Name______________________________

**Appeal to Authority**

Definition: A rhetorical strategy that calls upon an individual or other source as an expert to give credence to an argument made by an author of a work.

**Examples:**
- An allergy commercial actor explains why the medication works well while wearing a white lab coat.
- A composition uses the phrase “They say ... “
- A well-known professional basketball player is shown in shoe advertisements.
- A composition quotes a local university professor.

1. Which of the four examples above can be considered a dependable authority?

2. Explain why the ones you didn’t choose aren’t dependable authorities?

3. Which of the four examples above might impress or sway people’s minds if they aren’t specifically watching out for such influence?

4. Pretend that you have been assigned to write a paper against gun control in your state. What legitimate authority figure might you call upon for help?

5. What persuasive — but not necessarily credible — authority figure or phrase might you call upon for help?