The Pleasures of Eating

In *The Pleasures of Eating* by Wendell Berry, written in 1989 and published in the Center for Ecoliteracy, we are asked to question the things we do. The main audience of this article is for “City People,” otherwise known as people who use grocery stores like Walmart or Smiths. Our entire life we have become so accustomed to getting produce and groceries the fastest way we can, and the fastest way we get them is through a grocery store. We very rarely get food from the farm anymore and nobody questions why. We “city people” have become caught up in getting the cheapest food instead of going to the farm and getting the highest quality produce. We are no longer concerned what the food has been through and we are only worried about how easy it is to get, and that’s the problem. In this article, Berry will question us using ethos, pathos, and logos to make his point.

In this article, we will learn about all the crazy things we may overlook when purchasing food from the grocery store. All food companies have the same goal which is to make sure that we do not find out exactly what our food goes through before we purchase and eat it. There is a wide variety of questions that we should be concerned about before buying produce except they never even cross our mind. The problem is that we have all become used to this lifestyle and right now we are not making any effort to change it. Berry tries to find many different ways to convince us that the way we purchase foods is not the best way. He will use ethos, pathos, and logos throughout the entire article to make us trust him and question the things we do. Berry uses personal stories, emotion appeals, and facts to prove his point. His main point is that we have become lazy and want the food that is easily available. “The food industrialists have by now persuaded millions of consumers to prefer food that is already prepared” (Para 5).
Berry uses ethos to try and make us trust him right away. He creates credibility by using his personal experiences as a farmer to try and create a connection by helping us believe that what he knows is right. “I like to eat vegetables and fruits that I know have lived happily and healthily in good soil, not the products of the huge, becheicaled factory-fields that I have seen, for example, in the Central Valley of California” (Para 1). Many of these large companies that grow fruits and vegetables grow it in factory farms that do not produce the best food for us. Meat farms are even worse where the animals often sit in their own feces from being overfed. Why has this become normal for our food to be raised like this? Why did we not stop this problem when it was first starting instead of now when it could possibly be too late? For some strange reason, this does not bother us at all because we are too lazy to go get meat from a farm. We want our food the fastest and cheapest way possible. The fact that the quality of the produce and meats doesn’t bother us is a problem that we need to fix before the foods we eat continue to get worse. Why do we not question the food we eat? I think that this is a question we all may need to look at for ourselves otherwise our nation’s health is going to decline and we are going to continue to become obese.

Berry uses logos to make us trust him and believe the information that he is presenting. He uses facts and reasoning to create a bond between him and his audience, “city people.” “The industrial eater is, in fact, one who does not know that eating is an agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and uncritical — in short, a victim” (Para 5). We have all become victims of the food industry and most of us are unaware of that. We have been sucked into this trap that we honestly may not be able to escape anymore. We are constantly eating out and buying fast food because we are simply too lazy to go to the store and cook something ourselves. The food industry is trying to prevent the consumers to learn from
what actually goes on in the food industry. There are many different things that if we saw, we would stop eating out. We “city people” and food industries have learned that quantity is much more important than the quality of food. “For decades now the entire industrial food economy, from the large farms and feedlots to the chains of supermarkets and fast-food restaurants has been obsessed with volume” (Para 10). Average portion sizes of meals has increased drastically and that does not bother us. We continue to become more obese because of our poor choices. Our health is no longer a concern for the food industry, all that matters is how much money they are making from us. When will we finally begin to realize that what we are doing is not the right choice? The food that is provided to us has gotten worse and worse over the year and we continue to shove it down our throats. Berry’s whole goal is to make us question why we decide to do that instead of making a good health choice.

Berry then uses pathos to create an emotion that will make us want to change. We are now starting to realize the problem we have in this country but very few people are changing because we are still too lazy. “We still (sometimes) remember that we cannot be free if our minds and voices are controlled by someone else. But we have neglected to understand that we cannot be free if our food and its sources are controlled by someone else. The condition of the passive consumer of food is not a democratic condition. One reason to eat responsibly is to live free” (para 6). Berry tries to make us angry by explaining how these food companies have taken over our minds and can make us buy anything they want us too. Some of these food companies now have so much power because just how much we are buying their produce. We are giving them tons of money for a product that may not be to the quality of something that you got from the farm. The more we continue to feed these companies money and buy their poor quality meat and produce, it’s just going to get worse. “The trap is the ideal of industrialism: a walled city surrounded by valves that let merchandise in but no consciousness out”
(para 12). We are simply too lazy and do not want to put in extra effort to get food so we are stuck in the “trap.” Until we listen to what Berry is saying we are going to continue to have this problem.

All throughout this article, Berry used ethos, pathos and logos to prove his point. He used his experiences as a farmer as ethos to help us believe in what he had to say. Berry was somebody who was raised on a farm so why wouldn’t we trust him? Berry also used pathos to create emotion. He questioned us to make us angry and begin to question why exactly we do things the way we do. He tries to prove that we have lost our freedom and that the food industry now has complete control over us. Last, Berry uses logos to prove what exactly these food companies do with their food. He tells us about the process our produce goes through and uses facts and logic to help turn us against buying food from the grocery store. Berry wanted us “city people” to begin to question everything we do and that is what needs to happen. “City people” need to see how bad the things are that we eat and begin to buy produce and meat straight from the farm. Berry wants us to challenge the normal things we do to help better our lives and become healthier as a nation. The way that Berry tried to convince me through the article worked. He made me understand just how bad things are that we eat and that it is not much harder to get fresh, healthy, produce. Berry did an excellent job as an author by creating an emotional appeal and making the reader interested from the start. In the end all Berry wanted us to do was to think about “The Pleasures of Eating” and begin to actually enjoy eating healthy.