Rhetorical Question

Definition: A question where an answer is not expected; often used to involve the audience and create interest.

Examples:

- “What would you do for a Klondike Bar?”
- “Have you driven a Ford lately?”
- “What else could the president have done in that situation?”
- “How can we continue to allow people in Africa to die of AIDS without helping?”

1. Some say rhetorical questions shift the work of making the point onto the audience or reader. Explain how that works using one of the examples above.

2. You have been assigned a paper that will defend your school’s music program that is in danger of being eliminated. List three rhetorical questions you might use.

3. Would you use your questions from #2 or do you find them to be unethical and weak arguments? Defend your answer.

4. Think of a classical argument between a parent and child. Are these arguments loaded with rhetorical questions? What are some?

5. Prove that you understand the workload shift of a rhetorical question by answering the following question with a rhetorical one of your own: Why?