The *Trivium* and "The Semiotic Iceberg": A Paradigm for Reading and Responding to Texts

**Grammar Stage:** Making Empirical Observations  
"Above the waterline"; surface level/obvious

**Logic:** Evaluating and Analyzing the Message  
Second-Order Signs and Questions: "Below the waterline"—see "The Semiotic Iceberg"  
(What is the *text* saving to me?)

**Rhetoric:** Formulating an Interpretive Position; Generating Claims; Drawing Broader Conclusions  
Third-Order Signs and Questions: "Below the waterline"—"The Semiotic Iceberg" (What do I say about the text?)

---

**THE SEMIOTIC ICEBERG**

Grammar-level observations ↓

visible sign

Logic- and Rhetoric-Stage Inquiry: evaluating and analyzing a text's meaning; then formulating an interpretive position toward that text and its message(s)