

Informative Speeches

An informative speech is one in which the speaker relays knowledge to an audience on a specific topic. There are four distinct types of informative speeches: speeches about objects, speeches about processes, speeches about events, and speeches about concepts.

Speeches About Objects

For the purposes of this type of informative speech, anything that is visible and tangible is considered an object. Object speeches seek to impart knowledge about this object to the audience. Whether your object is the human body or the most recent episode of *Family Guy*, informative object speeches provide a comprehensive overview of your object as topic.

It's important that object speeches have a purpose: using our previous examples, you may discuss the complex, myriad ways in which the endocrine system functions and how it regulates metabolism; similarly, you may describe how *Family Guy* serves as a modern form of satire in pop culture. It's one thing to spout off facts about an object, but there must be a purpose to those facts.

Speeches About Processes

A process is the manner in which something is created, made, done, or works. An informative speech about a process then describes how something is made, done, or works. Processes could include anything from how the modern electoral college works to how an ice cream sandwich is made on the factory line. Informative process speeches work to help your audience both understand the process, and possibly be able to replicate the process for themselves (if applicable).

Speeches About Events

Any occurrence that happens is regarded as an "event." A speech about an event then, describes the occurrence in full: the time, date, location, and circumstances of that occurrence. Like all informative speeches, event speeches must also serve a purpose. You may talk about how the Battles of Lexington and Concord came to be known as the "shot heard 'round the world," or describe the experience of your first week at

college. In either case, your speech must have a purpose to it.

Speeches About Concepts

Concepts refer to ideas, beliefs, theories, attitudes, and/or principles. When speaking about concepts, you may have to find concrete ideas in order to make abstract ideas more relatable and tangible to your audience. Whether discussing the theory of the origins of the universe to whether there's any truth to the phrase "love at first sight," concept speeches break down complex ideas into manageable chunks of understanding for your audience.

Informative Speech Outline

The basics of writing an informative outline

There are many different purposes for writing an informative outline, therefore there are several different types of informative outlines. A few of the types include the informative essay outline, the informative presentation outline, and the informative speech outline.

Regardless what type of informative outline you are writing, the basic parts remain same. Each will include an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

The introduction generally needs to:

- Grab the reader's or audience's attention
- Present your thesis statement
- Establish your credibility
- Preview what is to come
- Transition to the body

The body:

- Outlines your main points, with subpoints and supporting facts
- Includes transitions between main points

The conclusion:

- Signals the end is coming
- Restates your thesis
- Ends strongly, but quickly, wrapping it up and driving your point home

You are likely already familiar with the basic outline format, which uses Roman numerals for the introduction, body (main points), and

conclusion, and letters and numbers for subpoints and supporting facts.

If you have the basic format down, you'll then want to then master the differences specific to the type of informative outline you're writing. For example, a speech outline may include a notation about visual aids you are using or when to emphasize using gestures or pauses, which would not be necessary in an informative essay outline.

Writing an informative speech outline

According to this writing guide from Colorado State University, the main point of an informative speech is "to provide interesting, useful, and unique information to your audience." Within that framework, there are still different types of informative speeches. When selecting your informative speech topic and beginning your outline, you'll want to keep in mind the type of speech you are writing and its overall objective.

Again, the key parts of your outline will remain the same, but the pattern of organization you use in your outline may vary based on which type of informative speech you are writing.

Types of informative speeches include:

- Object (people, places, animals, products)
- Process (patterns of action, including both demonstrative "how to" speeches and more broad processes)
- Event (things that have happened, are happening, or will happen)
- Concept (more abstract ideas such as theories, beliefs, and ideas)

Based on your speech type, you'll want to consider the following patterns of organization for your speech outline:

- Topical
- Chronological
- Spatial
- Causal

Another difference when preparing an outline for a speech is that you'll benefit from two outlines: the preparation outline and the speaking outline. A preparation outline is typically full sentences and is used to help write your speech. A speaking outline uses keywords and phrases, generally on note cards, and is designed to jog your memory

during your speech, keeping you on track, without distracting you from delivering your message.

Persuasive Speeches

A speaker gives a persuasive speech to convince the audience to take on his/her position regarding a certain topic. A persuasive speech might contain a call to action, whereby the speaker attempts to persuade members of the audience to perform a certain action, or to convince the audience to adopt a specific point of view on a certain topic.

Persuasive speeches commonly contain lots of pathos. Pathos is an appeal to the emotions of the audience. Political speeches are examples of persuasive speeches heavy with pathos. By appealing to emotions through references to "freedom" or "patriotism," politicians seek to gain the audience's vote.

In order for the pathos contained in a persuasive speech to be effective, the speaker has to understand the audience he/she is addressing. To be convincing, the speaker has to take into account the behavioral motivations and foundational beliefs of the audience.

Empathize with the audience to demonstrate that you are like them - that you understand how they feel and what they think. Drawing parallels between yourself and the audience reduces the distance between you and them, making your speech that much more persuasive.

In addition to pathos, persuasive speeches contain appeals to ethos and logos. An appeal to ethos is used to show the character of the speaker and make him/her more credible. For the audience to be persuaded, they have to feel that the speaker is a credible and worth listening to. An appeal to logos requires referencing evidence. This demonstrates the extent to which the speaker is knowledgeable about the topic he/she is speaking about, making their speech more persuasive than if he/she appeared ill-informed on the topic.