

## How a persuasive speech topic wins adherents

You find yourself called upon to give a speech. What's the purpose of any speech? In a word, persuasion. You must convince your audience of your point of view. Whether you're lauding the candidate for mayor or talking about global warming, you need to give your listeners convincing evidence that your position on the subject is one they should adopt.

The successful persuasive speech topic requires knowledge of rhetoric, style, logic and vocabulary. Yes, it's a tall order, even for the most accomplished speaker. However, a close examination of each element gives you the power to deliver a winning persuasive speech topic in words that make the angels cry. Let's look at some ways you can use each of these elements to your advantage.

Rhetoric involves the way in which you weave your words. For example, if your topic is global warming, your use of rhetoric can evoke emotional responses which quickly bring your listeners into your camp. You can awaken outrage, sympathy or alarm with the simple device of rhetoric. Consider the following two statements. "Changes in our world climate are causing increasing incidents of hurricanes and droughts." Compare this with "The deaths of more than 250,000 human beings in the Asian tsunami tragedy of 2004, as well as massive starvation in African nations, due to drought, can be laid at the door of global warming." Whereas the first statement is brief and unemotional, the second captures a response from the heart. The persuasive speech topic must employ sophisticated rhetoric for success.

Your style also matters. The most persuasive speech topic is only as winning as the style you use to deliver your message. Speak to your audience. Your style will be different when speaking to a group of seniors than to teenagers.

Logic is an important component of any thoroughly persuasive speech topic. Your arguments in favor of a certain conclusion must stand up to reasonable, logical analysis. In our scenario of the persuasive speech topic on global warming, you need to convey facts which support the conclusions. It's a fact that the polar ice caps are melting. The volume of water thereby released into the oceans must, by the laws of physics, cause the shorelines to shrink. Small islands may disappear. This logic is irrefutable. Bringing such facts to the attention of your audience is absolutely necessary to the successful persuasive speech topic.

Good vocabulary is essential to persuading your audience. Consider the following statements. "Global warming should concern all of us." Compare this with "Global warming is a dire threat, one with significant consequences we will all live to endure." This element of your speech is a combination of rhetoric and

vocabulary. The greater your repertoire and command of the language, the more accurately you can describe and persuade.

When you deliver your speech, your goal is to win people over to your point of view. Effective persuasion requires that you thoroughly address these essential elements of speaking. To your successful speech!