

Informative Speeches

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn that an informative speech is one in which the speaker relays knowledge to an audience on a specific topic. There are four distinct categories of topic: things, people, or places, methods, events, ideas. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Speeches About Objects
2. Speeches About Processes
3. Speeches About Events
4. Speeches About Concepts
5. Crafting an Effective Informative Speech

1. 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.

➦ **EXAMPLE** 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.



TERMS TO KNOW

Inform

To communicate knowledge to others.

Object

A thing that has physical existence.

2. 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.

➦ **EXAMPLE** 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).

3. 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.

➦ **EXAMPLE** 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.

4. 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.

➦ **EXAMPLE** 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.



TERM TO KNOW

Concept

An understanding retained in the mind, from experience, reasoning and/or imagination; a generalization (generic, basic form), or abstraction (mental impression), of a particular set of instances or occurrences (specific, though different, recorded manifestations of the concept).

5. Crafting an Effective Informative Speech

A narrowly focused speech topic can really hone in on an object, process, event, or concept, thus making it easier for the audience to understand that topic. A broadly chosen topic usually entails lots of different kinds of information, which might complicate the informative quality of a speech and confuse the audience members. A narrowed focus also makes researching more manageable for the speech writer and increases his or her ability to understand that topic thoroughly before presenting it to others.

When writing an informative speech, pick out a small number of key points on your specific topic that you want the audience to take away from your speech. Use these points to develop an organizational structure to your speech, which should include an introduction, body, and conclusion.

This structure will provide a trajectory that guides your audience as you elaborate the key points of information. Having a structure gives you, as the speaker, an opportunity to introduce the key points in the introduction and revisit them in the conclusion, increasing the likelihood that the audience will walk away with the key knowledge about your topic.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that a speaker should be very knowledgeable about the topic of their informative speech, whether it be an **object**, **event**, detailed **process**, or abstract **concept**. When **crafting an effective informative speech**, narrower topics make for more robust and comprehensible speeches. Remember to practice any speech multiple times.

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