

# Persuasive Speeches

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## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about speeches that are designed to convince your audience. Specifically, this lesson will focus on:

1. Persuasive Speeches

## 1. Persuasive Speeches

The purpose of a **persuasive** speech is to convince the **audience** to adopt the speaker's perspective on a given topic. The core of a persuasive speech is **pathos**: appealing to and resonating with the audience's feelings and emotions.

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. Showing empathy with the audience is crucial. 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.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### Persuade

To successfully convince someone to agree to, accept, or do something, usually through reasoning and verbal influence.

### Audience

A group of people within hearing; specifically a group of people listening to a performance, speech etc.; the crowd seeing a stage performance.

### Pathos

That quality or property of anything which touches the feelings or excites emotions and passions, esp., that which awakens tender emotions, such as pity, sorrow, and the like; contagious warmth of feeling, action, or expression; pathetic quality.



## SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that a **persuasive speech** intends to persuade the audience to adopt the position of the speaker. Know your audience: In order to be persuasive, the form and content of your speech must take into account what the audience knows and how it wants to be addressed.

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