

# Scoping your Topic

by Sophia Tutorial



## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn how narrow down your topic for appropriate coverage in your speech. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Scoping Your Topic

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After much deliberation, you have selected a **topic**. Congratulations! Now comes the fun part: making that topic manageable and developing your speech. Think of your preliminary work as establishing a general target. Now the goal is to **narrow** your aim and find the bull's-eye!

Even though it is not an easy decision to come to, deciding on the general topic has only set you out on the path toward developing a speech, not toward leading you to the end.

➞ **EXAMPLE** If you decide your topic will be about basketball, that is quite a broad topic. Will your speech be about the history of basketball? Will it be about specific players? Or specific rules?

**Scoping** your topic is the process of identifying the important subtopics that form the parameters of your speech. As these questions make clear, picking a general topic is only a first step. What you need to do is establish the scope of your engagement with the topic of your speech by breaking it into the important parts.

An important consideration when you begin narrowing in on the specific area of your general topic is how much time you will have to deliver your speech. If you have a shorter amount of time, you will need to narrow the scope of your speech. If you have a little more time, you might be able to cast a wider net when it comes to the topic of the speech. Use time constraints to your benefit, let them guide you to narrow the scope of your speech.

Scoping your topic will not only make the writing of the speech easier, but by narrowing the scope of your speech, you also increase the likelihood that your speech will effectively communicate with the audience. Covering a more narrow scope will allow you to include more detailed information, and cover your topic more fully. When your speech has a focused engagement, it is easier for audiences to follow along and be informed or persuaded, depending on what the purpose of your speech is.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### Topic

Subject; theme; a category or general area of interest.

### **Narrow**

To reduce in width or extent; to contract.

### **Scope**

The extent of the area or subject matter that something deals with or to which it is relevant.



## SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **scoping your topic** means identifying the subtopics related to the general topic your speech will address. The amount of time allowed for the speech will help determine how narrow or broad the scope should be. A broader scope will take more time to explain, while narrowing will allow you to cover the material in less time. If your goal is to include more detailed information, narrowing your scope will allow you to analyze your topic more completely.

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