

Tailor Complexity to Your Audience

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WHAT'S COVERED

As you've learned, the main goals for an informative speech are to help explain a specific subject and to help the audience remember the knowledge later. To achieve these goals, a speaker should consider how best to package the complex understanding that they have cultivated of the topic, from personal experience and research, into an easily communicable form for the audience. This lesson will focus on:

1. Complexity

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One way to deliver an effective informative speech and ensure that the audience leaves your speech informed is to tailor the **complexity** of the speech to the specific audience.

Never presume that your audience has a lot of background knowledge on your subject, but also don't assume they know nothing.

The audience is an integral part of public speaking; not only will they hear your speech, but they should be an important component that informs the writing of the speech as well.

IN CONTEXT

Consider if you are preparing to deliver an informative speech on the topic of cloning to an audience of geneticists. Their professional training will have given them an extensive understanding of DNA. Because of this, you would want to tailor the complexity of the speech to match the knowledge that the audience already possesses, meaning that the speech could contain lots of technical terms with little explanation because the audience will already understand what those terms mean.

Conversely, consider delivering a speech on the same topic to an audience of college students. This audience, even if they have taken biology classes, will not possess the same expertise knowledge that professionals do. Therefore, you would want to tailor the complexity of your speech to the knowledge of the students, using fewer technical terms and more general explanations.



TERM TO KNOW

Complexity

The state of being complex; intricacy; entanglement.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that it is important to consider your audience when determining your speech's level of **complexity**. Every piece of information in a speech should relate to the speech topic, purpose, and thesis simultaneously. Audiences have a hard time following or understanding speeches that are too broad in scope (that is, speeches that include too much irrelevant or tangential information). By keeping all of the information relevant as he or she develops your speech, the speaker's job becomes easier by keeping all supporting information on point.

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