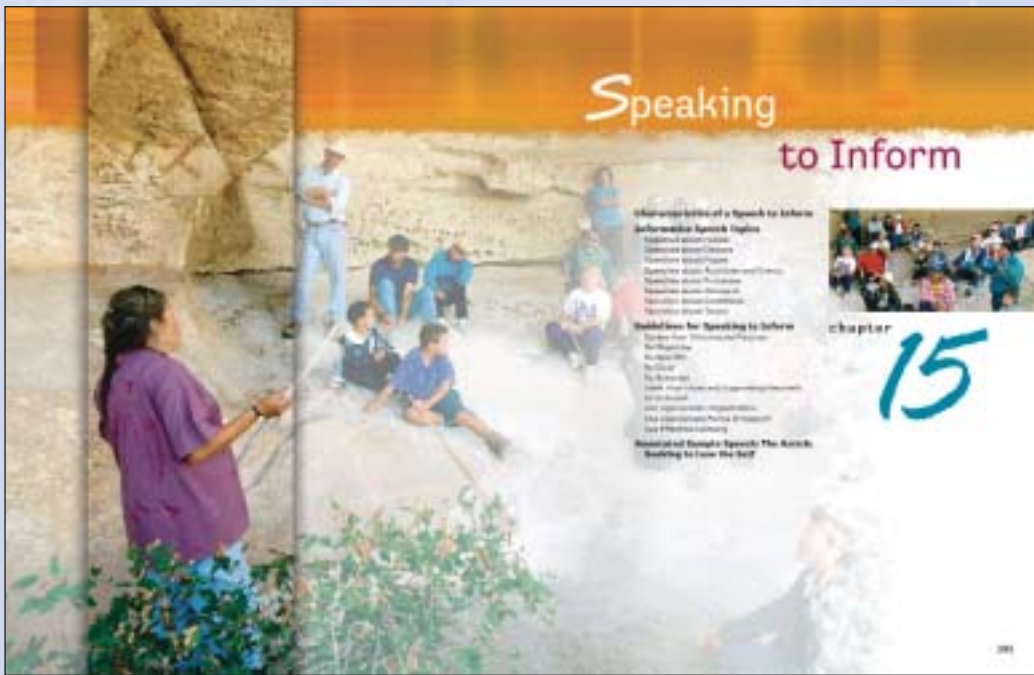


MASTERING PUBLIC SPEAKING, 6/e

by George L. Grice & John F. Skinner

Sample Chapter 15

Speaking to Inform



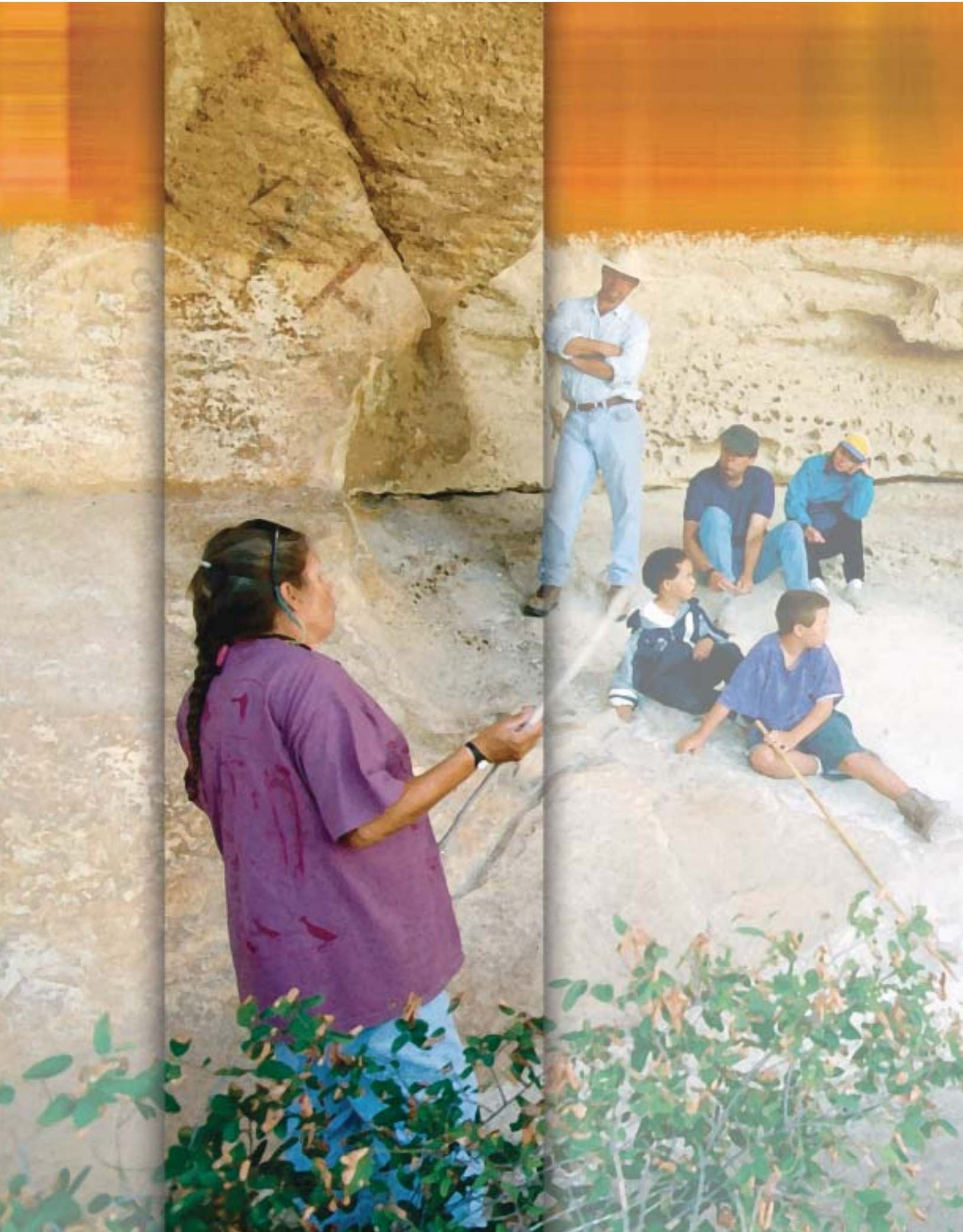
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Speaking

to Inform

Characteristics of a Speech to Inform

Informative Speech Topics

- Speeches about People
- Speeches about Objects
- Speeches about Places
- Speeches about Activities and Events
- Speeches about Processes
- Speeches about Concepts
- Speeches about Conditions
- Speeches about Issues

Guidelines for Speaking to Inform

- Stress Your Informative Purpose
- Be Objective
- Be Specific
- Be Clear
- Be Accurate
- Limit Your Ideas and Supporting Materials
- Be Relevant
- Use Appropriate Organization
- Use Appropriate Forms of Support
- Use Effective Delivery

Annotated Sample Speech: The Amish: Seeking to Lose the Self



chapter

15

We are drowning in information and starving for knowledge. —JOHN NAISBITT

Our thirst for knowledge and stimulation seems insatiable. It has also never been easier to satisfy.

“On a typical day at the end of 2004, some 70 million American adults logged onto the Internet

to use email, get news, access government information, check out health and medical information, participate in auctions, book travel reservations, research their genealogy, gamble, seek out romantic partners, and engage in countless other activities.”¹ The “always-on” function ensures that subscribers lucky enough to have broadband and DSL have the Internet always at hand.² For many of us, “iPod, therefore I Am.”³ We choose our own play lists rather than just living to the soundtracks commercial radio stations offer. We subscribe to weblogs, audioblogs, and videoblogs, often receiving them on our cell phones. Of course, we send text, pictures, and video from those same cell phones. Many who want to be connected—“plugged in”—find it amazingly easy to do so.

Why is it, then, that when asked to speak about what we consider interesting or important, so many of us feel all dressed up with nowhere to go? Perhaps we lack the sense of community that people experienced more easily when almost everyone watched the same few network TV news reports, read the same newspapers, and listened to the same radio stations. “Technology has given us finally a universe entirely for ourselves—where the serendipity of meeting a new stranger, or hearing a piece of music we would never choose for ourselves, or an opinion that might actually force us to change our mind about something are all effectively banished.” That’s the assessment of Andrew Sullivan, long-time member of iPod nation, who catalogs some of the things we miss by focusing solely on our own diversions:

That hilarious shard of an over-heard conversation that stays with you all day; the child whose chatter on the sidewalk takes you back to your own early memories; birdsong; weather; accents; the laughter of others; and those thoughts that come not by filling your head with selected diversion, but by allowing your mind to wander aimlessly through the regular background noise of human and mechanical life.⁴

An informative speech assignment challenges you to take a small step toward building a sense of community within your classroom. Such an assignment also poses at least three challenges:

1. Choosing a topic you find personally interesting and that your listeners will find interesting or relevant
2. Finding adequate information to make you well informed about the topic
3. Organizing your information in the most fitting manner

These three tasks form the essence of informative speaking, the subject of this chapter.

Characteristics of a Speech to Inform

Dr. Jones, your geology professor, enters the classroom, takes out a folder of notes, puts up the first of a series of slides, and begins to lecture on the differences between active and inactive volcanoes. At the morning staff meeting, Dr. Mendez explains how the hospital will implement its new policy to secure the confidentiality of patient records. Scott,

a classmate in your business communication class, spends half the period summarizing his outside reading on factors that shape a company's corporate culture. The lecture, briefing, and oral report these people deliver are three of the forms informative speeches can take. In this chapter we focus on the variety of subject areas for a **speech to inform**.

At the most fundamental level, we seek knowledge for three reasons: We want to *know*, *understand*, and *use* information. The goals of any informative speaker, in turn, are to impart knowledge, enhance understanding, or permit application. Suppose you decided to prepare an informative speech on the general subject of advertising. You could select as your specific purpose to inform the audience about advertising in ancient times. Your listeners probably know little about this topic, and you can readily assume that your speech would add to their knowledge. Alternatively, you could inform the audience about how effective advertising succeeds. Using examples your audience already knows, you could deepen their understanding of advertising strategies and principles. A third specific purpose could be to inform your listeners about how they can prepare effective, low-cost advertisements when they want to promote a charity fund-raising project or a garage sale. In this instance you would help the audience apply basic advertising principles.

Speakers inform us, then, when they provide us with new information, when they help us understand better some information we already possess, or when they enable us to apply information. When you prepare an informative speech, however, you must make sure that you don't slip into giving a persuasive speech. How can you avoid this problem? After all, a persuasive speech also conveys information. In fact, the best persuasive speeches usually include supporting material that is both expository and compelling.

Some topics, of course, are easy to classify as informative or persuasive. A speaker urging audience members not to use a cell phone while driving is clearly trying to persuade; the speaker is attempting to intensify beliefs and either change or reinforce behavior. On the other hand, a speech charting the most recent options in cell phone technology is a speech to inform. A speech describing different forms of alcohol addiction is informative, whereas a speech advocating the Alcoholics Anonymous program to overcome addiction would be persuasive.

Sometimes speakers, both beginning and experienced, begin preparing a speech with the intention to inform, only to discover that somewhere during the speech construction process their objective has become persuasion. In other instances, speakers deliver what they intended to be an informative speech only to find that their listeners received it as a persuasive message. How can this happen? Let's look at the experience of one speaker, Sarah.

Sarah designed a speech with the specific purpose of informing the audience of the arguments for and against allowing women to serve in military combat. In her speech, she took care to represent each side's arguments accurately and objectively. After her speech, however, Sarah discovered that some listeners previously undecided on the issue found the pro arguments more persuasive and now supported permitting women to serve in combat roles. But Sarah also learned that others in the audience became more convinced that women should be excluded from such roles. Did Sarah's speech persuade? Apparently for some audience members the answer is yes; they changed their attitudes because of this speech. Yet Sarah's objective was to inform, not to persuade.

In determining the general purpose of your speech, remember that both speakers and listeners are active participants in the communication process. Listeners will interpret what they hear and integrate it into their frames of reference. Your objectivity as a speaker will not stop the listener from hearing with subjectivity. As a speaker, though, you determine *your* motive for speaking. It is not to advocate specific beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors on controversial issues. Your objective is to assist your hearers as they

speech to inform: a speech to impart knowledge, enhance understanding, or facilitate application of information.

come to know, understand, or apply an idea or issue. As you word the specific purpose of your speech, you should be able to determine whether your general purpose is to persuade or to inform.

Informative Speech Topics

Experts identify several ways of classifying informative speeches. We have chosen a topical pattern that we think will work well for you. This approach is based on the types of topics you can choose for your speech. As you read about these topic categories, keep two guidelines in mind. First, approach each category of topics with the broadest possible perspective. Second, recognize that the categories overlap; the boundaries between them are not distinct. Whether you consider the Great Pyramid of Cheops an object or a place, for example, is much less important than the fact that it's a fascinating informative speech topic. The purpose of our categories is to stimulate, not to limit, your topic selection and development. As you begin brainstorming, consider information you could provide your listeners regarding people, objects, places, activities and events, processes, concepts, conditions, and issues. In the following sections, we discuss these eight major topic areas for informative speeches and the patterns of organization appropriate for each.

Key Points

Topic Categories for Informative Speeches

1. Speeches about people
2. Speeches about objects
3. Speeches about places
4. Speeches about activities and events
5. Speeches about processes
6. Speeches about concepts
7. Speeches about conditions
8. Speeches about issues

Speeches about People

Activities and accomplishments of other people fascinate us. We gravitate toward books, magazine articles, television programs, films, and even supermarket tabloids that reveal the lives of celebrities. We are interested in the lives of the rich and the famous. We are also interested in the lives of the poor and the not-so-famous. Lifetime TV's

We read about, listen to, and watch people who fascinate us. Many of them have unique, interesting stories. Sharing this information with an audience can make an excellent speech.



Intimate Portrait series features the lives of influential women. Bravo's *Profiles* explores the lives of creative people. A&E's *Biography* has been so popular and so critically acclaimed that it has spawned its own cable channel.

People, then, are an obvious and abundant resource of topics for your informative speech. You can be as historical or as contemporary as you wish. A speech about a person allows you the opportunity to expand your knowledge in a field that interests you while sharing those interests with your listeners. If you're a fan of animated films, you may be disappointed that Disney has abandoned freehand animation. An informative speech assignment gives you the option to discuss J. Stuart Blackton, one of the pioneers of American animation, or contemporary Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki, creator of *Spirited Away* and *Howl's Moving Castle*. If you're an avid photographer, you could discover and communicate something about the life and accomplishments of Ansel Adams, Diane Arbus, Alfred Stieglitz, or Annie Leibovitz, for example.

Of course, you don't need to confine your topic to individuals associated with your major or areas of interest. You could interest and inform audiences by discussing the lives and contributions of people such as:

Lance Armstrong	Sally Hemings	M. Night Shyamalan
Ray Charles	Jimi Hendrix	Patrick Tilman
Cesar Chavez	Margaret Mead	Andy Warhol
Johnny Depp	Jackie Robinson	Prince William of Wales

You may choose to discuss not one person but a group of people, such as the Marx Brothers, the Four Horsemen of Notre Dame, or the Red Hat Society. You could even compare and contrast two or more individuals to highlight their philosophies and contributions. The following pairs of noted figures could generate lively exposition: Rachel Carson and Ralph Nader, Britney Spears and Avril Lavigne, Thurgood Marshall and Clarence Thomas, or Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.

In considering an informative speech about a person, you must decide not only what is important but also what the audience will remember. Too often, students organize

Exploring Online

ONLINE BIOGRAPHIES

www.biography.com

<http://lifetimetv.com/shows/ip>

Visit these sites for thousands of ideas for speeches about people. At Biography.com you can search paragraph-length biographies of more than 25,000 people. At Lifetime's *Intimate Portrait* page you can search alphabetically for longer biographies of hundreds of influential women.

Speaking with Confidence

Though informative speaking sounds like a simple concept, it is more complicated than it may first appear. It is all too easy to fall into the trap of biased speaking. I selected the hotly debated topic of standardized testing for my informative speech. I then began my research. Throughout the process I would write down notes, only to realize that the information could be interpreted as leaning toward one side of the debate. In order to remain objective, I made an outline to plot the main points that needed to be discussed. I carefully chose ideas that were purely informative, such as "What exactly is standardized test-



ing?" and "When did standardized testing become widely used?" As I constructed my speech, I made sure to use reliable, objective websites that were not gung-ho for either side of the debate. Also, if I had a piece of information that had the slightest inclination of bias, I took it out and saved it for my persuasive speech. Researching an informative speech proved to be more challenging than I anticipated, because it's human nature to be biased in any hotly debated issue. But all this work kept me focused. When I delivered my speech, I felt confident that it was strictly informative.

—Patty Pak, Virginia Tech University

speeches about people so that the speeches resemble biographical listings in an encyclopedia. The speech amounts to a seemingly limitless compendium of dates. This is a mistake. Even the most attentive listener will remember few of the details in such a speech.

Speeches about people are often organized chronologically or topically. Cary used a chronological pattern to trace the life and legacy of Christopher Reeve. She presented three main points:

- I. The actor
- II. The accident victim
- III. The activist

In her second key idea, Cary discussed the equestrian accident that left Reeve paralyzed in 1995. Using acting metaphors, she described how this event transformed him. Reeve moved from the roles he had portrayed as an actor to a more important role as an activist. His final performance would be not on a Broadway stage or a movie screen, but on an international stage as an advocate for medical research to discover cures for spinal cord injuries.

Speeches about Objects

A second resource of informative topics is objects. Speeches about objects focus on what is concrete, rather than on what is abstract. Again, consider objects from the broadest perspective possible so that you can generate a maximum number of topic ideas. Topics for this type of speech could include the following:

Exploring Online

RESEARCHING HISTORICAL TOPICS

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

If you're interested in discussing an informative topic from a historical perspective, check out *American Memory*, historical collections maintained by the Library of Congress. The site contains more than 125 collections, with topics including the African American odyssey, early baseball cards (1887–1914), Civil War photographs, Hispanic music and culture, historic buildings, and sound recordings of speeches from World War I.

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| crocodiles | performance clothing |
| electric cars | smart roads |
| the Great Wall of China | volcanoes |
| “nanny cams” | |

Speeches about objects can use any of several organizational patterns. A speech on the Cathedral of Notre Dame or the Statue of Liberty could be organized spatially. A speech tracing the development of cyclones and anti-cyclones evolves chronologically. A speaker discussing the origins, types, and uses of pasta also uses a topical division.

If the speech focused only on the history of pasta, however, it may best be structured chronologically.

Kevin used a topical organization for his speech on genetically modified (GM) animals, sometimes called designer animals:

- I. The process of designing animals
- II. Benefits of GM animals
 - A. Medical uses
 - B. Commercial uses
- III. Problems of GM animals
 - A. Animal health issues
 - B. Ethical issues

Speeches about Places

Places are an easily tapped resource for informative speech topics. These speeches introduce listeners to new locales or expand their knowledge of familiar places. Topics may include real places, such as historic sites, emerging nations, national parks, famous



A visit to a museum, a historic site, a natural attraction, or even a mural painted on the side of a building might provide inspiration for an informative speech topic.

prisons, and planets. Topics may also include fictitious places, such as the Land of Oz or the Island of the Lord of the Flies. Speeches about places challenge speakers to select words that create vivid images.

To organize your speech about places, you would typically use one of three organizational patterns: spatial, chronological, or topical. A speech about the Nile, the world's longest river, is organized spatially if it discusses the upper, middle, and lower Nile. A presentation about your college could trace its development chronologically. A speech on Poplar Forest, Thomas Jefferson's getaway home, could use a topical pattern discussing Jefferson's architectural style.

Suppose you selected as your informative speech topic Ellis Island, the site of the chief U.S. immigration center from 1892 to 1954. You could choose any of the following patterns of development:

Pattern: Spatial

Specific Purpose: To inform the audience about Ellis Island's Main Building

- Key Ideas:**
- I. The Registry Room
 - II. The Baggage Room
 - III. The Oral History Studio

Pattern: Chronological

Specific Purpose: To inform the audience of the history of Ellis Island

- Key Ideas:**
- I. Years of Immigration, 1892–1954
 - II. Years of Dormancy, 1954–1984
 - III. Years of Remembrance, 1984–present

Pattern: Topical

Specific Purpose: To inform the audience of the history of Ellis Island

- Key Ideas**
- I. The Process of Immigration
 - II. The Place of Immigration
 - III. The People Who Immigrated

Notice that each of these outlines is organized according to a distinct pattern. The key ideas in the first outline are organized spatially. Although the specific purposes of the

second and third speeches are identical, the former is organized chronologically and the latter topically.

If you choose to speak about a place, be aware of a couple of common pitfalls. First, avoid making your speech sound like a travelogue. The speaking occasion is not an opportunity to show a captive audience slides you took during your last vacation (“And here are my cousins Lois and Louie. If you look closely, you can see part of Berkeley

Plantation, the site of the first Thanksgiving and the birthplace of William Henry Harrison and Benjamin Harrison.”). Your speech should identify and develop ideas that contribute to the general education of your listeners.

A second pitfall to avoid is inappropriate presentational aids. We have too often seen speakers illustrate their ideas visually by holding up postcards or books and magazines containing pictures of places. This strategy is a mistake. These pictures are too small to be seen. Use presentational aids that are large enough for all audience members to see easily. On other occasions, students speaking about places have distributed

photographs or postcards to be passed among audience members during the speech. Although listeners could see the presentational aids clearly as they held them, they often became preoccupied with the pictures and missed much of what the speaker was saying at the time. Reviewing the guidelines you learned in Chapter 14 will help you design and display visual aids that reinforce your speaking goals. Remember, your presentational aids should not distract your audience from the main attraction: you, speaking to inform.

Exploring Online

TOURING MUSEUMS ONLINE

www.virtualfreesites.com/museums.museums.html

Virtual Tours of Museums is an excellent resource for speeches about places. You can read text, view pictures, and, occasionally, listen to audio or see a short movie as you enjoy online guided tours of nearly 50 museums. From this site you can also access “Virtual Tours of Exhibits” and “Virtual Tours of Special Interest.”

Speeches about Activities and Events

Activities are things you do at home, work, or school; by yourself or with friends; to learn, relax, or accomplish a required task. You may shop, play video games, deliver meals to shut-ins, collect baseball cards, cook, knit, design websites, socialize with friends, or engage in countless other activities. In Chapter 6 we suggested that one source of speech topics is your hobbies, your interests, and your experiences. Topics that you already know well, and are willing to explore more fully, often enhance your credibility and energize your delivery.

If your purpose is to inform your audience about aerial sports, you could discuss (1) gliding, (2) ballooning, and (3) skydiving. If you’re interested in dancing, a speech on krumping, sometimes called street dancing or clown dancing, could be lively and informative. You could use a topical pattern, informing your audience on these key points:

- I. The origins of krumping
- II. The purposes of krumping
- III. The style of krumping
- IV. The face-painting of krumping

Events are important or interesting occurrences. Examples of topics for this type of speech include 9/11, the sinking of the *Titanic*, and the Woodstock festival. For a speech assignment that does not require you to conduct research, you could speak about an event in your life you consider important, funny, or instructive, for example: “the day I registered for my first semester in college,” “the day my first child was born,” or “my most embarrassing moment.”

Speeches about events typically use a chronological or topical pattern. For example, if your topic is the daring Great Train Robbery that took place in Britain in 1963, you

could organize your speech chronologically, describing what happened before, during, and after those famous fifteen minutes. Lisa used a topical organization in her speech on the “World’s Longest Yardsale.” She excited her audience with an enthusiastic discussion of this four-day event. More than 5,000 vendors spanned 450 scenic miles from Kentucky through Tennessee and into Alabama. Lisa divided her topic into two key ideas:

- I. Shopping
 - A. Antiques
 - B. Collectibles
 - C. Furniture
 - D. Food
- II. Scenery
 - A. Lookout Mountain Parkway
 - B. Big South Fork National River
 - C. Little River Canyon National Preserve

Speeches about Processes

A process is a series of steps producing an outcome. Your informative speech about a process could explain or demonstrate how something works, functions, or is accomplished. Our students have given informative speeches on such how-to topics as reading a food packaging label, suiting up and entering a “clean room,” and using an automated external defibrillator. Informative topics such as how Doppler radar works and how to make children “waterproof” (a speech on the process of teaching water safety) are both process speeches. Speeches on global positioning systems, high pressure processing of juices, nuclear medicine, and cryptography (encoding and decoding messages in a code known only to those who understand) are also potentially good informative topics about processes.

Because a process is by definition a time-ordered sequence, speeches about processes commonly use chronological organization. For example, if your specific purpose is to inform your audience of the steps to a successful job interview, you could present these key ideas:

- I. Prepare thoroughly
- II. Arrive promptly
- III. Enter confidently
- IV. Communicate effectively
- V. Follow up immediately

Speeches about processes, however, are not confined to a chronological pattern. As we have argued earlier, the best organization is the one that achieves the purpose of the speech. A student presenting a how-to speech on podcasting would likely choose a chronological pattern if the specific purpose is to explain the steps in the process. Another student might examine the process of podcasting more generally, using a topical pattern to discuss the equipment needed, the most popular file formats, the rapid growth of podcasts, or their effects on traditional broadcasters. Both speeches concern a process, but each uses an organizational pattern that’s suitable for the speaker’s specific purpose.

Speeches about Concepts

Speeches about concepts, or ideas, focus on what is abstract, rather than on what is concrete. Whereas a speech about an object such as the Statue of Liberty may focus on the history or physical attributes of the statue itself, a speech about an idea may focus on



the concept of liberty. Other topics suitable for informative speeches about concepts include ecotourism, concrete poetry, pirate radio, traumatic obsessions, antique software, and endangered languages.

Speeches about concepts challenge you to make specific something that is abstract. These speeches typically rely on definitions and examples to support their explanations. Appropriate organizational patterns vary. A speech on Norse mythology could use a topical division and focus on key figures. Speeches about theories, particularly if they are controversial, sometimes use a pro–con division.

Drew, a student of ours, entertained all his listeners with a speech on onomastics, or the study of names. Notice how his introduction personalizes his speech and quickly involves his listeners. You can also see from his preview statement that he, too, used a topical organization for this speech about a concept:

These are some actual names reported by John Train in his books *Remarkable Names of Real People* and *Even More Remarkable Names*. Let me repeat: These are actual names found in bureaus of vital statistics, public health services, newspaper articles, and hospital, church, and school records: E. Pluribus Eubanks, Loch Ness Hontas, Golden Pancake, Halloween Buggage, Odious Champagne, and Memory Leake.

Train says in *Even More Remarkable Names* that “what one might call the free-form nutty name—Oldmouse Waltz, Cashmere Tango Obedience, Eucalyptus Yoho—is the one indigenous American art form.”

We’re lucky. No one in here has a name as colorful as any of those. But we all have at least two names—a personal and a family name. Today, I’ll tell you, first, why personal names developed, and second, the legal status of names. Finally, I have something to tell each of you about the origin of your names.

Speeches about Conditions

Conditions are particular situations: living conditions in a third-world country or social and political climates that give rise to movements such as witchcraft hysteria in Salem, McCarthyism, the women’s movement, the civil rights movement, jihad, and national independence movements.

The word *condition* can also refer to a state of fitness or health. Speeches about conditions can focus on a person’s health and, indeed, medical topics are a popular source of student speeches. Informative speeches about crush syndrome, obsessive–compulsive disorder, and pre-eclampsia, for example, can educate listeners about these interesting conditions. A speaker could choose as a specific purpose “to inform the audience about the causes and treatment of repetitive stress injuries.” Topical organization is appropriate for many speeches about specific diseases or other health conditions.

Jean became interested in the topic of autism. She gathered information from several organizations that conducted research and provided information on this developmental disability. Reviewing the FAQ links on several Internet websites, Jean selected four questions to organize the body of her speech:

- I. What is autism?
- II. What causes autism?
- III. How do you treat autism?
- IV. Is there a cure for autism?

Though the fourth question is closed, requiring only a yes or no answer, Jean used it as an opportunity to discuss types of research being conducted in search of a cure. At the conclusion of her speech, she gave her audience the URLs for the Autism Society of America and the Center for the Study of Autism websites, so that they could continue to learn more about this important topic.



States of health also characterize the economy, individual communities, and specific institutions. Recession, depression, and full employment are terms economists use to describe the health of the economy. Speakers inform their listeners about conditions when they describe the state of the arts in their communities, assess the financial situation of most college students, or illustrate how catch limits have affected the whale population, for example.

Speeches about Issues

Speeches about issues deal with controversial ideas and policies. Topics appropriate for informative speeches on issues include the use of polygraphs as a condition for employment; uniform sentencing of criminals; freedom of expression versus freedom from pornography; stem cell research; and eliminating sugared soft drinks from school vending machines. Any issue being debated in your school, community, state, or nation can be a fruitful topic for your informative speech.

You may be thinking that controversial issues are better topics for persuasive speeches, but they can also be appropriate for speeches to inform. Just remember that an informative speech on a controversial topic must be researched and developed so that you present the issue objectively.

Two common organizational patterns for speeches about issues are the topical and pro-con divisions. If you use a topical pattern of organization for your speech about issues, it will be easier for you to maintain your objectivity. If you choose the pro-con pattern, you may run the risk of moving toward a persuasive speech. A pro-con strategy—presenting both sides of an issue—lets the listener decide which is stronger. If your informative speech on an issue is organized pro-con, guard against two pitfalls: lack of objectivity and lack of perspective.

Speakers predisposed toward one side of an issue sometimes have difficulty presenting both sides objectively:

Carl presented a speech on the increasingly popular practice of adopting uniforms for public schools. He presented four good reasons for the practice: (1) uniforms are more economical for parents; (2) uniforms reduce student bickering and fighting over designer clothes; (3) uniforms increase student attentiveness in the classroom; and (4) uniforms identify various schools and promote school spirit. Carl's only argument against public school uniforms was that they limit students' freedom of expression. His speech seemed out of balance, and most of his classmates thought Carl favored school uniforms. Though the assignment was an informative speech, Carl's pro-con approach was ultimately persuasive. If, like Carl, you feel strongly committed to one side of an issue, save that topic for a persuasive speech.

A second pitfall that sometimes surfaces in the pro-con approach is lack of perspective. Sometimes a speaker will characterize an issue as two-sided when, in reality, it is many-sided. For example, one of our students spoke on the issue of child care. He mentioned the state family leave laws that permit mothers of newborn infants to take paid leaves of absence from work and fathers to take unpaid leaves while their jobs are protected. The speaker characterized advocates of such bills as pro-family and opponents as pro-business. He failed to consider that some people oppose such laws because they feel the laws don't go far enough; many state laws exempt small companies with fewer than 50 employees. If you fail to recognize and acknowledge the many facets of an issue in this way, you lose perspective and polarize your topic.

Exploring Online

DISCOVERING ISSUES

www.aldaily.com

Arts & Letters Daily is an invaluable resource for locating issues in art, criticism, culture, history, literature, music, and philosophy. Updated each weekday and once for each weekend, it features current articles, book reviews, essays, and opinions. The site also contains extensive links to newspapers, news and radio services, journals, magazines, weblogs, music sites, columnists, amusements, and a virtual reference desk.

In the preceding sections, we have discussed eight types of informative speeches. As you begin working on your own informative speech, remember to select a topic that will benefit your listeners and then communicate your information clearly and memorably.

Use these eight subject categories to narrow and focus your topic. As you go through each category, use the self-, audience-, occasion-, and research-generated strategies we discussed in Chapter 6 on pages 112–120 to come up with many topics to consider for your informative speech.

As you review this list you will, no doubt, find several persuasive topics. Before excluding them, see if there are related topics suitable for an informative speech. For example, you may have some strong feelings about intercollegiate athletic programs and their role in colleges and universities. To argue their merits or to suggest that they be scaled back would make your speech persuasive rather than informative. However, you

could change your focus to a more informative topic related to the issue of intercollegiate athletics. You could inform the audience of the history and intent of Proposition 48, the National Collegiate Athletic Association's statement of academic entrance requirements for college athletes.

As you go about selecting your topic, keep in mind this question: "How will the audience benefit from my topic?" Remember, your informative speech must help your audience know, understand, or apply information you provide. A speech detailing what employers look for in an employment résumé, for example, is clearly relevant to a class of students ready to enter the job market.

What about topics such as the golden age of vaudeville, the origins of superstitions, the history of aviation, the effect of music on livestock production, or the psychological aspects of aging? Maybe you think that these topics are not relevant to your audience. But part of the process of becoming an educated individual is learning more about the world around you. We are committed to this perspective and believe it is one you should encourage in your listeners.

Exploring Online

CHOOSING AND RESEARCHING INFORMATIVE TOPICS

<http://vos.ucsb.edu>

Whether you are generating ideas for informative speeches or researching a topic you've already chosen, you ought to look at this site if your subject is in the area of the humanities. *The Voice of the Shuttle: Web Site for Humanities Research* contains numerous links in areas from anthropology to science, technology, and culture. Use the Search VOS option to access this site's database of links on your topic.

Try This

Targeting an Informative Topic

Using the techniques of brainstorming and research, generate a list of two informative topics for each of the eight speech categories discussed in this chapter. Evaluate the suitability of each topic by asking and answering the following questions:

1. Does the topic interest me?
2. Is the topic likely to interest my audience?
3. Will I be able to find sufficient supporting materials on this topic?

4. Can I develop a speech that is clearly informative, rather than persuasive?
5. Does this topic meet all the criteria for the assigned speech?

Place an asterisk (*) by each topic that received five yes answers. Continue to assess and narrow this short list until you've decided on the most appropriate topic for your informative speech.

Once you have selected a topic that meets the criteria discussed in Chapter 6, ask yourself the following three questions: (1) What does the audience already know about my topic? (2) What does the audience need to know to understand the topic? (3) Can I present this information in a way that is easy for the audience to understand and remember in the time allotted? If you are satisfied with your answers to these questions, your next step is to begin developing the most effective strategy for conveying that information. Use the Theory into Practice feature below as you select an appropriate organizational pattern.

Theory into Practice

TIPS

Organizing Informative Speeches

Speeches about	Use	If your purpose is to
People	Topical organization	Explain various aspects of the person's life
	Chronological organization	Survey events in the person's life
Objects	Topical organization	Explain various uses for the object
	Chronological organization	Explain how the object was created or made
	Spatial organization	Describe various parts of the object
Places	Topical organization	Emphasize various aspects of the place
	Chronological organization	Chart the history of or developments in the place
	Spatial organization	Describe the elements or parts of the place
Activities and Events	Topical organization	Explain the significance of the activity or event
	Chronological organization	Explain the sequence of the activity or event
	Causal organization	Explain how one event produced or resulted from another
Processes	Topical organization	Explain aspects of the process
	Chronological organization	Explain how something is done
	Pro-Con organization	Explore the arguments for and against the procedure
	Causal organization	Discuss the causes and effects of the process
Concepts	Topical organization	Discuss aspects, definitions, or applications of the concept
Conditions	Topical organization	Explain aspects of the condition
	Chronological organization	Trace the stages or phases of the condition
	Causal organization	Show the causes and effects of the condition
Issues	Topical organization	Discuss aspects of the issue's significance
	Chronological organization	Show how the issue evolved over time
	Pro-Con organization	Present opposing viewpoints on the issue



Guidelines for Speaking to Inform

In the remainder of this chapter, we offer ten guidelines for the informative speech. Use them as a checklist during your speech preparation, and you will deliver an excellent informative speech.

Stress Your Informative Purpose

The primary objective of your informative speech is to inform. It is important for you to be clear about this, especially if your topic is controversial or related to other topics that are controversial. For example, if you are discussing U.S. immigration policy, political correctness, or the role of women in religion, you must realize that some in your audience may already have some very strong feelings about your topic. Stress that your goal is to give additional information, not to try to change anyone's beliefs.

Be Objective

One of the most important criteria for an informative speech is objectivity. If you take a stand, you become a persuader. Informative speakers are committed to presenting a balanced view. People representing political parties, charitable organizations, business associations, and special interest groups are understandably committed to the objectives and policies of their groups. Your research should take into account all perspectives. If, as you develop and practice your speech, you find yourself becoming a proponent of a particular viewpoint, you may need to step back and assess whether your orientation has shifted from information to persuasion. If you do not think you can make your speech objective, save the topic for a persuasive speech.

Tour guides have clear, informative purposes as they describe objects and places to their audiences.



In Chapter 12, we discussed the use of language. Nothing betrays the image of objectivity that is essential in an informative speech as quickly as the inappropriate use of language. For example, in an informative speech on the pros and cons of juvenile curfew laws, one of our students used language that telegraphed his personal opinion on the issue. Even when explaining the arguments for such laws, he described them as “silly,” “costly,” and “unenforceable.” In an informative speech, your language should be descriptive, rather than evaluative or judgmental.

Be Specific

At times we have had students tell us they will deliver a brief informative speech on “sports.” This topic is far too broad and reflects little or no planning. Many of us know a little about a lot of subjects. An informative speech gives you the perfect opportunity to fill in the gaps by telling your audience a lot about a little. Narrow your topic. To help you do that, we have suggested in this chapter that you focus on specific people, objects, places, activities and events, processes, concepts, conditions, and issues. Your “sports” topic could be narrowed to sports commentators; the history of AstroTurf; Forest Hills, former home of the U.S. Open Tennis Championships; competitive team sports and male bonding; and so on. The more specific you are about your topic, your purpose, and the materials you use to support your speech, the more time you will save during your research. Your specific focus will also make your speech easier for the audience to remember.

Be Clear

If you choose your topic carefully and explain it thoroughly, your message should be clear. Do not choose a topic that is too complex. If your speech topic is Boolean polynomials or the biochemistry of bovine growth hormone, you run the risk of being too technical for most audiences. You would never be able to give your audience the background knowledge necessary to understand your presentation in the limited time you have. At the same time, be careful about using jargon. Impressing the audience with your vocabulary is counterproductive if they cannot understand your message. The purpose of informative speaking is not to impress the audience with complex data, but to communicate information clearly.

Be Accurate

Information that is inaccurate does not inform; it misinforms and has two negative consequences. First, inaccuracies can hurt your credibility as a speaker. If listeners recognize misstatements, they may begin to question the speaker’s credibility: “If the speaker’s wrong about that, could there be other inaccuracies in the speech?” Accurate statements help you develop a positive image or protect one you have established earlier.

Second, inaccurate information can do potential harm to listeners. Such harm can be mental or physical. For example, you give an informative speech on the life-threatening reactions some people have to sulfites, a common ingredient in certain food preservatives. Your audience leaves the class worried about their health and the damage they may have suffered. You neglected to mention that these reactions are rare. Your misinformation has harmed your audience. If audience members are unaware of factual errors, they may form beliefs that are not valid or make decisions that are not wise.

Not only should your information be accurate, but you must accurately cite the sources you used to develop your speech. Some speakers assume that because they do not take a controversial stand in an informative speech, they need not cite sources. An informative topic may require fewer sources than you would use to establish your side of a debatable point. Demonstrating the truth of your ideas and information is nevertheless important. Also, you must cite the sources for any quotations.



Limit Your Ideas and Supporting Materials

Perhaps the most common mistake speakers make in developing the content of their speeches is including too much information. Do not make the mistake of thinking that the more information you put into a speech, the more informative it is. Listeners cannot process all, or even most, of what you present. If you overload your audience with too much information, they will stop listening. Remember the adage that “less is more.” To spend more time explaining and developing a few ideas will probably result in greater retention of these ideas by your listeners than the “speed and spread” approach.

Be Relevant

As you research your topic, you will no doubt discover information that is interesting but not central to your thesis. Because it is so interesting, you may be tempted to include it. Don't. If it is not relevant, leave it out.

One student, Larry, delivered an intriguing informative speech on the Jains, a tribe of monks in India whose daily life is shaped by reverence for all living things. As you might guess, the Jains are vegetarians. But they don't eat vegetables that develop underground because harvesting them may kill insects in the soil. Larry had done a good deal of research on this fascinating topic, including his own travels in India. His firsthand knowledge was both a blessing and a curse. Listening to a speaker who had visited the Jains's monasteries certainly made the topic immediate and compelling. But because he knew so much about the country, Larry included a lot of information about India that was interesting but irrelevant to his main point. His speech became much too long.

To avoid this problem and to keep yourself on track, write out your central thesis and refer to it periodically. When you digress from your topic, you waste valuable preparation time, distort the focus of your speech, and confuse your audience.

Use Appropriate Organization

There is no one best organizational pattern for informative speeches. You choose the pattern that is most appropriate to your topic and specific purpose. However, some patterns are inappropriate for an informative speech. While a pro-con approach is appropriate, a pro-con-assessment strategy moves the speech into persuasion. Problem-solution and need-plan patterns are also inherently persuasive. The motivated sequence strategy, to be discussed in Chapter 17, is also traditionally used for persuasive, not informative, speeches. Again, this chapter's Theory into Practice feature offers suggestions for selecting an appropriate organizational pattern. If you have any doubt that your organization is informative rather than persuasive, check with your instructor.

Use Appropriate Forms of Support

As with persuasive speeches, speeches to inform require appropriate supporting materials, such as those we discussed in Chapter 8. These materials should come from sources that are authoritative and free from bias. If you discuss a controversial issue, you must represent each side fairly. For example, if your specific purpose is to inform your audience on the effects of bilingual education, you must research and present information from both its proponents and its critics.

Use Effective Delivery

Some speakers have a misconception that delivery is more important for a persuasive speech than for an informative speech. Regardless of the type of speech, show your involvement in your speech through your physical and vocal delivery. The suggestions

Ethical Decisions

Managing Bias in an Informative Speech

Leon is president of a campus fraternity. He feels he is an expert on the subject of Greek life at his school, so he decides to use his observations and personal experiences as the basis for an informative speech on the pros and cons of joining fraternities and sororities. However, Leon fears that if he reveals that he is a fraternity president, his listeners will assume that he is not presenting objective information—so he does not mention it.

Is it ethical for Leon to avoid mentioning his fraternity affiliation or the fact that he is a fraternity president? Is it possible for him to give an unbiased presentation of both sides of the issue? In general, is it ethical for speakers who are strongly committed to an organization, cause, or position to give informative speeches on related topics? If so, what obligations do they have to their audience? What guidelines should these speakers follow to ensure that they will deliver objective information, rather than a persuasive speech? Write some suggestions that you can discuss with your classmates.

offered in Chapter 13 are appropriate for the speaker who informs as well as the speaker who persuades. Your voice and body should reinforce your interest in and enthusiasm for your topic. Your delivery should also reinforce your objectivity. If you find your gestures, body tension, or voice conveying an emotional urgency, you have likely slipped into persuasion.

Guidelines for Informative Speaking

1. Stress your informative purpose.
2. Be objective.
3. Be specific.
4. Be clear.
5. Be accurate.
6. Limit your ideas and supporting materials.
7. Be relevant.
8. Use appropriate organization.
9. Use appropriate forms of support.
10. Use effective delivery.

Key Points

After reading this chapter you should know the principles and characteristics of informative speaking, understand how they contribute to effective speaking, and be able to apply them as you prepare your speeches. Our student Susan Chontos understood and used these principles when she delivered the following speech to her classmates. Notice how her supporting materials and her organization of the introduction, body, and conclusion contributed to a seamless, organic whole. In the marginal annotations we have indicated the major strengths of Susan's speech, as well as some improvements she might make.

Annotated Sample Speech

The Amish: Seeking to Lose the Self⁵

Susan Chontos, San Antonio College, San Antonio

1 Our society is one that caters to the individual. We have seminars on how to be assertive, books on how to better your self-image, and countless articles on how to take control of your life. It seems that everyone today is in a great rush to find themselves. There

Susan's topic is apparent by the end of her first paragraph.

This section of the introduction establishes Susan’s credibility and previews the three key ideas she will develop in the body of the speech.

Here Susan begins to apply the “4 S’s” to her first point. She signposts (“first”) and states her idea (separation from the world). She supports her point using testimony, definition, and examples.

In her fourth paragraph Susan reiterates her point, provides support using contrast, and briefly summarizes her key idea. She does not include a transition statement.

Susan signposts her second key idea and again uses a Biblical quotation to explain the Amish tenet of simplicity. She uses several examples and five presentational aids in paragraphs 5 through 7 to illustrate both this simplicity and the exceptions the Amish allow themselves.

is, however, a small group of people in our country who are seeking rather to lose themselves. They are the Amish.

2 The Amish were a small group of persecuted immigrants who came to this country 250 years ago seeking religious freedoms. They quietly settled along the northeastern coast of the United States, primarily in Pennsylvania. Last summer, I visited this Pennsylvania settlement and toured an Amish home. So, this morning, I would like to briefly examine the three major tenets of the Amish faith. They are based on Biblical scriptures. They are separation from the world, simplicity in the world, and a strong dedication to their group.

3 The first major tenet of the Amish faith is a desire to be separate from this world. 2 Corinthians 6:17 states, “Therefore come out from them and be ye separate, says the Lord.” You can see how the Amish separate themselves from society in many ways. First, they are an endogamous people. That is, they marry within their group. Marriage to non-Amish outsiders is strictly forbidden. Also, they separate themselves in that they speak a Germanic dialect among themselves, and this further distances them from their non-Amish neighbors. In addition, the Amish are separate from what would be considered the public life of most Americans. They don’t seek public office. They don’t participate in local sports teams or any other community organizations. Most recently, the Amish have separated themselves from our public school system. The Amish believe in attending school only from elementary up through the eighth grade, which they feel is adequate time to learn the basic skills necessary to succeed in Amish culture. In the 1950s, however, states began requiring attendance up through high school. The Amish parents and children protested this and were fined and even imprisoned. According to the *Encyclopedia of World Cultures*, this controversy was finally resolved in 1972, when the Supreme Court unanimously ruled in favor of the Amish separating themselves on the basis of their religious beliefs.

4 This Amish desire to remain separate from our world—to be in our world but not of our world—has required them to strike many compromises with the rise of modern technology around them. Don Kraybill, in his book *The Puzzles of Amish Life*, describes some of these compromises. For example, the primary mode of transportation for the Amish is the horse and buggy. Today, however, they are permitted to ride in automobiles, although they can’t own one. Similarly, they may use a telephone, but they can’t have one in their home. In addition, they may use modern farm equipment, but only if it’s pulled by their plow horses. Certainly, it is becoming more and more difficult for the Amish to separate themselves from our modern world and its conveniences.

5 The second major tenet of the Amish faith is the desire to be simple, or plain. 1 Peter 3:3–4 states, “Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair or the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self.” Therefore, the Amish don’t seek any material possessions at all. Rather, they strive to be plain and simple. Nicknamed “the plain people,” nowhere is this plainness more evident than in their dress. In their dress, the Amish don’t allow anything that represents style: no buttons, belts, bright colors, or pockets. Instead, they use hooks and ties and straight pins to fasten their clothes. As you can see in this picture [presentational aid], the Amish men are restricted to wearing only black and white. They must always have a wide-brimmed hat to cover their head, and you can tell that this man is married since he has a beard but no mustache. The Amish women are allowed a little more variation in their clothing, and they can wear different combinations of dark solids—dark purples or blues or browns. The Amish women must also wear bonnets to cover their hair, and they must never cut or curl their hair.

6 Not only do the Amish have simple ways of dressing, but they also provide very simple toys for their children to play with. I have here an example of a wooden bear toy [presentational aid]. This toy is very popular among Amish boys, since it has fun marbles and moving parts. The Amish girls, however, as you might expect, like to play with dolls.

And here is a traditional Amish doll [presentational aid]. There are two things I'd like for you to notice about this doll. First, her simple dress. Notice again the dark colors and the ties and hooks instead of buttons. The second thing I'd like for you to notice is that she doesn't have a face. The Amish don't believe in putting the human face on any object, or even having their pictures taken. They feel that this represents a graven image and is a sign of personal pride.

7 There are two exceptions to this rule of simplicity for the Amish people, and these are the only two things that they may wear, or hang, or display in their homes. The first exception to the rule of being a simple people is their quilts [presentational aid]. Notice again the dark colors and the simple patterns. John Ruth, in his book *A Quiet and Peaceable Life*, states that quilts began as a way for frugal housewives to use leftover scraps of cloth. Now quilts have grown into a beautiful expression of the artistry and creativity of the Amish women. A second exception to this rule of being a simple people is what's known as *Fraktur* art [presentational aid]. And this dates back to the Middle Ages and is characterized by calligraphy writing and bright colors, with hearts or birds or flowers. What the Amish will do is they will write scripture verses in this *Fraktur* style and they will hang these plaques in their homes to remind them to be humble. We can see how this inner desire of the Amish to be a simple people is reflected outwardly in such tangibles as their dress and their toys.

8 The third and final tenet of the Amish faith is a strong commitment to the group. 1 John 3:16 states, "This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers." John Hostetler, in his book *Amish Society*, describes some of the ways the Amish care for and are committed to their brothers. Perhaps the most vivid example of this is what would be known as the barn-raising day. If any of you have seen the movie *Witness*, you will recall the barn-raising scene, where the entire community of twenty to thirty families came together to join forces and build a barn. Barn-raising day is a very common occurrence among Amish communities, and they use it to provide new barns, either for newlyweds who are just starting out, or for families whose original barns have been destroyed by fire or rains. And this barn is actually a gift from the entire community to that family, since all of the builders of the barn share in the cost of the materials.

9 A second way we can see how the Amish are dedicated to their group is in times of hardship. For example, if there is a birth in the family or a death in the family, the neighbors of that family will come together and they will cook for the family, care for their children, tend their crops, and do everything necessary until that family is able to emotionally and physically recuperate.

10 Lastly, we can see how the Amish are dedicated to their group in the way they care for their elderly. The Amish elderly are treated with the greatest respect, and they hold all of the authority and leadership positions in the community. Instead of sending their elderly to nursing homes, they build additions onto their farmhouses, where the elderly grandparents can live comfortably and have their needs provided for. Certainly, this strong dedication to the group has its benefits. John Ruth, in *A Quiet and Peaceable Life*, describes one of these benefits as "a powerful deliverance: to sense the blending of your thoughts and prayers with those who would give their lives for you."

11 This morning we have briefly reviewed the three major tenets of the Amish faith. That is separation from this world, simplicity in the world, and strong dedication to their group. Clearly, the Amish have chosen a different path in life than have most of us: one that is not so fancy, not so modern, not so fast-paced, and, perhaps, one that is not so bad after all.

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Susan could speak more economically near the end of this paragraph by saying, "Second, notice that she doesn't have a face."

Throughout her speech Susan mentions Don Kraybill, John Ruth, and John Hostetler without stating their qualifications regarding the topic. She concludes with a summary of her second point, but again does not include a transition statement to her final idea.

Susan signposts and states her third idea clearly. She divides this main point into three sub-points, which she discusses in these three paragraphs. Her example of barn-raising is particularly vivid, as is her discussion of how the Amish treat elderly people in paragraph 10.

In her final paragraph Susan summarizes her key ideas and uses repetition in her closure statement. Involving the audience more actively could have enhanced her psychological closure.

Summary

As part of your work in this class, you will present at least one *speech to inform*. An informative speech assignment provides you with the opportunity to be the sender rather than the receiver of information; it requires you to research a subject of your choice, synthesize data from various sources, and pass it on to your listeners. Your goals as an informative speaker are to expand listeners' knowledge, assist their understanding, or help them apply the information you communicate.

Classifying informative speeches by subject gives you an idea of the range of possible topics and the patterns of organization each subject typically uses. Speeches about *people* are often arranged chronologically, but may explore subtopics, such as aspects of the subject's life. Speeches about *objects* use spatial organization if your purpose is to describe various parts of the object, chronological organization if your purpose is to explain how the object was created, and topical organization if your purpose is to explain how the object is used. Speeches about *places* use chronological organization if your purpose is to explain the history or stages of development of the place, topical organization if you want to emphasize various aspects of the place, and spatial organization if your purpose is to describe the parts of the place. Speeches about *activities* and *events* also use one of three methods of organization: chronological organization to explain a sequence of events, topical organization to explain the significance of events, and causal organization to show how one event produced or led to another.

Speeches about *processes* can use chronological organization to tell listeners how to do something or how something is done, pro-con organization to explore the arguments for and against the process, or causal organization to discuss what caused or causes some process and the effects that result. Speeches about *concepts* typically use topical organization as the speaker discusses various aspects, definitions, or applications of the concept.

Speeches about *conditions* may use topical organization to discuss various aspects of the condition, chronological organization to trace the stages or phases of a condition, or causal organization to show the causes of the condition and the effects that the condition has. Finally, speeches about controversial *issues* may use a pro-con organization if your purpose is to explore opposing viewpoints on the issue, topical organization if your purpose is to discuss the significance of the issue, or chronological organization if your purpose is to discuss how the issue has evolved.

As you begin to prepare an informative speech on a subject from one of these categories, ask yourself three questions: (1) How much does the audience already know about this topic? (2) What does the audience need to know in order to understand this topic? (3) Can I present this information in the allotted time so that the audience will understand and remember it? When you answer these questions, you can be sure that your topic is sufficiently narrow and appropriate to your listeners.

Finally, we offer ten guidelines to help you develop and deliver an effective informative speech. (1) Begin with an overall picture; let your audience know that your purpose is to inform. (2) Be objective in your approach to the topic and the language you use. (3) Be specific; narrow the topic you have chosen. (4) Be clear; remember that your audience probably knows much less about this topic than you do. (5) Be accurate; misinformation can harm your listeners. (6) Limit the ideas and supporting material that you try to include. Covering a few ideas in depth is usually more informative than discussing many ideas superficially. (7) Be relevant; do not be sidetracked by interesting but irrelevant information. (8) Use the pattern of organization best suited to achieving your specific purpose. (9) Use appropriate forms of support. (10) Use lively, effective speech delivery.

Practice Critique

Evaluating and Comparing Two Informative Student Speeches

Melissa Janoske's and Darla Goodrich's speeches in the Appendix are examples of informative speeches delivered in two different introductory public speaking classes. Read the transcripts or watch the videos. Then, using the guidelines you have learned in this and previous chapters, compile a list of strengths and weaknesses in each speech. Suppose you were judging these speeches in a competition. Which speech would you select for the first-place award? In writing, provide the reasons for your decisions.

Exercises

1. Write and bring to class five specific purpose statements for speeches on any topics you choose. Do not identify the general purpose (to inform or to persuade) in these statements, for example: “To _____ the audience on the effects of fragrance on personal health, worker productivity, and product sales.” Two or three of these statements should be for informative speech topics; the remainder for persuasive topics. Be prepared to exchange your paper with another classmate. Each person should write “inform” or “persuade” in the blank provided in each specific purpose statement. Return the papers and discuss the answers.
2. Using the list you generated in this chapter’s Try This feature, select one topic from each of four categories, and write a specific purpose statement for each. Think about how you could develop each specific purpose, and then discuss what organizational pattern you think would be most appropriate.
3. Suppose you are asked to speak to a group of incoming students on the topic “Using the Campus Library.” Your objective is to familiarize new students with the physical layout of the library so that they can research more efficiently. Outline the key ideas you would develop in your speech. What types of presentational aids would you use to reinforce your message?
4. Select an emotionally charged issue (political correctness, Internet filtering in public libraries, or legalization of drugs, for example). Brainstorm aspects of the issue that would be appropriate for an informative speech. State the specific purpose of the speech and briefly describe what you could discuss. In discussing your topic, point out what makes the speech informative rather than persuasive.
5. Select an informative speech from *Vital Speeches of the Day*, some other published source, or the Internet. Analyze the speech to see if it adheres to the guidelines discussed in this chapter. If it does, show specifically how it fulfills the goals of each guideline. If it does not, list the guidelines violated, and give examples of where this occurs in the speech. Suggest how the speaker could revise the speech to meet the guidelines.
6. Using the speech you selected in Exercise 5, identify and write down the specific purpose of the speech. Does it meet the characteristics of a speech to inform? Why or why not? What method of organization did the speaker use? Do you think this is the best pattern to achieve the speech’s specific purpose? Why or why not?
7. Analyze a lecture by one of your instructors to see if it adheres to the guidelines listed in this chapter. Which guidelines for informative speeches do you think also apply to class lectures? Which do not apply? If the instructor violated any guidelines you think apply to lecturing, how might the instructor remedy this?