

# SOUND SPEECH

*public speaking & communication studies*

*for Christian Schools®*



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In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Titus 2:7-8

One ought, everyday at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words.  
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Surveys report that 75 percent of Americans have glossophobia, the fear of speaking in public. According to the *Encyclopedia of Human Emotion*, as many as 20 percent of people have a serious problem with this fear. Most people ranked stage fright ahead of their fear of heights, insects, financial disaster, deep water, sickness, and even death.

Actually, to some people, dying would be preferable. As you read this, you may think that you have made a terrible mistake in selecting this course, or you may think that your school administration or parents have just found another way to torture you. However, neither is true. If you begin this class with a positive attitude and a desire to please the Lord, you will finish the semester with new friends, a clearer understanding of yourself, and a new preparedness "to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3:15).

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

You may think that you already have all the skills you need to speak in public because you communicate in conversation every day. If so, you are partly correct. Many of the skills you have developed in informal speaking will help you in public speaking. Focusing on those similarities may make public speaking less intimidating; however, there are also several differences between informal and public speaking. Knowing the differences will help you approach public speaking more realistically. First, let's look at the similarities.

### Similarities

When you tell a story, explain a process, or present your viewpoint to friends, you are giving an informal speech. The same characteristics that make you effective in informal communication will help you in your formal speaking.

#### definition

*Credibility, or believability, is the ability to gain a person's confidence in what you have to say.*

### Credibility

People respect and listen to a person who has **credibility**, or believability. Think back to politicians who have run for office in your area. If they twist information for their

own purposes or are caught in shady business dealings, their speeches become less and less believable. People begin to listen to them with skepticism and mistrust. They lose their credibility.

Credibility is gained when the audience knows that the speaker has **integrity**, or follows a strict code of ethics. The Bible provides a ready source of principles that, if followed, will give a speaker credibility. The Bible also expressly commands that Christians speak the truth. Ephesians 4:25 says, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."

Your friends listen to you because they know that they can trust what you say. The same is true when you speak to a formal audience. Your audience members will listen if they find that you are knowledgeable about your subject and that you use your information accurately.

## definition

*Your integrity is based on your adherence to a strict code of ethics.*

## Organization

When you give a new friend directions to your house, you have to organize that information. You start from some place that is familiar to your friend and lead him step by step to the final destination—your home. A formal speech follows that same process. You begin your speech on common ground and then carefully lead your audience to your conclusion.

## Adaptation

When you meet someone for the first time, your initial conversation usually involves exchanging background information.

Are you from around here?

Yes, I live in Scotsdale.

Where do you go to church?

Scotsdale Bible.

Oh, I know someone who goes there, Jason Simms. Do you know Jason?

Yeah. He's on my soccer team too.

Hey, do you play in the Tri-State Recreation League?

And so the conversation goes. You listen to and watch each other and make decisions based on the exchange. The answers to this information help each person tailor the conversation to the other. A good conversationalist will talk about topics that he knows will interest the person to whom he is speaking. The same is true of a public speaker. He seeks information about the audience so that he can adapt his topic to their interests.

## Response

In conversation, we constantly monitor the people listening to us to see if they are getting our message. When their response shows that they are confused, bored,

or distracted, we react by explaining better, throwing in a funny story, or ending the conversation. That same analysis of the audience's response is necessary for the public speaker. An effective speaker sees and reacts to audience response in order to become a better communicator.

## Differences

If conversation and public speaking were the same, you could leave your class right now. By perfecting the skills that are similar, you might become a good public speaker; but by understanding and applying the differences, you can become an excellent and effective public speaker. Now let's look at the differences between informal conversation and formal public speaking.

### Structure

Conversation is generally unstructured. Sometimes everyone talks at the same time. Interaction is continuous. But in formal speaking the audience is separated from the speaker—less able to interact. The speaker has to make sure that the audience "gets it" the first time, so he must organize his speech in a way that makes it manageable and memorable.

### Precision

Formal public speaking requires precise language. No one in a formal audience is likely to shout out, "Hey, what do you mean by that?" or "Would you explain that word?" the way your friends would. A novice speaker needs to learn to plan precise language and wording that will allow communication to take place immediately.

### Delivery

When you talk with your friends in the hallway between classes, you probably don't think about whether you are slouching or if your words are clearly pronounced or if your gestures fit your message. The close proximity of that kind of delivery makes it less necessary to be concerned about these specifics. However, when you speak to a larger audience, these factors become key to communication. A commanding stance, careful pronunciation, and good gestures and facial expressions aid delivery and improve communication.

### Preparation

In looking at the items above, it may appear obvious that a formal speech requires preparation. Rarely will a speaker appear before an audience without prior and explicit preparation. Planning, practice, and self-evaluation will help a speaker share his message effectively while meeting the needs of his audience.

## I WILL NEVER SPEAK IN PUBLIC!

Famous last words. Many people have vowed not to speak in public and yet have found that their path of life went straight to a podium in front of people. Ask some of the speakers you know if they have had formal speech training. Most who have had training will agree that it benefited them greatly. Their training benefited them because public speaking is not just about speaking in front of hundreds of people in a crowded auditorium; it is about class projects, Sunday school classes, work presentations, and community events.

### Speaking in School

Of course you speak every day at school. But beyond the casual conversations in the hall or before class, many classes give you the opportunity to demonstrate your speaking skills through class projects. If you speak well, communication takes place. If you speak poorly, you are embarrassed, and the entire class feels uncomfortable.

Explaining a science experiment requires more than placing your body in front of the class and mumbling a description of chemical reactions. To present that information effectively, you must organize your thoughts and speak loudly enough for your classmates to hear you. An oral book report will be much more interesting when you use vocal variety and appropriate gestures.

Training in public speaking gives you an image of confidence and expands your opportunities for leadership in school. You may be the next class president or editor of the school newspaper. In either case, your training will help you lead meetings and present information in a clear, easily understood way.



### Speaking at Church

Church activities provide many opportunities for speaking. Perhaps you will go on a mission trip or teach a Bible club or help in a children's day camp. Being a good speaker will help you tell the good news of salvation without distracting mannerisms.

Because you are an older teenager, your help is often needed in Sunday school classes and clubs. The teen who has training in public speaking will be a great asset to those groups because he will be able to gain and maintain the class's attention.

In many churches, members have the opportunity to give their testimonies in Sunday school class or a church service. All of us have watched in empathy as someone struggled through his five minutes at the podium.

Rather than saying “no” to any of these church opportunities, look at each one as a good occasion to hone your speaking skills for the Lord. Each time you speak, you will become more confident.

## Speaking at Work

If you have a job now, you know how important communication is. Even if you don't have a job, you have encountered many workers in restaurants and stores. Sometimes their communication skills are good. The girl at your favorite fast-food place spoke, and you actually understood what she said! The customer-service clerk not only appeased the angry man in line ahead of you but also made a sale.



Someday you will take your place in the occupation of your choice. Businessmen and women, who may have said they would never speak in front of an audience, now find they are called on to give annual sales reports, propose new market strategies, or present the employee-of-the-month award. Your speaking and communication skills may make the difference in making a sale or getting a promotion.

## Speaking in the Community

British politician and writer Edmund Burke said, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” Some politicians are so well known for corruption that few parents long for their children to be involved in politics someday. However, it is vital for Christians to stand for what is right. Neighborhood, town, or precinct meetings are opportunities for maintaining the foundations of our democracy. With prayer and God's guidance, well-expressed thoughts can make a lasting impact on the community.



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### Thinking Realistically

You may be thinking, "I will never speak in public!" or you may already be active in some form of public speaking. In either case, circle the following choices and fill in the blanks openly and honestly. Your teacher will not look at your answers. Try to think realistically about your future.

1. I will most likely use my speech training in school/church/work/my community. (Circle one or more.)
2. When I speak, I will probably speak to children/my peers/small groups/large groups. (Circle one or more.)
3. Explain why you agree or disagree with the following statement: God wants you to improve your speaking skills.

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## IT WON'T HELP ME!

Speech training will help you with far more than just your ability to present information in front of an audience. If you actively participate in your speech class this semester, you will learn to project confidence, you will learn to research and organize information, and you will learn to listen better.

## Learn to Project Confidence

Remember the first time you attempted a new activity? Riding a bike? Snow skiing? What terrified you as you sat on the bicycle seat and looked at the long driveway or stood at the top of the mountain and saw the slope seemingly disappear in the distance? Most of us were afraid because we didn't know what was going to happen. People had told us how it would feel and what to do, but we had never experienced the sport ourselves. Until we experienced it, we didn't know what to expect, and that lack of knowledge was frightening.

Speaking is like that. People can tell you that it will be all right and that you shouldn't be afraid; but until you experience speaking in front of a group, you



won't know what to expect. And just as the fear of skiing gives way to anticipation with just a tinge of nervousness, speaking experience will help you learn to control your nervous feelings in many situations as well as anticipate communicating with an audience. You will learn to project confidence that lets people know that you can work well in any situation.

More than that, Christians can rest in the knowledge of God's promise in Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The key to that verse is to do things through Christ. We can do very little in our own strength, but when we have prepared and trust Christ for speaking—for the power, for the ability, for the confidence—we can know that He will be faithful to His promise.

## Learn to Research and Organize

Learning to research and organize your thoughts may not help you find things in your bedroom, but it can help you with English and history papers. Perhaps you wrote a state or country report in elementary school. If so, it may have sounded like you paraphrased the encyclopedia. Your speech training will help you share information in writing or speaking that you have gleaned from many sources in order to expand the knowledge of those with whom you communicate. It will help you state a belief, explain it, and persuade people to believe with you.



## Learn to Listen with Understanding

Have you ever listened to a speaker and walked away wondering what he said? Sometimes that is the speaker's fault, but sometimes it is your fault because you didn't listen for the important points. Once you begin organizing your own speeches, you will recognize the organizational techniques used by other speakers. This knowledge will help you listen with understanding.

Another aspect of speech training is analyzing what you listen to. You will learn to analyze fellow speakers—judge their reasoning, organization, and presentation. Listening with that purpose will sharpen your ability to focus on the speaker. You will also learn how to express to the speaker what you have understood from his speech. You will be a person who can accurately analyze and respond to information.

### Self-Evaluation

Once again, be open and honest in completing your responses. Your teacher will not look at your answers; however, take time to truly evaluate your weaknesses and strengths in order to determine how this class might help you.

1. I already feel good about my confidence/my research and organization skills/my listening skills/other. (Circle one or more.) Explain your answer.

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2. Taking this class will especially help me improve in the following areas:

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### How Will I Be Graded?

Your speeches will be graded in the following areas. Don't panic as you read the criteria. Your teacher will grade your first speeches with lower expectations. After all, you haven't taken the course yet and can't be accountable for principles that you haven't learned. However, as you progress through the semester, the requirements for a high score in each category will increase. The following list shows the areas in which you will be judged and what those areas refer to.

#### **Delivery**

**Voice**—This refers to your vocal effect. It includes volume, energy, the rate at which you speak, and articulation.

**Body**—This deals with your visual directness (eye contact), gestures, poise, and facial expression.

## Content

**Support**—This focuses on what you say. It includes whether there is enough information, the variety of the content, and how the content is supported with illustrations, examples, and so on.

**Preparation**—This reflects how well you prepared for speaking. Did you meet the requirements of the speech? Is your preparation evident in your poise? Do the topic, message, and delivery show that your speech has been well planned and practiced?

**Organization**—This deals with how the content of your speech is structured. It focuses on whether there is a logical progression that flows smoothly from the introduction, to the body of the speech, through the transitions, and into the conclusion so that your listeners can follow your explanations or reasoning.

**Overall Effectiveness**—This category allows your teacher to be more subjective in his or her grading. Sometimes you will have achieved much of the criteria, but something will be lacking in your overall effectiveness that makes your speech less than what it could have been. Other times you will not have met all the criteria, but your overall presentation will be very effective.

Every speech should reflect that you are using what you have learned about communication and the requirements for speaking.

## IN CONCLUSION

Hundreds of thousands of people who thought they would never speak in public are doing just that today. They may not be in front of a huge auditorium full of people. They may be speaking to a Bible study group in their church or teaching in a classroom of third graders. Public speaking is about speaking to big groups and small groups, at school, in church, at work, or in the community. Your training in public speaking this semester can help you gain confidence, develop research and organization skills, and listen intelligently. You will soon perform your first speech. Don't panic. Everyone in your class is likely to have about as much experience speaking as you. Keep a positive attitude; trust God to help you become all you need to be for His service. Be creative and be confident. You can become a sound, successful speaker.



# 1

## CHAPTER REVIEW

### Terms to Know

credibility

integrity

### Ideas to Understand

#### Short Answer

1. What are the four differences between informal and formal public speaking?

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2. Why is credibility essential to the speaker? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How does speech training help you in the following places?

At school \_\_\_\_\_

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At church \_\_\_\_\_

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At work \_\_\_\_\_

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In the community \_\_\_\_\_

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4. What are the three ways that speech training will help you in areas other than speech class?

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## INTRODUCING



Imagine that you are the president of the senior class. During class meetings, you are usually responsible for making class announcements, and then the sponsor takes charge of the rest of the meeting. Today, your class meeting is having a special speaker, and the sponsor has asked you to introduce the speaker. He warns you, "Don't just say, 'This is Mrs. Stegall. She will be talking to us about writing college applications.'"

Even if you are never a keynote speaker, you may be called on to introduce the speaker. This first speech will give you a little practice at introducing another person. You should highlight all the things that make that person special. Later in the course, your teacher may ask you to introduce the people giving their speeches, so this speech will be practice for life and for this class.

For this speech your teacher will either choose a partner for you or allow you to choose one for yourself. Once you have your partner, you should take ten to fifteen minutes to interview each other. Ask questions that will give you the suggested information below or questions that you decide are more interesting, depending on how your interview progresses. Remember that you are looking for information that will show how appealing your partner is. Do not be tempted to waste your time talking about all the homework you have tonight or the ball game coming up on Friday night. Stay focused!

When you go home tonight, use the interview information to prepare a one- to two-minute speech about your partner. Begin your speech with your most interesting information and then include the other points you discussed with your partner. Finally, cap off your speech with why everyone should meet and get to know your interviewee.

Do not memorize this speech! You should be very familiar with what you are going to say without actually committing it to memory. Look at the critique sheet at the end of this chapter so that you can see what your teacher will be evaluating in this first performance. Your requirements will be fairly minimal since this is your first speech. Prepare and practice.

### Outline Plan

(You will not need to use all of the information.)

- I. Identify your partner.
- II. Highlight the most interesting or unusual fact about your partner.
- III. Give general biographical information.
  - A. Birthplace
  - B. Family members
  - C. Parents' occupations

- IV. Highlight other interests.
  - A. Sports participation
  - B. Special hobbies
  - C. Travel opportunities
  - D. Recent vacations
- V. Give spiritual biographical information.
  - A. Salvation
  - B. Church
  - C. Favorite verse
  - D. Service opportunities
- VI. Give a closing statement (to tie up the speech).

## Sample Speech

### *An Award Winner!*

Mike Sanchez may be just another face to all of us, but down at the Save-a-Bit grocery store, Mike is something of a celebrity. Three months ago Mike won the "Bagger of the Year" award. The baggers competed based on speed and accuracy. That means that baggers not only needed to be fast but also needed to place appropriate items together in the bags. After winning the local competition, Mike went on to the state competition in Ashton where he bagged eight bags of groceries in three minutes. The competition was so close that the judges had to compare the contents of the finalists' bags to see who had bagged the items more appropriately.

Mike came to this fame from humble beginnings. He was born right here in Mayville in 1986. You may know his older sister, Marie, but he also has a younger brother named Frankie. Mike's dad works at the S&M Company as a chemical engineer, and his mother is a receptionist at a dentist's office. Mike's grandma lives with his family. She is from Colombia, South America, so she made sure that Mike and his sister and brother all learned Spanish while they were growing up.

Mike and his family are members at Crossroads Bible Church, where Mike helps out with AWANA and is active in his youth group. This past summer he went on the teen mission trip to Puerto Rico. Mike was especially prepared to help with Bible clubs there since he is fluent in Spanish. During his mission trip, Mike was encouraged by James 1:5: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Working with thirty five- to twelve-year-olds every day, Mike really needed wisdom!

I don't have time to tell everything I learned about Mike, but when you see him after class, don't forget to ask him about the lady who got "shot" by a can of refrigerated biscuits in the parking lot at the grocery store. That and other great stories make Mike someone worth getting to know better.

# INTRODUCTION SPEECH

## Essential Information

Due date \_\_\_\_\_

Time limit \_\_\_\_\_

Speaking helps \_\_\_\_\_

Outline requirements \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Speech Outline

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction (may be written out) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Body (keywords or phrases) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion (may be written out) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

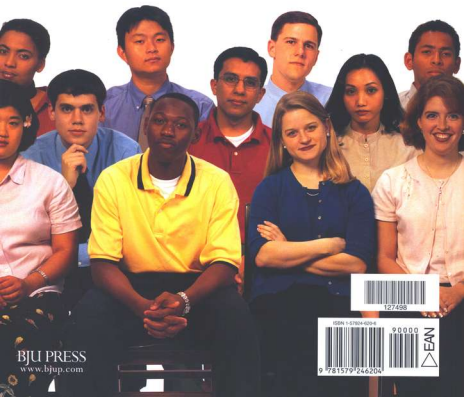
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Topic \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery		Comments
Voice	4 Volume and energy are excellent.	
	3 Either volume or energy could improve.	
	2 Volume and energy could improve.	
	1 Volume is too soft or too loud; energy is too low.	
Body	4 Poise enhances the message well.	
	3 Poise usually enhances the message.	
	2 Poise neither distracts from nor enhances the message.	
	1 Lack of poise distracts from the message.	
	4 Visual directness is excellent and consistent.	
	3 Visual directness is good but inconsistent.	
	2 Visual directness is brief and sporadic.	
	1 Visual directness is not evident.	
Content		
Support	4 Excellent; includes examples, illustrations, and details	
	3 Good; includes some variety	
	2 Adequate but lacks variety	
	1 Lacking; insufficient to communicate	
Preparation	4 Excellent in presentation and content	
	3 Evident in either presentation or content	
	2 Adequate; content is acceptable but not vital.	
	1 Weak; presentation and content are unacceptable.	
Organization	4 Logical; introduction, transitions, and conclusion are obvious.	
	3 Logical but sometimes awkward	
	2 Weak and sometimes rambling	
	1 Absent, making the speech hard to follow	
Overall Effectiveness		
	4 Highly effective and well communicated	
	3 Good and well communicated	
	2 Adequate, but communication could be improved.	
	1 Ineffective; communication was limited.	
You demonstrate good ability in ...		You would benefit from more attention to ...



BJU PRESS  
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127498

ISBN 1-5704-620-4



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