

# Public Speaking Assignment

## Speaking in Small Groups

The purpose of this speech is to sharpen your ability to speak with a group about a unified topic. For this assignment, the class will be divided into small groups of three to four members. The goal for the group will be to inform the audience about several aspects of a single, unifying topic. In your deliberations, the group should follow the reflective-thinking method of decision-making explained in Chapter 18.

Members of the group should understand that this project will require research and group meetings outside of class and that the group will be responsible for organizing and conducting a symposium in which the group presents its report to the class. On the day of the speech, each speaker will have 5:00 to 5:30 minutes to detail some aspect of the group's topic. Each speaker is expected to prepare and deliver a complete speech with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Completed speaking and preparation outlines for each speaker are due on the day of the speech.

Evaluation will focus on such basic matters as establishing eye contact, avoiding distracting mannerisms, formulating a sharp specific purpose statement, fulfilling the functions of an introduction and conclusion, limiting main points and arranging them properly, and employing connectives effectively. The use of a visual aid is optional for this speech. Students will be graded both on the quality of the group's presentation and on their individual contributions to the group. Grading for the speech will be based on the following questions:

1. Does the speech conform to the kind of speech assigned?
2. Is the speech ready for presentation on the assigned date?
3. Did the speech conform to the time limit?
4. Did the speech fulfill any special requirements of the assignment such as preparing an outline, using visual aids, conducting an interview, etc.?
5. Did the speech have a clear specific purpose and central idea?
6. Did the speech have an identifiable introduction, body, and conclusion?
7. Did the speech show reasonable directness and competence in delivery?
8. Was the speech free of serious errors in grammar, pronunciation, and word usage?
9. Did the speech deal with a challenging topic?
10. Did the speech fulfill all major functions of a speech introduction and conclusion?
11. Did the speech display clear organization of main points and supporting materials?
12. Did the speech support main points with evidence that meets the tests of accuracy, relevance, objectivity, and sufficiency?
13. Did the speech exhibit proficient use of connectives—transitions, internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts?
14. Was the speech delivered skillfully enough so as not to distract attention from the speaker's message?
15. Did the speech constitute a genuine contribution by the speaker to the knowledge or beliefs of the audience?
16. Did the speech sustain positive interest, feeling, and/or commitment among the audience?
17. Did the speech contain elements of vividness and special interest in the use of language?
18. Was the speech delivered in a fluent, polished manner that strengthens the impact of the speaker's message?