

Order of Speeches for Sophomore Speech Semester

I designed the curriculum for the required semester of speech during Sophomore English to make the students progressively more comfortable with speaking in front of their peers. The order of the speeches asks the students to take small risks in the beginning, and then builds on what they've done and the confidence they've gained in incremental steps assignment by assignment. The order of speech assignments is below.

1. Interview speech

- Students are assigned a partner whom they will first interview and then introduce to the class in a speech. The partner stands with the speaker while the speech is given. This speech allows students to give information about someone else while also having that person up front with them in order to partially deflect the attention of the audience.

2. Anything speech

- Students must stand alone up front for one minute, speaking about any approved topic. The goal is to work on eye contact, as the students can't use notecards and are asked to simply speak in a conversational tone to the class about a familiar topic.

3. Interesting person speech

- Students are asked to give a short speech describing the most interesting person they know. Students are alone up front, but they are talking about someone else.

4. Poetry Reading

- Students must select a poem of their choice to "recite" to the class. Students are focused on voice, as they are asked to pay special attention to volume, pace, and tone of the words they are reading.

5. Children's Book Reading

- In one of the most popular speeches of the unit, students select a children's book that they will read for the class. This is also work on voice and taking chances, as the students must use voices for each of the characters and read it as if they were in front of an early elementary class. We have a lot of fun with this one, as we push aside the desks and have the audience sit on the floor so they can better see the pictures shown by the reader.

6. Shakespeare Lines

- To give students experience with a different type of text, they are asked to select out of four choices a famous Shakespeare speech of approximately twenty lines to memorize and speak to the class.

7. Award Acceptance Speech

- Students create an award for which they will give an acceptance speech. This is the first speech in which they are both alone up front and also presenting their own organized ideas in speech form.

8. Story-Telling Speech

- In an effort to work on conversational tone, students are asked to tell a story of my approval in front of the class. This can include a long joke, an anecdote of times with friends, a fairy tale, etc. No notecards are allowed.

9. Informative Speech

- After instruction on giving formal speeches, students research a topic of their choice to present to the class. Students are evaluated on all aspects of their speech, as they must put all they've learned together into one coherent speech.

10. Persuasive Speech

- Students must research a controversial topic on which to present a persuasive speech. This is the final speech for the students, and the expectations for all aspects of the speech are high.