

Persuasive Essay and Speech

For this project, you will be typing a five paragraph persuasive essay and then turning it into a three to five minute speech to be delivered to the class.

The Essay

A persuasive essay attempts to convince the reader that the point of view or course of action recommended by the writer is valid. To accomplish this, the writer must develop a limited topic that is clearly defined and debatable. The first thing that you will need to do for this project is to come up with an issue or topic that you want to convince the reader about. We will talk about some possible topics in class.

For this essay, you are going to use the five-paragraph essay format. The following is the structure for a five-paragraph essay.

- ✓ **First Paragraph: (Introductory Paragraph)**

The introductory paragraph includes the topic sentence (thesis). The thesis cannot be a fact since facts cannot be debated. It should be an opinion that the writer strongly supports. That position must be clear and direct. This statement directs the readers to follow along with your logic towards the specific stated conclusion that you want them to support. It should not be personal, so do not use personal pronouns. In the same introductory paragraph, state the two best reasons that you have to support your position. These reasons become the topic sentences for the second and third paragraphs.

- ✓ **Second and Third Paragraphs (Body)**

In the body of the essay, the writer uses specific evidence, examples, and statistics to support each of the two main points made in the introduction. Each topic sentence for the support paragraphs has been introduced in the introductory paragraph.

- ✓ **Fourth Paragraph (Body)**

In this paragraph, you will need to come up with a counter argument that someone might use against your thesis. You will then need to show why this counter argument is not valid.

- ✓ **Fifth Paragraph (Conclusion)**

The concluding paragraph needs to restate, in different words, the most compelling evidence cited in body of your essay. This is your last chance to convince your reader of your argument. Do not introduce new material in the conclusion.

The Speech

Once you have completed your essay, you will then begin to use that information to create a three to five minute speech that you will present to the class. You will be allowed to use one 3X5 index card to assist you during the speech. You should use this card to write an outline of your speech to assist you if you get stuck during the presentation.

You will be graded on the following elements of your speech:

- **Content** – Does your speech include a hook, a clear thesis, two supporting points, a counter argument, and a conclusion? How convincing are you? Your audience must find that you are being reasonable or rational. You must be committed to the ideas and the goals of your speech. Do not use words such as "maybe" or "might". Use positive words such as "will" and "must" instead.
- **Body Language and Eye Contact** – Be sure to make good eye contact with your audience. Do not slouch or demonstrate body language that shows that you are unsure of yourself or your topic.
- **Volume and Pitch** – Be sure that you speak in a clear voice with the appropriate volume. You also need to be sure that you don't deliver the speech in a monotone voice.
- **Speed or Pace** - Your speed, or pace, is an important part of the speech. When people get nervous, they tend to talk too fast. On the other hand, we are sometimes tempted to talk too slow to fill the three-minute requirement. Present your speech in a speed that is natural sounding.

You will turn in your persuasive essay at the time you deliver your speech.

All students must be ready to present speeches on the first due date. I will call students randomly on that day to present their speeches to the class. We will spend the next five class periods presenting speeches. If a student is not ready when called, a letter will be sent home to parents that must be signed.