

LESSON 4: **WRITING EFFECTIVE SPEECHES**

TOPIC:

Writing Effective Speeches

Essential Question + Objectives

What makes a speech persuasive?

1. Students will be able to write a persuasive speech that incorporates complete arguments.
2. Students will be able to identify the rhetorical devices (logos, pathos, and ethos) in persuasive writing.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES:

- Notebook paper and pen
- Copies of the class docket in order for the agenda
- Access to the internet and reliable sources for research
- Student copies of the *Argument Organization Chart* (ongoing)
- *Congressional Debate Guide*
- *Congressional Debate Textbook*
- *Speaker Checklist and Rubric*
- *Presiding Officer Checklist and Rubric*
- Digital copies of the *Speech Structure Template*
- *Sample Ballot*
- *Constructing Speeches Google Slides*
- *Video of Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg*
- *The Skill of Self-Confidence TEDx Video*
- TED-Ed video, “*What Aristotle and Joshua Bell can teach us about persuasion*” by *Conor Neil*
- Commercials that provide examples of ethos, pathos, logos
- *Steve Jobs’ Stanford University commencement speech video*
- Highlighters - three different colors
- Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab article, “*Rhetorical Strategies for Persuasion*”
- Copies of the article “*Using Rhetorical Strategies for Persuasion*”
- *Voting Record Template*

LESSON 4: WRITING EFFECTIVE SPEECHES



Insight:

Speeches in Congressional Debate sessions should be compelling and progressive. As each piece of legislation is debated, the conversation should be guided by the understanding that every speech should provide new supported claims for why it should or should not be passed. The premise in Congressional Debate is that each speech should be responsive to the last, without being repetitive from one cycle of speeches to the next.

Rhetoric is the art of persuasion and can ultimately be one of the most important ways a debater can craft effective speeches in a Congressional Debate session. Ethos, logos, and pathos are persuasive strategies used in arguments and should be present in all debates. A speech that lacks ethos lacks credibility. Without logos, a case is missing logic; and without pathos, debaters miss out on an opportunity to connect with their judges through an emotional appeal. In this three-day lesson, students will learn the format of Congressional speeches along with strategies for ensuring those speeches include persuasive appeals.

THREE-DAY LESSON

DAY 1

HOOK

15 minutes

Begin today's class by asking the question: If you had to speak to world leaders about a topic that you feel passionately about, what would that topic be? Who would you hope would be in the audience listening?

Then show this [video of Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg](#) speaking in September 2019 at the United Nations' Climate Action Summit.

Ask students if they feel Greta Thunberg's speech was effective. What strategies did Thunberg utilize as she tried to persuade world leaders? What do the students believe was Thunberg's purpose or goal for the speech? Did she achieve it? Why or why not?

BODY

30-40 minutes

Work through the [Constructing Speeches Google Slides](#) and ask students to take notes throughout the presentation. They can add these to the notes they've taken throughout the unit thus far.

On the final slide, play this [video](#) of the 2020 Congressional Debate House Final Session, skipping to the 15:13 mark, which is when the docket is voted on and the first speech begins. Continue watching through the end of the first questioning period at 22:34. As students watch this

LESSON 4: WRITING EFFECTIVE SPEECHES



sponsorship speech and questioning period, ask that they try to decide whether or not they believe it is effective. Why or why not?

When the slideshow is complete, distribute digital or paper copies of the docket, the **Speech Structure Template**, and **checklist/rubric** for the upcoming in-class session. Share the **PO rubric** with students interested in that position.

Review the rubric with students before they start writing. Allow them to have a few minutes to flip through the docket as a refresher, and then assign them to write a speech on one or more pieces of legislation from the docket (*prioritizing the bills that are on the top of the agenda*) using the research they have conducted so far. They'll need these speeches for the upcoming in-class session in Lesson 6.

Each student should only have one or two pre-written authorship/ sponsorship speeches prepared for the chance they are called as the first speaker on a bill. Like other formats of debate, the majority of the speeches will be written as the debating occurs and are more impromptu, by design.

HOMework

- Remind students that they should be prepared to speak during the in-class session in Lesson 6, and they should continue to research and work on pre-written speeches over the next several days.
- Assign students to read the article by Purdue University's Online Writing Lab called "**Using Rhetorical Strategies for Persuasion.**"

CLOSURE

5 minutes

Emphasize that the scorers in Congressional Debate rounds do not add or subtract points from speakers whose legislation does or does not pass; thereby, the way to win a session is best achieved through effective, persuasive participation, either serving as presiding officer or as a speaker and/or questioner.

QUICK WRITE:

Imagine you are a judge in the final session of the National Tournament. What would inform your rankings on the ballot? How will this influence your goals as a participant in the upcoming in-class session?

DAY 2

HOOK

15 minutes

Show students the following advertisements (*or ones that are similar*) and ask, “What about this commercial persuades the viewer to buy the item? Which rhetorical strategy or strategies are used in this commercial?”

Gatorade – I Can Do Better

- Ethos: The athletes featured are all some of the most successful in their field. The advertisement suggests that if this drink is good enough for them, it must be great.
- Pathos: The commercial appeals to the viewer’s desire to win and be better than others, to be as good as some of the greatest athletes in the world.

FlexTAPE – Slap it on!

- Logos: The viewer sees the product work, so logically, it must be a good product to buy. Its over-the-top demonstration leads viewers to assume that their less over-the-top need will be satisfied if they purchase this product.

Old Spice – The Man Your Man Could Smell Like

- Pathos: The humor of this advertisement makes it memorable and enjoyable to audiences.
- Logos: This advertisement (*while it has some problematic generalizations!*) makes the argument that a man who smells like Old Spice is also a man who treats his partner well. While the logic doesn’t take itself seriously, it is suggesting that men who use this body wash are better than other men.

BODY

30-40 minutes

Next, give each student a copy of the **transcript of Steve Jobs’ 2005 commencement speech**. They will also need three different colored highlighters. Ask students to all use the same three colors to represent each of the three means of persuasion—for example, yellow for ethos, orange for logos, and purple for pathos. Draw a color-coded legend on the board for students to reference while they work.

As you play the commencement video, ask students to use the three different colors to highlight the various examples of each mode of persuasion. There are multiple examples of all three, but answers could vary because parts of the speech could represent multiple types of persuasion.

Review answers through a class discussion. In the circumstance that different students label one part of the speech as more than one color, allow them to discuss why they believe it to be one

LESSON 4: WRITING EFFECTIVE SPEECHES



more than the other, but guide the conversation back to the ultimate motivation Jobs likely had for including that particular piece of information in the story. Doing so will likely help them all come to the same conclusion.

Ask students which method Jobs used more frequently than others (*pathos*) and why they believe it worked so well in this speech.

CLOSURE

5-10 minutes

A great example of pathos in Congressional Debate speech is the end, where speakers often draw a conclusion about the impact of the legislation up for debate. For example, the authorship speech in data protection that we watched yesterday ended with:

“Don’t let yourself be compromised, protect your constituents, protect your information, and protect America.”

And the next speech ended with:

“Two dollars might not seem like a lot of money for you or I, but when you cannot afford to put food on the table, when you cannot afford to pay your medical bills, it is extravagant. Stand in the negation for them.”

Ask students to take a few minutes to evaluate their speeches for rhetorical examples. They all will likely have examples of logos, but ask them to consider adding pathos by adding a close to their speech that relies on an emotional appeal, like our examples.

Remind students that anyone interested in being the presiding officer of the in-class session should be prepared to give their speech tomorrow.

DAY 3

HOOK

15 minutes

Show students the TEDx Talk, *The Skill of Self-Confidence*. As they watch the video, ask students to **reiterate the “why.”** What can we learn from Dr. Joseph’s speech and why do you think it is relevant to what we are preparing to do in this class? Facilitate a short discussion.

BODY

20-30 minutes

Begin today’s lesson with presiding officer speeches. Remember, each speech should be 20 to 30 seconds. Determine how many sessions you’ll need to allow each student in your class enough time to give at least two speeches on at least two bills. The length of a session will be determined by the number of students you have in each chamber (*classroom*). For example, if

LESSON 4: WRITING EFFECTIVE SPEECHES



there will be four sessions (*class days*), you can have four different students take turns serving as the presiding officer. These students will not be giving speeches in the chamber while serving, so allowing them to present their speech for presiding officer is an opportunity to develop an important skill. Regardless if you already know they will preside, proceed with the election speeches.

Conduct a single ballot election for the presiding officer position. Use the **Voting Record template** to track votes. Refer to page 7 in the **Congressional Debate Guide** for more information.

STOP AND JOT:

After speeches have concluded, pass out post-it notes and direct students to read the sections of Chapter 9 relevant for Congress in the **textbook**, pages 73-79 and 84-90, skipping the sections that are titled for Public Forum Debate. Today's in-class readings will guide students on the practices of writing speeches that occur beyond the authorship/sponsorship speech along with notetaking strategies and tips on how to advance the debate. As they read, they should use the post-it notes to highlight items of importance. As they are reading, instruct students to jot down any questions they may have on the post-it notes.

HOMEWORK

- Read Unit 8 of the **Congressional Debate Guide** and Chapter 11 of the **Congressional Debate Textbook**.

CLOSURE

5-10 minutes

Facilitate a class discussion before students leave to check comprehension, gauge understanding, and answer questions. Announce the presiding officer winner(s) before students leave class so that they can begin to prepare for that role.