Four Parts of an Informative Speech

What does an informative speech consist of?

An informative speech consists of an introduction, body, and conclusion. Many then conclude with a question-and-answer period.

Four Parts of an Informative Speech:

1. **Introduction – Five Steps:**
   a. Get the audience’s attention
      • Make a dramatic statement
      • Ask a question
      • Use a quotation
      • Tell a joke or anecdote (brief story connected to your topic)
      • Use description to appeal to emotions
      • Present a contrast (Ex.: contrast between now and the past)
   b. Build interest
      • Use meaningful, specific information (concrete data)
      • Keep your speech simple and well organized (Organize it around a purpose and main idea)
      • Use attention-getting techniques
      • Use catchy slogans
      • Introduce a visual aid (chart, prop, video clip, recording, etc.)
   c. Preview the topic
      • Explain any background or terms that listeners need to know before the actual speech
   d. Apply the message to the audience
      • How does this topic affect the lives of the audience? (family, friends, values, health, self-esteem, etc.)
   e. Establish your credibility
      • Let your audience know you
      • Share specific knowledge or skills with the audience relevant to the speech
      • Give the audience a reason to listen to you and believe you

2. **Body – Four Steps:**
   a. Organize information – certain types of organization are appropriate for certain types of speeches
      • Time Order – describe events or process steps in chronological order
      • Spatial Organization – Describe an object or geographical location in a logical sequence (top to bottom, left to right, etc.); consider what will
help the audience to visualize the subject in speeches about places or objects

- Comparison and Contrast – Describe elements by explaining how they are alike and different
- Classification – Show what makes up a group and its parts
- Cause and Effect – Explain events, actions, or problems beginning with the cause and moving to the effect or vice versa

* Many speeches make use of more than one type of organization.

b. Follow Principles of Informing – make your speech interesting, clear, and accurate, so your audience listens to you and remembers your speech

- Fulfill a need to know
  - Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs – a person must satisfy each need level before the next one can be approached (See p. 157 for further information)
    - Physical
    - Safety
    - Social
    - Ego
    - Self
- Connect information to feelings of the audience
- Limit your main points (Keep things simple)
- Repeat information
  - Emphasize the theme or subject of your speech

c. Polish the Speech

- Use smooth transitions/connections between ideas
  - Repetition of key words and use of transitional words and phrases
- Avoid too much technical talk (Language that your audience does not understand)
- Personalize the information (Show the audience the benefits of your words)

d. Keep an Eye on the Audience

- Watch and listen to your audience so you can make adjustments

3. Conclusion

Techniques for conclusions:

- Summarize your thesis and main supporting points.
- Remind the audience of the importance of the issue.
- Use an attention device mentioned earlier
- Urge your audience to take action
- Warn your audience that the speech is about to end
- Predict the future
- Use a “clincher” ending

4. Conducting a Question-and-Answer Period
• Ask audience to write questions on note cards
• Give an interesting speech to guarantee a good questioning session
• Write a list of possible questions and answers to prepare
• Don’t be sarcastic
• Don’t lose your temper, even if an audience member does
• Make sure you know what the question is. If question is asked out loud, have it repeated if necessary.
• Keep your answers short