Warm-Up Speaking and Listening: Evaluating a Speaker

Lesson Objectives
By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

• Apply critical listening skills to a speech.
• Identify the author’s purpose and evaluate the effectiveness of a speech.
• Critique the word choice and argumentative techniques (such as rhetoric and use of logic) in a speech.

Words to Know
Fill in this table as you work through the lesson. You may also use the glossary to help you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>argumentative speech</td>
<td>a speech that establishes a position on a topic in a concise manner</td>
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<tr>
<td>ethos</td>
<td>an appeal based on the character, credibility, or reliability of the speaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>logos</td>
<td>an appeal based on logic or reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pathos</td>
<td>an appeal based on emotion</td>
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<tr>
<td>purpose</td>
<td>what the speaker intends to speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>rhetoric</td>
<td>the art of achieve or writing in an effective manner</td>
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The Importance of Critical Listening

Tips for effective listening:

- Pay attention.
- Don’t multitask.
- Be prepared.
- Don’t prejudge the speaker.
- Avoid jumping to conclusions.
- Listen critically.

Taking Notes on a Speech or Lecture

Tips for effective note-taking:

- Don’t write everything out; use shorthand.
- Write main points and supporting details.
- Review your notes immediately.
Using Shorthand Notation

Underline the word that could be abbreviated using “lil.”

Some Americans think that Europeans are too little concerned for their own security. Some would unilaterally reduce the number of American troops deployed in Europe.

—Address before the Bundestag in West Germany, Ronald Reagan

Shorthand:

Some Ams think Euros too lil concerned 4 security. Some would red no. of Am troops in Euro.
Identifying a Speaker’s Purpose

Purpose: what the speaker intends to achieve

To persuade: to influence listeners’ actions and ways of thinking
  • Victorian architecture is offensively outdated and full of elaborate decoration. We must avoid such wasteful use of resources.

To inform: to present information and explain ideas
  • Victorian architecture, popular in the United States between 1860 and 1900, makes use of elaborate decoration.

Listening to an Argumentative Speech

An argumentative speech establishes a position on a topic in a concise manner by:

• introducing a topic.

• citing evidence.

• establishing a clear, concise claim.

• making logical connections between evidence and conclusions.
Instruction

Speaking and Listening: Evaluating a Speaker

Listening for Evidence
- Opposing claims
- Problems with opposing claims
- Examples and details
- Relevant facts and quotations
- Useful statistics

Speaker’s Effectiveness

Speaker’s effectiveness: whether the speaker engages listeners and achieves what he or she intends to achieve

- Intent is to persuade: Is the speech argumentative?
- Intent is to inform: Is the speech informative?
- Engage with words: Is the language appropriate to the purpose?
- Engage with examples: Are main points memorable and engaging?
Evaluating a Speaker’s Effectiveness

Underline the clue in the excerpt that shows the speech is argumentative.

I’ve always had great faith in and respect for our space program, and what happened today does nothing to diminish it. We don’t hide our space program. We don’t keep secrets and cover things up. We do it all up front and in public. That’s the way freedom is, and we wouldn’t change it for a minute. We’ll continue our quest in space. There will be more shuttle flights and more shuttle crews and, yes, more volunteers, more civilians, more teachers in space. Nothing ends here; our hopes and our journeys continue. I want to add that I wish I could talk to every man and woman who works for NASA or who worked on this mission and tell them: “Your dedication and professionalism have moved and impressed us for decades. And we know of your anguish. We share it.”

–Address on the space shuttle Challenger, Ronald Reagan
Speaking and Listening: Evaluating a Speaker

Critiquing Word Choice in a Speech

To **critique** a speaker’s **word choice**, ask:

- Are the words appropriate for the speaker’s **purpose**?
- Are the words appropriate for the **audience**?
- Are the words appropriate for the **subject matter**?

*Underline the words in the example that imply togetherness.*

Example: “Today is a day for mourning and remembering. Nancy and I are pained to the core by the tragedy of the shuttle *Challenger*. We know we **share** this pain with all of the people of our country. This is truly a national loss.”

Rhetoric and the Three Appeals

**Rhetoric** is the art of **speaking** or writing in an effective manner.

There are three rhetorical appeals.

- **Logos**: an appeal based on logic or **reason**
- **Ethos**: an appeal based on the **character**, credibility, or reliability of the speaker
- **Pathos**: an appeal based on **emotion**
Understanding Rhetorical Appeals

- **Logos**: “According to the 1880 census, the populations of towns with railroad stations tripled over the course of ten years. It is easy to conclude that railroads had a tremendous impact on population.”

- **Ethos**: “As a former soldier in the United States Army, I know the cost of careless military decisions.”

- **Pathos**: “Imagine the impact budget cuts will have on elderly members of your community, including your own grandparents.”
Lesson Question
How can listening skills help you evaluate a speech’s effectiveness and its techniques?

Answer
(Sample answer) Listening critically will help you understand others’ speeches, and it will also help to make you a better speaker.

Review: Evaluating the Speaker
• Listen critically.
• Identify the purpose.
• Evaluate effectiveness.
• Critique word choice and argumentative techniques.
Use this space to write any questions or thoughts about this lesson.