

APSU Writing Center
Persuasive Speech

What is a Persuasive Speech?

- A persuasive speech aims to convince the audience to adopt a particular viewpoint, belief, or course of action. The goal is to influence how the audience thinks or behaves.
- Persuasive speeches often address facts, values, or policies, and may appeal to:
 - **Pathos:** emotions and personal connection.
 - **Logos:** logic, evidence, and reasoning.
 - **Ethos:** credibility, ethics, or moral authority.

How to Choose a Topic

Use the basic questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why.

- **Who**
 - **Examples:** Who is the audience and why should they care? Who might change their perspective after hearing this speech?
- **What**
 - **Examples:** What topics interest you? What topics will interest your audience? What information can you research and support with evidence?
- **When**
 - **Examples:** When will you present, and how much time do you have? When can you explore a topic in depth?
- **Where**
 - **Examples:** Where will the speech take place? Where can you access materials for your presentation?
- **Why**
 - **Examples:** Why is this topic important? Why are you motivated to speak about it? Why should the audience change their opinion on the topic?

Persuasive Speech Topic Examples

- Should all students be required to learn an instrument in school?
- Are there any circumstances in which athletes should be allowed to use steroids?
- Should schools still teach cursive handwriting?

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Persuasive Speech Outline

Introduction

Thesis Statement: (Summarize your main point or lesson in one sentence)

Attention Getter: (Hook your audience with a story, question, fact, or quote)

Audience Relevance: (Why is this topic important to them? How will it benefit them?)

Credibility: (Why are you qualified to demonstrate this topic?)

Preview of Steps/Task: (Briefly outline the steps you will demonstrate)

Body Point 1 (repeat steps as necessary)

Claim: (State your first major argument supporting your thesis.)

Explanation: (Support the claim using facts, statistics, examples, expert opinions, etc.)

Connection to Audience: (Show how this point affects or benefits the audience.)

Transition to Next Step: (Smoothly guide listeners to the next argument.)



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Body Point 2 (repeat steps as necessary)

Claim: (State your first major argument supporting your thesis.)

Explanation: (Support the claim using facts, statistics, examples, expert opinions, etc.)

Connection to Audience: (Show how this point affects or benefits the audience.)

Emotional or Ethical Appeal: (Use pathos or ethos if appropriate to strengthen connection.)

Conclusion

Summary of Main Points: (Briefly review your key arguments.)

Reinforce Thesis: (Remind the audience what they've learned and why it matters)

Closing Statement: (End with a memorable thought, call to action, or practical tip)



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References

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