

Thank you

FOR YOUR
INTEREST IN
CORWIN

Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *High-Impact Writing Clinics* by Sara Holbrook and Michael Salinger. This lesson makes your students' forays into oral presentations a bit more successful with helpful hints to alleviate their fears of public speaking.

LEARN MORE about this title, including Features, Table of Contents, and Reviews.

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Speaking Out

Public Speaking With Conviction

WHY TEACH THIS?

The number-one fear of mankind is public speaking, according to various and sundry studies. Death came in at third in one of those reports. So accordingly, the comedian Jerry Seinfeld has postulated that, given the choice, we would rather be in the coffin than delivering the eulogy.

While we can't guarantee that we can alleviate all of your students' stage fright, we can provide you with some tips to make their forays into oral presentations a bit more successful. We believe these initial successes will lay the groundwork for helping them become confident speakers who get their messages across with conviction.

The rubric in this lesson will provide your class with a vocabulary that they may use to self-assess and to give peer critiques of their oral presentations.

Michael: I can truly say that no small amount of any success I have had over the years has been due to my ability to look someone in the eye and speak with composure.

Sara: I have repeatedly found that reading my poetry aloud informs not only my audience, but also my own writing. I need to say the words, feel how they flow. For me, reading aloud is an integral part of the revision process.

CCSS AND CORRESPONDING ANCHOR STANDARDS

- **Present** information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
[4.SL.4] [5.SL.4] [6.SL.4] [7.SL.4] [8.SL.4]
- **Adapt** speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
[4.SL.6] [5.SL.6] [6.SL.6] [7.SL.6] [8.SL.6]

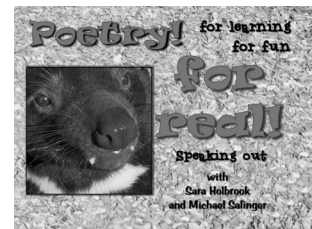
PRIOR TO THE LESSON

- Read through the entire lesson and review the slideshow to familiarize yourself with the clinic.
- Make sure students have in front of them a piece they have written or an example text you have selected that they may mark up and use to practice these techniques aloud.

THE LESSON

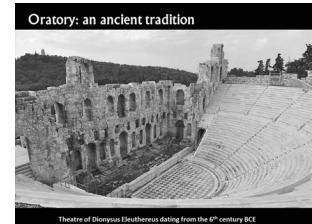
Slide 1

- Introduce the lesson. This lesson is about public speaking.
- Don't have everyone reading the same text or it will become an exercise in choral reading. Follow along with the Tasmanian Devil.



Slide 2

- Explain that public speaking is no doubt the first form of mass communication.
- Ask students to turn and talk about occasions when public speaking is a necessity.
- Note: Even though it is considered one of people's major fears, it is a skill that will serve people well no matter what they decide to do with their lives.



Slide 3

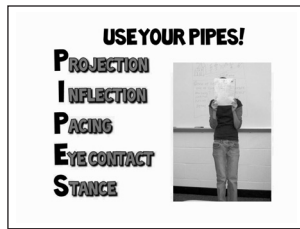
- Ask students to list habits and mistakes people might make when speaking to an audience that may keep them from being understood.
- Give examples:
 - Playing with your hair
 - Swaying back and forth
 - Speaking too quietly
 - Looking down at the ground



Slide 4

- Explain: We are going to break down the strategies for good public speaking into five components.
- Note that our goal is to be able to deliver a speech in front of an audience in a convincing, confident, and understandable manner.
- Explain: We are not concerned with grand dramatization or character as much as the competent delivery of a text. (Drama could be the next step as we hone our skills even further.)





Slide 5

- PIPES is the acronym we will use to help us with public speaking.
- Offer a reminder of the definition of acronym (**P**rojection, **I**nflection, **P**acing, **E**ye contact, **S**tance).
- Announce: We will go over each of these items on the following slides one by one.



Slide 6: Projection

- Explain that there is a difference between projecting and yelling.
- Yelling distorts the voice and hurts our throat as well as the audience's ears.
- Illustrate this point with a clear example: In the same way a slide projector makes an image bigger without distorting the image, speakers must project their voices to the point where they are loud enough to be heard by the most distant listener but clear enough to be understood by the entire audience.



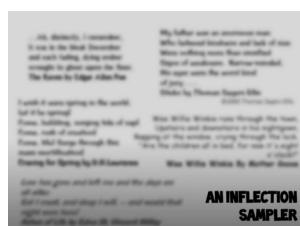
Slide 7

- Ask students to read the texts they have in front of them aloud—everyone at the same time.
- Start them out just sitting at their desks.
- Instruct the students to be loud enough to hear themselves over their neighbors without yelling.
- Walk around the class speaking out loud yourself, and encourage the students to match your volume as you pass them.
- Explain to the students that the volume they are using in this mish-mash chorus is very near the volume they will need when presenting their pieces solo.
- Working in a group like this provides a reference point for the participants to refer to later.
- Reiterate that projection is not yelling.



Slide 8: Inflection

- Define inflection as the emotion and emphasis we put on our spoken words.
- Explain that when we are told to read with more emotion or feeling, inflection is what is being requested.
- Tell students that inflection includes dynamics—speaking more loudly and more quietly as the text infers (while still making sure one is heard by the whole audience).



Slide 9

- Read through these excerpts.
- Have students pair up to read to one another.
- Notice how the language and rhythm of the lines require different styles of inflection.

- Choose a couple of lines from one of the pieces and read through them a few times, emphasizing different words each time.
- Ask: How do the different emphases color the way the line might be interpreted?
- Ask: What is the difference in a speaker's inflection when they ask a question, state a fact, or are trying to persuade?

Slide 10: Pacing

- Ask: What is meant by *pacing*?
- Note: It is not walking back and forth like our devilish friend above.
- Explain: We are speaking about the speed with which people speak their words.
- Let students know that a good rule of thumb is that the larger the audience, the slower the pace and more frequent the pauses.



Slide 11

- Read through this piece aloud with your students.
- Notice how the phrase *shrilly sung crescendos* requires a reader to slow down a bit because of its tongue-twister characteristics.
- Have students ask themselves, “Am I able to articulate the text at the speed I am speaking?”
- Instruct students to read the pieces they have in front of them out loud—first as fast as they can, then again in slow motion, then again at what they consider the perfect speed for an audience the size of the class.
- Note that not only will the students be practicing their pacing, they will be doing repeated readings of their text, also known as rehearsing.



Slide 12: Eye Contact

- Simply put—look at your audience.
- Explain that pacing and pausing help a reader take the time to look up at the audience.
- Reminder: Rehearsal helps!
- Demonstrate that tricks like looking over the audience's heads to fake eye contact won't work—it will be noticeable.



Slide 13

- Give students these tricks to help with making eye contact:
- Treat the page you are holding as if it were a plate on which the words are resting. It is not a mirror to hold in front of your face.
- Use your thumb to keep your place as you look up from the page to make eye contact with your audience.



- Make sure the font size of your text is large enough to facilitate easy reading.
- Memorize the first line or so of the piece and be sure to deliver this looking at your audience. The first and last lines are the most important to make eye contact on.



Slide 14: Stance

- Explain that *stance* refers to anything one is doing with their body in front of their audience.
- Refer back to your earlier discussion about distracting things the students have seen public speakers do.
- Note that in the introduction to public speaking, it is most important to cut out distracting movement.
- Instruct the students to stand with a good base—feet shoulder width apart like our Tasmanian friend above.
- Tell students not to lock their knees; they are the body's shock absorbers.
- Remind them: No swaying, pulling at clothes, snapping fingers, knee shaking, hair eating, eye rolling, incessant blinking, etc.



Slide 15

- Here are Michael and Sara in action.
- Ask: Even without hearing their voices, what can you infer from these pictures?
- Bring a student to the front of the class and have them read their piece for the rest of the room.
- Using PIPES as a rubric, critique the speaker's performance.
- Ask: Which of these five things did our speaker do best?
- Then ask: If you had to pick just one of the remaining attributes for improvement, which would it be?
- Explain that this is how they may use PIPES as a tool to self-assess their work with each other.
- Emphasize the importance of always letting the speaker know what they are doing best and then what points they need to improve on the most.
- Run through this exercise with a few more students and then have the class work with partners and coach one another.
- Don't try to improve more than one skill at a time. It is too confusing to try to improve more than one component of PIPES at a time. As a speaker gets better at their weakest skill, it becomes easier to work on improving the next skill.
- Explain: No matter how proficient a speaker is, there is always one of these attributes they can improve on. And no matter how inexperienced a speaker is, they are better at one of these than the others.

ASSESSMENT

Here we provide a rubric you may choose to use. We provide this as a guide knowing that you may have other goals for your class. Don't feel compelled to assess every skill mentioned in this chart. We have had more success when we zero in on a skill or two with a lesson, but we want to afford you multiple options with these clinics.

Skill	3	2	1
Projection	Demonstrates the ability to speak with proper projection for the audience. Is not too loud, nor too soft. All words are heard by all audience members.	Partially demonstrates the ability to speak with proper projection for the audience. May trail off at the end of lines or may be too loud once or twice during recitation.	Is either too quiet to be heard or too loud to be understood.
Inflection	Demonstrates the ability to use pitch and dynamics in a way that enhances the audience's understanding of the text being spoken.	Partially demonstrates the ability to use pitch and dynamics while reciting a piece. May fall into a sing-song or inappropriately overemphasize a word.	Does not demonstrate the ability to use pitch and dynamics while reciting a piece. Reading is monotone or full of inappropriately or overemphasized words.
Pacing	Demonstrates the ability to control pace, using pauses effectively and articulating all words to enhance the audience's understanding of the text being spoken.	Partially demonstrates the ability to control pacing, pauses, and articulation. May perform portions of text either too fast or too slow. May miss an opportunity to use a pause for dramatic effect.	Is unable to demonstrate the ability to control pacing, pauses, or articulation. Speed reads through text or loses place several times when reading from the page.
Eye Contact	Demonstrates the ability to make eye contact across the whole audience and to create a feeling of conversation with listeners.	Occasionally demonstrates the ability to make eye contact with the audience. May only occasionally look up from text.	Does not demonstrate the ability to make eye contact with audience. Never looks up from the page, or stares off into space.
Stance	Consistently demonstrates effective stance. Does not display any distracting movements and adds to the audience's understanding of the piece by using appropriate body language.	Partially demonstrates effective stance. May display a distracting or cliché movement or two.	Does not demonstrate effective stance. Movements during recitation are distracting or disconnected from text being spoken.