

EXPOSITORY SPEAKING

by Connie J. Link

Our approach to coaching Expository for the National Tournament must begin with a basic teaching of informative speaking and after dinner speaking since we incorporate elements of both types of speeches into our entries. Because most of our national qualifiers have participated in our elective speech class, they have written and delivered informative speeches in class. From this base, we expend upon the student's understanding of expository by more closely examining types of informative speeches (i.e. speeches about objects, events, processes and concepts). We constantly stress the need for clear development and organization during the writing process and used a patterned outline for that process. Thus, the speeches are basically formulated according to the following format:

I. Attention Step

- A. Arouse interest in the topic
- B. Introduce the topic

II. Justification Step

- A. Statement of Need -- what is reason for needing to know this information
- C. Ramification -- show how the need is widespread or serious
- D. Pointing -- show how this need is directly related to this audience

III. Satisfaction Step

- A. Preview of major ideas
- B. Detailed information

1.

- a.
- b.

2.

- a.
- b.

IV. Conclusion Step

- A. Review

- B. Direct reference to introduction

Because topics are always of utmost importance, we keep a file all year of possible expository topics. Coaches, extempers, orators and other team members add articles found while researching in other speech areas. We stress looking for topics which will impart new knowledge or which will give an audience new and interesting information about a familiar product, concept or event. For instance, one of our speakers did an expository on the "census" at Nationals in San Jose. Most audience members know that the United States commissions a cen-

sus every ten years, yet most of us know very little about its history, its results or even its impact on each of us. Thus, the "census" was a good topic for the 1990 Nationals -- the year of our last census. Topic choices are limitless, but we look for topics that are current, educational and have humorous possibilities. We also persuade our students to write and deliver expositories on subjects that provide a clear analysis of the audience and with topics that are pertinent to that audience.

Humor is an important element in speeches. That does not mean that expository speeches should be after dinner speeches or comic routines; however, we attempt to include some humor or light references within the speech. Most topics of an informative nature do not lend themselves to the injection of some humor. One place humor might be used is in the introduction and conclusion. For instance, Ms. Tracy Berner's "census" speech used the following preview:

To better understand why our government sticks its nose in our business every ten years, we need to "figure" out how census information is gathered, "enumerate" the types of results produced by the census and "tally" the census's final ramifications. All that "calculating" should bring us to our "senses."

A further example of use of humor is Ben Moore's introduction and conclusion in last year's National Championship speech where he utilized an amusing anecdote about an automobile accident in the mountain with a 250 pound pig about which he had been warned by a woman at the base of the mountain. Although the anecdote seemed bizarre, it provided an entertaining introduction, and Ben was able to hook that joke to his topic and claim the audience's attention.

But at that point it occurred to him that the woman he had passed earlier wasn't calling him a pig at all, but rather she was warning him of a potential road hazard. Obviously, the man wasn't just a victim of a busted radiator or the recipient of a two year supply of bacon. He was suffering from something far more devastating. He was suffering from Information Anxiety.

Finally, Ben referred back to his introduc-

tory humor in his conclusion to leave the audience with a light hearted feeling about a serious topic.

As we move into the 90's more and more board games seem to further illustrate the United States' quest for more and more knowledge; however, the knowledge we use when we play "Clever Endeavor," "Adverteasing" or "Trivial Pursuit" is just that' trivial and merely part of a game. The real game would be to learn the important facts that apply to our lives rather than a mass of statistics and loose bits of information that makes us "seem" smart. **After all being cool and recognizing "pig" as an animal that is a basic part of a nutritious breakfast rather than a modern slang term could have saved my friend on the mountain a few repair costs.** Remember, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. But, it is our quest to know the "little things" that keeps us ignorant.

Like persuasion, expository lends itself well to the use of source and, of course, quotation where applicable. Each of our entries in expository is researched and documented. We also require our students to cite sources in their speeches. Overall, such citation does give the speech the credibility that is necessary in any well written speech.

Expositories for supplemental events at Nationals are written in May and memorized in May so that the students who are eliminated from main event competition will not be frantically writing and/or memorizing a speech during the week of nationals. With our students prepared ahead of time, all we have to do is work on delivery as we "pump" them back up to compete in a new category.

Finally, we enjoy the challenge of teaching our students a new speech event, and whether they use the speeches at Nationals or not, they have added to their overall forensics background. An added bonus -- most basic communication courses in college require an expository (informative) speech. Thus, our seniors are already one speech ahead!

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