

Grading Speeches



**Levels 4, 5,
7, and 9**

If a student desires to get an “A,” we feel he should know just how to do so! Feel more than free to share the grading rubric as a self-proofing guide for students at the appropriate level.

Student Evaluations

A student should always be required to do a self-evaluation before submitting his work. Prior to handing in his draft, have him complete a proofing sheet (just a checklist of those skills to which you think he can be held accountable). He can use the rubric in this document as his proofing sheet, or you can give him a bulleted list that includes more detail for sentence and paragraph proofing, if you so desire. If possible, record your student delivering his speech. Have him analyze his speech, particularly his delivery style. (This kind of self-evaluation may be particularly helpful for older students.)

Speech Criteria

- * Structure
 - ☐ A strong opening statement or story grabs the audience’s attention and introduces the speaker’s topic.
 - ☐ The thesis and three major points are presented in the introduction. These points are clear and simple.
 - ☐ The speech maintains strict parallelism in developing each point.
 - ☐ The speaker alerts the audience of major points and conclusions throughout the speech.
- * Content
 - ☐ The speaker makes appropriate emotional appeals, without manipulating the audience.
 - ☐ There is a clear thesis.
 - ☐ Ample, dynamic facts support the thesis.
 - ☐ Humor, strong images, and good stories supplement the facts and are used appropriately.
- * Style
 - ☐ Simple language and short sentences make the speaker’s points clear and powerful.
 - ☐ The overall flow of the speech is clear. It makes good use of transition words, phrases, or sentences so that the reader easily follows the speech.
- * Delivery
 - ☐ The cadence or pace is not too fast, and the student pauses when appropriate.
 - ☐ The student maintains good eye contact with the audience.
 - ☐ The student does not fidget, sway, or shift from one foot to the other.
 - ☐ The student is nicely and appropriately dressed for the circumstances.
 - ☐ The student’s volume is appropriate for the size of the audience and the room; he has good inflexion and diction.

Grading the Speech

We offer both a rubric and a spectrum for grading your student’s speech. Our suggestion is to use the rubric to assign the actual grade and to use the spectrum for giving comments and suggestions for improvement. Or, you may choose to use only one of these tools. Below are some general guidelines for giving grades.

- * “A” speeches will have all of the above features almost completely correct.
- * “B” speeches are graded down because of issues with one or two significant aspects. In terms of the grading rubric, a “B” speech has the majority of checks in the “Good” column.
- * “C” speeches indicate some real issues, and these can be with any of the rows of the rubric where at least half of the check marks fall into the “Fair” column.
- * “D” speeches are seriously flawed for any number of reasons. There are usually at least two of three main elements missing structurally, or two or three serious content problems, or perhaps there simply is no introduction or conclusion. Usually, problems in only one category will not cause a speech to receive this grade. The speech will also have problems with delivery or preparation. In terms of the rubric, usually most of your check marks wind up in the “Fair” to “Poor” columns.

There are various point-to-grade schemes. Here’s the one that we recommend:

A+ 100-98 pts.
A 97-94 pts.
A- 93-90 pts.
B+ 89-88 pts.
B 87-84 pts.
B- 83-80 pts.
C+ 79-78 pts.
C 77-74 pts.
C- 73-70 pts.
D+ 69-68 pts.
D 67-64 pts.
D- 63-60 pts.
F below 60 pts.



- * “F” work is failing. As with “D’s,” “F’s” are not usually given for failure in just one area. Rather, it’s the result of a combination of failures that give the student an overall failing grade. In the rubric, almost all check marks would fall into the “Poor” column.

Numerical Grades

To reach a grade, work down the chart, checking off elements as they appear on your student’s draft.

- * You will subtract points for every check mark that does not fall in the “Excellent” column. Below is a chart that shows you how many points to subtract for each checked bullet point in a particular box. We are calling these “lost points.”

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Structure	-5 per bullet	-4 per bullet	-3 per bullet	-0 per bullet
Content	-5 per bullet	-4 per bullet	-2 per bullet	-0 per bullet
Style	-4 per bullet	-3 per bullet	-2 per bullet	-0 per bullet
Delivery	-4 per bullet	-3 per bullet	-2 per bullet	-0 per bullet

- * Add the total number of lost points and write the sum in the space at the bottom of the page. To obtain the final grade for the paper, subtract the total lost points from 200 and divide by 2.
- * Remember that grading is somewhat subjective. This rubric is meant merely to be a tool to help you evaluate your student’s work, so please adjust it if you need to.

If you alter the number of bullets checked in any row, the lost point system will not work correctly, but you may still reach a grade based on the descriptions under “Grading the Speech.”

Speech Rubric



Name _____ Date ____/____/____ Grade: _____

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Structure (Only check 5 total bullets in this row.) Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> No introduction, or very poorly chosen opening. <input type="checkbox"/> No clear thesis. <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no apparent organization; poor or no parallelism. <input type="checkbox"/> Facts not arranged logically. <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to alert audience to main points or conclusions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Opening statement or story not well chosen. <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis & main points not well defined. <input type="checkbox"/> Vague organization; serious parallelism issues. <input type="checkbox"/> Some facts are not arranged logically. <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely alerts audience to main points or conclusions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Basic statement or story for introduction. <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis and major points could be better defined or presented earlier. <input type="checkbox"/> Some faults in organization & parallelism. <input type="checkbox"/> A few key facts are not logically placed. <input type="checkbox"/> Could be more clear in alerting audience to main points & conclusions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Striking statement or story for introduction. <input type="checkbox"/> Clear thesis and major points presented in introduction. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent organization & parallelism made speech very clear & engaging. <input type="checkbox"/> Facts arranged clearly and logically under strong topic sentences. <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly alerts audience to main points & conclusions.
Content (Only check 4 total bullets in this row.) Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Thesis is insupportable or wrong. <input type="checkbox"/> Makes inappropriate emotional appeals & is manipulative. <input type="checkbox"/> Very few facts presented. <input type="checkbox"/> Misuses humor, images, or stories, or uses them inappropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/> Thesis is not supported by facts. <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional appeals often inappropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak on facts; some are present, but not enough to prove the thesis. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of humor, images, & stories is unbalanced or inappropriate at times.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good thesis, but not the best choice of supportive categories or facts. <input type="checkbox"/> Makes appropriate emotional appeals. <input type="checkbox"/> Many good facts, but some key ones left out. <input type="checkbox"/> Humor, images, & stories supplement the facts and are usually well-placed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong thesis, amply supported by three strong categories. <input type="checkbox"/> Makes appropriate & powerful emotional appeals. <input type="checkbox"/> Many strong, specific facts support the thesis. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent humor, strong images, & stories supplement the facts.
Writing Style (Only check 2 total bullets in this row.) Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor word choice & sentence structure throughout. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks flow of style; wooden and/or awkward statements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Word choice & sentences are frequently confusing. <input type="checkbox"/> Poor transitions; can't follow main points.	<input type="checkbox"/> Word choice & sentences are mostly good, but could be clearer or better chosen. <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks excellent flow—transition words, ordering of phrases, and subordinate clauses.	<input type="checkbox"/> Short, simple words & sentences used clearly and persuasively. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent transitions and flow of speech.
Mechanics (Only check 5 total bullets in this row.) Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pace was very fast or slow; audience could not understand the speech. <input type="checkbox"/> No eye contact. <input type="checkbox"/> Poor posture; constant swaying or fidgeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Very sloppy or inappropriate dress. <input type="checkbox"/> Poor volume, diction, or inflexion. Delivery is boring or unintelligible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Pace was rushed & caused confusion for audience. <input type="checkbox"/> Needs significant work on eye contact. <input type="checkbox"/> Sways or fidgets frequently. <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat sloppy or inappropriate dress. <input type="checkbox"/> Volume, diction, or inflexion need significant improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/> Good pace, but could pause more or slow down for emphasis. <input type="checkbox"/> Could look up more. <input type="checkbox"/> Good posture, but some fidgeting. <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate dress. <input type="checkbox"/> Good general volume, diction, & inflexion, but could be improved at times.	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent pace and sense of timing. <input type="checkbox"/> Maintained good eye contact throughout. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent posture and poise. <input type="checkbox"/> Attractive and appropriate dress. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent volume, diction, & inflexion throughout.

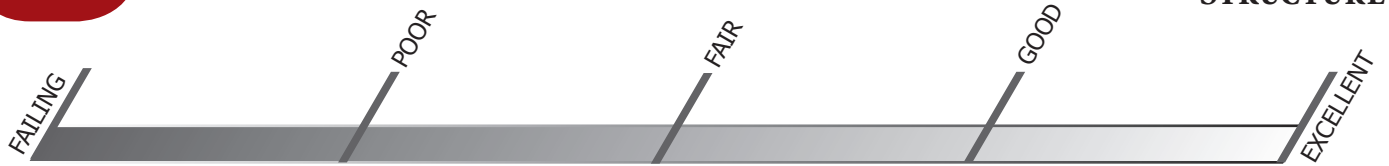
_____ Total lost points

To obtain final grade, subtract total lost points from 200 and divide by 2.



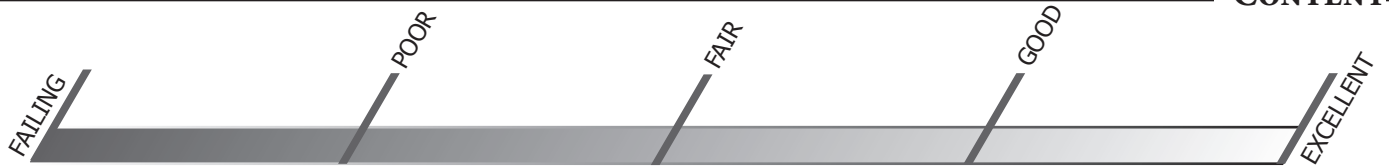
Speech Spectrum

STRUCTURE



COMMENTS: _____

CONTENT



COMMENTS: _____



STYLE

FAILING	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT

COMMENTS: _____

DELIVERY

FAILING	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT

COMMENTS: _____
