

Informative Speech

PURPOSE

This speech is designed to apply all of the concepts you have learned so far in this course. It is a 4-6 minute informative speech. You will choose something that you want to teach your audience about. It can teach us about a concept, a theory, a place, a person, or you can also show us how to do/make something.

REQUIREMENTS

- I. **Organizational Requirements**
 - A. The organizational pattern for this speech is up to your instructor but can include topical, chronological, or spatial orders of main points.
 - B. You will have two to four main points to this speech.

- II. **Research Requirements**
 - A. This speech requires research to fully develop your ideas.
 - B. You must use **3 or more sources** in your speech.
 1. Do NOT use Wikipedia, or any other unreliable sources
 2. Include a References/Works Cited section at the end of the outline in either APA or MLA format
 - C. Cite all sources during your speech and in your outline to avoid plagiarism.
 1. Cite all sources orally in the speech
 2. Cite all sources in the text of the outline (in-text citations)

- III. **Visual Aid Requirements**
 - A. You are required to use at least one visual aid to help guide the presentation (though more are encouraged).
 - B. Do not rely solely on pictures. Include graphs, charts, maps, etc. to be sure you are clarifying your ideas.
 - C. Do not use complete sentences or thoughts on your PowerPoint slides. PowerPoint should be used for visual elements like graphs, charts, pictures, maps, etc.

- IV. **Outline**
 - A. On your speaking day, you are responsible for bringing a typed outline of your speech to class. It should be a FULL sentence outline, which utilizes **complete sentences**. Your instructor may require you to turn in a rough draft of your outline either via paper copy, e-mail, or on taskstream.
 - B. Clearly label the specific purpose, and thesis statement, preview, summary, and memorable ending.
 - C. Include transitions between main points
 - D. Include your source citations in the text of the outline
 - E. Include a reference list in APA or MLA format with your different published source materials

V. **Speech Rubric**

- A. On the day that you are scheduled to deliver your speech, you must bring your speech rubric to class. Rubrics will be provided to you via e-courses.

You will be graded on your outline, as well as your speeches content, your delivery, and your visual aids. Due dates for all assignments can be found on the syllabus as well as on eCourses.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARATION:

1. Use the internet as a tool for brainstorming for a topic. Keep in mind you should try to find a topic that is interesting to you or that you want to know more about. Also, keep your audience in mind when searching for a topic as well.
2. The largest amount of effort should go into developing the ideas you want to present. Make sure your main points clearly represent these ideas. Give special thought to your introduction and conclusion. These parts of your speech can make a strong impression that affects your persuasiveness.
3. Make use of supporting materials (i.e. statistics, definitions, testimony, examples). Begin your research as soon as possible so that you have plenty of time to consider how you want your speech to progress.
4. Practice your speech aloud using your note cards and visual aids several times. Work on really connecting with your audience. Move away from the lectern, maintain eye contact, and show sincerity in your face and voice.

ON THE DAY OF THE SPEECH BRING THE FOLLOWING:

1. A copy of your outline
2. Visual Aids
3. Speaker Notes
4. Grade Rubric

SENTENCE OUTLINE FOR INFORMATIVE SPEECH

Tornadoes

I. Introduction

- A. **Attention Getter:** What can hurdle automobiles through the air, rip ordinary homes to shreds, defeather chickens, and travel at speeds over 60mph?
- B. **Relevance:** Illinois rests on the boundary of what tornado researchers call tornado alley. This is the area of the country that receives the most tornadoes every year. According to a 1995 brochure distributed by the *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration* (NOAA), Illinois averages 27 tornadoes a year. Also, nearly five people die every year in Illinois as a result of tornadoes **[Visual Aid]**. In fact, according to *Tornado Project Online!*, a website hosted by a company that gathers tornado information for tornado researchers that I accessed earlier this month, the deadliest tornado in U.S. recorded history occurred in Murphysboro, Illinois. In 1925, a violent tornado killed 234 people in this Southern Illinois town.
- C. **Credibility:** I grew up in the heart of tornado alley and have been interested in this weather phenomenon for a very long time. Also, I am a trained weather spotter for the Bloomington/Normal civil defense agency.
- D. **Thesis:** In order to better understand tornadoes, it is important to explore what causes tornadoes to develop, how researchers classify types of tornadoes, and odd occurrences that may be associated with tornadoes.
- E. **Preview of main points:** So, let us crash through the causes of tornadoes, twist around the types of tornadoes, and blow through some of the oddities associated with tornadoes.

Transition: Initially, I will crash through the causes of tornadoes.

II. Body

- A. There are several causes of tornadoes.
 1. According to the *USA Today Tornado Information* website, which was last updated on June 20, 2000, a tornado is a “violently rotating column of air in contact with the ground and pendant from a thunderstorm.” Therefore, thunderstorms are the first step in the creation of a tornado.
 2. The *USA Today Tornado Information* site also indicates that there are three key conditions for thunderstorms to form.
 - a. First, moisture in the lower to mid levels of the atmosphere.
 - b. Second, unstable air. This is air that will continue rising once it begins rising from near the ground.
 - c. The final condition for the formation of tornado-producing thunderstorms is a lifting force. A lifting force is a mechanism that cause air to begin rising. The most common lifting force is heating of the air (which is why we experience so many thunderstorms in the spring as the air begins to warm).
 3. The same source indicates that the strongest thunderstorms typically form in the warm, humid air that’s east or south of advancing cold air.
 4. I mentioned in the introduction, Illinois sees its fair share of tornadoes. The following graph, adapted from the *USA Today Tornado Information* website, illustrates areas in the U.S. that receive the greatest number of tornadoes (tornado alley). Thunderstorm-producing tornadoes are likely to form in this area

as cold air from the west and north clashes violently with warm air from the Gulf of Mexico **[Visual Aid]**.

Transition: Now that we have crashed through the causes of tornadoes, let's twist around the types of tornadoes.

B. There are several types of tornadoes.

1. According to renowned weather historian Dr. David Ludlum, author of the 1997 edition of the National Audubon Society's *Field Guide To North American Weather*, tornado researchers use a scale, known as the Fujita-Pearson Tornado Intensity Scale (named after its creators) to rate the intensity of tornadoes **[Visual Aid]**.
2. Tornado statistics from NOAA (cited above) **[Visual Aid]**.
 - a. Weak Tornadoes
 - i. Account for 69% of all tornadoes.
 - ii. Winds are less than 110 mph.
 - b. Strong Tornadoes
 - i. Account for 29% of all tornadoes.
 - ii. Winds range from 110-125 mph.
 - c. Violent Tornadoes
 - i. Represent only 2% of all tornadoes.
 - ii. Winds exceed 125 mph.
3. According to *Tornado Project Online!*, although violent tornadoes account for only 2% of all tornadoes, they are responsible for 67% of all deaths in tornadoes **[Visual Aid]**.
4. In addition, astrogeophysicist Dr. Robert Davies-Jones notes in a 1995 edition of *Scientific American* that most tornadoes have damage paths 150 feet wide, move at about 30 miles per hour and last only a few minutes. However, extremely violent tornadoes, like the one that ripped through Murphysboro, Illinois, may be over a mile wide, travel at 60 miles per hour and may stay on the ground for more than one hour.

Transition: Now that we have a better understanding of the causes and types of tornadoes, I will blow through some of the oddities associated with tornadoes.

C. There have been many oddities associated with tornadoes.

1. Stories of strange events are typical in the wake of the damage caused by tornadoes. Indeed, much of what makes stories of tornadoes unusual is irony. Consider the following story from the 1996 *Weather Guide Calendar*. In a 1984 Kansas tornado a man, apparently thinking that his mobile home would be destroyed, ran to shelter in another building, only to have that building destroyed (killing the man), while his trailer survived just fine.
2. As noted by *Tornado Project Online!*, the Great Bend, Kansas tornado of November 1915 is a tornado which seems to have the greatest number of oddities associated with it.
 - a. At Grant Jones' store, the south wall was blown down and scattered, but shelves of canned goods that stood against the wall were not moved.
 - b. The Riverside Steam Laundry, built of stone and cement block, was completely destroyed, yet two nearby wooden shacks were untouched.
 - c. A canceled check from Great Bend was found in a corn field, one mile outside of Palmyra, Nebraska... 305 miles to

the northeast. This is the longest known distance that debris has ever been carried.

3. *Tornado Project Online!* Also reports that the “plucked chicken” remains today as perhaps the most talked about tornado oddity **[Visual Aid]**. Indeed, this oddity has been associated with many Illinois tornadoes.
 - a. Within the damage descriptions of rural tornadoes, there are often stories of a chicken “stripped clean of every feather.”
 - b. It has long been thought that the feathers explode off the bird in the tornado’s low pressure.
 - c. The most likely explanation for the defeathering of a chicken is the protective response called “flight molt.” As noted by *Tornado Project Online!*, “chickens are not stripped clean, but in actuality they lose a large percentage of their feathers under stress in this flight molt process.” In short, when the chickens become scared their feathers become loose and are simply blown off.

III. Conclusion

- A. **Thesis/Summary:** Today, I have explored the key factors that cause tornadoes to develop, how researchers classify types of tornadoes, and odd occurrences that may be associated with tornadoes.
- B. **Memorable Close:** So, the next time you see a Ferrari flying through the air, your college dorm being dismantled floor by floor, or a chicken without wings, take cover because tornado season is here.

References

- Davies-Jones, R (1995). Tornadoes: The storms that spawn twisters are now largely understood, but mysteries still remain about how these violent vortices form. *Scientific American*, 273(2), 48-58.
- Grazulis, T. (1995). Chasing tornado oddities. In L. Sessions (Ed.), *1996 Weather Guide Calendar with Phenomenal Weather Events*. Denver, CO: Accord Publishing.
- Ludlum, D. M. (1997). *National Audubon Society field guide to North American weather*. New York: Chanticleer Press.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (1995). *Tornadoes: Nature's most violent storms* [Brochure]. Washington, DC: National Weather Service.
- Tornado Project Online. (2000, June 19). *The top ten U.S. killer tornadoes*. Retrieved August 5, 2000, from <http://www.tornadoproject.com/>
- USA Today Tornado Information. (2000, June 20). *Understanding tornadoes*. [On-Line]. Retrieved August 7, 2000, from <http://www.usatoday.com/weather/tornado/wtwist0.htm>

