



Fact Sheet

PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

TEST INFORMATION

This test was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that, which is learned, by students taking the course. The school may choose to award college credit to the student based on the achievement of a passing score. The passing score for each examination is determined by the school based on recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE®). This minimum credit-awarding score is equal to the mean score of students in the norming sample who received a grade of C in the course. Some schools set their own standards for awarding credit and may require a higher score than the ACE recommendation. Students should obtain this information from the institution where they expect to receive credit.

The test consists of two parts:

Part One contains 84 multiple-choice questions and is untimed. **Students must pass both parts of the test in order to receive credit.**

Part Two requires the student to record an impromptu persuasive speech that is approximately 4 minutes. **Speeches that are shorter than 3 minutes or longer than 5 minutes will receive an automatic failure.** Speeches are to be recorded on an audiocassette tape. The student will be given a specific topic on which to speak and will have 10 minutes in which to prepare the speech.

Reasons for Automatic Failure are:

- (1) Timing (shorter than 3 minutes-longer than 5 minutes)
- (2) Editing
- (3) Topic not addressed
- (4) Failure to take a position
- (5) Took several positions

If you take the Principles of Public Speaking examination and fail, you may retest after 6 months (180 days) on a different speech topic.

Part Two: A faculty member who teaches a Public Speaking course at an accredited college or university will grade the speech using the five dimensions listed. Raters are trained to apply a scoring rubric (guide) uniformly to all speeches. You will have 10 minutes to prepare your speech, which will be judged on the following dimensions.

Structure/Organization:	(25 percent)
Delivery:	(25 percent)
Content/Supporting Material:	(20 percent)
Effect/Persuasive:	(20 percent)
Language/Style:	(10 percent)

CONTENT

The following topics commonly taught in courses on this subject are covered by this examination:

	Approximate Percent
I. Ethical, Historical, and Social Considerations of Public Speaking (free speech in a democracy and free speech issues)	5%
II. Audience Analysis and Adaptation/ Effect/Persuasive (analyzing the audience and preparing the speech in terms of the needs of the speaker and the major characteristics of the audience, e.g., age, sex, socio-economic traits, education, political and ethnic attitudes, available time, etc.)	8%
III. Topics and Purposes of Speeches (formulating appropriate speech topics and speech purposes)	11%
IV. Structure/Organization (structuring introductions, bodies, and conclusions; understanding thought patterns and organizational strategies)	18%
V. Content/Supporting Materials (recognizing and using evidence, argument, and reasoning; formulating logical, emotional, ethical, and credible appeals)	15%
VI. Research (using reference materials and finding sources in the preparation of a speech)	5%
VII. Language and Style (using language appropriate for a public speech)	11%
VIII. Delivery (articulation, voice, pronunciation, and body action)	11%

IX. Communication Apprehension (understanding and controlling apprehension in public speaking)	3%
X. Listening and Feedback (listening techniques; obstacles to avoid; giving and responding to feedback)	5%
XI. Criticism and Evaluation (criticizing and evaluating the effectiveness of a public speech)	8%

SAMPLE QUESTIONS (Part I)

1. In both classical and contemporary views of public speaking, primary attention is given to which of the following?
 - (A) Style of the speech
 - (B) Substance or content of the speech
 - (C) Delivery of the speech
 - (D) Organization of the speech
2. A speech divided into the three main divisions of animal, vegetable, and mineral would be best organized according to which of the following patterns?
 - (A) Temporal
 - (B) Cause-effect
 - (C) Topical
 - (D) Problem-solution
3. Speaker credibility refers most closely to which of the following?
 - (A) Persuasiveness
 - (B) Effectiveness
 - (C) Emotional appeal
 - (D) Believability

4. In his famous "Liberty or Death" speech, Patrick Henry said:
- For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery; and in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility, which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.
- This excerpt provides an example of Henry's attempt to do which of the following?
- (A) Establish the truth of his proposition
 (B) Establish his credibility
 (C) Present his opponents' arguments in a bad light
 (D) Provide the audience with arguments to use against the alternative views they would hear from other speakers
5. The assumption that a person who is competent in one field is also competent in another field is referred to as which of the following?
- (A) Halo effect
 (B) Matching hypothesis
 (C) Social exchange hypothesis
 (D) Self-fulfilling prophecy
6. The predisposition to act for or against a person or position is referred to as which of the following?
- (A) Attitude
 (B) Belief
 (C) Value
 (D) Opinion
7. Most speeches should be prepared for which of the following audiences?
- (A) Hypothetical
 (B) General
 (C) Specific
 (D) Idealized
8. Which of the following terms is used for the argument that what a person hears last is remembered best and has the greatest effect?
- (A) Primacy
 (B) Recency
 (C) Climax
 (D) Anticlimax
9. Which of the following patterns of organization would be most suitable for speeches such as "The events leading to World War II," "the development of language in the child," and "the major steps in learning to use a computer"?
- (A) Spatial
 (B) Chronological
 (C) Problem-solution
 (D) Cause-effect
10. The degree to which the audience members have counterarguments ready to answer an attack on their beliefs, attitudes, and values is referred to as which of the following?
- (A) Persuasive presumption
 (B) Inoculation
 (C) Selective exposure
 (D) Reinforcement

SAMPLE SPEECH TOPIC (Part II)

Topic: Some people believe that all states should be allowed to pass laws requiring the death penalty for certain crimes. Others feel that the death penalty is wrong and should be abolished. Try to persuade the audience of your position or point of view on the death penalty. Include supporting arguments to defend your position. Be sure to take the designated audience into consideration.

Audience: A college public speaking class composed of female and male students ranging in age from 18 to 30.

STUDYING FOR THE EXAMINATION

The following is a list of reference publications that were being used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. Appropriate textbooks for study are not limited to those listed below. If you wish to obtain study resources to prepare for the examination, you may reference either the current edition of the following titles **or** textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference **more than one textbook** on the topics outlined in this fact sheet. You should **begin by checking textbook content against the content outline** included on the front page of this Fact Sheet **before** selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study. Textbooks may be found at the campus bookstore of a local college or university offering a course on the subject.

Sources for study material suggested but not limited to the following:

Bradley, Bert E. *Fundamentals of Speech Communication: The Credibility of Ideas*. Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown, current edition.

DeVito, Joseph A. *The Elements of Public Speaking*. New York, NY: Longman, current edition.

Gronbeck, Bruce E. and others. *Principles of Speech Communication*. New York, NY: Longman, current edition.

Lucas, Stephen E. *The Art of Public Speaking*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Inc., current edition.

McCroskey, James. *Introduction to Rhetorical Communication*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, current edition.

Nelson, Paul Edward, and Judy Cornelia Pearson. *Confidence in Public Speaking*. Madison, WI: Brown & Benchmark, current edition.

Sprague, Jo, and Douglas Stuart. *The Speaker's Handbook*. Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace College Pubs., current edition.

Verderber, Rudolph F. *The Challenge of Effective Speaking*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, current edition.

Current textbook used by a local college or university for a course on the subject.

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Council on Education (ACE) has reviewed and evaluated the DSST test development process and has made the following recommendations:

Area or Course	Public Speaking
Equivalent:	Lower-level baccalaureate
Level:	Three (3) semester hours
Amount of credit:	ACE Commission on
Source:	Educational Credit and
	Credentials

INFORMATION

Colleges and universities that would like additional information about the national norming, or assistance in local norming or score validation studies should write to: DSST Program, Prometric, 2000 Lenox Drive, 3rd Floor, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.

It is advisable that schools develop a consistent policy about awarding credit based on scores from this test and that the policy be reviewed periodically. Prometric will be happy to help schools in this effort.

Correct Responses: 1.B; 2.C; 3.D; 4.B; 5.A; 6.A; 7.C; 8.B; 9.B; 10.B

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