

“In Their Shoes for Three Minutes”

Goal: To apply students’ gained knowledge of public speaking to an impromptu special occasion speech. This uses Bloom’s taxonomy levels of application and evaluation.

Rationale: Speaking on special occasions typically is one of the last types of speech discussed in a classroom lecture. This topic is very important for a few main reasons. First, it will help students apply their speaking knowledge to a possible real-life speaking opportunity in the future. Second, the activity provides an opportunity for students to practice giving an impromptu speech, which some types of special occasion speeches tend to be. Lastly, this activity will also prepare the student for the final exam.

Directions:

1. Divide the class into nine groups of three, assuming there are 27 students in the class.
2. Have the students move the desks into their assigned groups with the desks facing each other.
3. Randomly pass out a notecard to each group. Each notecard will have a type of special occasion speech written on the front and a number from one to nine on the back. Examples of special occasion speech types are: to welcome, to pay tribute, to introduce, to nominate, to dedicate, to commemorate, to entertain, to recognize, and a farewell speech.
4. Say to the students, “One student in each group: please pull out your textbook and look up the section that describes the speech type you were given on the notecard. Look it over as a group and briefly discuss the speech type.” Give students five minutes to complete this.
5. Instructor randomly passes out another notecard to each group with a name of a famous Hollywood celebrity on it.
6. Instructor says to the students, “I just gave you a second notecard with the name of a famous Hollywood celebrity. Now apply the type of special occasion speech, on your first notecard, to the celebrity on the second notecard.”
7. Explain to the class that giving a special occasion speech isn’t always planned ahead of time; it may be something you will be asked to do in minutes. Give the example of an actor or actress winning a Golden Globe award. Explain that the actor or actress is giving an impromptu special occasion speech.
8. Say to the students, “I am going to give you 10 minutes to put together a three-minute special occasion speech which will include the three main components of a speech: introduction, main points, and conclusion. When time is up, I will call your group up to the front by the number on the card and your group will give your speech to the class. Each group member has to speak, therefore I suggest you divide the speech accordingly. Also, it is a good idea to keep in mind that—just like your other speeches—a special occasion

speech needs to flow properly in order to keep the audience's attention.
Ready, set, go!"

9. After the 10 minutes are up, the instructor calls out group numbers and students come up accordingly.
10. After each group has completed their three-minute speech, say to the class, "Now the audience needs to guess which type of special occasion speech that was. Why did you choose that? What clues lead you to that choice?"
11. Continue with that process until all nine groups have completed their speeches.
12. Ask the students, "Can you see how you can use a special occasion speech in your own life? The skills you have learned through out the quarter in this class will be useful to you the rest of your life."

Typical results: Students really enjoy this activity, it will allow them to interpersonally connect with classmates and learn about special occasion speeches at the same time. The other groups that are not speaking tend to actively listen to their peers. The entire class is engaged in the various types of speeches. The speeches tend to be very creative and the students have fun while speaking.

Materials needed: Instructor will need 18 notecards. On nine notecards, written on the front is a type of special occasion speech and the back has a number from one to nine. On the second set of nine, write the name of a famous Hollywood celebrity. Each group will need a textbook, a single sheet of paper, and something to write with.

Time: This activity takes about 50 minutes. The instructor can manipulate the time allotted to the groups depending on the length of the class period. For example, in shorter classes instructor may increase the number of students per group and give the groups between five to seven minutes to prepare the special occasion speech.