

5-Minute Speech Outline Template

I. Pick A Topic

- A. Before you can begin writing an outline, you have to know what you're going to be speaking about. In some situations, you may have a topic given to you—especially if you are in a public speaking class and must follow the instructor's requirements. But in many cases, speakers must come up with their own topic for a speech.
- B. Consider your audience and what kind of educational, humorous, or otherwise valuable information they need to hear. Your topic and message should of course be highly relevant to them. If you don't know your audience well enough to choose a topic, that's a problem.
- C. Your audience is your first priority. If possible, however, it's also helpful to choose a topic that appeals to *you*. What's something you're interested in and/or knowledgeable about?
- D. It will be much easier to write a speech on a topic you care about rather than one you don't. If you can come up with a speech topic that appeals to your audience and is interesting to you, that's the sweet spot for writing and delivering an unforgettable speech.

II. Write a Thesis Statement:

- A. The next step is to ask yourself two important questions:
 - i. What do you want your audience to take away from your speech?
 - ii. How will you communicate this main message?
- B. The key message of your speech can also be called your "thesis statement." Essentially, this is your main point—the most important thing you hope to get across.
- C. You'll most likely actually say your thesis statement verbatim during your speech. It should come at the end of your introduction. Then, you'll spend the rest of your talk expanding on this statement, sharing more information that will prove the statement is true.

III. Hook

- A. Once you have a topic for your presentation and a good thesis statement, you can move on to the bulk of the outline.
- B. The first part of your speech is the introduction, which should include a strong "hook" to grab the attention of your audience. There are endless directions you can go to create this hook. Don't be afraid to get creative! You might try:
 - i. Telling a joke
 - ii. Sharing an anecdote
 - iii. Using a prop or visual aid
 - iv. Asking a question (rhetorical or otherwise)
- C. These are just a few examples of hooks that can make your audience sit up and take notice.
- D. The rest of your introduction shouldn't be too long—as a general rule of thumb, you want your introduction to take up about 10% of your entire speech. But there are a few other things you need to say.
- E. Briefly introduce yourself and who you are to communicate why the audience should trust you. Mention why you're giving this speech.
- F. Explain that you're going to cover X main points—you can quickly list them—and include your thesis statement.
- G. You could also mention how long your speech will be and say what your audience will take away from it ("At the end of our 5 minutes together today, you'll understand how to cook with a Dutch oven").
- H. Then smoothly transition into the body of your speech.

IV. Body

- A. Next, you'll write the body of your speech. This is the bulk of your presentation. It will include your main points and their sub-points. Here's how this should look:
 - i. Main Point 1:
 - a. Sub point.
 - b. Sub point.
 - c. Sub point.
 - d. Transition Sentence: (Smoothly connect Main Point 1 with Main Point 2)
 - ii. Main Point 2:
 - a. Sub point.
 - b. Sub point.
 - c. Sub point.
 - d. Transition Sentence: (Smoothly connect Main Point 2 with Main Point 3)
 - iii. Main Point 3:
 - a. Sub point.
 - b. Sub point.
 - c. Sub point.
 - d. Signal the wrap up! (Move smoothly from Main Point 3 to the conclusion of your speech.)

V. Conclusion:

- A. Your conclusion should concisely summarize the main points of your speech. You could do this by saying, "To recap as I finish up, today we learned..." and reiterate those primary points. It's also good to leave the audience with something to think about and/or discuss. Consider asking them a question that expands on your speech—something they can turn over in their minds the rest of the day. Or share one final story or quote that will leave them with lasting inspiration. Bonus points if your conclusion circles back around to your introduction or hook.
- B. Thank audience for listening!

Sample Outline

- I. Let's say you decide to give a five-minute speech to your Scout patrol about Dutch oven cooking for campouts. To prepare, create a brief outline of the main points to cover. It might look like this.
 - A. Introduction
 - i. Begin with a true story about the first time you cooked over a campfire. "The beef was burned and covered with ash. It was a disaster! I knew I had to improve my skills. That is when I decided to learn about Dutch oven cooking."
- II. Body
 - A. How to select a Dutch oven and why you need to season it before using it. This involves oiling it and baking it at a high temperature in an oven
 - B. Tips for cooking with Dutch ovens.
 - C. How to clean and properly store a Dutch oven so it will last a lifetime.
 - D. One-pot wonders: Handouts of four recipes for a Dutch oven meal that will make your entire patrol a bunch of happy campers.
- III. Conclusion
 - A. Nothing tastes better than a hearty meal at the end of a long day of hiking, cycling, or canoeing. Preparing and eating a great home-cooked meals outdoors with your patrol is part of what makes the brotherhood of Scouting so memorable. So don't forget the wonders of one-pot cooking with a Dutch oven. It truly beats a burnt meal that tastes like charcoal briquettes.