

SAMPLE TOPICS

Speaking opportunities are not limited to speech or English classrooms. Science, social studies and other content areas also lend themselves to oral presentations. Speeches may be given as part of larger assignments. For example, a written report can be scored using the writing scoring guide and a speech covering the material in the report can be scored using the speaking scoring guide. The more speaking becomes a regular classroom activity, the more proficient students will become.

The following sample topics—listed for **benchmarks 1, 2, 3 and CIM**—may be helpful in developing classroom assessments. Tips for helping students prepare their speeches follow the sample topics.

Benchmarks 1 and 2

Classroom reports on:

- noted individuals (authors, inventors, scientists, historical figures, artists, celebrities, sports figures, politicians)
- places (countries, cities, monuments, tourist attractions, natural wonders, civilizations throughout history)
- notable events (battles, discoveries, disasters, historical events, sporting events)
- natural phenomena (hurricanes, volcanoes, sunspots)
- nature and wildlife (breeds of animals, insects, plant life, rain forests and other habitats)
- 4-H, scout or other outside projects

Benchmark 3 and CIM

Classroom reports on:

- noted individuals (authors, inventors, scientists, historical figures, artists, celebrities, sports figures, politicians)
- places (countries, cities, monuments, tourist attractions, natural wonders, civilizations throughout history)
- notable events (battles, discoveries, disasters, historical events, sporting events)
- natural phenomena (Northern Lights, Black Holes, hurricanes, volcanoes)

Reports on:

- student exchange experiences (presented to Rotary or other sponsoring civic club)
- experiments/labs in a science class
- a Future Farmers of America project
- a specific occupation and the training and skills required to qualify to do it
- debates on public issues in a social studies class
- mock television news editorial on a controversial issue pertaining to the school, community, state or nation
- analysis of a work of art (poem, novel, short story, play, painting, sculpture, vocal or instrumental piece of music, dance)

- campaign speech at a school assembly
- speeches prepared for speech competitions
- persuasive speech on environmental, legal, educational, social or political issues

Unrehearsed presentation topics

At the CIM level, students are required to give one unrehearsed speech with preparation time limited to 15 to 20 minutes. Potential topics may be drawn from the list above. Students will be most successful if the topic appeals to them and relates to their own knowledge and experience. Students may suggest topics, keeping in mind they are unlikely to draw the topic they suggested. Or, students may select from topics previously discussed in class. In any case, students should be allowed to choose from a few options so they can select a topic with which they are more familiar.

Preparing for Speeches

Similar to writing, the best speeches are developed over time. Thus, a reasonable amount of class time should be allocated to preparation. Even the best speakers will benefit from activities to polish their presentations.

Classroom preparation activities might include:

- Researching the topic
- Organizing the material into an outline
- Making note cards that reflect key ideas and their sequence in the speech
- Creating visual aids
- Practicing the speech individually, with peer partners and in small groups
- Studying the official scoring guide
- Watching scored student speeches and discussing them in class. The videotape, *Oregon Speaks: Classroom Speaking Assessment* has been sent to all schools and can be used for this purpose.
- Reviewing the student checklist included in the Scoring Guides section of the Speaking Resources part of the ODE Website
- Using student scoring guides to score each other's presentations