



Beijing Foreign Studies University|
教育部 - 出国人员培训部

i Based on: 《公共演讲的艺术》（第7版），乔治·L·格赖斯、约翰·F·斯金纳 著，中国人民大学出版社，2012年。

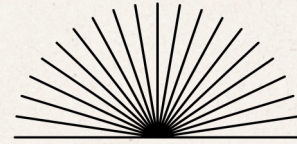
Public Speaking

Unit 4, Lesson 1: writing your introduction

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Spring Term,
2026





I think the end is implicit
in the beginning. It must
be. If that isn't there in the
beginning, you don't know
what you're working
toward. You should have a
sense of a story's shape
and form and its destina-
tion, all of which is like a
flower inside a seed.

—Eudora Welty



Lesson 1

01	<u>Warm-up:</u> What makes a good introduction?
02	Part 1: Getting the attention of your audience
03	Practice 1: recognizing attention getters
04	Part 2: State your topic
04	Part 3: establish the importance of your topic
05	Practice 2: using facts and figures to establish importance
06	Part 4: establish your credibility
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08	Examples: Putting it all together
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The Five Objectives of a Speech Introduction

How can you **start** your **speech** in a(n) _____ manner?



Good introduction!



Part 1: Get the Attention of Your Audience



This is your **first objective** as a speaker. There are **seven** ways to achieve it:

A. Question Your Audience

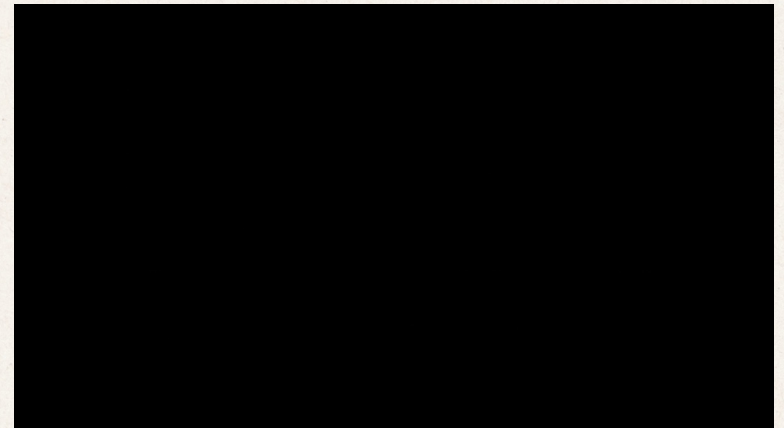
Rhetorical Question: Stimulates thought without an overt response.

***Example:** "How did you spend last weekend?
Staring at your phone until 2 a.m.?"*

Direct Question: Seeks a public response, often by a show of hands.

***Example:** "How many of you have used AI tools like DeepSeek to help with your homework this semester?"*

Watch this example: How many questions does she ask the audience?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRTqeAEga5E>

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Part 1: Get the Attention of Your Audience



B. Arouse Your Audience's Curiosity

Use suspense to make the audience wonder what is to come.

Example: "My mother's voice on WeChat: 'You did WHAT?! ... Are you crazy?! ... Tell me this is a joke!' My father's reply: 'You paid money to do this? In China? Have you lost your mind?' These were the responses I got when I told my parents I had just gone bungee jumping at a tourist spot in Zhangjiajie."





Part 1: Get the Attention of Your Audience



B. Stimulate Your Audience's Imagination

Use descriptive language to paint a vivid picture based on shared experiences.

Example: "Imagine yourself on Huangshan Mountain, late at night. The moonlight lights up the ancient pine trees around you. A cool wind moves through the rocks. Above you, the stars are so clear you feel like you could reach out and touch them. This is what it feels like to hike one of China's most famous mountains at night."





Part 1: Get the Attention of Your Audience

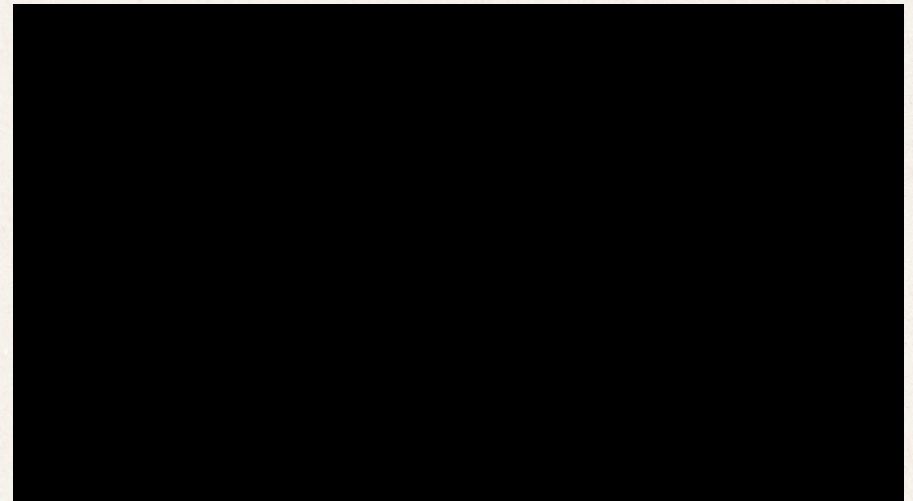


D. Promise Your Audience Something Beneficial

Appeal to self-interest to secure attention.

Example: "In the next ten minutes, I will show you how to find a summer internship that not only looks good on your resume but also pays enough to cover next semester's tuition."

Watch this example: What does he promise the audience?



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Part 1: Get the Attention of Your Audience



E. Amuse Your Audience

Use humor to create a relaxed atmosphere.

Example: "What do you call someone who speaks three languages? Trilingual. What do you call someone who speaks two languages? Bilingual. What do you call someone who speaks one language? A native English speaker—who never learned anything else."

1. Is math fun?



2. Does he make sound fun?

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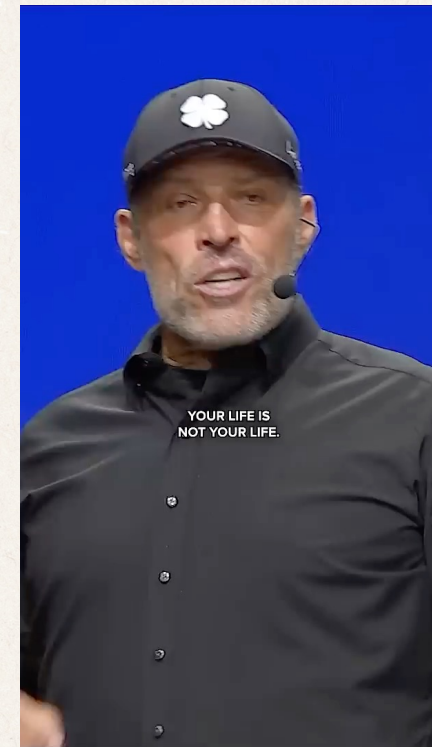
Part 1: Get the Attention of Your Audience



F. Energize Your Audience

Command attention through dynamic delivery

Elements: A confident walk to the podium, direct eye contact, a friendly smile, upright posture, a clear and strong voice, and purposeful gestures.





Practice 1: Recognizing Attention Getters

Watch this speaker and identify the strategies he used to get the audience's attention:

Question the audience

Arouse curiosity

Stimulate imagination

Energize the audience

Promise something

Amuse the audience



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Part 2: State Your Topic



Once attention is secured, the speaker **must state the topic directly** and clearly.

How to Do It: Use a simple, clear sentence.

Example: "So the main I want to address in this talk is that there is nothing wrong with being an introvert. However, society doesn't see it in the same lighting."

Practical Tip: Do not waste time with vague statements. After your attention-getter, state your purpose in one clear sentence.

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Part 3: Establish the Importance of Your Topic



The speaker must convince the audience that the topic matters to them.

How to Do It: Use facts, examples, and expert opinions to show relevance.

Example: To show the importance of choosing safe drinking water, a student says:

"According to a 2023 report from the China Center for Disease Control, nearly 30 percent of water dispensers in university dormitories tested positive for bacteria levels above safety standards."



Practice 2: using facts and figures to establish importance



Listen to this speaker and number the facts in the order she mentions them:



- 9 About **798 million** adults lack basic literacy skills
- 2 **25 million** out of the **70 million** will never go to school
- 5 **Two-thirds** of these kids will ever graduate high school
- 8 Approximately **five million** more teachers are needed to educate every kid in the world
- 7 West Africa needs about **380,000** more teachers
- 4 **18 million** of those in Africa are girls
- 3 **33 million** kids in Africa can't go to school
- 6 India needs about **350,000** more teachers
- 1 **70 million** children don't have the opportunity to go to school every day



Part 4: Establish Your Credibility to Speak on Your Topic



The speaker must demonstrate why they are qualified to speak on the subject.



How to Do It (Research): Cite reliable sources to show you have prepared.

Example: "In preparing this speech, I read three research papers from the Journal of Educational Psychology."



How to Do It (Experience): Draw on your own personal experience.

Example: In a speech on online shopping scams, a student says in the introduction: "Last year, I almost lost 3,000 yuan to a fake seller on a second-hand app. I was lucky to get my money back, but many students are not so lucky."



Part 5: Preview Your Key Ideas



The preview acts as a map, telling the audience the main points to be covered.

How to Do It: Use a brief statement (one to three sentences) that outlines the key ideas.

***Example (Study Skills):** "To improve your study habits, I will share three simple techniques: first, how to use the Pomodoro method to manage your time; second, how to create effective study notes; and third, how to avoid distractions from your phone."*



Putting It All Together: Complete Introduction Examples

Example (Qingming Festival):

Attention: "There is **a Chinese saying**: a person dies three times. The first time is when their heart stops beating. The second time is when they are buried. The third time is when their name is spoken for the last time. (人有三死。第一次是心脏停止跳动的时候。第三次是他们的名字最后一次被人提起的时候。)"

Topic: "Today, I **want to talk about death**—but not in a sad way. I want to talk about how we remember those who have passed, using a tradition from southern China called Qingming Festival."

Importance: "For many young people, Qingming Festival is just a day off from school. But in Chinese culture, **this tradition carries deep meaning** about family, memory, and respect."

Credibility: "I grew up in a small village in Jiangxi, where my grandmother taught me how to prepare offerings and clean the family graves. Every year, our whole family returns home for this day."

Preview: "In the next few minutes, I will explain the history of Qingming Festival, describe how families celebrate it today, and share why this tradition is still important for young people like us."



Practice 3: Complete Introduction Examples

Match the paragraphs to their respective functions in the introduction:



1.Attention

2.Topic

3.Importance

4.Credibility

5.Preview

"I will share three things: why families push for certain majors, the cost of ignoring our interests, and how to find a balance."

"Today, I want to talk about the pressure to choose a 'useful' major instead of one we actually care about."

"Last year, my roommate told his parents he wanted to study history. Their reply was simple: 'You will be a teacher with no money. Choose business.' He chose business. Now he is failing two classes and does not want to get out of bed."

"I faced this choice myself. I also talked to five classmates about their experiences."

"A 2023 survey found that nearly 7 out of 10 university students in China feel family pressure to pick a major based on job prospects. Almost half of them say it affects their happiness."



Practice 4: Quiz

Let's test what we have learnt in this unit:



Public Speaking Course

Understanding Effective Speech Introductions

10 multiple-choice questions • Select the best answer • Submit to see detailed feedback & score

Q1 A student begins her speech by saying: "Close your eyes. Imagine you are sitting in a crowded canteen. The smell of fried rice fills the air. Your friends are laughing beside you. Suddenly, your phone buzzes—a message from your parents. You have not called them in two weeks." What attention-getting strategy is she using?

- ☐ A) Asking a direct question
- ☐ B) Using humor
- ☐ C) Stimulating the audience's imagination
- ☐ D) Promising something beneficial

 Not yet answered. Submit to see feedback.



Practice 5: Complete Your Own Introduction

Now it's time to create your own introduction:



Attention: _____

Topic: _____

Importance: _____

Credibility: _____

Preview: _____
