

Grade 6 Informational

Stand and Deliver

Butler up, Urkowski on deck, Aldana in the hole. Sounds like a summer ball game, but what if it was your teacher announcing the line-up for your oral history report? Many students feel less nervous standing at home plate preparing to bat against a tough pitcher than they do standing in front of their classmates to give a speech.

Being a successful speaker isn't just about writing a great report. Once you have your presentation written, you are only halfway done. The next task is to practice aloud. How you say something is almost as important as what you are saying.

First of all, remember to speak clearly and to talk loudly enough for everyone in your audience to hear. No one likes to decipher mumbling or to strain to hear a weak voice. A great speaker expresses enthusiasm for the topic by speaking with variety. If you speak with passion, you will find that facial expressions become a natural part of your delivery. Smiling actually helps relax nerves, so don't be afraid to show those pearly whites!

In addition to your voice and facial expression, you will want to stand tall and confidently with your feet firmly planted on the floor. Too many speakers show their nerves by rocking back and forth or fidgeting. Don't forget to use your hands to gesture. Good speakers aren't statues; they communicate with their hands.

Our culture also values strong eye contact. Look directly at your audience. If you have a note card, be sure that you don't read from it. Only look at your card as a reminder; you should concentrate on looking at your audience.

The final way to prepare for your speech is to check your appearance. You don't have to wear something fancy to deliver a presentation, but you do need to feel good about yourself. Sometimes that means wearing a favorite t-shirt or a comfortable pair of shoes.

Imagine how unprepared you'd feel if you never practiced batting before your first ballgame of the season. That's the same feeling many students have when it's time to give an oral report. They don't realize that practicing aloud is what it takes to be confident and successful. Now you know, so say good-bye to nerves and hello to an outstanding presentation.

Grade 6 Narrative

Watching and Waiting

I played kick the can with Jason,
caught tadpoles with Erin,
ran through the sprinklers
and had sleepovers with Jamine.

Now they're all in high school,
way too busy for me—
dating, going to parties
and dances, telling jokes
I don't understand,
going places I'm not allowed.

Getting their learner's permits,
driving their family cars,
leaving the neighborhood,
giving me a quick wave
as their CD players boom,
trailing a banner of music
behind them.

As they sweep down our street,
turn the corner,
leaving me watching,
I am waiting for *my* turn.