



Public Speaking 10TH-12TH- BOE Approved May 19, 2025

Course Description:

Public Speaking is a course designed to develop students' skills in speaking, listening, and presenting in both formal and informal contexts. Over the course of the semester, students will study persuasive speaking, argumentation, debate, informative speaking, interviewing, active listening, formal introductions, marketing, comedy/improv, and impromptu speaking. Through active participation in this wide variety of communication contexts, students will learn to connect to their audience and develop their confidence and competence as speakers and presenters.

Grade Level: 10th, 11th, 12th

Unit Scope and Sequence

Unit 1: Intro to Public Speaking

Unit 2: Formal Introductions and Celebrations

Unit 3: Informative Speaking

Unit 4: Intro to Persuasion

Unit 5: Persuasion

Course Enduring Understandings:

- When we hear a new message, our brains are hardwired to gather information from all of our senses and our background knowledge and to assemble that information into a kind of story that determines how we value that information.
- Audiences will respond to a speaker's non-verbal communication before they listen to your message and personal and relatable stories are both engaging and informative.
- Every author makes assumptions about their intended audience's background knowledge, questions, values, and ability to process information.
- Because members of the audience process nonverbal information quickly, authenticity and passion are essential to earning credibility and authority.
- A speaker's knowledge and selection of supporting materials will earn them credibility with different audiences on different occasions.

Course Essential Questions:

- What do we need to understand about public communication to ensure that we can communicate the messages we intend to the audience we are hoping to reach?
- How do our assumptions about our audience and the occasion for communication influence how we craft a message?
- What are our obligations to others in how we represent the authority we have to make claims and credibility of our information?
- How do we determine which information is common knowledge that does not require citation and which information needs to be attributed so it can be investigated?
- How does a speaker establish credibility and authority with a particular audience?

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Unit 1: Intro to Public Speaking

Students will research a historical figure. In the persona of the figure, they will present a two to three minute speech convincing their audience that they are one of the most significant figures in history. This assignment is an ungraded pre-assessment of each student's current public speaking skills.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
When we hear a new message, our brains are hardwired to gather information from all of our senses and our background knowledge and to assemble that information into a kind of story that determines how we value that information.	- What do we need to understand about public communication to ensure that we can communicate the messages we intend to the audience we are hoping to reach? - How do our assumptions about our audience and the occasion for communication influence how we craft a message?
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
- Non-verbals - Body language - Tone - Poise	- Prepare and deliver a three to five minute speech. - Deliver a rehearsed speech from notes without reading verbatim - Engage the audience - Set goals for improvement

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Unit 1: Intro to Public Speaking

Missouri Learning Standards

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Verbal Delivery : Speak audibly, and to the point, using conventions of language as appropriate to task, purpose and audience when presenting including fluent and clear articulation, strategically varying volume, pitch, and pace to consistently engage listeners.(11-12.SL.2.A)

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Nonverbal: Make consistent eye contact with a range of listeners when speaking, using a range of gestures or movement to emphasize aspects of speech while avoiding body language or mannerisms that might be distracting to the audience.(11-12.SL.2.B)

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Multimedia: Plan and deliver appropriate presentations based on the task, audience and purpose making strategic use of multimedia in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest conveying a clear and distinct perspective.(11-12.SL.2.C)

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Unit 2: Formal Introductions and Celebrations

In a 3 ½ -4 ½ minute-long speech, students introduce a classmate to the rest of the class and celebrate them as if they were receiving an award. Students script this speech out word-for-word and carefully practice their delivery. Students focus on selecting stories about their partners that capture their deeper personality and showcase their achievements.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
- Audiences will respond to a speaker's non-verbal communication before they listen to your message. - Personal and relatable stories are both engaging and informative.	- What kinds of non-verbal communication sets an audience at ease and inspires confidence in the speaker? - How can we find and tell stories that are appropriate for the occasion and also surprise and engage our audience?
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
- Tone - Fluency - Posture - Pacing - Pause - Projection - Articulation - Inflection	- Practice celebrating friends and family at fun, formal events like weddings - Introduce ourselves and others professionally - Interview for career opportunities - Write speeches with rich intros/conclusions and varying tones: engaging, humorous, thoughtful, etc. - Present a written speech fluently and gracefully

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Unit 2: Formal Introductions and Celebrations

Missouri Learning Standards

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Verbal Delivery: Speak audibly, and to the point, using conventions of language as appropriate to task, purpose and audience when presenting including fluent and clear articulation, strategically varying volume, pitch, and pace to consistently engage listeners.(11-12.SL.2.A)

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Nonverbal: Make consistent eye contact with a range of listeners when speaking, using a range of gestures or movement to emphasize aspects of speech while avoiding body language or mannerisms that might be distracting to the audience.(11-12.SL.2.B)

Priority Standard: Writing: 2 Approaching the Task as a Writer: Development: Follow a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style, and voice are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience; self-select and blend (when appropriate) previously learned narrative, expository, and argumentative writing techniques.(11-12.W.2.A)

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Unit 3: Informative Speaking

Students will create their own informative videos and share their videos digitally with the class. They will teach a complex skill, concept, or news story as professionally and factually as possible. Students will be assessed on their ability to clearly communicate vocally and visually to the unseen audience. Research is required.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
Every author makes assumptions about their intended audience's background knowledge, questions, values, and ability to process information. Authors use these assumptions to attempt to address their audiences' concerns in a meaningful way.	- What do you know about your audience and the questions they are likely to have about your topic? - How can you address your audience's likely questions in a way that will invite them in to more learning about your topic? - How can you organize the information so that it is easy for your audience to add to what they already know and to address any obvious misconceptions?at this unit will require students to address
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
- Authenticity - Ethics - Integrity - visual aids - Signposting - Organization - Focus	- Teach information to others in a clear and unbiased way - Use of technology tools to bring our message to a wider audience - Inspire confidence, trust, and reliability in our body language and voice quality - Research information - Attribute sources in public speaking - Use a 'mental-map' to support extemporaneous speaking skills

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Unit 3: Informative Speaking

Missouri Learning Standards

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Verbal Delivery : Speak audibly, and to the point, using conventions of language as appropriate to task, purpose and audience when presenting including fluent and clear articulation, strategically varying volume, pitch, and pace to consistently engage listeners.(11-12.SL.2.A)

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Multimedia: Plan and deliver appropriate presentations based on the task, audience and purpose making strategic use of multimedia in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest conveying a clear and distinct perspective.(11-12.SL.2.C)

Priority Standard: Writing: 2 Approaching the Task as a Writer: Development: Follow a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style, and voice are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience; self-select and blend (when appropriate) previously learned narrative, expository, and argumentative writing techniques. (11-12.W.2.A)

Priority Standard: Writing: 1 Approaching the Task as a Researcher: Research: Conduct research to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; gather multiple relevant, credible sources, print and digital; integrate information using a standard citation system.(11-12.W.1.A)

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Unit 4: Intro to Persuasion

As an introduction to the art of persuasion, students will create an imaginary product, political campaign, and/or nonprofit organization and write and deliver a marketing pitch. Students will begin using a debate structure to craft an opening argument and prepare for a response to the counter-arguments.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
- Because members of the audience process nonverbal information quickly, authenticity and passion are essential to earning credibility and authority. - A speaker's knowledge and selection of supporting materials will earn them credibility with different audiences on different occasions. - A speaker needs to know about their intended audience's values in order to communicate authority and credibility in ways the audience finds meaningful.	- How does a speaker establish credibility and authority with a particular audience? - Who is your target audience? Why are they the right people who need to take some action? - In a short speech, how can you convince your audience of a need to act or a harm from inaction?
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
- Ethics - Logic - Rhetoric - Extemporaneously - Debate - Counter-argument - Claim - Evidence - Warrant - Fallacy	- Explore the history, ethics, and psychology of the art of persuasion - Establish trust and demonstrate relevant expertise with a specific audience - Adjust tone and mood to influence an audience - Craft logical arguments with sound evidence and reasoning - Use of visual aids for persuasive purposes - Prepare and speak extemporaneously particularly through the practice of debate

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Unit 4: Intro to Persuasion

Missouri Learning Standards

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 1 Collaborating: Conversations: Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.(11-12.SL.1.A)

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 1 Collaborating: Questioning : Delineate a speaker's argument and claims evaluating the speaker's point of view, reasoning, stance, and evidence in order to propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.(11-12.SL.1.B)

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 1 Collaborating: Viewpoints of others: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives including those presented in diverse media: synthesize claims made on all sides of an issue, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.(11-12.SL.1.C)

Priority Standard: Writing: 2 Approaching the Task as a Writer: Development: Follow a writing process to produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, style, and voice are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience; self-select and blend (when appropriate) previously learned narrative, expository, and argumentative writing techniques.(11-12.W.2.A)

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Unit 5: Persuasion

Students will conduct research on a series of controversial topics, then use their research to develop well-organized, persuasive opening speeches and rebuttals in a formal debate setting. Outlining and argumentation skills are emphasized. As the final exam for the course, students will use their previously learned skills to persuade the audience to adopt a certain position or act in a particular way. Students research and develop cases, this time with the focus of persuading the audience in 8-10 minutes.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
• Transferable, conceptual big ideas having enduring value (These help organize "Know" and "Do" items) • Specific and useful generalizations, not facts or vocabulary • Strategic Principles in skill areas	• How do our assumptions about our audience and the occasion for communication influence how we craft a message? • What are our obligations to others in how we represent the authority we have to make claims and credibility of our information? • How do we determine which information is common knowledge that does not require citation and which information needs to be attributed so it can be investigated? • How does a speaker establish credibility and authority with a particular audience?
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
• Hook • Organization • Conclusion • Dynamic tone • Vocal rhythm • Syntax	• Develop our extemporaneous speaking skills, particularly through the practice of debate • Bring together multiple rhetorical techniques to present a highly-effective persuasive presentation. • Persuade our class to adopt a certain belief / position or act in a particular way in 8-10 minutes, with accompanying slides, while citing at least five sources.

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Unit 5: Persuasion

Missouri Learning Standards

Priority Standard: Speaking and Listening: 2 Presenting: Multimedia: Plan and deliver appropriate presentations based on the task, audience and purpose making strategic use of multimedia in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest conveying a clear and distinct perspective.(11-12.SL.2.C)

Priority Standard: Writing: 3 Approaching the Task as a Reader: Revise and Edit: Review, revise, and edit writing with consideration for the task, purpose, and audience. B: Word choice, syntax, and style: Choose precise language and make syntactical choices to reflect an understanding of how language functions in different contexts and enhance the reader's understanding of the text.(11-12.W.3.A.b)

Priority Standard: Writing: 3 Approaching the Task as a Reader: Revise and Edit: Review, revise, and edit writing with consideration for the task, purpose, and audience. E: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.(11-12.W.3.A.e)