**CHAPTER 1: Introducing Public Speaking**

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter highlights the primary benefits of public speaking, which include public speaking abilities, personal and social competencies, and academic and career skills. The essential elements of public speaking are also defined and include: the speaker, the audience, the messages and channels, noise, contexts, and ethics.

The chapter also teaches public speakers how to manage their communication apprehension. First, it explains that communication apprehension is normal and is experienced by everyone in varying degrees. Then it defines the different types of communication apprehension, which are trait apprehension and state apprehension. The section also explains that apprehension exists on a continuum and provides a self-test, so students can gauge their degree of apprehension. You may want to discuss this self-report in order to help your students interpret the results. You may also want to plan individual conferences with your students to provide specific suggestions for dealing with communication apprehension.

After this careful explanation of communication apprehension, the chapter turns to specific suggestions for dealing with communication apprehension. The suggestions are detailed within four general approaches to handling speaker apprehension: reversing factors that cause apprehension, restructuring thinking, practicing performance visualization, and employing systematic desensitization.

The chapter concludes by overviewing the ten essential steps for preparing and presenting an effective public speech.

**Learning Objectives**

This chapter introduces students to one of the most practical and empowering subjects they will study during their entire college career and will help them to:

1.1 Identify three benefits of studying public speaking.

1.2 Define *public speaking* and its essential elements.

1.3 Explain the nature of communication apprehension and suggest ways of managing your fear of public speaking.

1.4 Identify the 10 steps necessary for preparing and presenting a public speech.

**Chapter Outline**

I. The Benefits of Studying **Public Speaking**

A. Public Speaking Abilities

B. Personal and Social Competencies

C. Academic and Career Skills

1. Develop an effective and comfortable communication style.
2. Use verbal and nonverbal messages with greater clarity and persuasiveness.
3. Conduct research efficiently and effectively.
4. Critically analyze and evaluate arguments and evidence.
5. Understand human motivation and make effective use of your insights.
6. Communicate your competence, character, and charisma.
7. Give and respond appropriately to criticism.

II. The Essential Elements of Public Speaking

A. **Speaker**

B. **Audiences**

C. **Messages** and **Channels**

D. **Noise**

E. **Contexts**

1. **Physical context**

2. **Socio-psychological context**

3. **Temporalcontext**

4. **Cultural context**

F. **Ethics**

III. Managing Your **Communication Apprehension**

A. The Nature of Communication Apprehension

1. **Trait** and **state** apprehension.

2. Apprehension exists on a continuum.

B. Reverse the Factors that Cause Apprehension

1. Reduce the newness of public speaking by gaining experience.
2. Reduce your self-focus by visualizing public speaking as conversation.
3. Reduce your perceived differentness from the audience by stressing similarity.
4. Reduce your fear of failure by thoroughly preparing and practicing.
5. Reduce your anxiety by moving about and breathing deeply.
6. Avoid chemicals as tension relievers.

C. Restructure Your Thinking

1. **Cognitive restructuring**

2. **Self-affirmation**

D. Practice **Performance Visualization**

E. Desensitize Yourself

1. **Systematic desensitization**

IV.Preparing and Presenting a Speech: The 10 Steps in Brief

A. Step 1: Select Your **Topic**, **Purposes**, and **Thesis**

B. Step 2: Analyze Your Audience

C. Step 3: **Research** Your Topic

D. Step 4: Collect **Supporting Materials**

E. Step 5: Develop Your **Main Points**

F. Step 6: **Organize** Your Speech Materials

G. Step 7: Construct Your Introduction, Conclusion, and **Transitions**

H. Step 8: Word Your Speech

I. Step 9: **Rehearse** Your Speech

J. Step 10: Present Your Speech

**Journal Prompts**

**<pxe-note>Journal 1.1 Public Speaking Choice Point – The Importance of Public Speaking**

Robert is teaching a course in public speaking and wants to explain the importance of public speaking. *Assuming he was teaching your specific class, what are some of the things Robert might say to convince your class of the significance and value of public speaking skills?*

**Journal 1.2 Public Speaking Choice Point – Cultural Insensitivity**

Ted is giving a speech critical of bullfighting, something he sees as animal cruelty. A significant number of audience members, however, celebrate this as a part of their culture. *What options does Ted have for remaining true to his convictions and yet not insulting audience members?*

**Journal 1.3 Public Speaking Choice Point – Dealing with Apprehension**

This is Harry’s first experience with public speaking, and he’s very nervous. He’s afraid he’ll forget his speech or stumble somehow, so he’s wondering if it would be a good idea to alert the audience to his nervousness. *What are Harry’s options in this situation? What would you advise Harry to do if his audience were your public speaking class?*

**Journal 1.4 Public Speaking Choice Point – Finding the Right Supporting Material**

*Assuming you were giving a speech on the development of popular icons, what options would you have for supporting materials?*

**Shared Writing Prompt**

**Adapting Speeches for Your Class </pxe-note>**

*How would you describe members of your class in terms of their knowledge, interests, and attitudes and beliefs about religion, politics, finance, technology, or culture (select any one for your analysis)? How might this analysis figure into your adapting your speeches to them?*

**Discussion Questions**

1. How can public speaking skills help you in your academic and professional life?
2. What are the key differences between messages used in public speaking and messages used in conversations?
3. What are two different types of audiences, and how do they impact your message?
4. What are the various channels messages travel through? Which ones are most significant in public speaking?
5. What can be done to reduce the effects of noise?
6. What are the different types of contexts and how do they influence you in your role as a public speaker?
7. What is the difference of the subjective view of ethics and the objective view? Which do you believe is closest to your own ethical views?
8. Suppose your best friend had to give a public speech, and she was extremely nervous. What advice would you offer?

**Key Terms**

audience

audience analysis

channel

cognitive restructuring

communication apprehension

context

cultural context

ethics

general purpose

immediate audience

main points

message

noise

oral citation

organization

performance visualization

physical context

power priming

proof

public speaking

rehearsal

remote audience

research

self-affirmation

socio-psychological context

speaker

specific purpose

state apprehension

supporting materials

systematic desensitization

temporal context

thesis

topic

trait apprehension

transitions

**Activity**

**1.1 Professions and Public Speaking: Develop Your Interview Skills**

**Description:** To help students understand the importance of public speaking, ask students to interview someone they know (parent, supervisor, religious leader, another professor, etc.) about their public speaking experience. The results of the interview can be shared orally or in a brief written report. The rest of the class may find it interesting to hear either selected reports or reports from every member of the class.

**Objective:** This activity provides reinforcement about the unit from people “in the real world.” It also provides a preliminary experience in gathering information through interviewing.

**Time:** This activity is conducted outside of class. The in-class time will vary depending on whether you discuss the results of the interviews in class and, if so, whether you discuss the interviews of all of the students or those of selected students.

**Group Size:** This activity is completed individually by each member of the class. If there is an in-class discussion of the results, students may report to the class as a whole or to small groups of five to seven students.

**Form:** Give each student a short handout to record the responses to the interview.