

The Epideictic or Ceremonial Speech: An Overview

(<http://www.pitt.edu/~present/cermony.htm>)

An *epideictic* or *ceremonial* speech is a speech of praise or blame, celebration or thanksgiving, condemnation or mourning. Ceremonial speaking stresses that sharing of identities and values that unites people into communities (Osborn and Osborn). Eulogies, Fourth of July orations, speeches of condemnation or commendation, farewell addresses, etc. are instances of epideictic discourse. Ceremonial speeches often serve to establish standards for action or provide the ethical and moral basis for future arguments.

You should use language that is clear, vivid, inspiring and arousing. Your style will be critical in the delivery of the epideictic speech; **style** is *your* word preference and syntax (i.e., the structure of your sentences). Two major techniques of ceremonial speaking are **identification** and **magnification**.

Identification creates the feeling of closeness, familiarity, universality.

Magnification expounds overcoming obstacles, exceeding the boundaries, shifting paradigms, achieving the unparalleled, benefiting humankind.

The language you choose will influence how your audience will envision the subject. Words express an attitude toward the object, the idea, the event, or the person. Your words will convey a perspective or a reality.

Five basic guidelines for the epideictic speech (Cohn, 1992):

- use **concrete** rather than **abstract** terms
- use **personal** rather than **impersonal** references
- use **simple** rather than **complex** sentences
- use **active** rather than **passive** verbs
- use **more repetition of ideas** to enhance comprehension and memory.

For this assignment, you have the choice of the following five ceremonial formats:

- Commencement-
- Commemorative
- Eulogy
- After-Dinner Speech
- Tribute

Tue. 5/19/09

Overview - Ceremonial Speeches

Read in your textbook, pages 417-427. Complete Review Questions: 1-7. (turn in)

Homework: Complete Assignment #1: Be prepared to turn in tomorrow.

Wed. 5/20/09

Complete Assignment #2

Commencement Example

Homework: Begin writing your speech.

Thu. 5/21/09

Rhetorical Strategies

Homework: Complete your Rhetorical Analysis of MLK.

Tue. 5/26/09

Eulogy Example

Homework: Complete your Rhetorical Analysis assignment.

Wed. 5/27/09

Commencement Example

Homework: Complete your Rhetorical Analysis assignment.

Thu. 5/28/09

Tribute Example

Homework: Complete your Rhetorical Analysis Assignment

Fri. 5/29/09

Commemorative Example

Homework: Complete your Rhetorical Analysis Assignment

Mon. - Thu. (6/1/09 - 6/4/09)

Writing Workshop

Homework: Manuscripts completed for Friday, 6/5/09

Fri. (6/5/09)

Rehearsal & Final Exam Review

Homework: Presentations begin Monday.

Monday - Wednesday (6/8/09 - 6/10/09)

Presentations

Thursday & Friday (6/11-12/09)

Exam (in class) - No exam during exam period.

Absentees will need to make up exam during exam period.

CEREMONIAL ADDRESS
ASSIGNMENT #1

SITUATION: You have been assigned the task of presenting a "cermonial address" to your public speaking class. This opportunity allows you to leave your audience with a message of which you truly feel impassioned and focused.

DIRECTION: Reflect upon the final message you wish to leave your classmates. What are some of the ideas you wish to communicate to them? Brainstorm, at least, five potential messages you wish to send your classmates.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

