

Arizona State University (ASU) COM225 Public Speaking Final Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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Questions

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1. What role does tone play in the delivery of a public speech?
 - A. It dictates the content of the speech.
 - B. It conveys the speaker's emotional state.
 - C. It determines the speech length.
 - D. It impacts the use of visual aids.
2. What is the final step in the listening process?
 - A. Understanding
 - B. Responding
 - C. Recall and remembering
 - D. Receiving
3. In any persuasive speech, the main argument or claim is referred to as?
 - A. The thesis statement
 - B. The counterargument
 - C. The conclusion
 - D. The rhetorical question
4. To ensure ethical public speaking, what is important for the speaker to do?
 - A. Use persuasive tactics regardless of the truth
 - B. Be unprepared for the audience
 - C. Demonstrate respect towards the audience
 - D. Focus only on their own beliefs
5. Why is it important to have a clear structure in a speech?
 - A. It makes the speech longer and more detailed
 - B. It helps maintain the speaker's own interest
 - C. It aids audience comprehension and retention of the information presented
 - D. It allows for spontaneous speaking opportunities

6. Which of the following best characterizes the nature of beliefs in communication?
- A. Beliefs are generally fixed and unchangeable.
 - B. Beliefs influence attitudes and behaviors.
 - C. Beliefs are solely based on emotions.
 - D. Beliefs do not affect communication outcomes.
7. What is the primary purpose of a "call to action" in persuasive speaking?
- A. To entertain the audience
 - B. To encourage the audience to take specific steps or make changes based on the speaker's message
 - C. To summarize the speech content
 - D. To create an emotional connection with the audience
8. In what way does logic enhance communication?
- A. By appealing only to emotions
 - B. By providing a coherent structure to arguments
 - C. By using complex vocabulary
 - D. By avoiding clear expressions of ideas
9. Which fallacy attacks a person's character unfairly?
- A. Ad Baculum
 - B. Ad Hominem
 - C. Appeal to Ignorance
 - D. Straw Man
10. What does 'techne' refer to in terms of skills and communication?
- A. A style of speaking that is informal*
 - B. A habit of mind and body cultivated to create something
 - C. A natural talent that requires no practice
 - D. A type of creativity that is purely spontaneous

Answers

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1. B
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. C
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What role does tone play in the delivery of a public speech?

- A. It dictates the content of the speech.
- B. It conveys the speaker's emotional state.
- C. It determines the speech length.
- D. It impacts the use of visual aids.

Tone plays a crucial role in delivering a public speech because it effectively conveys the speaker's emotional state and intentions to the audience. Through tone, speakers can express enthusiasm, seriousness, anger, humor, or sincerity, which helps to establish a connection with the audience and evoke appropriate emotional responses. For instance, a passionate tone can engage listeners and make a persuasive argument more compelling, while a calm and measured tone may lend credibility and authority to a more serious topic. When speakers adjust their tone to suit the subject matter and audience, they create an atmosphere that enhances communication, making it more likely that the audience will relate to the message being delivered. Therefore, the emotional nuances embedded in tone are essential for effective public speaking, making it a primary tool in engaging and influencing the audience's perceptions and reactions.

2. What is the final step in the listening process?

- A. Understanding
- B. Responding
- C. Recall and remembering
- D. Receiving

The final step in the listening process is tied to the ability to recall and remember information that has been communicated. After receiving auditory signals, processing and understanding the message, recalling information requires the listener to store and retrieve what they have learned or absorbed during the communication. This ability to remember is crucial for effective communication as it allows the listener to apply the information in future conversations, discussions, or actions. By effectively recalling and remembering, individuals can engage in more informed discussions, make better decisions based on previous information, and demonstrate active involvement in conversations. This process culminates the listening experience as it significantly impacts how well the communication is integrated into the listener's knowledge base. Understanding, responding, and receiving are all important components of the listening process but do not represent the final stage, which focuses on the retention and retrieval of information.

3. In any persuasive speech, the main argument or claim is referred to as?

- A. The thesis statement
- B. The counterargument
- C. The conclusion
- D. The rhetorical question

In a persuasive speech, the main argument or claim is referred to as the thesis statement. This is because the thesis statement encapsulates the core message that the speaker intends to convey to the audience. It serves as a foundation for the entire speech, guiding the organization and development of supporting points and arguments. A clear and compelling thesis statement is crucial in persuading the audience, as it outlines what the speaker believes and aims to prove throughout the speech. The other terms mentioned do not serve as the central claim. For instance, the counterargument is an opposing viewpoint that a speaker might address to strengthen their position but is not the main argument itself. The conclusion summarizes the main points and reiterates the thesis but does not present a new claim. A rhetorical question is used to engage the audience or provoke thought, rather than serving as the primary assertion of the speech. Thus, the thesis statement stands out as the defining element in a persuasive argument.

4. To ensure ethical public speaking, what is important for the speaker to do?

- A. Use persuasive tactics regardless of the truth
- B. Be unprepared for the audience
- C. Demonstrate respect towards the audience
- D. Focus only on their own beliefs

Demonstrating respect towards the audience is fundamental for ethical public speaking because it fosters a positive and constructive environment for communication. When a speaker respects the audience, they recognize the audience's perspectives, values, and experiences, which helps to build trust and credibility. This respect is essential for engaging the audience and encouraging open dialogue. It also ensures that the speaker's message is received in the spirit it is intended, contributing to a collaborative atmosphere rather than a confrontational one. Moreover, respectful communication encompasses being honest, acknowledging diverse viewpoints, and avoiding manipulation. By prioritizing respect, the speaker ensures ethical standards are upheld, enhancing the overall effectiveness and sincerity of their delivery. This approach leads to a more informed and empowered audience, as they feel valued and included in the conversation.

5. Why is it important to have a clear structure in a speech?

- A. It makes the speech longer and more detailed
- B. It helps maintain the speaker's own interest
- C. It aids audience comprehension and retention of the information presented
- D. It allows for spontaneous speaking opportunities

Having a clear structure in a speech is crucial because it directly enhances the audience's comprehension and retention of the information being presented. A well-structured speech organizes the content in a logical flow, making it easier for listeners to follow along and understand the key points. When an audience can easily grasp the organization of the material, such as through a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, they are more likely to remember the important messages conveyed. Moreover, a structured approach typically involves signposting—using verbal cues to guide the audience through the arguments or points being made. This process of structuring helps to reinforce the information and allows the audience to anticipate what is coming next, facilitating better retention long after the speech has ended. By ensuring clarity and coherence, a structured speech not only delivers content effectively but also engages the audience, making the experience more impactful and memorable.

6. Which of the following best characterizes the nature of beliefs in communication?

- A. Beliefs are generally fixed and unchangeable.
- B. Beliefs influence attitudes and behaviors.
- C. Beliefs are solely based on emotions.
- D. Beliefs do not affect communication outcomes.

Beliefs significantly influence attitudes and behaviors, making this choice the strongest characterization of their nature in communication. When individuals hold certain beliefs, these convictions shape how they perceive information and interact with others. For instance, a belief in the importance of sustainability can lead to an attitude favoring eco-friendly practices, which in turn influences behaviors such as purchasing decisions or advocating for environmental policies. Beliefs serve as the underlying framework through which people interpret messages, which is crucial in the context of public speaking and communication. A speaker's beliefs can affect how they present their message and how their audience receives it. Thus, understanding the role of beliefs is essential for effective communication and persuasion. The other options fail to recognize the dynamic nature and impact of beliefs. They either suggest that beliefs remain static and do not evolve, that they rely solely on emotions, or that they lack any influence on communication outcomes, all of which misrepresent the complexity of beliefs in the communication process.

7. What is the primary purpose of a "call to action" in persuasive speaking?

- A. To entertain the audience
- B. To encourage the audience to take specific steps or make changes based on the speaker's message
- C. To summarize the speech content
- D. To create an emotional connection with the audience

The primary purpose of a "call to action" in persuasive speaking is to encourage the audience to take specific steps or make changes based on the speaker's message. This element serves as a crucial component that moves beyond merely presenting information or arguments; it is intended to motivate the audience to act in some way that reflects the ideas presented during the speech. A call to action both reinforces the main points of the argument and provides a clear, actionable directive for the audience. By specifying what the speaker wants the audience to do—whether it's signing a petition, changing a behavior, or supporting a cause—the speaker is effectively translating the information into tangible outcomes. This step is essential for persuasive speaking as it gives the audience a direction in which to channel their understanding and energy after the speaking event. In contrast, while entertaining the audience, summarizing key points, or creating emotional connections can enhance a speech, these aspects do not fulfill the specific objective of motivating the audience to take action. A persuasive speech thrives on its ability to drive change and prompt the audience to engage with the topic on a practical level, making the call to action a pivotal part of effective communication in this context.

8. In what way does logic enhance communication?

- A. By appealing only to emotions
- B. By providing a coherent structure to arguments
- C. By using complex vocabulary
- D. By avoiding clear expressions of ideas

Logic enhances communication by providing a coherent structure to arguments. When presenting ideas, using logical reasoning helps to organize thoughts in a clear and rational manner. This structure allows the audience to follow the speaker's line of thought easily, enabling better understanding and retention of information. A well-structured argument makes it easier to draw conclusions, enhancing the persuasiveness of the message. By relying on logical frameworks, speakers can substantiate their claims with evidence, making their arguments more compelling. This systematic approach fosters critical thinking and encourages audiences to engage with the material presented. Ultimately, a clear organization through logical structuring serves to improve overall communication effectiveness.

9. Which fallacy attacks a person's character unfairly?

- A. Ad Baculum
- B. Ad Hominem
- C. Appeal to Ignorance
- D. Straw Man

The fallacy that attacks a person's character unfairly is Ad Hominem. This type of fallacy occurs when the focus shifts from the argument at hand to the personal characteristics, motives, or actions of the individual presenting the argument, rather than engaging with the content of their claims. It undermines the logic of the discussion because it distracts from the relevant issues and instead seeks to discredit the opponent based on unrelated personal attributes. For example, instead of addressing the arguments related to a policy, a speaker may attack another speaker's integrity or background, suggesting that because the person has a controversial past, their current arguments are invalid. This tactic can be particularly harmful in public discourse as it prevents constructive debate and can mislead audiences into making judgments based on personal attacks rather than logical reasoning. In contrast, the other choices refer to different types of fallacies that do not specifically involve personal attacks. Ad Baculum relies on threats to persuade, Appeal to Ignorance asserts that a claim is true simply because it hasn't been proven false, and Straw Man misrepresents an opponent's argument to make it easier to attack. Each of these fallacies has its own distinct characteristics that differentiate them from an Ad Hominem attack.

10. What does 'techne' refer to in terms of skills and communication?

- A. A style of speaking that is informal*
- B. A habit of mind and body cultivated to create something
- C. A natural talent that requires no practice
- D. A type of creativity that is purely spontaneous

'Techne' refers to a type of knowledge that involves the skillful application of understanding in a practical context. It encompasses the idea of a habit of mind and body that is cultivated to create something. This concept emphasizes the importance of learned skills and disciplined practice in mastering a craft or communication skill. In public speaking specifically, 'techne' underscores the blend of systematic knowledge and skillful execution. It reflects the notion that effective communicators hone their abilities through practice, experience, and the deliberate development of techniques designed to engage and persuade an audience. This stands in contrast to a purely innate ability or spontaneous creativity, which suggests that excellence can spring from inherent talent without the necessity of structured effort or learning.