Awesome Speaker’s Lab Mentor

Amazing Professor

Speakers Lab 123

11/11/2011

Explanation Speech Reflection

My explanation speech was about Angelina Grimke: her life, her writing and her speaking and how they impacted the abolitionist movement. I found I grew a lot between this speech and the last one, and I hope to grow even more as a speaker. Through the preparation, presentation and as an audience member, I truly learned from this speech process and know what areas to improve.

My time management was better in this speech. Last time I was the last to present, so I had more time to prepare, but I didn’t spend as much time in focused preparation. This time, however, I was first, so I found that my times of preparation and practice were much more productive. I wrote my speech draft and PowerPoint faster and started practicing right off the bat. Another thing that I did was to practice without notecards from the start as well. I knew that if I started off practicing with notecards that I would feel like I needed them for a crutch, so I peaked at my outline if I got stuck and kept right on going. My PowerPoint also helped give me visual cues and reminders, which helped with recall and timing. When I practiced my speech, I hit right about the 6.5-7 minute mark, but when I delivered it in class, I hit 5:45. This taught me that I tend to speed my speech up and leave out information when I’m actually giving it. In the future, I want to always be prepared to go a little shorter, so I don’t cut it quite so close next time.

From watching my delivery and reading my peer-reviewed papers, I think I have really improved in this speech. I didn’t say “Um” at all; I talked slower, I had more of a flow, I used more vocal intonation, I didn’t use note cards, and my topic was overall more interesting. However, I still have many areas to improve. I swayed back and forth while I was speaking, I used the same hand gestures repeatedly, I read my thesis off of the screen, I could have made better eye-contact, and I used a lot of quotes in my presentation. In the future, I would like to continue to improve in my voice and memorization, and improve on my movements, written sources on PowerPoint, and eye-contact.

As an audience member, I saw that the things I struggled with were common to all of us. I think it would be awesome if fewer of my classmates used notecards, but I totally understand feeling like they are necessary. I think my classmates have really improved on introductions and conclusions, and I think I did as well in my speech. I could definitely see improvement in each one of us, and I am excited to see more.

Through this speech I learned a lot about the importance of choosing a topic you’re interested in, managing time and practicing without a crutch, improving on little things like gestures, PowerPoints and more, and learning from my peers. For my next speech I will use better time management by writing my outline and making my PowerPoint right away, so I can get to practicing; I will work on my physical gestures; I will work on timing myself more, and I will make a PowerPoint with fewer long quotes. I think this plan of action will impact my next speech and make it even better than this one, and I am so excited to see what the next speeches will bring.