“Mad-Lib” Speech

(1) Goal

- This activity allows students to acquainted with each other and begin audience analysis, helps address communication apprehension and familiarize them with the basic speech outline early in the class.

(2) Rationale

- Students need to be speaking as soon as possible in public speaking class. But, they should also be learning about organizing their speeches and the basic speech outline. Students quickly learn about each other while working with their partner on the speech and by listening to the other students’ speeches. Thus, accomplishing their initial audience analysis of the class. Also, they utilize the basic speech outline by simply filling in the blanks in a prewritten complete sentence speech outline. Finally, students also begin addressing communication apprehension by “breaking the ice” with a fun activity that everyone has to do.

(3) Directions

1. Each student is given a “Mad-Lib” speech outline and they fill in the answers with their partner’s information. (One of the options I use is attached at the end of this proposal)
2. Students are assigned partners. Students organize themselves in chronological order based on the month and day of their birthday and are then paired on the basis of the order they are standing.
3. Students are given 10 minutes to fill out the outline with their partner’s information.
4. Students then stand up in front of the class and read their speech about their partner and their partner stands with them.
5. After each speech, the audience applauds.
6. When all speeches are completed the class discusses the purpose for the activity and students will typically generate the following reasons for the activity:
   a. Get to know each other / break the ice / do audience analysis
   b. Get comfortable speaking in front of others / eliminate some apprehension about public speaking and the class
   c. Learn about the basic speech outline and structure of speeches
   d. Give professor / teacher the opportunity to assess their speaking skills
   e. Practice following directions

(4) Explanation (how it addresses theoretical concepts or skills)

- Audience analysis of their partner and the class
- Communication apprehension
Basic speech outline

(5) Typical results.

- Students in the class engage in their first audience analysis of the class. The students in the class enjoy getting to know one another through the information that is shared. Students immediately begin getting to know one another and frequently remember some of the information shared long into the semester. They get to know each other quickly and this aids in their audience analysis for future speeches.

- Students begin alleviating their public speaking apprehension. They laugh at some of the light-hearted information shared by their peers and seem to get more comfortable with speaking in front of the class quickly. They feel more relaxed because all they have to do is read the speech and not think of something on their own to say. Students all feel a little silly in front of one another when speaking but since everyone is doing the speech, it becomes something they have all done together and helps them bond as a class.

- Students more readily understand and are more willing to adhere to the basic speech outline. Speech outlining is covered later in the course and because students have already heard well organized speeches utilizing the basic speech outline they understand it more quickly when it is covered in class. After the activity students discuss how they easily understood the main points because it was well organized. This makes the point that an organized speech is a better speech.
My Name:
My Partner’s Name:
Specific Purpose: to inform the audience about ___________________ (partner’s name)

Introduction

I. It’s not often that you get to know the interesting person sitting next to you in class, but today is my lucky day.

II. ________________ (partner’s name) is a fascinating member of our Public Speaking class.

III. Class will be much more enjoyable if we get to know each other so let’s begin today by getting to know ________________ (partner’s name).

Body

We’re going to learn a few facts about ___________________ (partner’s name), her/his dream of where she/he will be in five years and what actress/actor she/he would like cast as herself/himself.

I. ________________ (partner’s name – first and last) is a __________________ (year in school) at WU from ____________________________ (hometown) and is studying ________________ (major) at WU.

_______________ (partner’s name) has a while to go to WU and is hoping that after graduating she/he will be onto new adventures.

II. ________________ (partner’s name) would like to be ____________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________ in five years.

Perhaps someday a movie might be made about ________________ ’s (partner’s name) life and, of course, a movie star will be cast in the starring role.

III. ________________ (partner’s name) believes that of all the actresses / actors alive in the world today, ________________ (actress / actor’s name) would be best suited to play her/him

because ____________________________________________________________
Conclusion

I. Now we know some background information about _______________ (partner’s name), what she/he would like to be doing in five years and who she/he believes would be best cast as her/himself for her/his movie biography.

II. There is still a lot of time in class left to get to know _______________ (partner’s name) so we should all enjoy Public Speaking class and getting to know each other in this class.