

Core F and Language Arts F

Memorization Notes - Week 1

Bible

Memorization

Memorizing can be a nerve-wracking prospect. We have compiled some helpful suggestions and tips to achieve a successful presentation.

Do you know the meanings of all the words? Do you understand what the passage as a whole is about? Are there words you find hard to pronounce? (Make sure you practice saying them correctly.) Which words should receive special emphasis as you read? Any places you should pause or speed up for dramatic effect? Any places where your voice should become louder, softer, higher or lower? Make notes of these things.

Make sure you read the words with as much dramatic import as possible. **Note to Mom or Dad:** Don't be afraid of drama. You will find it easier to start out going overboard with drama and moving back to some form of normalcy than to slowly inch forward from a mouse-like, fearful mumble toward appropriate dramatic intonation. Read loudly, boldly, with lots of expression—as if you were standing before an audience. As you read, think of hand or body motions that would fit with the words you are reading.

Keep working on the vocal dramatic devices. Also think about where hand gestures or body motions would help dramatize your passage's meaning. In elocutionary contests, participants are given hand motions for almost every phrase—"he will save you from the fowler's snare" would merit a motion or two (your hands possibly reaching out to extricate the victim from the fowler's snare); "he will cover you with his feathers" would have another motion, etc. Make notes about these motions. Practice doing them as you say the words. Talk with your mom or dad to see if they can give you any suggestions or recommendations for improvement.

We want you to make your presentation as naturally dramatic as possible. It should not be overly dramatic, but it should be lively and interesting.

Because they are usually nervous, beginning speakers often fail in this area. They speak in tiny voices, with little dynamism (inflection, emphasis, or change in volume

from one section to another), and stand stiffly. If they make any motions, the motions look unnatural and choppy.

Even good speakers have a natural tendency to "tighten up" and speak with less dynamism or drama than they ought, especially when they first begin speaking. Therefore, before making public presentations, the really good speakers will "loosen up."

There are two things public speakers need to loosen: their vocal chords and their bodies. You should practice the following exercises each week so you can do them easily before going "onstage."

1. In order to loosen your vocal chords, try "singing" your passage. Begin "singing" it at the lowest note you can reach, and then let your voice rise through its full range—to the highest note you can sing. Keep "singing" your passage, letting your voice rise and fall from its bottom note to its top and back down to its bottom.
2. Another loosening exercise for your voice: Don't sing the passage; just say it, without expression, but beginning in a whisper and building volume until you are shouting. Keep saying your speech, but let your voice grow softer until it is just a whisper. Continue oscillating from whispers to shouts until you have finished your speech, or until you feel relaxed at both ends of your vocal spectrum.
3. How about working your voice (and face) through various emotions? Start with a belly laugh: "Ho! Ho! Ho! Ha! Ha! Ha! Hee! Hee! Hee!" (etc.). Then pretend you're angry. Embarrassed. Excited. Sad. Can you think of any other emotions to pretend? Show those emotions on your face and in your body movements as you recite.
4. In order to loosen your body: try swinging and shaking your arms, rolling your head in circles on your shoulders, shaking your legs, doing jumping jacks, etc. Another exercise: try saying your speech with exaggerated motions: make the motions far broader, faster, more dramatic than you would ever plan to do them before an audience.