

SAMPLE OUTLINE

Here is a complete outline of an informative descriptive speech presented by Chaim Verschleisser.²⁸ You can also access the outline of this speech on the *Building a Speech* Web site under Student Resources for Chapter 10.

Raising the “Monitor”

- Topic:** The raising of the *Monitor*’s turret
- General Purpose:** Informative speech to describe
- Specific Purpose:** To describe the history, impact, and recovery of the USS *Monitor*.
- Thesis Statement:** “The historical significance of the USS *Monitor* led scientists and engineers to overcome extreme challenges that resulted in the successful recovery of the vessel’s turret.”

WEB SITE

The title describes the subject matter.

The stated topic and the general purpose, indicating an informative descriptive speech that enlightens and educates listeners.

The specific purpose points to the goal of the speech.

The thesis previews the three main points in the body.

Each part of the speech is clearly labeled as introduction, body, or conclusion. Numeral I is the first sentence—the first line the speaker will say. Numeral II determines the introduction strategy—a historical example presented in a suspenseful manner and PowerPoint slides. Although the specific purpose in numeral III is not stated, quotation marks indicate that the thesis (numeral IV) is taken directly from the speech. The introduction is an informal outline: It includes both sentence and topic form.

The body of the speech represents the formal outline. Unlike the introduction, the body does not mix topics and sentences. This outline contains only topics. Parentheses provide abbreviated sources, verifying information.

The external transition connects numerals I and II.

This outline includes three levels: Roman numerals, capital letters, and numbers. The three Roman numerals carry out the thesis statement. In this outline, main points are arranged in a topical sequence.

The transition connects numerals II and III.

INTRODUCTION

- I. “March 8, 1862. The Confederate ship known as the *Virginia* virtually decimated a Union fleet of wooden warships off the coast of Newport News.”
- II. Example of historical battle scene image with PowerPoint slides to create suspense and interest (*Slide 1–2*)
- III. To inform about raising the *USS Monitor*
- IV. “The historical significance of the *USS Monitor* led scientists and engineers to overcome extreme challenges that resulted in the successful recovery of the vessel’s turret.”

BODY

- I.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - D. Sinking in a storm (*Slide 4–5*) (*USA Today*, Jul 22, ’02, D.06)
 - E. Discovery in 1975 (*Newsday*, May 26, ’87, 03)
 - F. Beginning of recovery
 - G. Importance of retrieving the turret (*Christian Science Monitor*, Aug 9, ’02, 3)

Transition: “Although the recovery and preservation of the *Monitor*’s turret is such important testimony to our nation’s history, the scientists and agencies involved in its retrieval faced very serious challenges in the process.” (*Slide 6*)

- II. Challenges faced in retrieving the turret
 - A. Money
 1. Cumulative cost
 2. Salaries (*Atlanta Journal–Constitution*, May 27, ’02, A1)
 3. Maintenance (*Atlanta Journal–Constitution*, May 27, ’02, A1)
 4. \$30 million for Monitor Center
 - B. Time (*Atlanta Journal–Constitution*, May 27, ’02, A1) (*Slide 7*)
 - C. Conservation and funding
 - D. Complications of the actual process (*Slide 8*)
 1. Weight and depth
 2. Manpower
 3. Weather conditions
 4. Delicate and painstaking procedure

Transition: “After months of working through all of these complex challenges, (*Slide 9*) Navy divers lifted the 200-ton turret (including its contents) of the *USS Monitor* from the graveyard of the Atlantic on Monday, August 5, 2002.”

III. The recovery of the turret

- A.
- B.
 - 1.
 - 2.
- C. Findings
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

CONCLUSION

- I. "The *USS Monitor*'s turret will now join the collection of over 400 other *Monitor* artifacts."
- II. Summary, PowerPoint slide, brief quotes from Robert Sheridan and President Bush, and a series of descriptive statements regarding *Monitor*'s significance. (*Slide 10*)

Bibliography:

Each level is mechanically parallel, all subordinate points clearly support their headings, every item contains only one basic thought, and each level contains a minimum of two items.

Notice that the body includes many different types of supporting materials such as statistics, examples, quotations, and PowerPoint visual aids.

Like the introduction, the conclusion is informally outlined. Numeral I identifies the first sentence of the conclusion. Numeral II states the strategy used—in this case a summary followed by quotations and descriptive statements.

The speaker has used a wide range of supporting materials from a variety of sources.

References are listed alphabetically, and each source is entered according to correct bibliographic form based on the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

