

THS Students Practice Public Speaking Skills



Photo provided by Ms. Rubano

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The Public Speaking seminar hosted by Lenny Laskowski at the Agriscience building on September 28 was a resounding success, for both the members of the Bicentennial Team and those of the Debate Club walked away with a plethora of information and tips.

Greeted with personal note-taking booklets and handy memory cards upon arrival, already a great day of enjoyment and learning was in the making. As he progressed through each stage of public speaking, namely the speech itself, the audience, nerves, and preparation, lifelong advice was gleaned from every word. One of the more interesting and cumulative sections of the seminar was in the explanation of an effective oral speech. Mr. Laskowski outlined six key points to an effective oration, for instance, the advice to give of ourselves and include personal, intriguing stories which would further the message of our presentation so as to keep the audience's attention.

Another major point was the importance of planning hand and body motions, for as the students learned, nearly a speaker's entire message is conveyed through vocal tone and body language. This, of course, surprised the majority of those present, but a quick game of Simon Says proved the point.

The students were told to take measured steps and to appropriately gesture when providing grandiose description or to mimic a verb, but also cautioned to keep such gestures under control.

Using a flipchart, Mr. Laskowski walked the students through the writing process of the speech itself. He impressed upon us the importance of having an introduction and conclusion that provided a concise message and a direction for the rest of the body of the writing. The need for prior research and rehearsal was also made clear, for as he said, what better way to dispel nervousness than to practice speaking until one knows one's speech by rote. Indeed, he then transitioned into ways of controlling nervousness, as well as suggested hand and resting positions. This section was perhaps the most helpful, for the skill of managing nerves is always a useful one to acquire.

As the day neared its conclusion, the students reflected upon the enjoyment and the life skills that Lenny Laskowski had imparted.



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