Persuasive Speech

Mr. Brocato

You are going to craft a 4-5 minute persuasive speech.

You must choose a topic that is NOT cliché or tired. For example: abortion, gun control, drinking age, marijuana, illegal immigrants, etc.

Find something that is unique. General rule of thumb: if 90% of the room most likely agrees with you, bad topic (ex topic: convincing the audience that cruelty to animals is bad). Conversely, if 90% of the audience disagrees with you, that may not be good either (ex topic: convincing the audience that kids are too irresponsible to drive and therefore the driving age should be 25). A good % is around 50/50.

You need to make sure that you have a nice mix of pathos (appeal to the audience’s emotions), logos (logic) and ethos (credibility).

Pathos: set the scene. This usually involves a nice hook to get the audience on your side. Sprinkle emotional appeals throughout

Logos: have great facts to back you up

Ethos: if you show no emotion, you lose credibility. If you include a statement like “I personally could go either way with this…” that’s bad.

If you have a topic that is all emotional appeal but no facts (ala Burger King-v-McDonalds) that’s bad.

Other things:

1. Make reference to your sources in the speech so people can assess credibility (“according to the National Center for ….”).

2. Have a visual to help

3. Include a counterargument. Make sure it’s no better than any of YOUR arguments! But anticipate the audience being very cynical

4. Do NOT just throw random things together (like ALL the logos in one chunk). How you present this should be clever and purposeful.