



# Understanding the Body of the Speech

## Lesson 5

# Introduction

- Think about shopping in a store such as Ikea, Target, or Best Buy. Many of the items for sale are organizers—drawer organizers, desk organizers, closet organizers, kitchen organizers, bathroom organizers, office organizers, audio and video organizers.
- Why all this quest for organization? Obviously, when the objects you possess are well organized, they serve you better. Organization allows you to see what you have and to put your hands immediately on the garment, the tool, the piece of paper, the CD you want without a frenzied search.
- Much the same is true of your speeches. If they are well organized, they will serve you better. Organization allows you—and your listeners—to see what ideas you have and to put mental "hands" on the most important ones.

# Example

- In a classic study, a college professor took a well-organized speech and scrambled it by randomly changing the order of its sentences. He then had a speaker deliver the original version to one group of listeners and the scrambled version to another group. After the speeches, he gave a test to see how well each group understood what they had heard. Not surprisingly, the group that heard the original, unscrambled speech scored much higher than the other group.<sup>1</sup>

# Strategic organisation

- Just as a director must be sure view-ers can follow the plot of a film from beginning to end, so must a speaker be sure listeners can follow the progression of ideas in a speech from beginning to end.
- It is closely connected to critical thinking. When you work to organize your speeches, you gain practice in the general skill of establishing clear relationships among your ideas. This skill will serve you well throughout your college days and in almost any career you may choose.
- It can boost your confidence as a speaker and improve your ability to deliver a message fluently.

# why to write the body first?

- The first step in developing a strong sense of speech organization is to gain command of the three basic parts of a speech—introduction, body, and conclusion—and the strategic role of each.
- The body is the longest and most important part (60%).
- It is easier to create an effective introduction after you know exactly what you will say in the body.



# The main points

- You should select them carefully, phrase them precisely, and arrange them strategically. Most speeches contain from two to five main points.
- **The medical uses of hypnosis:**
- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience about the major uses of hypnosis.
- Central Idea: The major uses of hypnosis today are to control pain in surgery, to help people stop smoking, and to help students improve their academic performance.
- Main points
- I. Hypnosis is used in surgery as an adjunct to chemical anesthesia.
- II. Hypnosis is used to help people stop smoking.
- III. Hypnosis is used to help students improve their academic performance.

# How do you choose your main points?

Sometimes they will be evident from your specific purpose statement. Suppose your specific purpose is "To inform my audience about the development, technology, and benefits of hydrogen fuel cells." Obviously, your speech will have three main points. The first will deal with the development of hydrogen fuel cells, the second with the technology behind hydrogen fuel cells, the third with the benefits of hydrogen fuel cells.

# Example

- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience about the development, technology, and benefits of hydrogen fuel cells.
- Central Idea: Developed as a highly efficient form of energy, hydrogen fuel cells use sophisticated technology and offer a number of economic and environmental benefits.
- Main Points:
  - I. Hydrogen fuel cells were developed to provide a highly efficient form of energy.
  - II. Hydrogen fuel cells produce power through an electro-chemical reaction involving hydrogen gas.
  - III. Hydrogen fuel cells provide an economically and environmentally superior method of powering motor vehicles.



# if your main points are not stated expressly?

- they may be easy to project from it. For example,
- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience of the basic steps in making stained-glass windows.
- Central Idea: There are four steps in making stained-glass windows.
- You know each of your main points will correspond to a step in the window-making process. They might look like this in outline form:
- Main Points:
  - I. The first step is designing the window.
  - II. The second step is cutting the glass to fit the design.
  - III. The third step is painting the glass.
  - IV. The fourth step is assembling the window.

# NUMBER OF MAIN POINTS

- If you find that you have too many, you may be able to condense them into categories.  
Example:
- **Specific Purpose**: To inform my audience about the practice of yoga.
- **Central Idea**: Yoga is an ancient practice that involves the whole body.
- **Main Points**:
  - I. Yoga breathing starts with deep inhalation.
  - II. Yoga breathing requires slow exhalation.
  - III. Yoga breathing includes prolonged pauses.
  - IV. Yoga breathing provides many benefits.
  - V. Yoga postures involve all parts of the body.
  - VI. Yoga postures increase flexibility.
  - VII. Yoga postures strengthen muscle tone.
  - VIII. Yoga postures demand precise movements.

## You might, therefore, restate your main points this way:

- I. One part of practicing yoga involves proper breathing.
- II. Another part of yoga involves body postures.
- Once you establish your main points, you need to decide the order in which you will present them. The most effective order depends on three things—your topic, your purpose, and your audience

# Chronological Order

- It may be a narrate a series of events. Example:
- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience how the Great Wall of China was built.
- Central Idea: The Great Wall of China was built in three major stages.
- Main Points:
  - I. Building of the Great Wall began during the Qin dynasty of 221-206 B.C.
  - II. New sections of the Great Wall were added during the Han dynasty of 206 B.C.-220 A.D.
  - III. The Great Wall was completed during the Ming dynasty of 1368-1644.

# explaining a process

- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience of the steps in laser-assisted corrective eye surgery.
- Central Idea: There are three main steps in laser-assisted corrective eye surgery.
- Main Points:
  - I. First, a thin layer is sliced off the surface of the eye to expose the cornea.
  - II. Second, an ultraviolet laser is used to reshape the cornea.
  - III. Third, the thin layer sliced off at the beginning of the surgery is reaffixed to the eye.



# Spatial Order

- follows a directional pattern. That is, the main points proceed from top to bottom, left to right, front to back, inside to outside, east to west, or some other route. For example:
- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience about the structure of a hurricane.
- Central Idea: A hurricane is made up of three parts going from inside to outside.
- Main Points:
  - I. At the center of a hurricane is the calm, cloud-free eye.
  - II. Surrounding the eye is the eyewall, a dense ring of clouds that produces the most intense wind and rainfall.
  - III. Rotating around the eyewall are large bands of clouds and precipitation called spiral rain bands.

# Causal Order

- to show a cause- effect relationship.
- you have two main points—one dealing with the causes of an event, the other dealing with its effects.
- Specific Purpose: To persuade my audience that a growing shortage of qualified air-traffic controllers is a serious problem for U.S. aviation.
- Central Idea: The growing shortage of certified air-traffic controllers threatens the safety of air travel.
- Main Points:
  - I. The U.S. aviation system faces a growing shortage of qualified air-traffic controllers.
  - II. If this shortage continues, it will create serious problems for airline safety.

# Problem-Solution Order

- are divided into two main parts. The first shows the existence and seriousness of a problem. The second presents a workable solution to the problem.
- Specific Purpose: To persuade my audience that action is needed to combat the abuses of puppy mills.
- Central Idea: Puppy mills are a serious problem that can be solved by a combination of legislation and individual initiative.
- Main Points:
  - I. Puppy mills are a serious problem across the United States.
  - II. Solving the problem requires legislation and individual initiative.

# Topical Order

- you divide the speech topic into subtopics, each of which becomes a main point in the speech.
- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience of the major kinds of fireworks.
- Central Idea: The major kinds of fireworks are skyrockets, Roman candles, pinwheels, and lances.
- Main Points:
  - I. Skyrockets explode high in the air, producing the most dramatic effects of all fireworks.
  - II. Roman candles shoot out separate groups of sparks and colored flames with a series of booming noises.
  - III. Pinwheels throw off sparks and flames as they whirl on the end of a stick.
  - IV. Lances are thin, colorful fireworks used in ground displays.

# TIPS FOR PREPARING MAIN POINTS

- **Keep Main Points Separate**
- Each main point in a speech should be clearly independent of the others. Compare these two sets of main points for a speech about the process of producing a Broadway play:
- **Ineffective**
  - I. The first step is choosing the play.
  - II. The second step is selecting the cast.
  - III. The third step is conducting rehearsals and then performing the play.
- **More Effective**
  - I. The first step is choosing the play.
  - II. The second step is selecting the cast.
  - III. The third step is conducting the rehearsals.
  - IV. The fourth



# Try to Use the Same Pattern of Wording for Main Points

- Consider the following main points for an informative speech about the benefits of exercise.
- Ineffective
  - I. Regular exercise increases your endurance.
  - II. Your sleeping pattern is improved by regular exercise.
  - III. It is possible to help control your weight by regular exercise.
- More Effective
  - I. Regular exercise increases your endurance.
  - II. Regular exercise improves your sleeping pattern.
  - III. Regular exercise helps control your weight.

# Balance the Amount of Time Devoted to Main Points

- This means allowing sufficient time to develop each main point. Suppose you discover that the proportion of time devoted to your main points is something like this:
- I. 85 percent
- II. 10 percent
- III. 5 percent
- Either points II and III aren't really main points and you have only one main point, or points II and III haven't been given the attention they need.
- This is not to say that all main points must receive exactly equal emphasis, but only that they should be roughly balanced. For example, either of the following would be fine:
- I. 30 percent      I. 20 percent
- II. 40 percent      II. 30 percent
- III. 30 percent      III. 50 percent
- depends on the amount and complexity of supporting materials for each point.

# Supporting Materials

## I. Hypnosis is used in surgery as an adjunct to chemical anesthesia.

- A. Hypnosis reduces both the physical and psychological aspects of pain.
- 1. Hypnosis can double a person's pain threshold. 2. It also reduces the fear that intensifies physical pain.
- B. Hypnosis is most useful in cases when the patient is known to have problems with general anesthesia.
- 1. Quotation from Dr. Harold Wain of Walter Reed Army Hospital. 2. Story of Linda Kuay. 3. Statistics from Psychology Today.

## II. Hypnosis is used to help people stop smoking.

- A. Many therapists utilize hypnosis to help people break their addiction to cigarettes.
- 1. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services considers hypnosis a safe and effective means of stopping smoking.
- 2. Success rates are as high as 70 percent.
- a. Story of Alex Hamilton. b. Quotation from New York psychiatrist Dr. Herbert Spiegel.
- B. Hypnosis does not work for all smokers.
- 1. A person must want to stop smoking for hypnosis to work. 2. A person must also be responsive to hypnotic suggestion.

## III. Hypnosis is used to help students improve their academic performance.

- A. Hypnosis enables people to use their minds more effectively.
- 1. The conscious mind uses about 10 percent of a person's mental ability. 2. Hypnosis allows people to tap more of their mental power.
- B. Studies show that hypnosis can help people overcome many obstacles to academic success.
- 1. It improves ability to concentrate. 2. It increases reading speed. 3. It reduces test anxiety.

# Connectives

Carla Maggio was speaking to her class about the need for medical malpractice reform. She had rehearsed the speech several times, had a well-defined central idea, three sharp main points, and strong evidence to support her position. But when Carla delivered the speech, she said "All right" every time she moved from one thought to the next. After a while, her classmates started counting. By the end of the speech, most were too busy waiting for the next "All right" to pay attention to Carla's message. Afterward, Carla said, "I never even thought about saying 'All right.' I guess it just popped out when I didn't know what else to say."



# TRANSITIONS

- Transitions are words or phrases that indicate when a speaker has just completed one thought and is moving on to another:
- Now that we have a clear understanding of the problem, let me share the solution with you.
- I have spoken so far of bravery and patriotism, but it is the sacrifice of the Massachusetts 54th that has etched them into the pages of history.
- Keeping these points in mind about sign language, let's return to the sentence I started with and see if we can learn the signs for "You are my friend."



# INTERNAL PREVIEWS

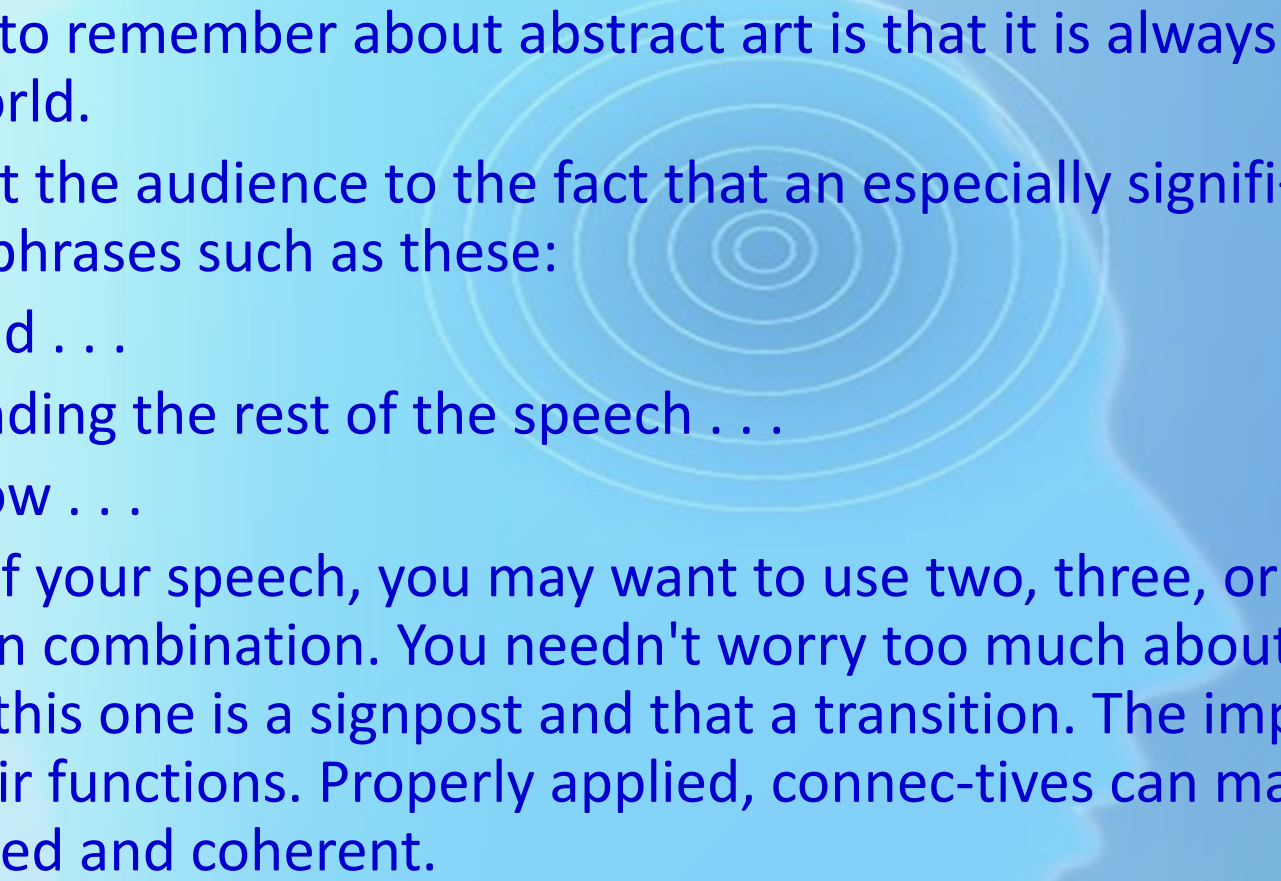
- Internal previews let the audience know what the speaker will take up next, but they are more detailed than transitions. In effect, an internal preview works just like the preview statement in a speech introduction, except that it comes in the body of the speech—usually as the speaker is starting to discuss a main point. For example:
- In discussing how Asian Americans have been stereotyped in the mass media, we'll look first at the origins of the problem and second at its continuing impact today.
- After hearing this, the audience knows exactly what to listen for as the speaker develops the "problem" main point.
- Internal previews are often combined with transitions. For example:
- [Transition]: Now that we have seen how serious the problem of faulty credit reports is, let's look at some solutions. [Internal Preview]: I will focus on three solutions—instituting tighter government regulation of credit bureaus, holding credit bureaus financially responsible for their errors, and giving individuals easier access to their credit reports.
- You will seldom need an internal preview for each main point in your speech, but be sure to use one whenever you think it will help listeners keep track of your ideas.

# INTERNAL SUMMARIES

- Internal summaries are the reverse of internal previews. Rather than letting listeners know what is coming up next, internal summaries remind listeners of what they have just heard. Such summaries are usually used when a speaker finishes a complicated or particularly important main point or set of main points. For example:
- In short, palm reading is an ancient art. Developed in China more than five thousand years ago, it was practiced in classical Greece and Rome, flourished during the Middle Ages, survived the Industrial Revolution, and remains popular today in many parts of the world.
- Internal summaries are an excellent way to clarify and reinforce ideas. By combining them with transitions, you can also lead your audience smoothly into your next main point:
- [Internal Summary]: Let's pause for a moment to summarize what we have found so far. First, we have seen that America's criminal justice system is less effective than it should be in deterring crime. Second, we have seen that prison programs to rehabilitate prisoners have been far from successful. [Transition]: We are now ready to explore solutions to these problems.

# SIGNPOSTS

- Signposts are very brief statements that indicate exactly where you are in the speech. Frequently they are just numbers. Here is how one student used simple numerical signposts to help her audience keep track of the major causes for the continuing problem of famine in Africa:
- The first cause of this problem is inefficient agricultural production.
- The second cause is recurrent drought in the affected countries.
- The final cause is mismanagement of available food resources by local leaders.
- Another way to accomplish the same thing is to introduce your main points with a question, as did one student in his speech on mail-order fraud. His first main point showed that mail-order fraud continues to be a serious problem despite the growth of the Internet. He introduced it this way:
- So just how serious is the problem of mail-order fraud? Is it just a few isolated cases, or is it widespread enough to require serious measures to protect consumers?
- His second main point dealt with ways to curb mail-order fraud. He introduced it by saying:
- So how can we solve this problem? Is there a way to protect the rights of legitimate mail-order companies while attacking the fraudulent ones?
- Questions are particularly effective as signposts because they invite subliminal answers and thereby get the audience more involved with the speech.
- Besides using signposts to indicate where you are in the speech, you can use them to focus attention on key ideas. You can do this with a simple phrase, as in the following example:

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- The most important thing to remember about abstract art is that it is always based on forms in the natural world.
  - The underlined words alert the audience to the fact that an especially significant point is coming up. So do phrases such as these:
  - Be sure to keep this in mind . . .
  - This is crucial to understanding the rest of the speech . . .
  - Above all, you need to know . . .
  - Depending on the needs of your speech, you may want to use two, three, or even all four kinds of connectives in combination. You needn't worry too much about what they are called—whether this one is a signpost and that a transition. The important thing is to be aware of their functions. Properly applied, connectives can make your speeches much more unified and coherent.



# REVIEW QUESTIONS

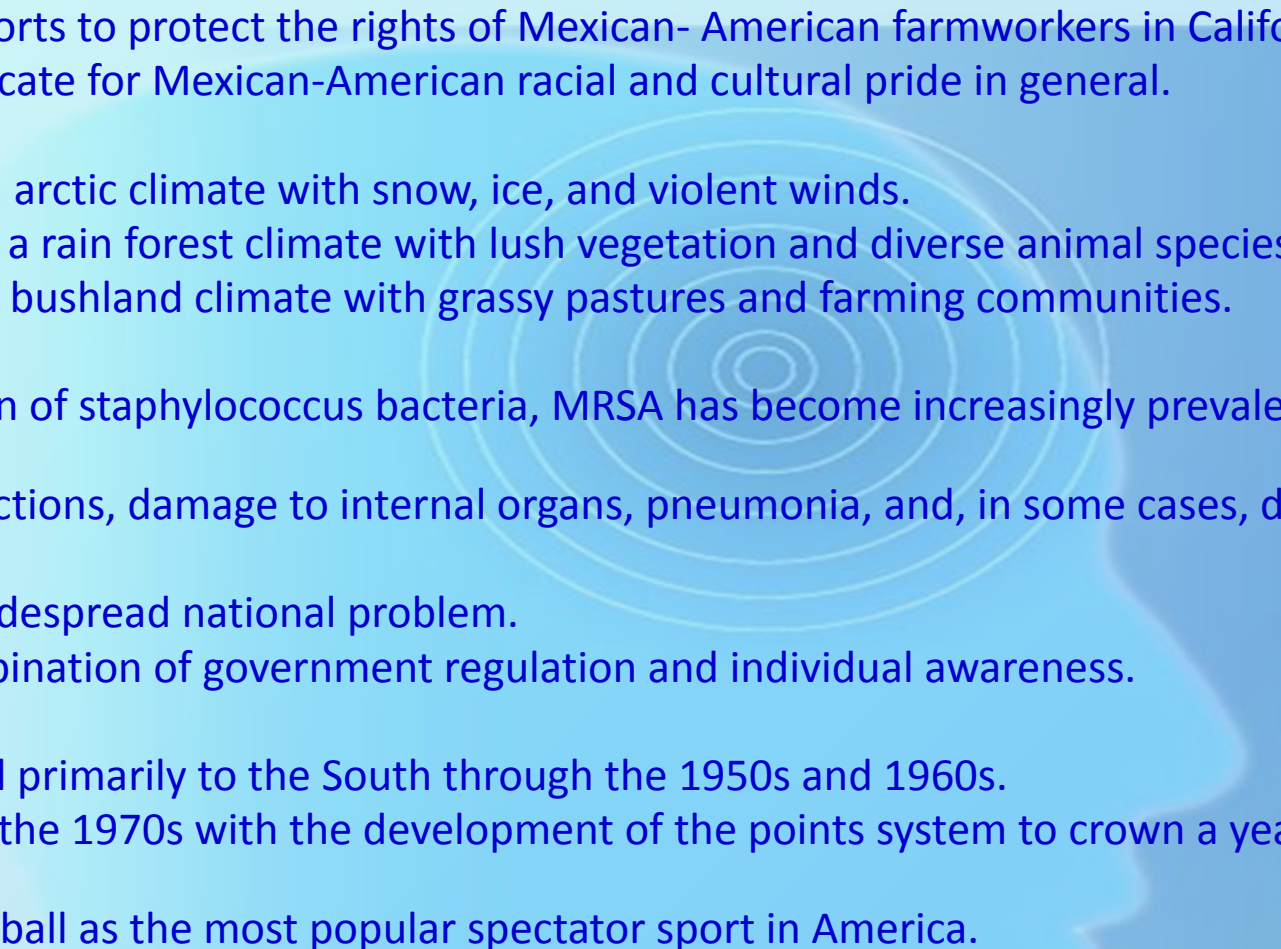
- 1. Why is it important that speeches be organized clearly and coherently?
- 2. How many main points will your speeches usually contain? Why is it important to limit the number of main points in your speeches?
- 3. What are the five basic patterns of organizing main points in a speech? Which are appropriate for informative speeches? Which is used only in persuasive speeches? Which is used most often?
- 4. What are three tips for preparing your main points?
- 5. What is the most important thing to remember when organizing supporting materials in the body of your speech?
- 6. What are the four kinds of speech connectives? What role does each play in a speech?



# 1. What organizational method (or methods) might you use to arrange main points for speeches with the following specific purpose statements?

- To inform my audience about the geographical regions of Australia.
- To inform my audience about the major kinds of symbols used in Native American art.
- To inform my audience of the causes and effects of Parkinson's disease.
- To persuade my audience that the state legislature should enact tougher laws to curb the problem of repeated drunk-driving offenders.
- To inform my audience about the educational philosophy of Jean Piaget.
- To inform my audience about the major stages of the civil rights movement from 1955 to 1970.

## 2. Identify the organizational method used in each of the following sets of main points.

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- I. Cesar Chavez is best known for his efforts to protect the rights of Mexican- American farmworkers in California.
  - II. Cesar Chavez was also a tireless advocate for Mexican-American racial and cultural pride in general.
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- I. The peak of Mount Kilimanjaro has an arctic climate with snow, ice, and violent winds.
  - II. The middle of Mount Kilimanjaro has a rain forest climate with lush vegetation and diverse animal species.
  - III. The base of Mount Kilimanjaro has a bushland climate with grassy pastures and farming communities.
- 
- I. Caused by an antibiotic-resistant strain of staphylococcus bacteria, MRSA has become increasingly prevalent among college students.
  - II. The effects of MRSA include skin infections, damage to internal organs, pneumonia, and, in some cases, death.
- 
- I. Fraudulent charity fund-raising is a widespread national problem.
  - II. The problem can be solved by a combination of government regulation and individual awareness.
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- I. Founded in 1948, NASCAR was limited primarily to the South through the 1950s and 1960s.
  - II. The modern era of NASCAR began in the 1970s with the development of the points system to crown a yearly champion.
  - III. Today NASCAR is second only to football as the most popular spectator sport in America.

# Home task

- You are in the purchasing department of a large clothing manufacturer. The company's design team has come up with an idea for a new shirt requiring a light-weight, stretchable fabric. The fabric cannot be provided by your company's usual suppliers, so you were sent to visit a number of textile firms in the U.S. and abroad to see what they can offer. You were asked to evaluate their products for quality, availability, and cost.
- You have just returned from a 10-day trip to textile manufacturers in North Carolina, Italy, India, and China. You will present your findings and recommendations to the purchasing and design departments, but you're not sure how best to organize your speech. Your major choices are chronological order, problem-solution order, and topical order. What might be the main points of your speech with each of these methods of organization?
- **Explain which method you think would be most effective for your presentation.**