

NUCLEAR ENERGY IS A SAFE AND RELIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO FOSSIL FUELS

In general, I felt the speech went well, though upon viewing the DVD there are a number of areas I would like to improve upon. To further my thesis that nuclear energy a safe and reliable alternative to consuming fossil fuels, I decided to use the additional benefits model. I thought this was best for the amount of information I needed to provide. I had three main points: the existing concerns of opponents of nuclear energy, a response to the concerns, and the additional benefits of nuclear energy.

There were a number of things in this speech that went well, especially in terms of invention and delivery. I felt my argument incorporated a significant amount of *logos*. I addressed the concerns that the “fence-sitters” on nuclear energy have, and attempted to convince them that, while valid, their concerns have been naturally addressed with rapid technological advances. In order to show these were valid claims, I talked a bit about the threats posed by meltdowns, nuclear waste, and terrorism. I thought that I was quite fair to the environmentalist position and provided enough evidence to prove that these were actual concerns they held. In order to address these concerns, I responded to each concern in my second main point. I didn’t argue that these concerns about nuclear energy were wrong, but that technology had reduced each of the three main threats posed by nuclear energy. I was able to use a lot of evidence here to show that nuclear energy is now much safer than it once was. As a way of building on the second point, I wanted to demonstrate that a small risk was worth the significant benefits gained through using nuclear energy. All in all, this was a fair argument that tried to address fence-sitters and dispel some of the outdated myths about nuclear energy. In terms of delivery, I liked the way I was engaging the audience. I tried to do things to liven the conversation, considering I was talking about such a dry topic. I took pauses and asked rhetorical questions in order to provide “mental breaks” for the audience. I also liked the way I walked around during my speech, although next time I want to be more deliberate and practice walking at key points, phrases, or pauses.

There were a number of things that I would change if I were to deliver this speech again. Each point could have used more evidence. I thought my additional benefits section was strong, but it would have been stronger if I had provided more information about how nuclear energy is better for the environment than fossil fuels. I would have also liked to talk about desalination more. I forgot to add in my speech that desalination can be done with energy generated with oil but that it would still pollute the air. I don’t think I needed more statistics, but some examples would have helped make this issue easier to visualize. Each point was a bit dry in spots. I needed to step back from the evidence in each sub-point and summarize it for the audience. At times, it felt like I was simply moving from one piece of evidence to the next. I had done a lot of research and I wanted to be able to use all this research, but points two and three might have benefited from more summary. I liked my flying analogy in point two and I think I might have used more of these types of explanations. Some things I didn’t like about my delivery were that I said things that I told my self REPEATEDLY not to say, such as “You should support me.” When I watched myself on the DVD, I noticed that I quickly caught myself saying such things,

and had to correct myself. This just made things cumbersome and awkward. If I had practiced more, I would have been able to better avoid such statements. I also didn't like the transition I had between my first and second points. I didn't mean to sound sarcastic. I wanted to just take a second to provide some sort of comic relief after discussing serious and daunting information.

All in all, this was a strong speech, but for my next speech, I want to work more on developing and delivering parts of the speech that summarize the evidence more. Also, this speech was *logos* intensive. I would like to be able to incorporate more *ethos* and *pathos* into my speeches. The nature of the subject matter lends itself to *logos*, but some additional testimony or solid examples of the benefits of nuclear energy would add to overall persuasiveness of my position. I am comfortable with my delivery, but I would like to get over some of the rough spots where I seem to be reaching for a planned phrase.