

When You are the Lexicologist/Grammarians

Objective

- To provide the “Word of the Day” and track its usage throughout the meeting.
- To comment on the use of English during the course of the meeting.

Note: Novice Toastmasters, it is acceptable to only concentrate on the Word of the Day before trying to accomplish both objectives during a meeting.

Before the Meeting

- Select a word to be used as the “Word of the Day”. The word should be one that will expand the vocabulary of the group, but not so uncommon that it cannot be readily incorporated into the speaking opportunities during the meeting.
- Notify the Toastmaster for the week of the word you have chosen and the definition so that it can be included in the meeting agenda. You might even want to choose a word that is in line with the theme of the meeting, if there is a theme.
- Prepare an overhead or enlarged definition sheet with the word prominently displayed along with its definition(s) and examples of how to use the word. During the meeting, the word of the day should be displayed in front of the room (taped to the lectern). You can also use a transparency to display while you are introducing the word.

During the Meeting

- When called upon near the beginning of the meeting, introduce the “Word of the Day” from the lectern. State the word, its definition(s), and give examples of proper usage. Also mention that you will be keeping track of the number of times that the word is used correctly and the use of English during the meeting.
- Keep track of the number of times each speaker uses the word of the day. Pay

special attention to the Table Topics speakers who must use the “Word of the Day” to qualify for voting.

- Keep track of the awkward use or misuse of language (incomplete sentences, sentences that change direction in midstream, incorrect grammar, etc.). Include this information in your “End of the Meeting Report.”

Note: If you are a novice Toastmaster, keeping track of the Word of the Day usage is acceptable. Leave comments about the use of English until you are comfortable.

- You will be called upon to give a report twice during the meeting. The first time will be after Table Topics when you will be asked which Table Topics speakers used the word. The second time will be towards the end of the meeting when you will be asked to report on who used the word and how many times for the entire meeting. Refer to the Sample Reports.

After the Meeting

- Nothing.

Sample Introduction

“Thank you, Madam Toastmaster. The Word of the Day is <insert word>. The word <insert word> is a (an) <noun, verb, adjective, or adverb>. Its definition(s) is (are) <insert definition(s)>. Today I will be listening for the correct usage of the word and will provide reports when called upon. Be sure to use the Word of the Day during Table Topics.”

Sample Reports

After Table Topics

“Madam Toastmaster (or Table Topics Master). Phil, Lucy, and Pam each used the Word of the Day.”

End of Meeting

“Thank you, Mr. General Evaluator. I am pleased to report that we made very good use of the Word of the Day. Bob used the word 2 times. David, Larry, and Sarah all used the word once. And George used it three times today.”

Variance

If the word was not used very often during the meeting, consider using the following report.

“Thank you, Mr. General Evaluator. Since we didn’t have an opportunity to use the Word of the Day very much today, let’s everyone say <insert word>.”

Keys to Success

- Be prepared for your speaking opportunities. Use sample wording provided as a guideline, but don’t read it word for word. This will ensure that your introduction and report are
 - concise so that the meeting stays on schedule and
 - clear so that our guests understand what is going on.
- Use care in selecting a word. Do not choose an esoteric word that will be too difficult for people to use in their speech (like “eschewed” or “fiat”). Try to avoid words with negative connotations (like “insidious” or “insipid”). Remember that the speaker will try to use the word and a negative word will encourage the repetition of negative ideas during the meeting.