**SPEAKING WITH CONFIDENCE**

Jim was a head counselor at Camp Sunrise. On Awards Day at the end of the season, he was expected to stand up and speak to the large group of campers and their parents. Jim had prepared his talk and even memorized what he wanted to say. But as he sat on the stage waiting to be introduced, he became nervous. As he moved to center stage, his legs started shaking. Jim looked out at all those faces. Suddenly, he wished he could disappear. “Thank you for coming here today,” he began in a tense, high-pitched voice. “It’s been a wonderful opportunity to work with so many great campers this summer. Now I’d like to tell you a story about one of them.” All eyes were on him. Everyone seemed to be waiting for him to begin the story. They waited and waited and waited. Jim’s mind had suddenly gone blank. He couldn’t remember what he wanted to say. “I knew it yesterday,” he thought. “Why can’t I remember it now? Why?” It seemed like an hour had passed. But in reality it was only 30 seconds. Panic seized him. Jim knew everyone was staring at him. And he just wanted to get out of there. He could stand it no longer. Jim turned from the audience and fled the stage.

**Key facts about speaking**

1. Most people are afraid of public speaking even good speakers.

## 2. There are several approaches to conquer fear when speaking. This includes becoming more conscious of your feelings, stop writing scripts, do not worry if you repeat things, remember that the audience wants you to succeed.

## 3. Make eye contact with an individual in the audience who is a friend or acquaintance.

## 4. If you are still nervous when it’s time to deliver the speech, take a deep breath and remind yourself that you don’t have to be so serious.

5. Communications consultant Richard Southern advises that you “get your body involved in what you’re saying.”

6. In his book, *Inspire Any Audience*, Tony Jeary explains that one way to overcome pre-speech jitters is to "know what you’re talking about".

7. Prepare to communicate with your audience by researching your topic. Books, magazines, journals, newspapers, and advocacy groups are all helpful. Government sources and legal sources can also provide you with a lot of credible information and statistics.

8. What do my listeners want to know? If you don’t provide information that interests them, you’ll put them to sleep.

9. Tell the audience what you’re going to say at the beginning of the talk.

10. Start your presentation with a story or a statistic to hook audiences