Organizing and Outlining the Speech

I. The Introduction — For our class, you should write out the intro as a paragraph which includes the elements described below. You always start with the attention grabber and end with the preview statement. You should have constant eye contact during the first 30-40 seconds or more of your introduction.

A. Attention Grabber — This is the first thing out of your mouth when you begin your speech in order to get the attention and interest of your audience. Consider using one of the many options that your text recommends to start your speech.
   1. Brief real or hypothetical stories
   2. Quotations
   3. Startling Statements
   4. Reference to audience, occasion or current events
   5. Appropriate and related humor
   6. Personal experiences
   7. Rhetorical questions
   8. Audience participation

B. Thesis/Central idea — This is the focus of your speech and is formed as a declarative sentence (not a question) to reveal the topic of your speech. The thesis is sometimes teamed with the preview statement.

C. Relation Statement — Make sure your audience knows why they need to listen to your speech and why/how this speech affects them.

D. Qualifications — If you haven’t been introduced prior to your speech, you may choose to provide your qualifications (i.e. why do you have the right to speak on this subject) in the introduction.

E. Preview/Forecast — This is the last element of the introduction and should be the last sentence as you move into the body of your speech. It is often teamed with the thesis while it gives your audience a verbal outline of the main points to be presented in the body of the speech.

The Body — This part of the speech is actually the first part to organize followed by the tailoring of the introduction and conclusion to fit.
I. Main points are the central features of your speech.
   A. Limit the number of your main points.
      1. Focus each main point on one main idea.
      2. Keep main points separate.
   B. Construct main points so that they parallel in structure.
      1. Try to use the same pattern of wording for main points.
      2. State main points as simple as the subject will allow.

Transition: A connective is a phrase or sentence that joins one thought to another illustrating the relationship between the two. You should include transitions between each main point. For example, “Now that you understand the structure of the speech, it is important to consider organization.”

II. Main points can be organized in a variety of strategic organizational patterns.
   A. Chronological order follows a time pattern.
   B. Spatial order follows a directional pattern.
      1. physical space
      2. geography
   C. Causal order follows a cause-effect relationship.
   D. Problem-solution order analyzes the extent and acuteness of a problem followed by a workable solution for persuasion speeches.
      1. harms
      2. significance
      3. cause
      4. solution
         a. description
         b. feasibility
         c. advantages
   E. Topical order develops subtopics or components that are the natural divisions of the whole topic.
   F. Monroe’s Motivational Sequence is a five-step pattern used for persuasive speeches.
      1. Attention — gain your audience’s attention (intro).
      2. Need — show the audience that a need exists that affects them.
      3. Satisfaction — present the solution to the need.
4. Visualization—help the audience imagine how their need will be met with the solution/future.
5. Action—state what actions must be taken to fulfill the need (the conclusion).

Transition: Another transition would be located here to connect the second and third main points keeping the flow of the speech going.

III. Supporting materials clarify and validate your main points.
   A. Examples
   B. Statistics
   C. Expert testimony

The Conclusion— you should write out the conclusion as a paragraph which includes the elements described below.

A. Signal the end of the speech.
   1. Use your voice.
   2. Stay away from overused signals (“in conclusion”).

B. Reinforce the thesis.
   1. Summarize the main points.
   2. Return to the opening to remind your audience of the introduction.
   3. Make a dramatic/memorable statement.
   4. Make a direct appeal for action if you are trying to persuade your audience to do something.

References—using APA style, list each reference used and cited in your speech.