

Your Name
Teacher's Name
Name of Class
Day Month Year

Sample Informational Speech Outline

Topic: A Silent Retreat

Title Page - **Image: Fig. 1. Brief Description (in-text). Fig. 1. Retreat (We Travel).**

General Purpose: To inform

Specific Purpose: To inform the audience about silent retreat centers

I. Introduction

Attention Getter: A few years ago, I found myself getting frustrated over little things at work, angry with family and friends, and miserable about my busy, frantic lifestyle. I felt I needed a change. Then a friend recommended that I go to a silent retreat center for two or three days, and let the silence speak to me. I did go, and it made a world of difference. Today, I'd like to explain what a silent retreat center is, what it does, and how to find a silent retreat center.

II. Body (Point 1)

A. (Transition/Signpost) **First**, I'd like to explain the purpose of a silent retreat center.

B. Image: Fig. 2. Quiet Places (Roderick).

C. A silent retreat center gives you a vacation from a busy, noisy world.

1. **Rita Winters, in her book, *The Green Desert***, explains "the purpose of silent retreat is to leave the noise of the world and discover the peace in silence" (**add a page number for a quote**).

2. Story about my first time at a silent retreat center.

D. Silent retreat centers are provided by a variety of religious groups.

E. Lodging, food, and quiet are provided for you.

III. Body (Point 2)

A. (Transition/Signpost) **Next**, I'd like to explain what a silent retreat center does for you.

B. Image: Fig. 3. Silence (Gerald's World).

C. The silence provides you with self-communication.

1. **Sara Park McLaughlin, in her book, *Meeting God in Silence***, tells us that “silence lets you hear your deepest voice” (87).
 2. Story about Thomas Merton’s deep listening.
- D. The silence can provide psychological healing.
1. **Richard Foster, in his book, *Freedom of Simplicity***, warns that “the complexity of rushing to achieve and accumulate more in life threatens to overwhelm and harm us” (23).
 2. Story about my sister’s spiritual direction.
- E. The silence can provide spiritual direction.
- IV. **Body (Point 3) Lastly**, I am going to explain to you how to find a silent retreat center.
- A. **Image: Fig. 4. Shush (Shushanashvili).**
- B. Making the decision to go to a silent retreat center.
1. You need to decide to take good care of yourself.
 2. **Counselor Dave Pennington** explains that “even your decision to treat yourself to a time away from the world is the beginning of a more serene and balanced life” (201).
- C. The Internet is an excellent resource for finding silent retreat centers.
1. Try www.retreatsonline.com for listings.
 2. Call the center and speak with someone before making a reservation.
 3. Things to take to the silent retreat.
 - a) Comfortable clothing.
 - b) A journal.
 - c) Reading material.
 - d) A gentle attitude.
- D. **Image: Fig. 5. Peaceful Sunset (Milo).**

V. **Conclusion**

Today, I’ve shared with you the purpose of a silent retreat center, what it does for you, and how to find a silent retreat center. It’s my hope that if you’re feeling a little stressed with life, frustrated with friends and family, and miserable about a lifestyle that is spinning out of control, you might consider making a reservation at a silent retreat center. **Thomas Merton** once said that, “one’s deepest journey passes through silence” (125). I hope you begin your journey soon.

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