



BIZ BITES: How to Give a Great BOOK READING



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA
NEW YORK CHAPTER

3 Easy Steps

1. Select your
reading
extract

2. Preparation

3. Execution

Select your book extract/ short story

- How much time do you have allocated?
 - Estimate 1 page per minute
- Choose a section that stands alone, is gripping and ends with impact
- Plan your **SHORT** introduction
 - Who are the characters, what just happened in the preceding pages?





Prepare for the reading

Spend some time
before a mirror!



Preparation

- Read the selection at a steady pace. How long did it take? Usually, 100 to 125 words per minute is a good speaking speed. Given your time target, you can use that to select the right size excerpt (e.g. 8 minutes=between 800 and 1000 words).
- You can easily gauge your speed by timing yourself reading a word document where you know the word count.
- Record yourself.
 - Listen to your recording, which words were unclear? Practice these
 - Prepare to read slowly and clearly. Modulate your tone
 - Unless you are a trained voice actor, avoid 'doing the voices'
 - If the dialog tag is at the end of the line, check whether you need to move it to the beginning.
- Pack your book and business cards/bookmarks (and laptop/cable/thumb drive if you plan to present slides)



Execution

Plan to have a good time!

On the day of the reading

Come early, meet people



Take it easy, you got this!

- Drink water before the talk
- Introduce yourself/ make a joke to check whether people can hear you
- Adjust your volume
- Introduce the characters, Read
- Breathe
- Enjoy the questions, hand out cards/bookmarks



Pro Tips

- The larger the room, the slower you need to speak.
 - Picture your words flowing out over the attendees like a wave. They take longer to reach the back, so the farther away the back is, the slower you need to speak.
- Avoid eating dairy products before your event. Milk and cheese thicken your saliva and can make it harder to speak clearly.
- Check your equipment (microphone, projector, etc) well before the start of the program. Fixing problems "live" in front of the audience is stressful for you.



**Wishing you
the best!**

MWA New York Chapter