

WRITING A SPEECH

What is a speech?

It must have a message given by someone to someone



(A) Types of speech/General Objectives

- To **inform**: to present a talk with the sole purpose of giving information
 - To **inspire**: to put feelings into words and inspire the audience
 - To **motivate**: to make others think, believe and act as you want them to, and have them like it
 - To **persuade**: to present a talk that persuades the audience to accept your proposal or viewpoint
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- To **entertain**: to entertain the audience through humour and drama

(B) What do you have to consider when writing a speech?

- **The subject**: Determine your topic for this speech, e.g., school election. What will you speak about? Whether it's on deforestation or world football history etc.
- **The audience**: This will determine your voice--the tone of your voice, and the degree of formality in your word choice and sentence structures. Are you're talking to fellow schoolmates or hyperactive nine-year-olds? Your language should change accordingly.
- **The purpose**: The objective that will define your subject, e.g., "to persuade the audience to make a particular choice."

The title: Don't worry about an exact title at the outset: this will develop. Likewise, your subject may shift as you acquire more knowledge, but you must start somewhere.

(C) Speech Organisation

1. Introduction (10%)

- (A) Opening Statement – Attention Getter
- (B) Thesis – States your case

2. Body (80%)

- (A) First Main Point
 - sub-points with support
- (B) Second Main Point
 - sub-points with support
- (C) Third Main Point
 - sub-points with support

3. Conclusion (10%)

- (A) Summary – Famous Words
- (B) Memorable Statement

(D) Techniques for an Introduction: Attention-Getters

1	Ask a question	What if the world ended tomorrow?
2	State a startling fact	My fellow schoolmates, in every 10 minutes, 20 people die in road accidents.
3	Present a quotation	You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.
4	Refer to a historical event	In 1965, Singapore was separated from Malaysia. We became an independent nation.
5	Compliment the audience	As I stand before you, my fellow friends, I am delighted to see faces that exude enthusiasm and faces that radiate a heart of warmth.
6	Refer to the occasion, purpose of the meeting	We gather here this morning for a single purpose, which is to elect a president for the Student Council.
7	Point out the importance of the subjects to the audience	Having the right attitudes towards learning is of paramount importance and this afternoon, we have a honourable speaker who flew....
8	Point to common relationships, beliefs, interests or opinions	Our school values advise us, to grow as one people, to serve as one people and to live victoriously as one people.
9	Give an illustration	e.g. a story
10	Tell a joke	
11	Use a gimmick	

*Bear in mind that a quote, story, joke etc. must all be relevant to the subject.

(E) Techniques for a Conclusion

1	Summary	To sum up, let me reiterate the points I have made. First...
2	Make a direct appeal	I appeal to you to cast a vote for Max of Sec 4S3 for we all know that she has the makings of a good leader to lead us in the Student Council
3	Look ahead	The future is in our hands. Seize the day and live for tomorrow.
4	Ask a rhetorical question	Is your future not important to you, may I ask?
5	Refer back to your opening comments	Returning to what I said earlier, my friends, it takes one with courage and integrity to stand up for what is right.
6	Quotation	

(F) Techniques for a Good Body

1. Plan for **three** main points and elaborate on them (but there again, read the question for the points to be covered).
2. You can employ the following techniques:

1	Imagery techniques -to help audience see and feel vicariously	<i>When I went swimming, the icy water felt like a million bees stinging my skin.</i> Instead of, <i>When I went swimming, the water was cold.</i>
2	Parallel Structure -group of words or phrases that copy or echo each other for emphasis and impact. It is also used for emotional appeal.	Where peace is unknown, make it welcome; Where peace is fragile, make it strong; Where peace is temporary, make it permanent. Richard Nixon
3	Alliteration -repeating the same or similar consonant in a phrase.	I plead for p atriotism in p eace as well as in war.
4	Simile -comparing one thing with another.	<i>...life was like a box a chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get.</i> Forrest Gump
5	Metaphor -two unlike things are compared for emotional, dramatic or poetic effect.	It's obviously raining and the rain will get heavier. This is not a passing shower. But we should not assume that it's going to be a full-blown thunderstorm. It may not be. George Yeo 11 July 2001
6	Rhetorical Question -a rhetorical question is answered silently in the mind of the listener. A sequence of repeated rhetorical questions creates a rhythm.	Who shall say our welfare is unimportant? Who shall say students don't matter? Who shall say we cannot have a voice?

(G) Wrong Dressing Up:

- Use of jargon
- Slang
- Colloquialism
- Clichés
- False generalisation

REMEMBER: If you have to write a speech, **DO NOT** write one that is way over 350 words. Examiners have noted that some students tend to write excessively. If you make a terribly long speech, it will bore the listeners and soon you will be talking only to yourself!

Valedictorian Speech

Good afternoon, Mr Ang, our Principal, Mrs Lim, our Vice-Principal, teachers and fellow Victorians. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to make the valedictorian speech on behalf of all my schoolmates who have graduated.

Do you remember how you felt four years ago when you first entered our school on the first day? I remember my own fears and apprehensions. What is a secondary school like? Are the teachers fierce? Will I be able to cope? Indeed, I did not know what to expect of our school, of myself and of being educated in a secondary school. But what made my first day most memorable, and I am sure I can speak for my fellow friends, was the warm smiles I received on that morning when I first entered the school. Indeed, I was greatly encouraged by the friendliness of our teachers and the amiable atmosphere we were thrown into.

As a student since then, our student life had its ups and downs. Studying in a secondary school, we soon realised, was much more demanding than being in a primary school. However, it was the encouragement, it was the perseverance and it was the determination of our teachers that saw us through all these years. Without which, I am sure, many of us would have failed miserably in our journey in education. For that, I want to thank all teachers of Victoria for what they have done for us. On occasions when we were difficult, they forgave us, on occasions when we were lazy, they pushed us, on occasions when we needed a listening ear, they heard us. I am sure many of my friends can attest to the love, commitment and dedication our teachers. They have demonstrated great enthusiasm in educating the mind and soul of the young. And oftentimes, we could find refuge beneath their wings and feel the warmth and security of their protection.

Apart from imparting knowledge to us, our teachers are also role models for us. They lead by example. This brings me to mind one occasion when a group of us were told to clean the toilet during our Secondary 3 Leadership Camp. We were, of course, reluctant and on our way to the toilet, started complaining to one another why a leadership camp would require us to work like servants. However, when we entered the toilet which we were supposed to clean, we saw two of our teachers, Mr Mike Tan and Mr Johnson Sim, busy scrubbing the toilet bowls in the cubicles. We learnt a valuable message that day. If you want to be great, learn to serve.

Today, as we depart from this place, allow me to quote Robert Frost. He said, "I'm not a teacher, but an awakener." That indeed is true of our teachers in Victoria. They have ignited in us our passion for lifelong learning and have awakened in us the commitment to serve. We came to learn and we shall leave to serve.

Thank you.

Sample Speech introductions

These are some of examples of speech introductions. They are not perfect and they can be improved on (see comments made in italics), but these introductions are well-structured and have made use of certain techniques to engage the reader.

Remember that an introduction is well-organised, states the purpose of the speech and outlines what the speech will be about. It is not lengthy and it does not give too much details.

Read on and see what you can learn from them, and employ certain techniques that you think can make your own introductions better.

“Excellence is not a destination. It is a journey that never ends” – Brian Tracy

Strength of Speech:

- *Clarity of the purpose of the class-outing*
- *Use of inclusive Language such as ‘we’*
- *Use of rhetorical question.*
- *Use of the ‘Rule of 3’ technique (be united; stand together; support one another).*

Good morning, fellow classmates. When I started off the year in this class – a new class –, I knew, I truly believed that each one of you, like me, felt a rush of determination to start the year right. It was the beginning of a new class, new friendships, and even meeting new teachers. Especially when I was appointed class chairman with your support, I knew that we all wanted to be a close-knitted class. That we will be united; stand together; support one another. After all, who doesn’t want to feel part of a team that feels like family? Thus, I came up with a few team-bonding activities we will do during the June holidays

- Speech introduction 1

Strength of Speech:

- *Clarity of the purpose of the class-outing*
- *Use of the adverb, ‘maybe’ shows that he is not exerting authority as chairman but rather, expressing that the possibility of a class outing is a good idea of inclusive Language such as ‘we’*

Good morning, fellow classmates. As your class chairman, I have some good news for you. As you all know, the June holidays are approaching next month. Since the mid-year examinations have just ended, it got me thinking. Should we organize an event to deepen our bond as classmates? Maybe we *should* go out together as a class and spend time together. Therefore, I am happy to announce that we will be having a class outing during the June Holidays.

- Speech introduction 2

Strength of Speech:

- *Use of humour to engage the audience.*

Fellow classmates, during the June holidays that are about to begin, I am convinced that most of you will become one with your beds. I, myself, am very tempted to do the same. Then I thought, “What if I chose not to be a loser for once and do something of interest to me and would bring meaning to my life?” That led me to search up some activities to keep me occupied and it led me to think about how we can have a day of fun together as a class! I am happy to share some great ideas we can do to grow together as a class and

strengthen our bonds and friendship; I am looking at partaking in outdoor camping, a hiking challenge, and a Fun with the Arts event. I am excited to see your responses!

- Speech introduction 3

Strength of Speech:

- *Clarity of the purpose of the class-outing*
- *Use of the quote*

“Do not take advantage of the people in your life that you call your friends... take advantage of the moments that you get to spend with them!” We are always seen either doing our work or being distracted by those hand-held gadgets of ours. Just exactly how much time do we actually spend bonding among ourselves? Quite little, I would admit. Good morning, fellow classmates. It gives me much pleasure to propose three bonding activities we can all do together as a class during the June holdiays and therefore, with the proposed activities, we would be able to strengthen our friendships and deepen our bonds as classmates.

- Speech introduction 4