



Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition

2020 Speaking Hints & Advice

**25TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION!**

Thanks for entering the 2020 Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition! This is a very simple guide to what adjudicators will be looking for in the competition, along with some tips to make sure your prepared and impromptu speeches are as brilliant and fun and engaging as can be. It's important to remember that the things which work in some speeches won't always work in others, so there's no formula for writing the perfect speech. Still, hopefully this advice will give you a better idea of what makes a good multicultural speech. If you'd like some more information on speech-writing, or want to see some examples of successful multicultural speeches, your teacher can access the "[Strictly Speaking](#)" resource on Scootle through the portal (they'll know what that is!) You can also watch both state finals from last year on our website (just head to www.artsunit.nsw.edu.au and scroll to the bottom of the Multicultural Perspectives page).

Prepared Speeches — Manner

- Your manner should be **natural and conversational**.
- Exaggerated gestures, exaggerated use of voice, over-acting and the like are all bad ideas. Try to have a sincere, down-to-earth manner.
- With that in mind, it is still important that you develop your own individual style. Some speakers come across more serious than others, some will be more entertaining and light-hearted – that's a good thing.
- You mustn't use props, and definitely don't act out scenes or sing no matter how good at it you are – it's awkward!
- You should look at the audience as much as possible. That said, learning your speech off by heart so that you end up reciting it like a robot as if for the hundredth time and putting everyone to sleep isn't great either, so it's fine if you glance down at your palm cards occasionally.
- Good speakers will occasionally stumble or say 'um'. The odd 'um' in a speech is way better than listening to a speech that is at one extreme entirely read or at the other really over-rehearsed. Think of the competition as a learning exercise – it's fine for learners stumble from time to time.
- Your body language should be natural and easy, which means have a few hand gestures (but not heaps of crazy rehearsed ones), stand comfortably, and if it comes naturally take the occasional step. Good speakers never act out their speeches.
- Finally, your voice should be relaxed and expressive without being exaggerated. Don't suddenly have an English accent or anything. In fact, the only thing you should worry about with your voice is just to make sure you're really, really loud so that everyone in the hall can hear you.

Prepared Speeches — Matter

- Every prepared speech in the competition **must have Multicultural content**. If you don't have a message around the idea of multiculturalism or if you show that you really don't get what multiculturalism is you can't progress through the competition.
- On top of that, the best speeches usually have a strong point of view and a clear direction. All good speeches have a purpose and a message in mind.



Prepared Speeches — Matter (continued)

- The best speeches are balanced. This means a balance between personal stuff and broader big-picture stuff, between emotional stuff and cold hard facts, and between humour and sincerity. If your speech is entirely personal it won't be as interesting, and the same applies if it's just an information report. A simple tip would be to begin with a personal story and then broaden out to look at an issue in the community or the country, but remember that this won't work for every speech.
- Finally, good speeches are unique and striking. They should be original and catch the audience's attention by presenting them with something they haven't heard before.

Prepared Speeches — Method

- Your speech should have an introduction, middle, and conclusion (obviously!)
- A good introduction is unique and gives the audience a sense of your message without being boringly explicit. "My name is _____ and today I'm here to talk about _____" is a very dull beginning, as is anything like that. You might try beginning with a question, a little story, or for more serious speeches, a bold and striking statement.
- The middle of your speech should contain 2 or 3 separate parts or ideas which you put together so that your speech flows. Maybe it will flow by moving from arguments on a personal scale to a look at a global issue, or from a look at the past to where we are heading in the future. Each part or idea should be given a reasonable amount of time. A simple list of every idea you can think of is not a useful way to structure this middle section, even if it makes you look smart for knowing so much!
- A good conclusion is memorable, effective and original, and avoids silly clichés like "I hope you have enjoyed listening to my speech". Speakers should also avoid thanking the audience and opt for a strong final statement of their message as their last words.
- The best tip for the ending is to tell the audience what you want them to do with all the information you've given them. Be a bit bossy and tell them to do this or that to fix the problems you might have been talking about, or to make sure they don't miss out on the fun stuff you've mentioned.
- Finally, it's important to time the speech properly. You should be wrapping up the final part of the middle section when the first bell rings, and finishing off the conclusion when the two bells ring. Never reach the continuous bell that comes one minute after the official speaking time has ended – adjudicators aren't allowed to listen to a single word you say once that bell starts!

Impromptu Speeches

- The impromptu topic on the day will be general and there'll be lots of different things your speech could end up being about. Some examples of past topics are: "Hard Work", "Changes", "A Second Chance", "Friends", "Honesty", "Making Mistakes", "Older and Wiser" and "Heroes and Villains."
- Last year's state finals topics were "Rewards" for Years 3&4 and "What a Mess!" for the Years 5&6 (that one's pretty hard!) Parts of newspaper headlines often make great impromptu topics for practice.



Impromptu Speeches (continued)

- Your impromptu speech shouldn't be about multiculturalism. The best impromptu speeches are very different from the prepared speeches that the audience has already heard. You'll be disadvantaged if you use an idea from your own or anyone else's prepared speech, so it's best to avoid multiculturalism.
- The rules of what makes a good impromptu speech are exactly the same as for the prepared section. This means a beginning, middle and end are still a must.
- A clear, singular approach to the topic is vital. Long lists of unrelated ideas make poor impromptu speeches, so don't just rattle off everything that comes into your head when they tell you the topic!
- It's even better if your clear, singular approach is original and different to everybody else.
- If you start rambling just to make the bells that probably won't work, but if you're under time that'll also be a problem!
- Remember – the adjudicator is going to give equal weight to the prepared and impromptu speeches in judging the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition, so you should practice both!
- The best tip we can give you for writing an impromptu speech is to start by asking yourself **“What's an important message for people to hear about this thing?”** Say we gave you “Bad Behaviour” as a topic. Definitions of what “Bad Behaviour” is and what the likely punishments might be aren't really a message at all – they're just things about the topic. “Bad Behaviour should be avoided because it's bad” isn't really an important message for people to hear because, well, they pretty much know that already. On the other hand, “Sporting heroes should watch how they behave because their bad behaviour influences the kids who look up to them” is an important message for people to hear, so a speech about that will be great to listen to and mean something – it'll work really well. So would a speech about “Sometimes you behave badly for the right reasons” or “Teachers who punish bad behaviour too harshly only make things worse.” Once you've got your message planned, write a speech that drives that one message home without any definitions or different possible messages or “Another-thing-about-the-topic-is...”es and you'll have a great impromptu speech!

In summary, while there's no formula for writing the perfect speech, most good speeches have a purpose, are sincere, are balanced, and are original and striking. We know there's a lot to think about here but remember – you'll have lots more public speaking opportunities as you continue through school. Make sure you focus on giving it your best and just enjoying the competition and learning as much as possible rather than on winning. The adjudicator will be happy to give you feedback at the end of the final, so make sure you stick around and ask questions and pick up as many tips on how to improve as you can. Thanks again for entering and working so hard on your speeches – they're always brilliant! Good luck!

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