

Chapter 4

Formal Speech Making – Speeches

NCEA Level 1 English material covered in this chapter provides important preparation for one of the assessment options for Achievement Standard 90058 (1.7) 'Deliver a speech in a formal situation' by understanding:

- The purpose and topic, and planning and preparation of content.
- Structure and language techniques.
- Delivery techniques.
- Carrying out a task – to write a speech of welcome.

Introduction

The most immediate way to communicate with others is through the spoken word. Verbal language combined with body language instantly creates a message for any listener. We are all capable of effectively communicating ideas when we are relaxed; however, a formal situation for a prepared speech can sometimes seem overwhelming. Think back to when you have been part of a special occasion such as a wedding, a significant birthday or a funeral. In the future it may be your turn to acknowledge, celebrate or to thank significant people in your life on such an occasion by giving a speech; the more experience you have, the better the result will be. Regardless of context, there are three important aspects of speeches:

- Audience – who you are speaking to.
- Content – what you say.
- Delivery – how you say it.



Content

Planning

Purpose

Depending on the occasion or situation, the speech will be given for a particular reason or purpose. Speeches can be a combination of, or fall into, one of four categories – to entertain, to persuade, to explain/inform or to convey feelings.



Persuade

Speaker's objective is to challenge the views of the audience by delivering clear points in support of the case that they are making. Ideas and language use repetition of structure and key words and listing when delivering in a controlled formal style. Often used in politics and when campaigning against a new law or cause (like GM food).

Entertain

Speaker's opinion is shared in a light-hearted manner on a serious or not-so-serious topic. To make a speech entertaining, consider contrasting or exaggerating language and ideas and an exaggerated delivery style. Situations could include radio discussions, television chat show, or a twenty-first birthday speech.

Purpose of speeches**Convey feelings**

Speaker's main focus is to communicate appropriate emotion on a special occasion such as a wedding, funeral, hui, tangi, reunion, welcome, farewell.

Inform

Speaker presents facts and information to the audience. Ideas must be clearly ordered, have accurate detail, make careful use of statistics, and all jargon is explained and examples given. Situations may include a specialist seminar, sales pitch, news conference, news or current affairs programme.

Choosing a topic

Your topic must suit the task, the audience and your own knowledge and interest. The audience are usually your own class members, teenagers like yourself. For some speeches a role play situation may be established, where the speaker assumes you are a member of a particular group to make the speech seem convincing.

Your teacher will direct the speech task you will be assessed on. Speech tasks could include giving a speech of welcome or a speech to demonstrate how something works. When choosing a topic, consider the interests and experiences that have helped shape your own knowledge. What do you know about or want to find out more about?

Once you have decided on your topic, you may need to do some research to find accurate additional information to support your existing opinion or stance. The source for this information could include statistics, quotations, interviews, reference books, internet sites, newspapers and magazines. It is not recommended that you do extensive research on a topic you are unfamiliar with, unless your information-finding skills are assessed at the same time in this task.

Choosing a good topic means finding the right combination of task, audience and knowledge; achieving this balance will help with the writing and delivery of your speech.

Activity 4A: Planning and choosing a speech topic

Consider your own speech:

1. What is the purpose of the speech task?
2. What are the requirements of the speech task?
3. Who is the audience, and what will they be interested in?
4. What are you interested in and have knowledge or experience of?

Writing your speech

Like formal writing, you need to have a clear structure that guides your audience through the speech, and does not jump from topic to topic. Your speech must have an introduction, body and conclusion. (See the **Structure** section of *Chapter 9: Formal Writing* for more detail.)

Introduction

You must greet the audience and give an overview of the topic of your speech. The way in which you do this can set your speech apart from others. You may wish to consider using a short poem, quotation, role play or even part of a song, if appropriate.

Middle of speech

Your ideas must be organised so you do not unnecessarily repeat sections or confuse listeners at any stage of the speech. Some ways to organise your ideas could include:

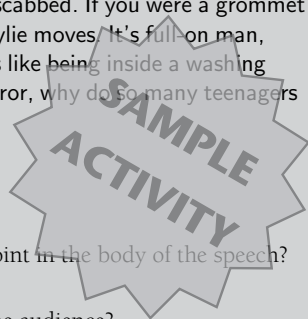
- Chronologically – in the exact time order the events occurred in.
- Cause and effect – a logical outcome for each point stated; key words could include *therefore* and *consequently* when introducing a result statement.
- **PDR** – **P**oint is made. **D**evelop the point. **R**efer to a specific example. Points relate to a single idea.

Conclusion

This is your final statement. It should be strong and effective and summarise your ideas, leaving the audience with a clear message.

Activity 4B: Organising your ideas

1. Read the following introduction to a student's speech and answer the questions.
 Have you ever taken on something you regretted as soon as you started? Half-way through you want to drop out but you can't. You have to stay for the duration of the ride, from beginning to the end. Perhaps you can relate to this scenario. You came in the backdoor totally clucked. You think your are going to get scabbed. If you were a grommet you would be swish but you are totally stoked with your styleie moves/ It's full on man, but you made it through your first tube. Surfing rocks! It is like being inside a washing machine – you just hope that you don't drown. Despite terror, why do so many teenagers possess the passion for surfing?
 - a. What makes this speech interesting?
 - b. What is the main idea of this speech?
 - c. How has this main idea been introduced?
 - d. How could the speaker go on to develop their main point in the body of the speech?
2. Consider your own speech:
 - a. How could your introduction capture the interest of the audience?
 - b. How can the ideas of your speech be best organised?
 - c. What is your main point and what do you want the audience to remember most?



Activity 4B: Organising your ideas

1.
 - a. Begins with a rhetorical question that could be about any subject; uses interesting jargon that keeps audience listening; uses personal pronouns to connect with audience; variety of sentence length and structure.
 - b. Why teenagers like surfing.
 - c. Descriptive example and jargon words to create the atmosphere of excitement.
 - d. Discuss:
 - Facing the specific challenges of surfing – such as safety, fitness, cost of equipment.
 - The rewards of surfing – physical and social aspects.
 - The history of surfing – local and international identities, trends and technology.
2. *Answers will vary.*



— Page Break —

Glossary/Index

The Glossary explains the meanings of very many of the words you need to understand in studying English. It is also an Index because it gives references to pages where the words are further explained or where examples are given.

actors (30, 289): people who act the part of the characters in a play or film or on television.

adjective (125): word which describes a noun.

adjudicator (46, 51, 56): person who judges a debate.

adverb (125): class of words which modify adjectives, verbs and adverbs, indicating time, place and manner.

adverbial phrases (117): the part of a sentence describing the action.

affirmative team (46): debating team that argues in support of the proposition/moot.

alliteration (38, 68, 204): when the same consonant sound links two or more words.

allusion (208): a brief, indirect reference to a generally well-known person, place, time, event, object, etc.

ambiguity (89): when meaning is unclear because it can be understood in different ways.

anchor story (318): news story found at the bottom of the front page of a newspaper, usually human interest.

angle (224, 226, 230, 348): point of view taken by a journalist; the idea emphasised by the writer.

annotate (39): write explanatory notes next to the text.

antithesis (14): when a sentence uses contrast for effect.

apostrophe (118): *see main text for explanation.*

appendix (253): additional material on a topic, added to the end of a book.

apposition (117): a *noun phrase* referring to the same person or thing as the previous noun phrase, eg “This is Tia, my cousin.” (Tia = my cousin.)

archives (257): historical documents, public records kept by individuals, local bodies, libraries, etc.

argument (53, 54): reasons given to support an idea or proposition.

argumentum ad hominem (54): formal term, used in debating, for ‘attacking the person’.

association (208, 272): connecting one idea with another.

