**Writing speeches- Ms. Ashley- English First Peoples**

**The purpose of your speech**

Before you can start writing your speech, you need to have a clear purpose. What are you trying to achieve? If you can’t write your purpose in a single clear concise sentence… you will struggle with the rest of your speech.

Your purpose could be anything:

* To inform people
* To entertain people
* To persuade people

***To clarify what you are trying to achieve, at the top of your script write…*** “The purpose of this speech is……………”  
Everything you write should be written with your purpose in mind.

If the main purposes of a your speech is to entertain, don’t simply tell a string of jokes or funny stories. Leave that to the stand up comedians. Your speech should entertain but it should do more…..

“Speeches that entertain, do more than entertain: They also create social cohesion by generating good feelings…….  
Even when your main purpose is to be entertaining, you should still include at least one serious idea in your speech. Why? A speech that is all fluff can sometimes become tiresome and vacuous.” – Laurie Rozakis Ph.D.

**Beginning your Speech**

The beginning of your speech should grab the audience and hold their attention and it has to do it from the beginning. Here are some possibilities:

* Use a famous or unusual quotation – *“Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others.”*
* Ask a question – *“Have you ever been in prison? I have.”*
* Use a startling statistic or fact – *“Children laugh about 400 times a day, while adults laugh on average only 15 times a day.”*
* Relate a short story or anecdote – *“While travelling down the Tigris and Euphrates rivers many years ago…..”*
* Make a promise – *“When you leave here today, you will have the solution to…..”*
* Use humour – *“I have always been short, but today I’ll be brief.”*
* Create your own saying or phrase that encapsulates (captures) your purpose ie. “*”I have a dream”*

Whatever method you use it has to grab the attention of the audience and make them listen.

Psychologists have shown that the first 30 seconds have the most impact. So don’t waste time.

**What else should your beginning do?**

Once you’ve grabbed the attention of the audience, you have to do a few other things before you dive into the body of your speech. Traditionally the beginning of your speech should:

* Allow the audience to get used to your voice – make sure that you speak slowly
* Provide reasons for listening… what’s in it for the audience – describe the benefits
* Give the audience an idea what your speech is about and what you’ll cover – provide a route map

**The middle of your Speech**

This is the meat and potatoes of your speech, and if it’s a good speech… you might throw in a few veg.  
This is where you present your information, facts and figures, statistics, quotes to prove your point, humorous stories to illustrate a point. Your speech should be arranged around a number of main points and these points should be arranged in a logical order.

**How many main points should your speech have?**

When you start to write your masterpiece, you’ll want to tell people everything. Don’t! Limit your main points to three, almost everyone agrees that three is the best number. You can add sub-points to your main points but limit your main points to the tried and trusted triad, stick to three.

**Use a strong pattern to structure your speech**

In your speech it’s not so easy…. make sure that your main points are in a logical order. This helps the audience follow your speech and it helps you to remember.  
Traditional patterns to structure your speech are:

* Numerical order eg. first point, second point, third point.
* Time related eg. past, present, future.
* Geography eg. in the UK, in Europe, in the USA.
* Problem, cause, solution.
* Extended metaphor/analogy e.g using comparison to simplify your point

**Put your best material last**

If your speech has three main points and you’re not sure what order to put them in, arrange them in ascending order of importance with your best material last.  
The audience tend to remember your final point the most, so make it a good one.

**Mix the facts with emotion**

Don’t be afraid to use emotion in your speeches. Plain old facts and logic can only go so far, we often make our decisions using emotion and feelings. As the old saying goes… “Facts tell, feelings sell.”  
The best speakers move us to action via our emotions. Open with a laugh – close with a tear. – Dottie Walters

**Ending your Speech**

Let them know that you’re coming to the end and that the final destination will make it all worthwhile.  
Your ending has to be signalled and it can’t just peter out, it has to make all that listening worthwhile.

If the beginning of your speech has to grab the attention of the audience, the ending has to leave them with something memorable to do, to act on, to think about, to give them hope.  
The ending is the part of your speech the audience will remember… no pressure there then!

The conclusion must do two things. It must remind the audience of your main points and it must satisfy the listeners, leaving them in the proper mood or frame of mind.

**Use voice music to let us know it’s the end**

When you deliver your final words, it should be obvious to the audience that you’ve finished… it’s the cue for the audience to applaud. If the audience don’t know that those were your final words, there is an embarrased silence and the speaker has to say “Thank you” to let the audience know it’s the end.  
Dilwyn Scott the National Training Officer for the Association of Speakers Clubs talks about using “Voice Music” to let the audience know that you’ve finished. In other words, it’s not just what you say but how you say it that says to the audience “you can applaud now.” Listen to the endings of famous speeches, and listen to the “Voice Music”.

**Always end on a positive note**

No matter how sad the occasion, how bleak your message, always leave the audience feeling good. Even if all you can do is give them hope for the future – motivate the audience to take action.

**Use transitions to link your speech**

Transitions are the phrases that tie the pieces of your speech together. They let the audience know that you are moving to a new section of the speech or to a new point. They’re the glue that holds the whole thing together. (don’t overuse these though- sometimes they can be seen as formulaic)  
Any short phrase can be used as a transition . e.g. Another reason for…..

**Bonus Speech Writing tips**

* **It’s meant to be spoken-**Make sure that you write your speech to be spoken, not read.
* **Use the showbiz formula** – strong opening, strong close.
* **Be active and specific-**To give your speech impact, cut out the adjectives and adverbs, use nouns and active verbs.
* **Get the proportions of your speech right** – The beginning should be about 10 to 15 percent of your speech, the ending should be about 5 to 10 percent.
* **Write the introduction last** – after you’ve written the body and conclusion, you’ll know what you’re introducing. Then write the introduction.
* **For a great finish to your speech, tie it in to the beginning** – by repeating at the end of your speech the idea, quotation, image or whatever you offered in the introduction, you give the audience the feeling of coming home again – this gives a wonderful sense of completeness to your speech.
* **Work and rework your speech**. All good speech writers will tell you that there’s no such thing a good writing, only good rewriting.
* **Practice and Time yourself –** Practice saying the speech out loud and time yourself. Often you will speak faster when you are nervous. Practice places where you will pause and speaking slowly and clearly.
* **Appeal to emotion-**Great speeches are primarily emotional, not logical
* **Use tone-**Small shifts in tone make an enormous difference to the audience, so sweat the details
* **Clear voice-**A great speech has a clear voice speaking throughout
* **One main idea-**A great speech conveys one idea only, though it can have lots of supporting points
* A great speech answers a great need
* **Keep it short**. Capture the key emotions and ideas you want to convey in as little time as possible. If you can deliver a two-minute speech, instead of a 30-minute droner, your audience will actually listen, and will love your for your brevity.
* **Have purpose**. Speak to communicate a message, and to get your audience to act.
* **Connect to your audience’s hearts**. A speech is not a logical argument, or a listing of accomplishments or facts or events. Make it personal- use stories, use humour, use irony etc.
* **Speak to larger truths**. It’s best if you connect your ideas and words to larger causes and ideals,.
* **Speak to the larger audience**. When you give a speech, ideally, it’s not just to those before you. Think about how your speech will affect a greater audience, and what message you want to convey to them.
* **Use imagery**. It is important to do more than use bland words, but to create a picture in people’s minds through your words. The imagery, of course, should be related to your central theme.
* **Recall more famous lines**. The references bring a lot more with them than just the phrase or quote you use, if your audience is familiar with it.
* **Revise, revise, revise**. Each revision should cut out the unnecessary, develop the central idea, make the words flow more smoothly, and powerful develop imagery and phrases.
* **End strong**. End with a line people will remember, that contains the message you want them to remember, because, aside from the opening, it’s the most important line.
* **Be circular in your reasoning** Bring your point home with purposeful repetition
* **Listen and learn-**Listen and read famous speeches to learn what made them resonate with their audience. Mirror and copy techniques that work.