

# HELPFUL HINTS TO WRITING AND PRESENTING AN EFFECTIVE SPEECH

## 1. Writing a Speech

1. Choose a topic that really **interests you** or **you confidently know a lot about**. Then begin with brainstorming all your thoughts, feelings, observations or information, on this chosen topic.
2. Decide what your **purpose** will be: *To inform? To persuade? To inspire? To entertain?* This is important, as you need to know how you want your listeners to feel.
3. **Research** for more information (facts, details, examples etc) to develop the interest in your content.
4. **Plan** your speech into **3 clear parts**: a beginning, middle and end

### Part 1: The Beginning (Introduction)

Make an **impact!!!!** Start with a **“sizzling”** beginning to “hook” and grab your audiences’ attention.

**Be imaginative!!!!** Here are some ideas you might like to begin with:

The chosen topic is... **The Perfect Pet**

Approach	Example
A question....	<i>Can you imagine how terrible our world would be without pets?</i>
An unexpected detail or statistic....	<i>Research has shown that owning a pet reduces stress and helps children to feel better emotionally.</i>
A quote from a poem, person or song....	<i>“Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our life whole.” by Roger Caras</i>
A short anecdote.... (a personal story or description)	<i>It was one of the worst days of my life! I thought everything was falling around me. I fell to the floor and burst into tears.... Then I felt a warm wet lick on my tear-soaked cheek. My beautiful dog looked lovingly at me with his big brown warm eyes.....then I felt that life was not such a disaster after all....</i>
A joke....	<i>What kind of cat should you never play games with? A cheetah!!!!</i>
An exaggeration....	<i>The dog was HUGE! Bigger than the room! The house! He loomed over me with rivers of drool spilling from his mouth.... I instantly fell in love!</i>

(Remember to **never** address the audience in the beginning, or thank them at the end)

### Part 2: The Middle (Body)

(Most of your time speaking will be presenting this middle part.)

Choose at least **2-4 points** to develop your topic. **Expand them** with examples, comparisons, personal stories, statistics, experiences or facts. Make sure each point **makes sense** and **follows logically**. Be descriptive!

### Part 3: The End (Conclusion)

Present a **strong** ending. Make a “*sizzling*” impact for the audience to **remember** your speech. (You can use one of the “hooks” mentioned in the Introduction or summarize in an engaging way).

Once you are happy with your speech, **before** you write it out or learn it.....**TIME IT!**

(It must be a **3 minute speech!** This is so important....it **must** finish on time!)

Once you're happy with your speech content, write it out onto **small (numbered) palm cards.**

These cards must fit neatly in the palm of your hand (approx..10cm x 7cm) Better still (if you can) learn it off by heart! If you can't learn it all, don't stress, but **please try to know the beginning** and/or the **ending off by heart**, this makes a big difference as you are now totally connecting eye-to-eye with your audience.

## 2. Presenting a Speech



### Practise! Practise! Practise!

Practise your speech until you are very sure of your words.

Practise in front of anyone!

Your parents, siblings, friends... anyone! Or anything!

To see what you really look like... Practise in front of a mirror, or better still, record yourself on a smart phone or ipad!

These are the things you should be checking for:

- **Voice projection** – Are you loud and clear enough for everyone to hear you?
- **Expression** – Are you interesting to listen to? Is your voice varied and expressive?
- **Phrasing** – Do you have nice pausing in your sentences, to add meaning and emphasis? Don't rush!!
- **Gestures** – Do you use your facial expressions to convey your feelings? Do you use your hands, arms or body subtly to emphasise your message? Are you standing tall and straight?
- **Eye Contact** – Do you look at *all* the audience?
- **Confidence** – Do you look prepared and confident? Do you believe what you are saying?
- **Ease using palm cards** – Are your cards unobtrusive? Are they easy to move through? Make sure your eyes move to the cards and not your head bent down. (If you know your speech by heart but need to still “use” your cards....do so! Do whatever helps you feel confident.)

**But remember... try not to be too nervous.**

**The more you practice, the more confident you will feel...**

(These “Helpful Hints” have always supported me when writing my speeches and practicing my presenting. I hope you find them “helpful”. Good luck and remember... try to have some fun!)

*K.Scarf Diocesan Public Speaking Coordinator*