

Persuasive Oratory: The Great Forest Debate

Learning objective: To identify and use the features of a persuasive speech, including emotive language, rhetorical questions, and modal verbs.

Read the speech delivered by Leo the Lion to the forest council. Analyse how he uses language to inspire his audience, then answer the questions below.

My fellow creatures of the woodland, look around you. Do we want to see our beautiful, ancient trees replaced by cold, grey concrete? We have lived in harmony here for generations. Is it not our duty to protect the sanctuary that provides our food, our shelter, and our peace? We must stand united. We shall surely overcome this challenge if we work together. If we act now, we might save our home, but if we hesitate, the forest will vanish forever. Surely, you agree that our future is worth fighting for?

Word bank: rhetorical question · emotive language · modal verbs · alliteration · persuasion · inclusive pronouns

1. Identify two examples of emotive language used in the speech and explain why they are effective in persuading the audience. (2 marks)

2. Find one rhetorical question in the text. Why does Leo use this technique instead of making a direct statement? (2 marks)

3. Highlight the modal verbs in the passage. How do these verbs change the tone of the speech from a suggestion to a firm commitment? (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast the effect of using 'we' instead of 'you' throughout the speech. Why is this an effective tool for a leader? (3 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Does Leo provide enough factual evidence to support his argument, or does he rely primarily on emotional appeal? Support your opinion with evidence from the text. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene of the forest council meeting. Show Leo the Lion standing on a mossy log addressing a group of woodland animals, including Bea the honeybee and Nova the owl.



Extension challenge: Imagine the developers have arrived to defend their plans to build on the forest. Write a short, one-paragraph rebuttal from their perspective. Use formal vocabulary and at least two modal verbs to sound convincing.