

Mastering the Art of Persuasive Speech Writing

Learning objective: To structure a formal speech that uses rhetorical devices, emotive language, and clear arguments to persuade an audience.

Follow the structure below to build your speech. Use the word bank to help you link your ideas and make your points sound more convincing. Remember to address your audience directly and maintain a confident, passionate tone.

Distinguished guests, teachers, and fellow students, I stand before you today to argue that we hold the power to change our future.

Word bank: Furthermore · In addition to this · Undoubtedly · However · Consequently · I implore you to consider · It is a fundamental truth that · Just imagine for a moment · The evidence is overwhelming · Nevertheless

1. The Hook: How will you grab the audience's attention immediately? Start with a thought-provoking rhetorical question or a startling statistic. Start your paragraph with: 'Have you ever wondered why...' (2 marks)

2. The Primary Argument: State your main point clearly. Use a 'rule of three' to add impact. Start your paragraph with: 'First and foremost, it is essential that we recognise...' (3 marks)

3. The Counter-Argument: Acknowledge an opposing view to show you have considered all angles, then explain why your view is stronger. Start your paragraph with: 'Some may argue that..., but in reality...' (3 marks)

4. Emotive Appeal: Use powerful, descriptive language to help your audience feel the importance of your topic. Start your paragraph with: 'Picture a world where...' (3 marks)

5. The Call to Action: Tell the audience exactly what they should do next. Start your paragraph with: 'Therefore, I urge you all to join me in...' (2 marks)

6. The Final Flourish: Write a memorable closing statement that leaves your audience thinking long after you have finished speaking. Start your sentence with: 'Let us be the generation that...' (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Explain why using modal verbs (such as 'must', 'could', 'should') makes a speech more persuasive. Compare and contrast how your tone would change if you were speaking to a group of five-year-olds versus a panel of experts; justify your choice of vocabulary for each audience. What might happen if you used aggressive language rather than persuasive language in your speech?