



Public Speaking

MPPS

Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition

Welcome to the Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking Competition! This is a very simple guide to what adjudicators will be looking for in the competition, along with some tips to make sure your prepared and impromptu speeches are as brilliant and fun and engaging as can be. It's important to remember that the things which work in some speeches won't always work in others, so there's no formula for writing the perfect speech. Still, hopefully this advice will give you a better idea of what makes a good multicultural speech, and if you need more ideas we've got links to lots of videos at the end of these hints.

Prepared speeches – manner

Your 'manner' is what you look and sound like when you give the speech, as opposed to what you actually say. Here are some tips about what great manner looks like.

- Try to sound natural, conversational, and relaxed.
- Don't have big wacky hand gestures, put on a fake English accent to sound smart, or do anything that feels cutesy or like you're over-acting. In fact, don't act at all! Try to come across really down-to-earth.
- Still, don't be afraid to have your own individual style. Some kids come across more serious than others, some are more humorous. Whatever suits you is fine.
- You mustn't use props, and definitely don't act out scenes or sing no matter how good at it you are – it's awkward!
- You should look at the audience as much as possible, but that doesn't mean you should learn your speech off by heart. If you learn your speech too well you can sound like a robot, or like you're giving a speech for the hundredth time and you're bored with it. Putting everyone to sleep isn't a great plan, so learn your speech a bit and glance at your palm cards to remind you what to say.
- Good speakers will occasionally stumble or say 'um'. The odd 'um' in a speech is way better than listening to a speech that is over-rehearsed or read out word for word. Think of the competition as a learning exercise – it's fine for learners to stumble from time to time.
- Your body language should be natural and easy, which means have a few hand gestures (but not heaps of crazy rehearsed ones), stand comfortably, and if it comes naturally take the occasional step. Good speakers never act out their speeches.
- Finally, your voice needs to be relaxed and expressive without being exaggerated. Really the only thing you should worry about with your voice is just to make sure you're super loud so that everyone in the hall can hear you.

Prepared speeches – matter

Your 'matter' is the stuff you actually say in the speech. We really should just call it 'stuff you say' but that doesn't start with 'm'. Here are some tips about the kinds of things to write about.

- First of all, every prepared speech in the competition must have multicultural content, and must be on one of the set topics. If you don't have a message around the idea of multiculturalism or if you show that you really don't get what multiculturalism is you can't progress through the competition.
- On top of that, the best speeches usually have a strong point of view and a clear direction. That means you need to have a purpose and a message in mind before you start writing.
- Good speeches are unique and striking. Try to be original and catch the audience's attention by presenting them with something they haven't heard before.



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Prepared speeches – matter (continued)

- The best speeches are balanced. That means a balance between personal stuff and broader big-picture stuff, between emotional stuff and cold hard facts, and between being funny and being serious. If your speech is all about you it won't be very interesting, but if it's not about you at all that will be dull too. A simple tip is to begin with a personal story and then broaden out to look at an issue in the community or the country, but remember that this won't work for every speech.
- Finally, remember that your prepared speech has to be on one of these topics...

2022 Years 3 and 4 topics

In my language
History matters
Racism – no way!
Australia on the screen
The power of sport
Who is responsible?
My place
A safe place to call home
Symbols of Australia
Kids lead the way!

2022 Years 5 and 6 topics

In my language
The story of Australia
Everyday racism
Representation
Australia Day
Rights and responsibilities
Identity – it's complicated!
Welcome to country
Crossing borders
Healing

Prepared speeches – method

'Method' means the structure of your speech. Here are a few tips about how to organise what you're saying and make sure your speech flows well.

- Your speech should have an introduction, middle, and conclusion (obviously!)
- Good intros are unique and give the audience a sense of your message without being boringly explicit. "My name is _____ and today I'm here to talk about _____" is a very dull beginning. You might try beginning with a question, a little story, or for more serious speeches, a bold and striking statement.
- Good middles normally have 2 or 3 separate parts or ideas which you put together so that your speech flows. Maybe it will flow by moving from talking on a personal scale to a look at a global issue, or from a look at the past to where we are heading in the future. You should give each part or idea a reasonable amount of time. A simple list of every idea you can think of is not a good way to structure this middle section, even if it makes you look smart for knowing heaps!
- Good endings are memorable, effective and original. You should avoid silly clichés like "I hope you have enjoyed listening to my speech". You should also avoid thanking the audience – instead, finish with something strong and memorable and then walk off the stage.
- The best tip for the ending is to tell the audience what you want them to do with all the information you've given them. Be a bit bossy and tell them to do this or that to fix the problems you might have been talking about, or to make sure they don't miss out on the fun stuff you've mentioned.
- Finally, it's important to time the speech properly. All the different speaking times are at the top of the next page. For any speech, you should aim to be wrapping up the middle section when the warning bell rings, and you should be finishing off the ending when you reach the speaking time (they'll ring two bells at that point). Never reach the continuous bell – the adjudicators aren't allowed to listen to a single word you say once that bell starts!



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Prepared speeches – speaking times

Division / speech	Warning bell	Speaking time	Continuous bell
Years 3 and 4 prepared	2 minutes	3 minutes	4 minutes
Years 3 and 4 impromptu	30 seconds	1 minute	1 ½ minutes
Years 5 and 6 prepared	3 minutes	4 minutes	5 minutes
Years 5 and 6 impromptu	1 ½ minutes	2 minutes	2 ½ minutes

Impromptu speeches – the basics

So, you're going to go to a local final, deliver the prepared speech you've written using all the tips we've given you, but you're not done yet! Once the prepared speeches are over you also need to give an impromptu speech. They'll take you to a quiet room, lead you to a desk where some random topic is written down, and you'll have just 5 minutes to write a short speech on that topic. Eeeek! (it's not that bad we promise!)

- You're not allowed to have any plans or notes written down beforehand, so you'll only have blank paper and palm cards to work on in your 5 minutes.
- Everyone will get the same impromptu topic, and it will be really general so that there are lots of different things your speech could end up being about.

Some examples of impromptu topics to try out:

Scary stuff
Funny business
Breaking the rules

Winners and losers
Distractions
Bad habits

Surprises
Keeping busy
Heroes and villains

- Last year's state finals topics were "Making excuses" for Years 3 and 4 and "Bouncing back" for the Years 5 and 6. Parts of newspaper headlines or song titles often make great impromptu topics for practice.
- Your impromptu speech shouldn't be about multiculturalism. The best impromptu speeches are very different from the prepared speeches that the adjudicators have already heard. It's a bad idea to use anything from your own or anyone else's prepared speech, so it's best to avoid multiculturalism.
- The rules of what makes a good impromptu speech are exactly the same as for the prepared section. This means a beginning, middle and end are still a must.
- The most important thing is to pick one clear thing to talk about. You don't want your speech to just be a long list of random stuff, so don't just rattle off everything that comes into your head when you see the topic!
- It's even better if the one, clear, thing you pick to talk about is a bit original and different to everybody else.
- If you start rambling just to make the bells that probably won't work, but if you're under time that might be a problem too!
- Remember – the adjudicators are going to give equal weight to the prepared and impromptu speeches so you should practice both!

Impromptu speeches – the most important tip!

- The best tip we can give you for writing an impromptu speech is to start by asking "What's an important message for people to hear about this thing?"
- Say we gave you "Bad behaviour" as a topic. Well, defining what "Bad behaviour" means and what the likely punishments might be isn't really a message at all – it's just stuff about the topic.



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Impromptu speeches – the most important tip (continued)

- “Bad Behaviour should be avoided because it’s bad” isn’t really an important message for people to hear because, well, they pretty much know that already (we hope!)
- “Sporting heroes should watch how they behave because their bad behaviour influences the kids who look up to them” is an important message for people to hear, so a speech about that will be great to listen to and mean something – it’ll work really well.
- So would a speech about “Sometimes you behave badly for the right reasons” or “Teachers who punish bad behaviour too harshly only make things worse.”
- Once you’ve got your message planned, write a speech that drives that one message home without any definitions or different possible messages or “Another-thing-about-the-topic-is...”es and you’ll have a great impromptu!

Extra videos and advice

In case you want some more advice on public speaking, and in particular your impromptu speeches, we’ve created these videos that might be worth a watch!



Click the icon to the left to check out videos of the state finals. They’re a really useful way to see the kinds of choices the best speakers make in their impromptu speeches.

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/3601163>

Next, this video is a quick chat about how to survive impromptus and then how to start writing better and better ones using some simple plans.

<https://vimeo.com/460048048>

There’s a whole lesson plan here with some great ideas to help you with your impromptu speaking skills!

<https://sites.google.com/education.nsw.gov.au/tau-cc-impressive-impromptus>

Finally, this is a conversation with a national champion about how she writes her prepared speeches. It’s super-advanced but there’s some really good advice in there so maybe check it out with a grown-up! <https://digital.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/art-bites/high-school-debating-6-debate-club>

Wow that’s a lot! One last thing...

So, there’s no formula for writing the perfect speech, but most good speeches have a purpose, are sincere, are balanced, and are original and striking. We know there’s a lot to think about here but remember – you’ll have lots more public speaking opportunities as you continue through school, so make sure you focus on giving it your best and just enjoying the competition and learning as much as possible rather than on winning. The adjudicator will be happy to give you feedback at the end of the final, so make sure you stick around and ask questions and pick up as many tips on how to improve as you can. Thanks again for entering and working so hard on your speech, and best of luck!