



Public Speaking

The Plain English Speaking Award

PESA

Congratulations on reaching this online final in the Plain English Speaking Award! Unfortunately, we can't hold this level of the competition in-person this year, but you'll still get to compete online instead. In some ways it'll actually be better – the impromptu speeches are certainly a lot less terrifying over Zoom!

The set-up

So, you're going to compete in an online final against 12-14 other speakers. We recommend a simple laptop connected to the school's wifi set up in a quiet corner of the school. It's also fine to compete from your home if you prefer. You'll be sitting for most of the final so you want a chair there, and when you give your speech you can either stand up or just stay sitting where you are – it's up to you! The main thing we care about is that you stay muted when you're not giving your speech and don't distract the other speakers. It's fine for anyone there to watch, and we can also share the link for the Zoom meeting if you want to invite anyone else to join and see you compete.

The prepared speeches

The day will begin at 9:30 AM, but it's a good idea to be online and connected to the Zoom meeting 10 minutes before then so we can have a chat and make sure everything's working. Once the clock hits 9:30 AM the speakers will each take their turn delivering and then watching the other speakers (we'll go in order of the draw).

The impromptu speeches

After the prepared speeches, we'll move you all to the Zoom waiting room (you can stay logged on to the meeting). Then we'll bring you back one by one for a short window (your allotted time is on the draw). We'll tell you the topic, and then you'll have 3 minutes to write a speech. You have to start off with completely blank paper or palm cards, you have to stay unmuted and onscreen the whole time, and you're not allowed to use the computer to do any research. When your time's up, you'll give your speech and then head to a Zoom breakout room with the adjudicator where you'll get lots of feedback on how to keep improving, and when that's done we'll put you back in the Zoom waiting room. Where a school has two speakers they'll go back-to-back and it's fine for them to use the same device, though if they have two separate devices and two separate corners of the school that's even better. One last thing – it's fine to be doing other stuff while the rest of the speakers are giving their impromptus. Head back to class, have a snack or whatever suits.

The adjudication

When everyone has given their impromptu, we'll bring you all back into the Zoom meeting and the adjudicator will present the oral adjudication and then announce the results. We'll be in touch with the winners about the next level of the competition as soon as possible.

Problems?

If you need any tech support or think you'll struggle to find good internet or a good device just let us know and we'll figure it out with you. We've run lots of these online finals and we'll be able to troubleshoot on the day if there are any problems (worst case you can always phone into the Zoom meeting!) Just call (02) 8512 1172 or email justine.clarke@det.nsw.edu.au and we'll sort things out with you. That's it – look forward to seeing you soon!