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Writing and Practising Your Speech

After you've have worked out your purpose and audience, it's time to do your research. This might mean searching through books, newspapers and websites, or chatting to friends and family. Remember to take notes about who said what and where you found bits of information, because you may need to acknowledge your sources.

Next you need to organise your material in order of importance. At this point, it's wise to come back to your purpose: why are you giving this speech? This should help you to decide which information is most important.



Dealing with Nerves

A recent study revealed that the number-one fear among Australians was death, then public speaking. A famous US study in the 1970s showed that most of the people surveyed feared public speaking more than death!

Making a speech can be quite scary, but there are ways to overcome your nerves before the big day. A sure-fire way to deal with nerves is to be prepared, to know your purpose and audience, and plan your speech. The next most important way to overcome nerves is to practise.

It may seem obvious, but the more you practise, the better your speech will be. Once you have written a number of drafts, cut or extended your speech and timed it, practise as many times as



Giving Your Speech

Well, here you are, on the big day. You've got five minutes to go before giving your speech.

Instead of giving in to the nerves that threaten to overwhelm you, use these last-minute ideas to stay calm and ensure you give a great speech.

- Breathe deeply three or four times.
- Keep in your mind an image of yourself giving your speech well.
- If your name will be announced, listen carefully so you don't miss your cue to begin. If not, wait till the right moment arrives before beginning. The right moment is when there's a lull in the conversation.
- Finally, speak clearly and take your time. Everyone's really keen to hear what you've got to say!





Births

The most obvious beginning is of course a birth. The beginning of a precious new life is such a happy occasion and rarely passes without a celebration. Today, many parents celebrate the birth of a new baby with a special ceremony in which the baby is 'named'. This ceremony can take many forms and may be religious or non-religious.

Religious Naming Day

After the religious ceremony, many families have a party or reception at home where someone important to them, such as a godparent, close friend or member of the family, will say a few words. Alternatively, the father or mother may decide to make a speech. For this kind of speech, you need to know all of the details, such as the baby's name and how to pronounce




it, Mum's and Dad's names and names of siblings, if any, and perhaps also grandparents' names.

On this very special day, we've welcomed you, [baby's name], into [deity's name]'s family. We wish you and your Mum, [name], Dad, [name] and [brother/sister], [name/s], many blessings. May your life be filled today and all days with love, happiness, peace and faith. It's such a joy for all of us here to share in this very special occasion.

Thank you for allowing all of us to share in [baby's name]'s ceremony today, [mother's name] and [father's name]. We hope that [baby's name] will always be surrounded by love and happiness. May [deity's name] protect [baby's name] always and fill his heart with joy and faith.

It's such a privilege to be here today at [baby's name]'s [name of ceremony]. Please accept my congratulations on this very special day. May [deity's name] bless [baby's name] and her family, and watch over all of you today and always.





Ladies and gentlemen, your attention please. I'm [your name], [name]'s [relationship to toastee]. I'd like to propose a toast to [name], who is celebrating [details of the occasion]. So, please, join with me in raising your glasses. To [name].

Everyone, as you know, I'm [name], [name]'s [relationship to toastee]. Here's a toast to you, [name], for [details of the occasion]. We're so proud of you! To [name].


Please raise your glasses to [concept], a worthy ideal! Here's to [concept]. Cheers!



Engagements

An engagement is almost as exciting as a wedding. There is so much to look forward to. If you're asked to give a speech at an engagement, it's a good idea to ask the couple if they'd also like you to propose a toast. Speeches and toasts for engagements don't really follow any formula. The main thing is to wish the couple well.

We couldn't be happier that you are taking this step. In fact, we've all been hoping that we would see this day, as you are such a perfect couple. It gives us great joy to see how happy you are together. There's so much to look forward to and we can't wait for your wedding. Congratulations on your engagement!



Congratulations to [name] and [name] on your engagement! Seeing how happy you are today makes us so happy. We're delighted you're making this commitment to each other and look forward to the big day. We wish you a long and happy life together filled with many blessings.

We're so happy you're engaged and are thrilled to see you setting out together on the journey through life. May your love and respect for each other grow as you grow old together. We wish you all the best that life has to offer. No two people deserve this happiness more than you two. Congratulations on your engagement!

Quotations to Use

'He felt now that he was not simply close to her, but that he did not know where he ended and she began.' – Leo Tolstoy

'The arms of love encompass you with your present, your past, your future, the arms of love gather you together.' – Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

'Love would never be a promise of a rose garden unless it is showered with light of faith, water of sincerity and air of passion.' – Author unknown



Thai – ‘*Chai-yo!*’ (hurrah!) (say ‘cho-do’)

Turkish – ‘*Serefe*’ (to honour) (say ‘sher-i-feh’)

Ukrainian – ‘*Budmo*’ (let us be!) (say ‘bood-mo’)

Vietnamese – ‘*Một hai ba, yo*’ (one, two, three, yo!) (say ‘moat hi bah, yo’)

Welsh – ‘*Iechyd Dda*’ (good health)
(say ‘yeh-chid dah’)