**Tips for selecting a topic:**

* Your speech should carry a clear **message**.
* In conveying this **message** your speech can follow a number of approaches: it can be **persuasive**, **humorous** (but *not*just a stand-up routine) or **descriptive** (but *not*just an informative lecture or a list of facts).
* You are asking at least twenty people for three minutes of their lives. Collectively that’s one hour of undivided attention. Make sure you have something that you want them to hear: **a message, idea or response to an issue**.
* Your message should be at the core of your speech. It can appear at the beginning, end or at both ends. Regardless of where it appears, it should be **stated explicitly**

**Tips for writing your speech:**

* Writing a good speech takes **time** and **preparation.**
* **Research** accurate information, **note** down ideas, start **crafting** phrases and interesting sentences, try to find the perfect word for your sentence.
* Try to think of a **different way of looking at the topic**, something that will make you and your speech stand out. No one is interested by a cliché.
* Think about how you will **structure** your speech. Will you make a dramatic opening which seizes the audience’s attention from the beginning? Can you find the perfect anecdote to illustrate your message? Remember that you must have an opening, middle and conclusion.
* Keep **refining** and **editing** your speech as you rehearse it, and make notes on how you want to deliver it in order to emphasise key ideas, points or emotions.
* Write small, **discreet cue cards** for when you present. Or, even better, **memorise** your speech. You should *never*read from a piece of A4 paper or an iPad!

**Tips for structuring your speech**

There is no right or wrong way of structuring a speech: remember that your goal is to convey a message effectively and engagingly. However, a useful approach to structuring a three minute speech can be as follows:

* Open with something that **GRABS** the audience’s attention. This will usually be a story that helps to establish the topic.
* State your **TOPIC** in a clear manner.
* Briefly outline the **STRUCTURE** of your speech (usually 3 points)
* Present your **POINTS** in the body of your speech, clearly**SIGNPOSTING** between points.
* Conclude your speech by leaving the audience with a final **MESSAGE**.

Often a three-step structure works best for presenting the main points of your speech. Again, there are no hard rules and no single correct approach: you should do whatever helps you to convey your message in the most engaging and effective way possible. Some examples of potential structures include:

* **What, Why, How:** Turn the prompt into 3 questions, which you then answer in turn; for example “What does … mean?”, “Why is … important?” and “How can we achieve … ?”
* **Individual, National, Global:** Look at the prompt from three different levels in order to discuss its different effects; e.g. at an individual level, at a national level and at a global level.
* **Problem, Cause, Solution:** If the prompt ties in with a problem of some sort, you can discuss it by using a 3 step structure: firstly, identify what the problem is; secondly, identify what is causing the problem; finally, discuss a possible solution that addresses this cause.
* **Past, Present, Future:** Take the prompt and look at how it has been used in the past, the role it has in the present, and the effect it could have in the future.
* **Social, Economic, Environmental (or Cultural, etc.):** Discuss the effect that the prompt has from three different perspectives, such as the social impact, the economic impact and the environmental impact.

Other popular structures include:

* Point, Reason, Example, Summary
* Yes, Argument, No, Argument

**Tips for presenting:**

* ***Eye Contact.***Eye contact is a necessity for engaging your audience. There is nothing more boring than a read speech – memorise your speech, or at the most use dot points. Don’t worry about being ‘word perfect’.
* ***Speed Up, Slow Down*.** Varying your speed can be an effective way of emphasising key points. Just don’t let yourself get too fast.
* ***Vary your Tone.***No one wants to listen to a computer. Vary the tone of your voice in relation to the emotions and ideas you wish to convey.
* ***Vary your Volume.*** Increase your volume to emphasise certain key words. Decrease it every now and then to create a suspenseful or sombre tone and make your audience listen more closely.
* ***Pausing for Emphasis.*** Silence is a powerful tool for a public speaker. Used deliberately, it adds emphasis, emotion or structure to a speech.
* ***Eliminate Filler Words.*** Avoid using words like “Um”, “Er”, “Hmm”, “Like” or “Yeah”. Generally, these words tend to convey a sense of uncertainty and suggest that you may be unsure of what you’re saying.
* ***Smile!*** When you appear happy, confident and positive, your mind forgets about fear and you’re left to enjoy your presentation. Your ability to smile will depend on the content and tone of your speech, but if it’s appropriate to smile, then smile!
* ***Relax.***Remember that you are just taking to your audience. Often a conversational approach can set your audience at ease and establish a connection.
* ***Practise, practise, PRACTISE!***