Plan to Persuade: Debate Speech

Teacher		**Class**	Year 7
Subject	English	**Topic**	Writing a persuasive speech
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

Students learn to plan a formal speech for purpose and audience. They build a six-box debate plan and peer-check it.

Curriculum links

- match writing to an audience and a purpose [2]
- Speech is planned and organised and there is clear understanding of how content is presented [2]

Learning objectives

- Students will adapt speech ideas and tone for different purpose and audience.
- Students will select strong evidence and clearly organise points for formal speeches.
- Students will plan clear formal opening, rebuttal and closing for debate.

Success criteria

- I can match my tone and reasons to my audience.
- I can order my points with links and formal language.
- I can plan a debate ending with a clear action.

What students already know

Ask: What is different about persuading a friend and persuading teachers in assembly? Listen for tone, word choice and reasons.

Key words

audience	the people who will listen to your speech [2]
purpose	the reason you speak and the change you want
evidence	facts or examples that show a point is true
organise	to put ideas in a clear order that is easy to follow [2]
rebuttal	an answer that shows why the opposite view is wrong
formal	polite and serious, right for assembly or debate [2]

Materials

- A4 paper, pens, rulers
- Slides 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 12 with projector and speakers
- Video clip 1 Top tips for a memorable speech (0:00-4:20) tested
- Worksheet Task D (page 4) copies, one per student
- Worksheet Task G (page 6) copies, one per student

Before the lesson

- Print Worksheet Task D and Task G, one per student
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00-4:20) for sound and picture
- Prepare one folded A4 six-box model and one half-filled plan for support
- Set out A4 paper, pens and rulers for Box Plan for a Debate Speech

- Half-filled six-box plan for support, timer

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

To hook students and link audience and purpose to speech planning.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 1 Speak Up and Persuade! and welcome the class to debate planning.
2. Say the hook and show Slide 3 Big idea: Plan for your listeners first, then your words will persuade.
3. Ask the prior question about persuading a friend and persuading teachers and take 3 quick answers.
4. Link answers to today's motion: every student should join one lunchtime club.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen and look at Slides 1 and 3.
2. Answer the prior question with a partner, then share one difference.
3. Predict what a formal debate plan will need.

Say: No laptops, no screens. Just paper and your brain, like a real debate preparation room. Today we plan a formal debate speech, not write it fully. Plan for your listeners first, then your words will persuade.

Ask: Would you try to persuade the headteacher in exactly the same way as a friend at lunch? (No, tone, word choice and reasons change for the listener.) · What is our purpose today? (To persuade listeners that every student should join one lunchtime club.)

Check understanding: Hands up for one change you would make for teachers: formal words or different reasons. If unsure, replay the friend versus assembly contrast.

Support: Give sentence frame: To a friend I would say... but in assembly I would say... **Stretch:** Name one extra reason that would persuade parents and carers in a formal announcement.

Use: Slides 1, 3

8–20 min **Teaching** 12 min · Whole class

To teach matching tone and reasons to audience and selecting formal language.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 2 objectives and Slide 4 Same topic, different audience for classmates and headteacher.
2. Model two 30-second versions for longer break: chatty version for friends, polite formal version for assembly.
3. Hand out Worksheet Task D and model circling the more formal word in the first pair.
4. Take answers and stress that at Key Stage 3 they match writing to an audience and a purpose [2].

STUDENTS DO

1. Compare the two versions and label formal and informal tone.
2. Complete Worksheet Task D by circling the more formal and persuasive word.
3. Practise saying one informal line and its formal version with a partner.

Say: Same idea, different listeners. For friends we are chatty and focus on fun. For the headteacher in assembly we are formal, polite and respectful, and we choose reasons adults care about. Circle the formal choice every time.

Worked example: Motion: school break should be 10 minutes longer. To a friend: Honestly, a longer break would be brilliant fun and fairer for everyone. To assembly: I strongly believe a longer break would improve concentration and wellbeing. I urge you to consider this proposal.

Ask: Which reasons persuade teachers and governors rather than friends? (Learning, health, concentration and fairness, not jokes or slang.) · Which words sound formal enough for assembly? (I strongly believe, furthermore, I urge you, ladies and gentlemen.)

Check understanding: Show circled answers on mini-whiteboards for Task D. Reteach any informal choice by saying both aloud.

Support: Provide a formal word bank and pre-highlight key words on Task D. **Stretch:** Rewrite one informal line adding a rhetorical question for a formal audience.

Use: Slides 2, 4; Worksheet Task D

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20–30 min **Modelling** 10 min · Whole class

To model strong opening, ordered points and persuasive language from a speech model.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 6 and play Video clip 1 Top tips for a memorable speech (0:00-4:20).
2. Pause for students to note opening hook, order and formal spoken language.
3. Show Slide 7 fact that rhetoric is the art of persuasion and speakers choose language on purpose [3].
4. Model the six-box shape on Slide 10 Speech Plan with a lunchtime club example.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch the video and note one hook, one ordering tip and one formal phrase.
2. Copy the six headings: audience and purpose, opening, point 1, point 2, counter plus rebuttal, closing action.
3. Suggest which point should go last to finish strongly.

Say: Listen for a strong opening hook. Spot how ideas are ordered. Notice formal spoken language. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion, so every word is chosen to guide attention and prompt action.

Worked example: Audience and purpose: Year 7 assembly to persuade them to join a club. Opening: Should every lunchtime be wasted? Point 1 plus evidence: clubs build skills - last term 30 students learned new skills. Point 2 plus evidence: clubs improve friendships across forms. Counter plus rebuttal: Some may argue there is no time, however clubs run only once a week. Closing: In conclusion, I urge you to sign up this week.

Ask: What makes an opening hook work for a formal audience? (Rhetorical question, bold statement or short everyday story, said formally.) · Why put the strongest point last? (Effective writing is organised and sequenced with clear links, so the end stays remembered [2].)

Check understanding: Cold-call for one hook type and one link word like furthermore, however, finally. Replay 30 seconds if order is unclear.

Support: Give technique labels to match: rhetorical question, bold statement, short story. **Stretch:** Name where the counter-argument plus rebuttal should sit and why.

Use: Video clip 1 (0:00-4:20); Slides 6-7, 10

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30–50 min **Main** 20 min · On their own

To create a complete selective six-box plan for a formal debate speech.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 9 Your task and give out A4 paper, pens and rulers.
2. Demonstrate folding paper into six boxes and labelling them clearly.
3. Set 14 minutes for planning the speech: every student should join one lunchtime club, bullet points only.
4. Stop for partner tick check: each box has a point, evidence and audience-appropriate language.

STUDENTS DO

1. Fold, rule and label six boxes, then plan the lunchtime club speech in bullets.
2. Add one persuasive device per point and one link word per arrow.
3. Swap plans with a partner who ticks each box for point, evidence and formal tone.

Say: Fold into six boxes. Label them: audience and purpose, opening, point 1 plus evidence, point 2 plus evidence, counter-argument plus rebuttal, closing action. Pick your three strongest reasons for this audience. Add one persuasive device per point. Bullets, not full sentences.

Worked example: Box 1 Audience and purpose: formal Year 7 assembly, to persuade them to act. Box 2 Opening: rhetorical question - Do we want lunchtimes that matter? Box 3 Point 1: new skills, evidence of clubs teaching. Box 4 Point 2: new friends, evidence of mixed forms. Box 5 Counter: Some may argue homework time is lost, however one lunch a week is small. Box 6 Closing: In conclusion, I urge you to join one club this month.

Ask: What evidence deserves to stay in a formal speech? (Relevant, true and persuasive for that audience, not jokes or repeats.) · How do you answer the opposite view? (Use: Some may argue... however... with a reason or evidence.)

Check understanding: Teacher walks with tick-sheet for audible plan parts: opening, two points, rebuttal, closing. Pairs missing a box add it now.

Support: Provide a half-filled box plan with audience, purpose and opening already modelled. **Stretch:** Label each box with the persuasive technique to be used, such as repetition, rhetorical question or emotive language.

Use: Slides 9-10

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50–60 min **Plenary** 10 min · Whole class

To check planning choices and secure clear order and closing action.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 12 True or false? and vote on planning the same way for friends and debate.
2. Invite two students to read only their closing 3-4 sentences aloud clearly and audibly.
3. Hand out Worksheet Task G Ranking pyramid and ask students to rank plan parts.
4. Close by returning to success criteria and setting homework.

STUDENTS DO

1. Vote true or false and explain why purpose and audience change tone.
2. Complete Worksheet Task G ranking plan parts and explain the top choice.
3. Listen to closers and tick: audible, formal tone, clear action.

Say: You plan differently for friends and for a debate. Purpose and audience change tone and ideas. A formal speech needs a clear order: opening, points, ending. Stand tall, pause, and tell us exactly what to do.

Worked example: In conclusion, clubs build skills and friendships. Some worry about time, however one lunch is enough. I urge you to sign up for one lunchtime club this week.

Ask: Do you plan the same way for friends and for a debate? (False, purpose and audience change tone, reasons and order.) · What must a formal ending do? (Summarise the strongest point and tell listeners exactly what to do.)

Check understanding: Exit tickets plus Task G top choice. If order is shaky, re-show the six-box order on Slide 10.

Support: Provide closing frame to adapt: In conclusion... I urge you to... **Stretch:** Deliver the closer from bullet points only, with one deliberate pause before the final sentence.

Use: Slide 12; Worksheet Task G

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Using chatty slang in a formal assembly plan	Hear you guys gotta, so unfair, gonna in boxes	Swap for I strongly believe, furthermore, I urge you and rehearse aloud [2]
Listing funny but weak or off-topic evidence	Plan has jokes or repeats with no link to audience	Keep only three relevant facts that would persuade adults and bin the rest
Missing rebuttal or trailing closing with no action	No Some may argue... however... and ending just stops	Add counter plus rebuttal frame and finish: In conclusion... I urge you to...

Support

- Half-filled six-box plan and formal word bank on desks
- Sentence frames for rebuttal and closing in every stage
- Partner tick check before plenary to catch gaps

Stretch

- Label each box with repetition, rhetorical question or emotive language
- Add counter-argument in different colour and justify its place
- Deliver closing from bullets with pause and formal assembly voice

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For the LSE or teaching assistant

Sit near target students in Teaching and Main. Prompt Task D choices, help fold and label boxes, cue rebuttal frame and check each box has evidence.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Name two changes you make when planning for a formal audience.	Use formal polite tone and choose reasons that audience cares about.
Put these in speaking order: closing action, opening hook, points with evidence.	Opening hook, points with evidence, closing action.
Complete the rebuttal: Some may argue clubs take time, however...	...they run only once a week and build skills and friendships.

Homework

Learn your six-box plan and write out your opening and closing in formal sentences.

Sources

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