



Skill Set Resource Sheets Expression and Delivery

Expression and delivery sets debating apart from competitive essay-writing. Students need to be able to convey their thoughts with their audience in mind.

A persuasive speaker:

- Speaks with confidence, as indicated by voice, body language and the absence of a verbatim script (although notes for reference are encouraged)
- Engages the audience with variations in the tone and volume of their voice
- Chooses vocabulary and sentence structure carefully, to maximise their rhetorical impact

The first step towards 'good style' is gaining and expressing confidence. This moves quickly into the art of seeming authoritative when speaking. There are many types of 'good style', and it's important for debaters to find a way of speaking that they find comfortable.

What You Say

Students are often pre-occupied with the idea that a funny speech is a stylish speech. This can be true, but there are many other ways to be stylish.

Instead, they should focus on ensuring the tone, volume and vocabulary are appropriate for the content of the speech, and on making sure they're not speaking too fast. Debaters still need to be (a) comprehensible and (b) slow enough that the judges can understand and write down their speeches and make written notes.

Hand Gestures and Body Language

It's natural to make hand gestures when speaking - a speech with none would seem odd. But somehow, in the stress of debating, people start making strange, distracting gestures. Focus students on what to do with their hands and body language, rather than a list of 'don'ts'.

Expression and Delivery Activity

Make it sound good, make it sound bad

Learning Objectives:

 Students understand how they can use different vocabulary to make a point more effectively and persuasively

Average time:

• 10 minutes

Use with:

All age groups (debating and public speaking)

Task:

Divide the students into small groups, and give each pair of groups a 'neutral' statement (e.g. 'London is a big city', or 'Birds can fly'). Ask one team in each pair to present the statement to the group so it sounds good ('London is a big, multicultural, thriving city'), and the other to present it so it sounds bad ('London is a big, dangerous, noisy city').

