Writing A Debate Speech

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Structure

- Usually six paragraphs
- Introduction
- Point One
- Refuting Point or Points Made By Opposition
- Point Two
- Point Three
- Conclusion
Introduction

‘Good evening chairperson, distinguished guests, fellow speakers, ladies and gentlemen.’

You may wish to tailor this to suit the situation. For example, if the Lord Mayor is present, you will probably wish to address him directly in the introduction.
Points

- Aim to make three points supporting your case.

- Set out these points in your introduction. ‘I will use the following three points to support my argument: firstly..., secondly... and finally...’
- State your point clearly and decisively

- If you are discussing a problem, look at the causes and the effects of the problem.

- Support your point with evidence (you can make this up but it should be credible)

- Show that this evidence proves your point

- Suggests a solution

- You may wish to *briefly* acknowledge and refute the opposition’s points. This should be a single paragraph in length only.
Rhetorical Devices - Be Sure To Use Them!

- Address the audience occasionally
- Make your sources sound credible if you have made them up: ‘A recent article in the Irish Times stated….’ or ‘A report commissioned by the HSE showed…’
- Rhetorical questions are a good way to make the audience consider your points
- Humour can be used, but be careful!
- Appeal to the audience’s sense of fair play and their desire to do the right thing
Language

- Debate speeches are very formal, so avoid slang and casual expressions.
- Use repetition to drive home your point: ‘We must act, we must act quickly and we must act decisively’.
Conclusion

- Make it clear that you are finishing your speech: ‘In conclusion, then,

- Give a brief and clear summary of your three points so the audience/adjudicators remember them

- If you have a good quote, now is the time to use it.

- Thank the audience for listening and urge them to support or oppose the motion