

Notes on Speech for a Debate

2013 Question 1:

'Write a speech in which you argue for or against the motion, *We live in an un-heroic age.*'

SLAP yourself when you see the question...

S...Structure?

L...Language to use?

A ...Analyse the title FULLY.

P...Plan your answer.

1) Does the essay title I've chosen have a set structure?

Debate...YES.

Introduction: Welcome Chairperson, adjudicators, members of the proposition/opposition and members of the audience, I vehemently uphold/oppose the motion '....'. Hook your audience with ONE of the persuasive techniques listed below, open with a quote or an image and it can create a lovely cyclical feel to the essay to refer back to the same image/quote in your conclusion.

Paragraphs: Topic sentence +Evidence+ Persuasive Language Technique.

5-7 well developed points.

Conclusion: Thank you for listening and I am sure I have convinced you that...

2) What language do I need to use?

Five types of language being used and assessed at Leaving Certificate level, each has its own writing techniques. Rarely does a piece of writing contain only one type.

1. Language of Persuasion
2. Language of Argument
3. Language of Narration
4. Language of Information
5. Aesthetic use of Language. (Description)

A debate will be a mixture of **persuasion/argument/information**.

If you know the techniques of these styles you can consciously include them in your essay.

(More on this at the planning stage).

3) Analyse the title FULLY.

Often students identify with one or two key words and use the first few ideas that immediately come into their heads; this leads to essays which are not fully developed and clichéd.

Take our title:

For/against the motion 'We live in an un-heroic age'...

Most students identify with 'un-heroic' issues like war will come to mind immediately and this is what the focus of their essay will be...

You must look at EACH word and dissect it...

We...Everyone in the world? The developed world? Irish people Younger generation?...Define it.

Un- heroic...what does it mean what is a hero? Someone who defends their country? Someone who defends their morals? Someone who is idealistic? Un-heroic...synonyms...greedy/corrupt/other?

Age...Post millennium? Compare/contrast with past ages/past heroes.

4) Plan your answer

Planning is ESSENTIAL to achieving a good grade. While planning ensure you develop your points but also remember to include some ***persuasive techniques in your plan!***

These include:

- Meaningful rhetorical questions.
- Imagery: particularly similes and metaphors.
- Emotive language.
- Anecdotal evidence (which can include descriptive language)
- Quotes – literature/experts (opportunity to use other sections of your course here; quote from a poet)
- Statistics and Facts

- Inclusive language. Use of the personal pronoun 'we' to include the audience in your point of view.
- Repetition.
- Use the imperative 'You must agree that...'

Also include...

- Your personality/opinions...it will endear an audience to you and give your writing an authenticity.
- **Current affairs.** Think about who/what is in the news at the moment, can you bring that into your essay?

Possible plan for both sides of the motion, **you must choose one** but in practicing planning it is a great idea to work on both sides to improve your critical thinking.

For (Persuasive Technique)	Against (Persuasive Technique)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War is rampant...heroism is not; the two are not one and the same.(Imperative) • Politicians cheat/lie and are corrupt.(Anecdote about an Irish politician) • Poverty is still rampant.(Repetition of a statistic about poverty – See appendix) • We live in a post 9/11 age of terrorism as opposed to heroism. (Rhetorical Question) • Greed has corrupted everyone's morals.(Quote from a poet) • The word hero is now used lightly...a hero is someone who posts a funny video on social media and it goes viral.(Use 'we' throughout) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heroism is all around; political activism is on the rise we see it all around.(Anecdotal evidence of the Climate Activism). • Personal hero. Mary Robinson – avoid obvious ones like Nelson Mandela/Martin Luther King Jr. (Adds personality – endears an audience). • Heroism can be personal as well as public matters. (Anecdote - Battling cancer is heroic). • Fighting for democracy is heroic (Current affairs reference) • Standing up against racism/sexism/homophobia is

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime is on the rise (statistics) 	<p>heroic.(Give racism the red card - football)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaking out about the issue of mental health is heroic. (Statistics)
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Finally...Never forget the **marking scheme: PCLM**

30% Purpose – are you doing what you have been asked? Format and style of a speech. Keeping on topic.

30% Coherence – is there fluidity to your writing? Are the paragraphs linked? Do you paragraphs follow a logical order?

30% Language – is your style of writing/phrasing lively and interesting? Wide ranging vocabulary?

10% Mechanics – Spelling and grammar.

Paragraph Structure: **Topic sentence** +Evidence+ **Persuasive Language Technique.**

Appendix 1:

Sample Paragraph:

It would be hard to define the new millennium in heroic terms when we continue to allow people all over the world to live in abject poverty. We are confronted with statistics from various charitable organisations daily through the media, informing us of the frightening number of people who die from preventable diseases; live on less than a dollar a day; or have no access to clean water or sanitation. What makes our age un-heroic is not just the shocking statistics but the fact that these advertisements are largely ignored. How many of you here have changed the channel when confronted with disturbing images of poverty? I myself am guilty of this, and as such, I feel our age is one defined by apathy to injustice as opposed to heroism.

Analysis:

Topic Sentence

Persuasive technique 1 – inclusive language 'we'

Persuasive technique 2 – referencing statistics

Persuasive technique 3- Rhetorical question.

Persuasive technique 4 – emotive language

Write the paragraph for a different point: (Afterwards analyse your work as above)

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