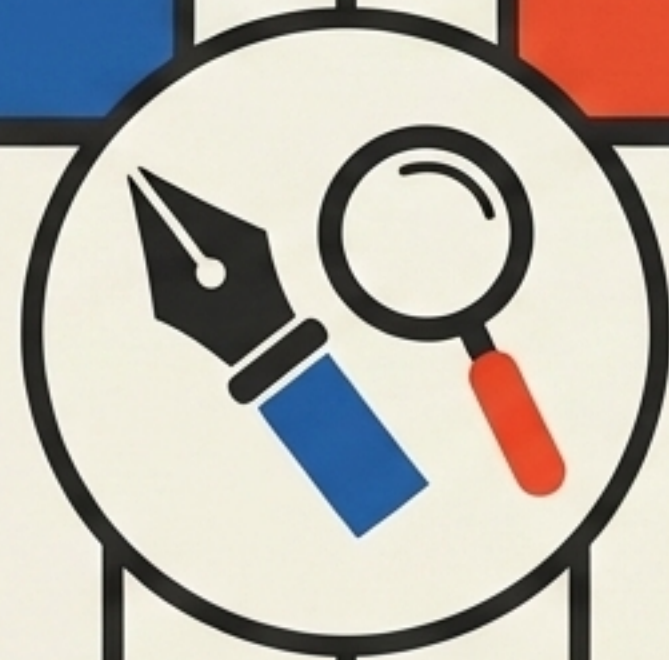


The Elements of Speech Writing

A visual toolkit for writing and analyzing speeches in Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert English.

WRITING

How to use the element. You are the architect. Use these tools to craft a compelling, structured argument that directs the audience's emotions and reactions.



ANALYSIS

How to spot and explain it. You are the detective. Identify the tool in a text and accurately explain why the author chose it and what impact it has on the reader.

PHASE 1: SET THE STAGE

The foundational geometry of your speech.

[En] Engage

[St] Structure

PHASE 2: BUILD THE BOND

The psychological bridge to your audience.

[Pr] Pronouns

[An] Anecdote

PHASE 3: DRIVE IT HOME

The persuasive momentum that demands a response.

[Rp] Repetition

[Ts] Triadic
Structure

[Rq] Rhetorical
Questions

[Ca] Call to
Action



BEGINNING (INTRODUCTION)

Engage the audience.
Address them directly.
State who you are and
what you will talk about.

MIDDLE (THE BODY)

Supported by the interwoven
cables of anecdotes, rhetoric,
and evidence.

CONCLUSION

The final destination.
Driving the message
home and initiating the
Call to Action.

A speech cannot float. It must have a deliberate beginning, middle, and conclusion to safely transport the listener's perspective.

[En]

Engage your audience

Address the audience in the introduction. Say who you are and explain what you are going to talk about.

To Write It

Don't just start talking. Acknowledge the room. State your purpose immediately to establish authority and intent.

To Analyze It

Look for the opening greeting. Explain to the examiner that the speaker is deliberately setting the parameters of the debate and building immediate rapport.

[St]

Structure

Speeches must have a deliberate beginning, a **middle**, and a conclusion.



To Write It

Outline your three phases before writing a single word. Ensure the transition between the middle and the conclusion clearly signals that the end is near.

To Analyze It

Track the speaker's journey. Point out to the examiner how the introduction differs in tone from the conclusion (e.g., a welcoming opening versus a demanding, urgent close).

The Engagement Spectrum



Personal Pronouns

Implicit Connection.
Builds a silent, psychological bridge.
The audience feels included.

Rhetorical Questions

Internal Action.
Forces explicit internal thought.
The audience answers in their head.

Call to Action

Physical Action.
Demands physical reality.
The audience is told to
physically do something.

The most effective speeches move the audience smoothly from left to right across this spectrum.

[Pr]

Personal Pronouns



We / Us



It is up to every one of us here today to tackle climate change.

Write It:

Use 'I', 'we', 'us', and 'you' to pull the reader into your side of the argument.

Analyze It:

Identify these words to show how they build a relationship with the reader, erasing the distance between speaker and audience.

[An]

Anecdote

Tell a story that has a meaning. It may be personal or about someone else.

Establishes personal authority and lived experience.

“I recently went to the North Pole, where I saw that many of ice caps have melted causing polar bears great distress.”

Grounds a massive global issue in an emotional, specific image.

Write It:

Use stories to break up heavy facts. It is the best way to keep people interested.

Analyze It:

Note how the anecdote shifts the tone from formal to personal, giving the audience a narrative break.

The Rule of Three Matrix: Repetition vs. Triadic Structure

Repetition



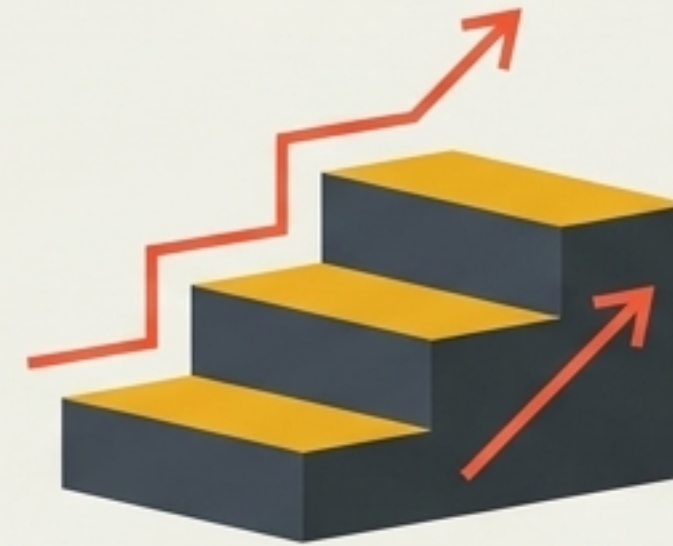
Concept

Repeating the exact same words or phrases.

Effect

Creates emphasis, urgency, and a hypnotic, driving rhythm.

Triadic Structure



Concept

Grouping different, related words or concepts into sets of three.

Effect

Creates a sense of balance, comprehensiveness, and finality. Things said in threes have the greatest impact.

[Rp]

Repetition

“We must do what it takes to help our planet. We must be the pioneers of the future, We must be the light in the darkness.”

Write It:

Pick a powerful foundational phrase and hit it multiple times to anchor a paragraph.

Analyze It:

State that this is an effective tool to impact the listener, driving the central thesis into their memory through rhythmic force.

[Ts]

Triadic Structure

“...sought **justice** in the past, seek **justice today**, and will seek **justice** in the future.”

“...a world where people of all race and creed can find **equality**, **liberty** and **freedom**.”

Write It:

Use this at the climax of your argument. List your three strongest nouns or adverbs together for maximum punch.

Analyze It:

Point out the Rule of Three. Explain that humans naturally process and remember information best when delivered in triplets.

[Rq]

Rhetorical Questions

Questions that do not require an out-loud answer from the audience, but make them think about the issue.

“Are we prepared to sacrifice our children’s lives by taking the easy option?”

“Are we willing to make sacrifices now so our children’s lives can blossom?”

Write It:

Trap the audience. Ask a question where the internal answer naturally aligns with your argument.

Analyze It:

Note how it gets the audience involved in the speech by forcing them from passive listeners into active participants evaluating their own morals.

[Ca]

Call to Action

Encouraging the listeners to physically do something, to make a difference.



“I ask each and every one of you to leave this room tonight and do what you can to halt global warming.”

Write It:

Never end on a passive note. Give your audience a clear, actionable directive before they leave.

Analyze It:

Identify this as the culmination of the speech’s persuasive momentum—translating words into real-world impact.

The Persuasion Formula



(Engage + Structure) multiplied by (Pronouns + Anecdote), raised to the power of (Triadic + Rhetoric + Repetition) results in a powerful powerful Call to Action.

Master these 8 elements individually, then combine them to engineer a masterpiece for the exam.