



THE INTERNATIONAL
CHURCHILL SOCIETY
—UNITED KINGDOM—

ESU-CHURCHILL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

Student
Handbook
2020-21



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPETITION

Student Handbook

Hello and a big welcome to the best team speaking competition in the UK! Not only is it the most prestigious, but also the biggest and the oldest. The competition is once again sponsored by the International Churchill Society.

By taking part in the ESU-Churchill Competition, you will be joining over 1500 pupils in England and Wales in improving the way you communicate verbally. You will learn to argue better and to be more confident in talking to people.

The next few pages show you how to put together a team and how to improve the way you speak in front of others. Don't worry if this is your first time. This guide should help and there is a great deal of supporting material, including videos and top tips, on our website at www.esu.org/competitions/psc/.

FORMAT

Working as a Team

The judges will score you as a team so teamwork is really important! Your team can have up to five people. Three will take part in your first heat but you can swap around later if you like. Everyone on the team has an important part to play in preparing and delivering your performance.

You Will need to pick **a Speaker, a Chairperson** and **a Questioner** before the heat.

Working with other schools is one of the great things about our competition - your Chairperson and Questioner will introduce and question a Speaker from a different school and your own Speaker will, in the same way, be introduced by the Chairperson and Questioner of another school.

Top Team Tip

Although there are only 3 people who are going to perform "on the night", it's a good idea to involve a few more students to help out with the speech-making and the questioning. As in a sports team, it's good to have a squad of players to work with!

Here are some ideas as to how you can help each other:

- Help the speaker to choose a topic.
- Help the speaker to write an interesting and entertaining speech.
- Take it in turns to speak the 1st rough draft and let the others ask questions. This way you will be able to predict the sort of questions you may be asked in the actual competition.
- Help the Chairperson to practise introducing the speaker and anyone else you have in your squad.
- Try out some different speeches on random topics to help the Questioner practise making up questions.
- If you can, try to present the finished speech in front of an audience of your year group or assembly.



THE THREE ROLES

HOW TO BE A GOOD CHAIRPERSON

Skills summary

To be a great Chairperson you need to:

- Show the audience you are firmly in charge.
- Make the audience keen to hear the Speaker.
- Control the timing.
- Be able to summarise the key elements of the presentation.
- Be able to thank people in a pleasant and friendly manner.

REMEMBER!

- Before you leave for the competition, make sure you have a stopwatch or mobile phone with stopwatch, a pen and some paper, or cue cards.
- Once you know which speaker you will be introducing, ask them for information about themselves and why they chose their topic.

Once you are "on stage" there are 4 major things you need to do:

1 Introduce the speaker

You are in charge from the start. It is your job to set the tone.

You may need to wait while the adjudicators make notes on the previous team.

First impressions are important. Start with a confident and friendly introduction. You have 1 minute to:

- Introduce the speaker by name.
- State the topic (if you have time you can say a few general words about the topic – just make sure you don't give your own opinion).
- Tell the audience what made the Speaker choose the topic.

2 Listen to the speech

Remember that even though you are not speaking....

- You are still in charge! A good chair always pays attention, supporting the speaker and keeping the audience engaged.
- You should take brief notes, as you'll need to give a summary later. If the speaker over-runs, wait for about 15 seconds; stay seated but ask them quietly to finish.

3 Run the question time

When the speaker has finished, introduce your Questioner (if you have not already done so) then.....

- Invite your Questioner to begin their questions.
- After the three minutes are up, thank your Questioner.

4 Finishing-up

You have 1 minute to:

- Sum up the Speaker's main arguments and some of the areas raised by the Questioner and the audience.
- Thank the Speaker, highlighting what you enjoyed about their speech and thank the Questioner.
- Finish in a pleasant, friendly manner.



WHAT MAKES A GOOD SPEAKER?

Skills summary

To be a great speaker you need to:

- Engage your audience with your words, your voice and your personality.
- Keep their attention by varying your expression and the mood of your speech.
- Structure your speech so that the audience can follow your reasoning.
- Consider both sides of the topic but lead to one clear conclusion.
- Be well prepared, but not over-rehearsed!
- Give brief but relevant answers to questions, introducing new evidence where you can.

1 Preparing your speech

Your teacher will have been sent a list of 5 or 6 topics. Then, you should.....

- With the rest of your team choose a topic that you are interested in.
- Research your topic.
- Try to sum up your speech in one sentence so you are absolutely sure of the main point you want the audience to understand.
- Get your teammates to add their thoughts to your speech and to question your ideas if they disagree with points you have made.

2 Writing your speech

Your speech should have a good structure and should separate into three parts:

- Introduction – get the attention of your audience, tell them what the main point of your speech is and why it is important.
- Main points – organise your 2, 3 or 4 points, and add the evidence for them. Show the audience what the other side of the argument might be.
- Conclusion – tie the speech together for your audience, and remind them of what it is you wanted to achieve by speaking to them.

Introduction

- Relate the topic to the audience: think about why they should be interested in your topic.
- Make your audience sit up and listen: you could start your speech with a quotation, question or statistic, for example.
- Show the audience the importance of the topic: for example, how many thousands of people it affects, how much money is involved, how many people are hurt or saved etc.

Main points

- Choose your evidence from a reliable source, and tell the audience what the source is when you use any facts or statistics.
- Stories about yourself or others that illustrate your point (anecdotes) can often make your speech more effective.
- Present the evidence you have found so it leads to a logical conclusion, forming a strong argument.

Conclusion

- Your conclusion is your chance to remind the audience of your main argument.
- Take us back to your introduction, reminding us of what you wanted us to achieve with your speech.
- End on a memorable phrase!

3 Delivering your speech

Once you have decided **what** your speech is about, you need to think about **how** you are going to deliver it. There are lots of things to consider...

Style: remember this is a speech not an essay; there should be a mixture of sentence lengths.

Vocabulary: be aware you are talking to adults as well as to your peer group. Explain technical words and abbreviations as necessary.

Projection: practise saying your speech in different room sizes and get someone to say whether they can hear every word.

Pace: be careful not to rush! Again, practise with a friend.

Pauses: use pauses to add impact to your speech.

Expression: make sure that you've really thought about the content of your speech and that your delivery reflects this.

Emphasis: add impact to your sentences by emphasising important words and phrases.

Body language: everything from your stance to your face and hand gestures can give your speech more impact.

Eye contact: maintain good eye-contact with members of the audience. Make them **all** feel involved!

4 Answering questions

During questioning, you have the opportunity to demonstrate how well you have researched your topic. You should:

- Introduce new material and evidence if it is relevant to your answer.
- Keep your answers brief and give the questioner time to respond. Try to understand the questioner's point of view and be respectful of it.
- Stand in a way that makes the whole audience feel included and make eye contact with them whilst answering. Do the same during audience questions too!



WHAT MAKES A GOOD QUESTIONER?

Skills summary

To be a great Questioner you need to:

- Ask the questions that you feel anyone listening would want to answers to.
- Show your great listening skills.
- Encourage the Speaker to expand on their points, add evidence and consider other sides to the issue.
- If something in the speech wasn't clear, don't be afraid to politely ask the Speaker to explain that point again.
- Maintain an enquiring but friendly attitude towards the Speaker; you are not there to attack the Speaker's views or to try and catch anyone out.

REMEMBER!

- To have a pen and paper or cue cards with you when you meet up with the Speaker and during their speech.
- Think of several possible viewpoints someone could have on the topic to help you form questions later on.

1 Listening well

Good listening is important for all members of the team but **especially** for the questioner.

- Don't forget to take notes during the speech – try to write short phrases instead of long sentences.
- You need to focus on the main themes of the arguments and ask questions based on them.
- Try using different coloured pens for speaker's point and your own questions.

2 Asking good questions

Content

Here are some good techniques that you should practise:

- Refer directly to things the Speaker has just said.
- If you feel you have not understood a particular point, ask the Speaker to make it clearer to the audience, for example "could you explain in more detail what you meant by...?"
- Ask the Speaker for more evidence to support a point they have made, in particular if you felt the information might not be accurate or that the source for the information might be biased.
- Ask for the Speaker's opinion on an area, within the topic, that has not been covered.
- Suggest areas of disagreement, perhaps offering a different point of view.
- If you are not totally satisfied with the answer, don't be afraid to ask follow-up questions, remembering to be polite.

3. Expression and delivery

The audience and judges are as interested

in the questions as they are in the speech.

Remember:

- Stand in a way that makes the whole audience feel included and make eye contact with them.
- Look up from your notes when asking the questions.
- Try to vary your voice when asking questions.
- Vary the length of your questions.

GOOD LUCK

We hope that you'll enjoy preparing for the ESU Public Speaking Competition. Don't forget to prepare as a team, ask your teacher for help if you need it and most of all – have fun!

Remember that the judges will be marking you according to three criteria: the content of what you say, your effectiveness in the role and your style.

We look forward to hearing your fantastic speeches!



EQUITY POLICY

The English-Speaking Union is committed to providing opportunities for individuals of all backgrounds to access and develop communication skills. We expect all ESU events to be welcoming, inclusive, and to foster a safe and supportive atmosphere in which all individuals feel that they are able and encouraged to express themselves.

In such a safe space, individuals should feel that:

- They are afforded the same high level of respect that is due to all
- They are never in a position where they feel under physical or psychological threat
- They will never be judged on things they cannot change
- Their opinions and beliefs can be challenged, but will always be respected
- If their safety and well-being is threatened, that others will listen and support them

The responsibility is placed on all individuals (students, school staff, ESU staff and members, judges etc.) to ensure that such a safe space is created and maintained. Any person who is found to breach these rules may be excluded from this or future events.

If any individual feels that these guidelines have been violated, whether the incident was directed against them or not, they should:

- Approach any member of ESU staff at the event
- Contact a member of staff at the ESU if an issue is not, or cannot, be resolved satisfactorily at the event
- If an issue remains unresolved, direct any complaints towards the ESU Safeguarding Lead, Gavin Illsley (gavin.illsley@esu.org) or to one of the deputies: Matthew Christmas (matthew.christmas@esu.org); Robert Saull (robert.saull@esu.org); Aameena Khan (aameena.khan@esu.org)

ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

The ESU is a unique educational charity and membership organisation dedicated to helping people realise their potential through giving them the skills and confidence in communication to articulate their ideas and share them with others.

For more information about the ESU and to view our other educational opportunities, please email a member of the team at competition@esu.org or visit our website at www.esu.org.

You can also find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/the.esu or on Twitter [@TheESU](https://twitter.com/TheESU)/[@ESUdebate](https://twitter.com/ESUdebate)

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