

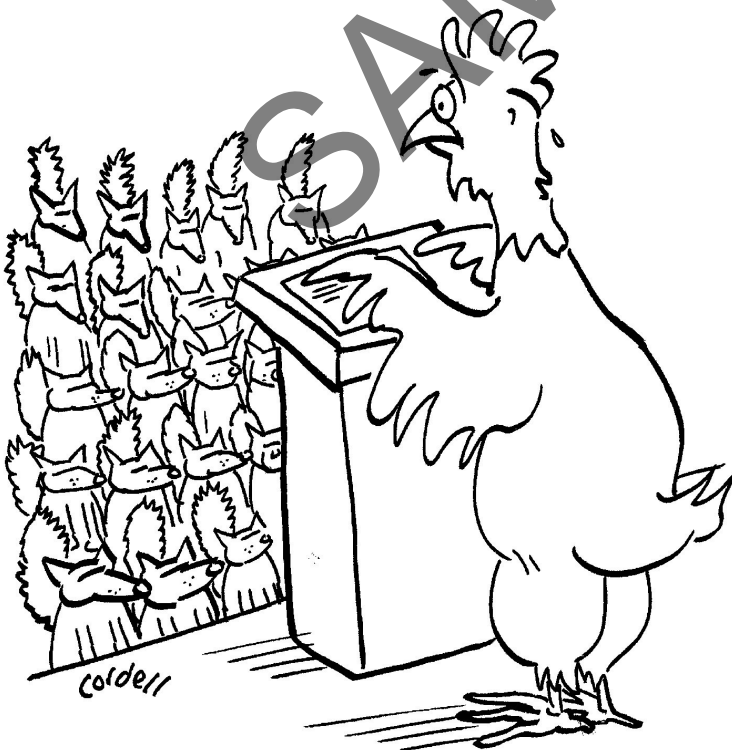
# Chapter 6:

## Say It Out Loud – Speeches, Debating and Drama

Most of the texts that you have explored in this book live only on the page. However, some texts are written to be said out loud, to be performed.

This chapter is divided into three sections: Speeches, Debating and Drama. These are some of the oldest forms of literature. The Ancient Greeks valued the power of oratory (the art of public speaking) as well as the importance of staged drama. Speeches, debates and drama take the focus of language but combine it with performance, so that meaning is offered not just through the words, but also by the performer who breathes life into them.

In this chapter you will hopefully come to appreciate these art forms and even be encouraged to perform yourself.



Gerald sensed that more than just his reputation was riding on the success of the presentation.

## Speeches

Whether it is in the political world, at a wedding, at an award ceremony, at a press conference, during a debate or at school, public speaking is a vital part of life today. In this section, you will explore the language and style of speech writing. To start we should look at speech openings.

### Speech Openings

There are many ways to begin a speech. However, a strong lively opening will grab the audience's interest. Unfortunately, some speech-makers start in a manner that is dull and fails to excite or interest the audience. For example, the opening line, 'Thank you so much for that kind introduction. I have been really looking forward to the opportunity to talk to you all...' lacks flair, energy or bite. A good speech opening should hook the audience. Many speakers begin with something that is amusing, shocking, imaginative or personal.

A strong speech opening may:

- include a quotation
- ask a question of the audience
- tell an anecdote (see Chapter 1, page 9)
- be deeply personal
- shock the audience

### Reading for Meaning

Take a look at the following speech openings and explain why they could be considered effective ways of beginning a speech:

- (a) I want to ask you a question: how many of you have ever dreamed of a world without poverty, a world where everybody has enough? I am here today to tell you that this dream can become a reality.
- (b) Sadly, in the next ten minutes, one species on planet Earth will become extinct. In the twenty minutes I spend talking to you, two species will cease to exist. By this time tomorrow one hundred and fifty more will have disappeared. By this day next year, it will be about 55,000.
- (c) James Dean once said, 'I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.'
- (d) Unlike most of you here today, I was not born in a hospital. There were no doctors when I came into this world; there were no nurses, no anaesthetic, no sterile sheets. There were no teddy bears nor balloons, no congratulation cards nor visiting relatives. When I was born, the sky was lit up by scud missiles and my mother's labour screams couldn't compete with the roar of gunfire. For I was born in a warzone.

- (e) The factory owner Henry Ford hired an expert to go through his plant. He said, 'Find the non-productive people. Tell me who they are, and I will fire them!'

After surveying the whole factory, the expert returned to Ford's office. 'I've found a problem with one of your administrators,' he said. 'Every time I walked by, he was sitting with his feet propped up on the desk. The man never does a thing. I definitely think you should consider getting rid of him!'

When Henry Ford learned the name of the man the expert was referring to, Ford shook his head and said, 'I can't fire him. I pay that man to do nothing but think – and that's what he's doing.'

I am here today to talk to you about the importance of deep thinkers.

### Writer's Workshop

**Openings:** You have been asked to write a speech about the experience of being a teenager in Ireland today. Using what you have learned about speech openings, write three different openings to your speech. Make use of the five opening techniques described on the previous page.

## The Language of Speeches

Successful speeches are carefully crafted to win over the audience. Speech-writers use language that strengthens their arguments, persuades or entertains. The following language devices are commonly found in speeches. You should refer back to this list when analysing speeches and when writing your own.

- **Rhetorical questions:** These are questions in which the answer is already implied. They are used to make a statement. For example, instead of the statement, 'I don't believe that,' a rhetorical question can be used: 'Do you expect me to believe that?' Asking questions of an audience is an effective and persuasive tool when making speeches and debating.
- **Repetition:** This can help to emphasise a point.
- **Hyperbole (exaggeration):** Used appropriately, exaggeration can stir an audience.
- **Humour:** When it is suitable, a joke can help to entertain and win over a crowd.
- **Identification with the audience:** Sometimes speakers may want to identify with the crowd. Speakers, therefore, often say 'we' to include the audience in the speech. The speaker may also use references or place names known to the audience.
- **Metaphor:** Metaphorical language can add colour to a speech. Look at Martin Luther King's Freedom's Ring (I Have a Dream) speech on pages 207–209 for an excellent example of this.
- **Anecdote/Illustration:** Sometimes an idea may need an example to bring it to life or to make a point more relevant. Speech-writers often use an anecdote to illustrate a point.
- **Facts:** It is difficult to argue with hard facts; they help to strengthen a point.
- **Emotive language:** Language that stirs the emotions may help to rouse an audience. For example, a speech about animal rights may use emotive language to evoke sympathy in the audience: 'These helpless animals are subjected to torture on a daily basis.'
- **Anticipatory statements:** By predicting the counter-argument and dismissing it, a speaker can deal with any potential opposition to their ideas.



# One Pen Can Change the World

Malala Yousafzai

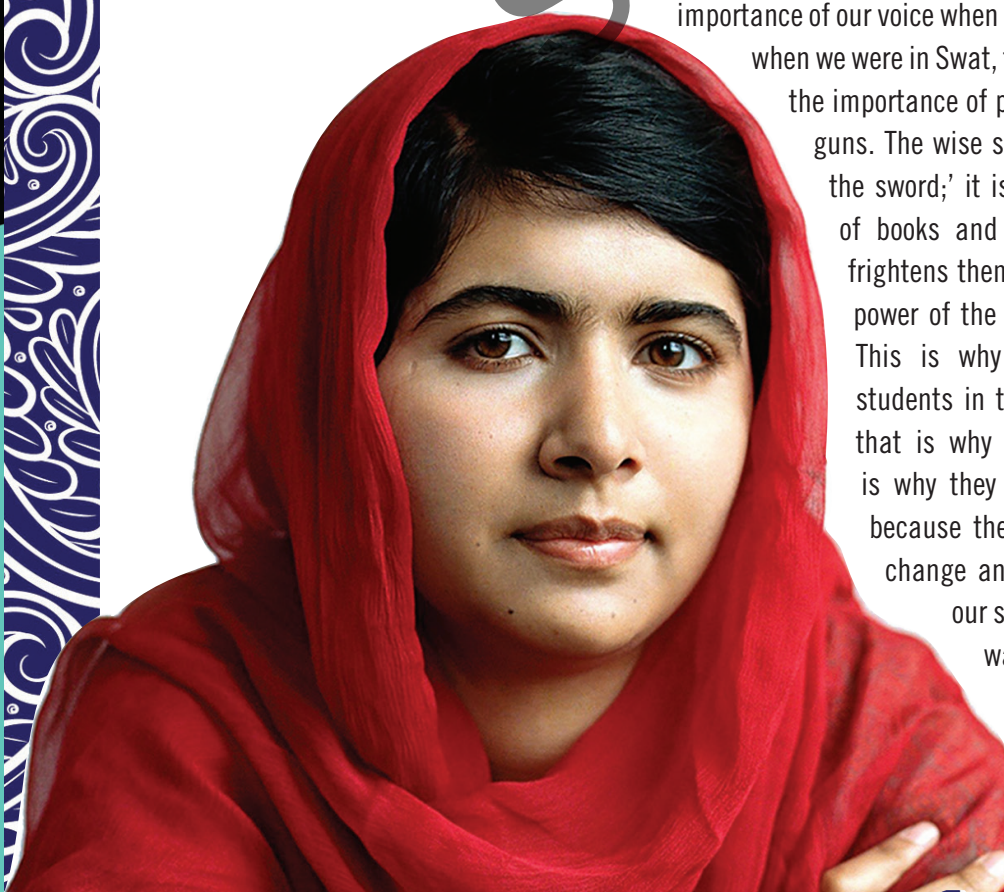
Malala Yousafzai is the youngest ever Nobel Prize recipient. She became a political activist at the age of eleven when she began writing a blog about life under the Taliban in Pakistan. A documentary was later made about her and she became famous following a number of interviews with her in the media. When she was 15, a Taliban gunman boarded her school bus, asked for her by name and shot her in the head. Yousafzai survived and became a world-famous advocate for education and women's rights.

The text below is from the speech that Malala Yousafzai gave to the United Nations on 12 July 2013, the date of her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and 'Malala Day' at the UN.

**Dear friends**, on 9 October 2012, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They shot my friends, too. They thought that the bullets would silence us, but they failed. And out of that silence came thousands of voices. The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions. But nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage were born.

I am the same Malala. My ambitions are the same. My hopes are the same. And my dreams are the same. Dear sisters and brothers, I am not against anyone. Neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban or any other terrorist group. I am here to speak for the right of education for every child. I want education for the sons and daughters of the Taliban and all the terrorists and extremists. I do not even hate the Talib who shot me. Even if there was a gun in my hand and he was standing in front of me, I would not shoot him.

Dear sisters and brothers, we realise the importance of light when we see darkness. We realise the importance of our voice when we are silenced. In the same way, when we were in Swat, the north of Pakistan, we realised the importance of pens and books when we saw the guns. The wise saying, 'The pen is mightier than the sword;' it is true. The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them. They are afraid of women. The power of the voice of women frightens them. This is why they killed fourteen innocent students in the recent attack in Quetta. And that is why they kill female teachers. That is why they are blasting schools every day because they were, and they are, afraid of change and equality that we will bring to our society. And I remember that there was a boy in our school who was asked by a journalist why are





the Taliban against education? He answered very simply by pointing to his book, he said, 'A Talib doesn't know what is written inside this book.'

Today I am focusing on women's rights and girls' education because they are suffering the most. We call upon all governments to ensure free, compulsory education all over the world for every child. We call upon all the governments to fight against terrorism and violence. To protect children from brutality and harm. We call upon the developed nations to support the expansion of education opportunities for girls in the developing world. We call upon all communities to be tolerant, to reject prejudice based on caste, creed, sect, colour, religion or agenda to ensure freedom and equality for women so they can flourish. We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back. We call upon our sisters around the world to be brave, to embrace the strength within themselves and realise their full potential.

Dear brothers and sisters, we want schools and education for every child's bright future. We will continue our journey to our destination of peace and education. No one can stop us. We will speak up for our rights and we will bring change to our voice. We believe in the power and the strength of our words. Our words can change the whole world because we are all together, united for the cause of education. And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty and injustice and ignorance. We must not forget that millions of children are out of their schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright, peaceful future.

So let us wage a global struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism; let us pick up our books and our pens; they are the most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first.

### Reading for Meaning

1. What is your impression of Malala Yousafzai from this speech?
2. What do you think is the main message of this speech?
3. This speech refers to a boy who was questioned about the Taliban by a journalist.
  - (a) What did the boy say?
  - (b) What do you think the boy meant by this comment?
4. Do you agree with Yousafzai that 'the pen is mightier than the sword'? Why / why not?

### Language Lab

1. How does Malala Yousafzai try to connect with the audience in her speech?
2. (a) Write down two examples of repetition in this speech.  
(b) What effect does this have on the listeners?
3. Yousafzai uses a number of contrasts in the opening paragraph, for example: 'out of that silence came thousands of voices.' Why do you think she uses these contrasts in her speech?



## Style Guide

**Rousing / Stirring Language:** Often the function of a speech is to appeal to people's hearts. Speech-writers therefore commonly use language that stirs the audience emotionally. This is true of this speech by Malala Yousafzai. She uses stirring phrases such as, 'But nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage were born' and 'One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.' Powerful, emotive phrases like this will resonate with the audience and encourage them to agree with the speech's message.

## Speaking and Listening

**Watch the Speaker:** Watch Malala Yousafzai deliver this powerful speech to the UN (17 mins) by going to [www.mentorbooks.ie/resources](http://www.mentorbooks.ie/resources) and then look in the TY English section. Alternatively, you can watch Malala Yousafzai deliver this speech on YouTube.

## Writer's Workshop

**Research Report:** Malala Yousafzai is a celebrated advocate for human rights. Using the internet, find out more about her. Present a report on her life and her achievements.

## Links

It is upsetting to confront the reality that sometimes children are the victims of war and political violence. This speech can be linked to other texts in this book and elsewhere:

**In this book:** Michael Morpurgo's short story, *No Trumpets Needed* (page 112)

**Elsewhere:** Search online for Rosita Boland's poem, *Butterflies*



# A Call for Revolution (from *Animal Farm*)

George Orwell

George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* is an allegory (symbolic story) for the communist revolution that happened in Russia early in the twentieth century. In this stirring speech from the book, an old pig called Major calls on the other animals to rise up against the farmer and take control of the farm.

'I do not think, comrades, that I shall be with you for many months longer, and before I die, I feel it my duty to pass on to you such wisdom as I have acquired. I have had a long life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall, and I think I may say that I understand the nature of life on this earth as well as any animal now living. It is about this that I wish to speak to you.

'Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength; and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty. No animal in England knows the meaning of happiness or leisure after he is a year old. No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth.

'But is this simply part of the order of nature? Is it because this land of ours is so poor that it cannot afford a decent life to those who dwell upon it? No, comrades, a thousand times no! The soil of England is fertile, its climate is good, it is capable of affording food in abundance to an enormously greater number of animals than now inhabit it. This single farm of ours would support a dozen horses, twenty cows, hundreds of sheep – and all of them living in a comfort and a dignity that are now almost beyond our imagining. Why then do we continue in this miserable condition? Because nearly the whole of the produce of our labour is stolen from us by human beings. There, comrades, is the answer to all our problems. It is summed up in a single word – Man. Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished for ever.

'Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving, and the rest he keeps for himself. Our labour tills the soil, our dung fertilises it, and yet there is not one of us that owns more than his bare skin. You cows that I see before me, how many thousands of gallons of milk have you given during this last year? And what has happened to that milk which should have been breeding up sturdy calves? Every drop of it has gone down the throats of our enemies. And you hens, how many eggs have you laid in this last year, and how many of those eggs ever hatched into chickens? The rest have all gone to market to bring in money for Jones and his men.

'And even the miserable lives we lead are not allowed to reach their natural span ... no animal escapes the cruel knife in the end. You young porkers who are sitting in front of me, every one of you will scream your lives out at the block within a year. To that horror we all must come – cows, pigs, hens, sheep, everyone. Even the horses and the dogs have no better fate. You, Boxer, the very day that those



great muscles of yours lose their power, Jones will sell you to the knacker, who will cut your throat and boil you down for the foxhounds. As for the dogs, when they grow old and toothless, Jones ties a brick round their necks and drowns them in the nearest pond.

‘Is it not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings? Only get rid of Man, and the produce of our labour would be our own. Almost overnight we could become rich and free. What then must we do? Why, work night and day, body and soul, for the overthrow of the human race! That is my message to you, comrades: Rebellion! I do not know when that Rebellion will come, it might be in a week or in a hundred years, but I know, as surely as I see this straw beneath my feet, that sooner or later justice will be done. Fix your eyes on that, comrades, throughout the short remainder of your lives! And above all, pass on this message of mine to those who come after you, so that future generations shall carry on the struggle until it is victorious.

‘Among us animals let there be perfect unity, perfect comradeship in the struggle. All men are enemies. All animals are comrades. I have little more to say. I merely repeat, remember always your duty of enmity towards Man and all his ways. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.’

#### GLOSSARY

**laborious:** involving much work or effort

**tills:** prepares land for ploughing

**Boxer:** a horse in the story

**produce:** agricultural products

**enmity:** hostility, feud



#### Reading for Meaning

1. According to Major, what is life like for the animals?
2. What evidence does Major offer to suggest that human beings are useless?
3. What does Major propose that the animals should do to improve their own lives?
4. If you were one of the animals, how do you think you would feel listening to this speech?

#### Language Lab

1. (a) Find examples of emotive language in this speech that stirs the listener emotionally.  
(b) Do you think this type of language is effective?



2. (a) How does Major try to shock or scare the other animals?  
(b) Why do you think he does this?
3. (a) Major uses questions in his speech. Write down three examples.  
(b) What effect does his use of questions have?
4. There are a number of interesting words used in this speech.  
(a) Using a dictionary, find the meanings of the following words from the text:

comrades	fertile	sturdy
laborious	abundance	knacker
dwelt	abolished	tyranny

- (b) For each, write a sentence that includes the word.

### Writer's Workshop

**What Happens Next?** Imagine that the other animals meet after hearing Major's speech to discuss what they have heard. Write the scene that takes place. Make use of dialogue in your writing.

