

THE MANUAL

CONTENTS

I Structuring information

1. Constructing an argument.
2. Mind mapping.

II Writing Like a Pro

1. Guidelines on writing a summary.
2. Guidelines on writing an argumentative essay expressing opinion.

III Speaking Like a Pro

1. Making an Effective Speech. Oratory Techniques.
2. Holding an Interactive Round-Table Discussion.
3. Guidelines on Verbal Jousts.
4. Guidelines on making a Presentation.

CONSTRUCTING AN ARGUMENT

Whenever you need to produce an idea of your own, be it in a written or spoken form, structure it properly, so as to avoid lack of clarity, ambiguity, or misunderstanding. The ideas you produce are to be well-balanced, well-thought-out, meaningful, and compelling.

Make a **CLAIM**– state your position or stance on the issue.

Give **REASON(s)** - explain why your claim is legitimate. Be very clear and consistent at this stage, you need to walk the audience through the logic of your argument.

Provide **EVIDENCE** - provide information that supports the reasons; this could be facts, statistics, examples, prominent cases, expert opinion.

When invited to give your opinion, you are expected to provide a well-reasoned answer, following the structure “claim – reason(s) – evidence”.

E.g. (see Unit 1, Reading 1)

Question: Do you share the author’s view about the real picture of the US Foreign Service?

Answer:

CLAIM: There is one point in the text which I don’t share. There has never been a myth that Foreign Service officers advance their own agendas. The author’s claim about such a myth is rather far-fetched.

REASONS: People have never seen Foreign Service as an independent body and there is no need to prove the opposite. It is common knowledge that foreign ministries in all countries pursue the policy adopted by the government. What’s more, Foreign Service is sometimes blamed for following the course of the government without questioning its relevance.

EVIDENCE: For example, the US Foreign Service was criticized by many Americans for advancing a military agenda in Iraq in 2003. It was suspected that intelligence related to Iraq’s nuclear weapons program was twisted to accommodate the government’s interests.

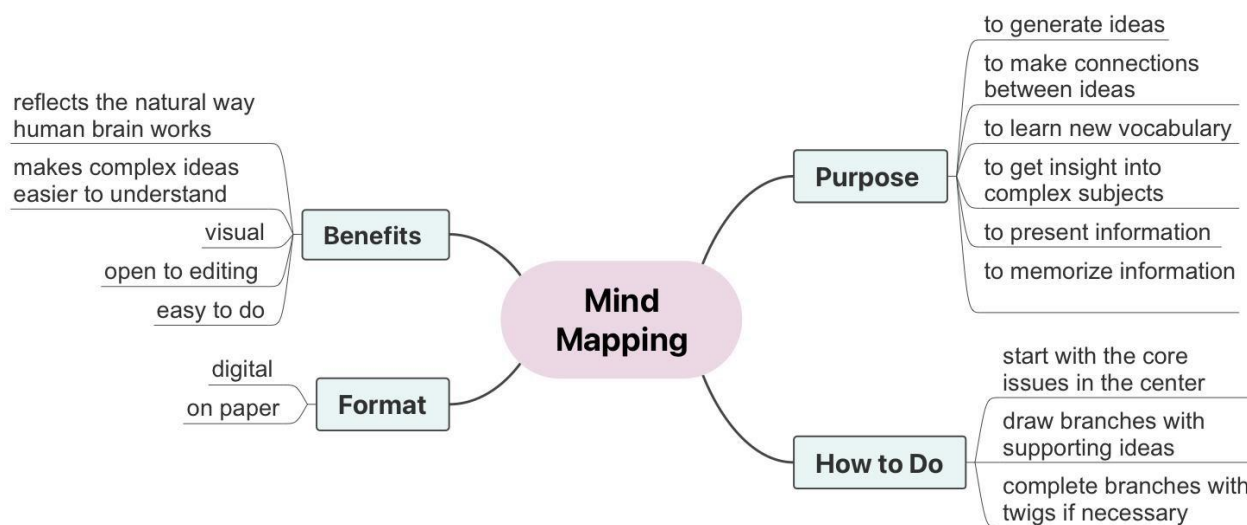
Use this structure when you are giving your opinion, writing an essay, making a presentation, writing a speech, or preparing for a debate: it will help you construct solid arguments and avoid a mess in the ideas you produce.

MIND MAPPING

Mind mapping is a clever way to structure the information which you need to understand, memorise, evaluate or otherwise critically process. This skill makes a student's life a lot easier as, instead of a long, monotonous list of information, you deal with a bright, eye-catching, brain-friendly diagram of concepts.

How to mind map:

- place the main idea or the central theme you intend to develop in the middle of the page;
- introduce sub-topics as branches radiating from the main idea;
- if necessary, develop branches into twigs for lower-level sub-topics;
- use different colors for different levels of the mind map.



Mindmapping will help you

- develop critical and analytical reading skills, e.g. break down a lengthy complex article into logical centres;
- brainstorm for ideas if you need to write an essay or make a project;
- present information when you deliver a PowerPoint presentation;
- take notes while watching a video or listening to a lecture;
- organise and learn new vocabulary.

WRITING LIKE A PRO

1. Guidelines on Writing a Summary

A summary is a rather utilitarian paper, so you should always bear in mind its primary goal – give the reader a clear understanding of what the article is about and what the author meant to get across. That is why you should be very concise, clear, and up to the point. (see the sample summary in *Unit 1, 'Writing like a Pro' section*)

To write a good summary, you need to take the following steps

- 1) Identify the **topic** of the article.

e.g. the role of US diplomacy

- 2) Identify the **thesis** of the article.

The thesis is the author's main message. If you stop and think why the author took the trouble to write the article, you are most likely to arrive at the thesis. A thesis statement always conveys the author's precise opinion on the topic of the article. It cannot be just an observation or a question.

Tip: if there could be several articles on the same topic, different authors may have different ideas on the issue.

e.g. *Topic: the role of US diplomacy*

Thesis of Article A: The author states that Americans tend to underestimate the importance of diplomacy in the history of their country; however, doing it justice may help restore American diplomatic capacity.

Thesis of Article B: The author posits that Americans tend to praise their diplomatic efforts; however, it is usually military power that they resort to in conducting foreign affairs.

3) Identify the author's **arguments**

After formulating the thesis, ask yourself a question "How does the author prove the thesis?" and find all the arguments that are provided to support it.

Tip: Don't try to find an argument in each paragraph. Some authors develop one argument within a few paragraphs.

4) Write your **summary**

● Introductory paragraph

The first introductory paragraph is rather clichéd: it gives the details of the article (the title, the author, the source), the topic, and the thesis.

e.g. The article by Ambassador Chas W. Freeman, Jr published on www.chasfreeman.net on 5 April 2018 is concerned with the role of US diplomacy. The author states that Americans tend to underestimate the importance of diplomacy in the history of their country; however, doing it justice may help restore American diplomatic capacity.

● Body paragraphs

Make sure you **start each paragraph with the topic sentence**, which is further developed and supported. The topic sentence embodies an argument the author provides to support the thesis.

Tip: Remember that **the number of body paragraphs in a summary** is not set in tablets of stone, and does not have to be, or rather **should not be the same as in the article**. If you can group the author's ideas as challenges and solutions, or causes and consequences, or advantages and disadvantages, then go for it and structure your summary accordingly. Many students ask **how long a summary should be**. The answer is: concise, i.e. reflecting the main ideas and arguments and devoid of any excess details, examples, statistics, etc. There is no limit as for the word count, but approximately **one third of the input text** would do.

● Conclusion

Another sensitive point is the conclusion. You should remember that a summary is a sum-up of someone else's written paper, so it **does not need any conclusion** unless the author gives a new idea at the end of the article. If this is the case, make a reference to the author, e.g. *In the conclusion the author emphasizes...* **NOT:** *In conclusion,...*

DO	DON'T
Make 2-3 references to the author throughout the body of the summary.	Make too many references (e.g. each paragraph), or none at all.
Give the author's full name in the introductory paragraph (e.g. <i>James Smith</i>). Further refer to the author by his/her last name (e.g. <i>Smith</i>).	Refer to the author as Mr. / Ms.... (e.g. <i>Mr. Smith</i>).
Rephrase and remember to be succinct.	Use the author's language.
Leave out unimportant things (examples, details).	Retell all the examples, descriptions, unimportant details.
Process the text logically. Find out the author's main arguments. Draw a mind map of the text to help you structure its ideas. Remember, even renowned authors can beat about the bush or return to the previously expressed idea, which should be avoided in a summary.	Stick to the same order of laying out the information as is used in the article if the author recycles the same idea throughout the text.
Make use of the vocabulary which would illustrate your analytical work done with the text. For example, the author <i>singles out</i> the following <i>reasons/ causes/ complications</i> etc. Or, the author <i>identifies</i> the <i>problem areas/ the challenges</i> , etc.	Use sequencers such as <i>first, after that, then, the author goes on to say, at the beginning of the first/ second paragraph, etc.</i> They will turn your attempted summary into a mere retelling, and this is the last thing we would like to arrive at.
Use linkers such as <i>Firstly/ Secondly/ Thirdly/ Finally/ Last but not least</i> ONLY to list items of the same order if they are mentioned in the thesis statement or in the topic sentence of a body paragraph (this could be a list of solutions, benefits, measures, etc.) e.g. <i>The author suggests a number of solutions to the present economic downturn caused by the covid-19 pandemic.</i> <i>Firstly, restrictive measures should be gradually relieved in the less affected regions.</i> (...) <i>Secondly, more funds should be allocated to local small enterprises.</i> (...)	Use linkers <i>Firstly/ Secondly/ Thirdly</i> to start each new paragraph just because it is the first/ second/ third paragraph in the body of your summary.
Focus exclusively on the author's ideas, his/her approach to the issue raised in the article.	Introduce your personal opinion or an element of subjectivity.

Imagine the reader has not read the article. Be reader-friendly, mention all the important information, leave out unnecessary details, avoid any ambiguity. Focus on this tip while proofreading!

Useful Expressions

To introduce the topic

The article entitled *[Title]* by *[Author's Name]* published in *[Newspaper/ Magazine/ Journal]* on *[Date]* deals with/ is concerned with/ studies/ explains/ explores/ analyzes/ considers the problem/ the issue of...

To introduce the thesis

The author claims/posits/argues/states/advocates the idea that...

The author warns/cautions/explains etc.

To connect paragraphs

Another reason for ...

A further indication of ...

Another implication of...

Meanwhile...

At the same time...

On the other hand...

However...

Although/Even though...

To connect ideas within a paragraph

Moreover (puts more weight on the argument)

Besides/ also/ furthermore/ apart from that (add another item)

Firstly, secondly, thirdly (list items of the same order)

To make a reference to the author

states	explains	provides an argument
posits	suggests	advocates the idea
argues	points out	holds the view
concludes	admits	challenges the view
concedes	considers	lists <i>solutions/ advantages, etc.</i>
implies	insists	presents the idea
proves	rejects	opposes the belief
maintains	criticizes	dismisses the criticism
emphasizes	disagrees	questions the validity of the view

2. Guidelines on Writing an Argumentative Essay Expressing Opinion

Making one's voice heard and persuading others of one's arguments are essential skills in a career of a diplomat. By writing opinion essays we aim at two birds with one stone: perfecting and polishing your language and developing critical and analytical thinking skills.

There are three main items to care about while writing your essay:

- STRUCTURE

- LANGUAGE
- STYLE

STRUCTURE

Argumentative essay expressing opinion has the following structure:

<i>Paragraph 1</i>	Introduction <u>Thesis statement</u>	Hooking technique CLAIM
<i>Paragraph 2</i>	<u>Argument 1</u>	REASON 1 to support the claim <i>Logical development of reason 1</i> <i>Evidence to support reason 1</i>
<i>Paragraph 3</i>	<u>Argument 2</u>	REASON 2 to support the claim <i>Logical development of reason 2</i> <i>Evidence to support reason 2</i>
<i>Paragraph 4</i>	<u>Refutation paragraph</u>	Opposing viewpoint + its refutation
<i>Paragraph 5</i>	<u>Conclusion</u>	Sum-up of the arguments Restatement of the thesis

Introductory Paragraph

- Traditionally, rhetorical questions, quotes, personal anecdotes have been used at length as **hooking techniques**. Given the academic style of an essay and the range of topics dictated by the professional focus, the most feasible plan for a good hook is to find a case which would illustrate the topic and start your essay with it.
e.g. The essay entitled "Personal Qualities in Leadership" can be started by the case of a charismatic leader winning over the public with his eloquence, like Churchill, or personal example, like Ghandi.
- A **thesis statement** presents a claim on the issue that you are to prove rather than merely raises the topic or restates some general truth.

Tips on how to make a successful thesis statement

- Avoid merely announcing the topic; your original and specific "angle" should be clear. Your thesis must be arguable; it must assert or deny something about your topic, i.e. it must be a statement with which people may disagree.
e.g. Original thesis: Oratory art is in decline in modern politics.
Revised thesis: Despite the fact that modern politics is witnessing an obvious decline in oratory, this ancient art should not be lost and forgotten.
- Make sure the thesis is neither too broad, nor too narrow. It should be limited to what can be accomplished in the specified **number of words (300-350)**.
- Continue to refine your thesis while developing the arguments. Start with a tentative (*примерный*) thesis and revise it as your essay develops. Compare this original thesis of an essay on the topic "Mass Media and Their Effect on Society",

which is too general, with the possible revisions that look at the topic from different angles.

e.g. Original thesis: *The mass media have a negative effect on society.*

Revised theses:

1. *The mass media play an important role in shaping public attitudes, but instead of serving the social good, they fuel social tension and escalate conflict.*
2. *Since the mass media have enormous potential to influence society, they have been increasingly used as a tool of manipulating public opinion.*

- Be as clear and as specific as possible; avoid vague words. For example, the superficial ‘society’ can be substituted by more precise ‘both genders’, ‘men and women’, ‘the young and the old’, ‘Russian/ British/...’, ‘taxpayers and legislators’, etc. depending on the focus of your paper.
- Indicate the point of your paper but avoid sentence structures like, “The point of my paper is...”, which will make it simplistic.
- Make use of complex sentences to formulate a more complex, comprehensive thesis.
- In the thesis of an essay expressing opinion you can make assessment, suggest solutions, predict consequences or outcomes.

e.g. Original thesis: *US-Russia relations can be improved.*

- Revised thesis: *US-Russia relations can be improved if both countries exercise enough political will.*

Common **pitfalls** in formulating a thesis:

- A thesis which is too broad or doesn’t need to be proved: e.g. *The US-Russia relations can be improved.*
- A thesis which is descriptive: e.g. *The current US-Russia relations have hit a historic low.*
- A thesis which is too narrow: e.g. *Diplomatic cooperation in the UNO can improve bilateral relations between Russia and the USA.*
- A thesis worded as a question: e.g. *What can be done to improve the current US-Russia relations?*
- A thesis which contains words that lead to faulty generalizations (all, none, always, only, everyone, etc.): e.g. *Diplomatic effort is always needed to improve bilateral relations between the countries.*
- A thesis that starts with ‘In my opinion’ or ‘I think’, as they make a thesis sound simplistic, thus weakening the author’s position: e.g. *I think that US-Russia relations can be improved if both countries exercise enough political will.*

Body Paragraphs

Body paragraphs convey the **arguments** you put forward to substantiate your thesis. They should be robust and compelling. Before writing your essay, it is a good idea to brainstorm for arguments that substantiate your take on the matter. Write down as many as you can. You can draw a mind map (see above) to structure your ideas. Then, shortlist the most compelling ones - **two to three would do**. These will be the ones you will lay out in your essay.

Traditionally, one argument equals one **paragraph** and reflects the following structure: CLAIM – REASON(S) – EVIDENCE. In the first sentence of a paragraph you put forward an argument (i.e. you make a CLAIM), then you develop it (provide REASONS and explanation), and, finally you provide examples, statistics, or expert opinion (EVIDENCE).

Opposing point of view is indispensable for an academic essay and demonstrates your awareness of the existing approaches to the problem you are covering in your essay. The very fact that the writer has arrived at his/her conclusion despite an array of opposing arguments strengthens the author's position (provided the author explains clearly why they are wrong) and makes the readers feel that they are provided with an unbiased, rounded view. The opposing view should be **refuted** to ensure a smooth transition to your own conclusion.

Conclusion

Conclusion summarizes the author's arguments without adding any new ideas, and restates the thesis.

LANGUAGE

Writing an essay gives you a wonderful opportunity to sport your language. It reminds, in a way, of painting a picture: if you use only basic colours, you may end up with a rather primitive drawing, but if you add subtle shades and hues, you stand every chance of creating an impressionistic piece of art.

Aim high, use a dictionary! Synonyms give the language of your essay more colour and more precision.

E.g. instead of using tedious combinations of *very* + *adjective*, go for brighter adjectives:

very bad - *adverse, dreadful, appalling, hideous*

very good – *amazing, positive, brilliant, outstanding*

very careful – *meticulous, thorough, fastidious*

very useful – *an invaluable tool, key to, etc.*

Make use of the **appropriate connectives** where necessary:

Addition: above all, additionally, also, as well as, at the same time, besides, equally important, furthermore, in addition, likewise, not only... but also, what is more.

Cause and effect: as, as a consequence of, as a result, because, consequently, due to, hence, in response, so, since, therefore, thus.

Comparison: as, equally, exactly as, identically, in comparison, in much the same way, in relation to, like, of little/no difference, parallel to, resembling, reminiscent of, same as, similar to, similarly.

Concession and qualification: admittedly, after all, although, despite, even so, for all that, however, in spite of, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, still, though, yet.

Conclusion and summation: all in all, in conclusion, to conclude, to recap it all, to sum up, to summarize.

Contrast: by contrast, in contrast to, on the one hand/on the other hand, on the contrary, opposite to, unlike, just the reverse.

Generalization: by and large, as a rule, generally, in essence, in most cases, on the whole.

Emphasis: above all, clearly, certainly, chiefly, each and every, especially, extremely, indeed, increasingly, more and more, more importantly, moreover, undoubtedly.

Illustration/exemplification: as an example, as illustrated by, as revealed by, for example, for instance, in other words, in particular, in simpler terms, namely, such as.

STYLE

While writing an argumentative essay expressing opinion, you are supposed to adhere to an **academic style**, avoiding contractions and informal vocabulary. For example, instead of writing the spoken '*last time I checked*', better opt for the written '*in my experience*' or '*to (the best of) my knowledge*'.

DO	DON'T
Think of a good introduction – a case illustrating the topic, a quote, or a rhetorical question.	Start with empty, vague phrases which convey no meaning e.g. <i>“Nowadays people are getting more and more concerned with the problem of...”</i>
Formulate a good thesis: an opinion, a statement which needs to be proved, e.g. <i>“Despite the obvious cultural benefits, preserving minority languages can cause controversies in many societies.”</i>	Restate commonly known facts in your thesis, e.g. <i>“Minority languages play an important role in the cultural development of society.”</i>
Brainstorm for arguments to support your thesis. You can use mind mapping to help you organise ideas.	Recycle the same idea throughout the whole of your essay.
Formulate your argument as a CLAIM.	Mistake examples for arguments.
Substantiate each claim with good reasoning and support with facts and examples.	Skip any part of the argument development.
Refute the opposing viewpoint, otherwise it would be difficult to make a good transition to the conclusion.	Forget to refute the opposing point of view.
Restate the thesis and sum up all the main points made in the essay.	Introduce new ideas in the conclusion. Forget to sum up the arguments provided in the essay.
Get hold of a good dictionary and a thesaurus to search for synonyms, which will make your writing colourful and precise.	Use dull words, such as <i>good, bad, interesting, important, very</i> , etc.
Proofread your essay and do the word count.	Skip proofreading.

SPEAKING LIKE A PRO

1. Making an Effective Speech. Oratory Techniques.

Public speaking is an essential part of diplomatic activity. A diplomat should know how to reach out to the audience, deliver a speech, chair a meeting, or address the press. An experienced diplomat knows how to tailor a speech to the audience’s needs and interests, which words to use and which would best be avoided. Achieving remarkable results in public speaking may seem an unattainable goal, but it is indeed far from that. With a little bit of luck, or rather some useful tips and regular practice, anyone can master oratory.

Here are some tips on how to make an effective speech:

DO	DON'T
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<p>Think of the target audience and tailor-make your speech according to their age, professions, or interests.</p>	<p>Blindly follow the ready-made speech text without considering the interests or the tastes of the people listening to you.</p>
<p>Be considerate and make your speech short enough so as to hold the audience's attention, and interesting enough so as to hold it till the very end. <i>"A good speech should be like a woman's skirt; long enough to cover the subject and short enough to create interest."</i> Winston Churchill</p>	<p>Keep it too long! (The ninth US President, William Henry Harrison, is known for the longest inaugural address ever. He spoke in front of the audience in the cold wind for more than two hours, developed pneumonia and died soon after).</p>
<p>Write a speech, making use of the oratory techniques listed below. You can see the striking difference between the draft speech and the edited one. Take your time to write and edit. <i>"All good public speaking is based on good private thinking"</i> Scott Bercun</p>	<p>Use dull, bland language: the words <i>good</i>, <i>bad</i>, <i>interesting</i>, and <i>very</i> are taboos.</p>
<p>Start your speech strong! If you make an effective introduction, the chances are the audience will stay with you till the end. You can open the speech with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a quote, e.g. <i>"Give me liberty or give me death!"</i> Patrick Henry • a rhetorical question, which can be thought-provoking or startling, e.g. <i>"Why should we care about others?"</i> • an anecdote, e.g. <i>"On my way to work this morning..."</i> or <i>"My phone rang. It was..."</i>, etc. • an example • a visual prompt, such as an object, e.g. <i>a toy gun to open a speech on gun control, or a picture, or a slide.</i> 	<p>Start by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • playing down the importance of your message, <i>"I don't know if this'll be of any interest"</i> or <i>"The subject might not interest some of you..."</i> • telling a story or a joke that doesn't relate to the subject, just for the sake of it • a very long introduction (if the whole of your speech is to fit within 10 minutes, introduction should take 1-2). • General truth presented in a general way, e.g. <i>"Most people drive too fast."</i>
<p>Involve the audience. This invites partnership and develops a sense of togetherness, e.g. <i>"Imagine..."</i>, <i>"Let's step back in time..."</i>, etc.</p>	<p>Be afraid to sound too personal. People are empathetic creatures.</p>
<p>Invent a powerful ending. It is the last words that linger and leave the audience thinking. Choose one of the following ideas of a close:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the title of your speech to close it. In this case you will need to think of the close at the very beginning, and only then write the body of the speech; 	<p>Finish off by saying <i>"That's all"</i>, <i>"This is all I wanted to say..."</i>, etc.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a circular close by restating the thesis. Use the classical essay structure: “Tell them what you’re going to say - say it - tell them what you have just said” • make an invitation to action, e.g. <i>“We’ve heard what we have to do. We’ve seen what we need to do. Now is the time to do it and together we can. Do it!”</i> 	
Record yourself and listen to the recording. This will help you understand when to pause and for how long, how to intone properly.	Be afraid to forget something and to improvise! Remember that the audience do not judge you as you do yourself.
Practice the speech beforehand in an empty room or in front of your friend/your parents/your dog/ a mirror, etc.	Read out from your notes! This is a crime against oratory.

Oratory Techniques

Details always matter, and making a speech is no exception. There are a number of techniques which will help you come up with a great speech. They can be divided into two major groups: the ones that you use while writing a speech and the ones that you use while delivering it. What these techniques have in common is that they are all aimed at making a speech emotional, touching, and powerful.

While writing a speech you can make use of the following oratory techniques:

- EMOTIVE, STRONG LANGUAGE aimed at evoking emotional response to the subject is more than welcome in speeches. e.g. *“One hundred years later the life of the Negro is still **badly crippled** by the **manacles of segregation** and the **chains of discrimination**.”* (Martin Luther King)
- LIST OF THREE is widely used as an oratory technique as it has long been proven that the rule of three affects our perception making us notice and memorise things much better when they are grouped in threes. It is a combination of brevity and rhythm that works wonders. Lists of three can be found in advertising slogans, speeches of famous politicians, e.g. *“reuse, reduce, recycle”*, *“life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”*. This is one of the oratory techniques that you should *learn, practise and master*.
- CONTRASTIVE PAIR contains two parts which are in opposition, e.g. *“**You don’t learn** to walk by following rules. **You learn** by doing, and by falling over.”* Richard Branson, *“You’re either **with** us, or **against** us.”*
- PARALLELISM is the use of the components of a sentence that are grammatically the same or similar. This adds balance and rhythm to a speech, e.g. *“**We shall fight** on the beaches, **we shall fight** on the landing grounds, **we shall fight** in the fields and in the streets, **we shall fight** in the hills...”* (Winston Churchill)
- ALLITERATION is a sequence of words that start with the same consonant, which gives an utterance a poetic flow, e.g. *“And our task today is to take the next steps in preparing Britain for a global future.”* (Philip Hammond). Better use in moderation and avoid forced alliteration just for the sake of it, as is the case in the following example *“nattering nabobs of negativism; pusillanimous pussyfoots; hopeless, hysterical hypochondriacs of history...”* (former US Vice President Spiro Agnew)
- REPETITION is using the same word or phrase or pattern in multiple sentences. It adds rhythm and a poetic touch to your speech, e.g. *“**Now is the time** to make real the promises of democracy. **Now is the time** to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. **Now is the time** to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. **Now is the time** to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.”* (Martin Luther King)

- METAPHOR is a feature of figurative language that directly refers to one thing by mentioning another. It is a subtle and artistic form of comparison, which helps create an image of what the speaker is talking about. *e.g. One hundred years later the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.*”
- SIMILE is another creative form of comparison that includes the words **as** and **like**. Be careful - there are many fixed English idiomatic similes that have different Russian equivalents, *e.g. as hungry as a hunter (голодный как волк), as like as two peas (похожи как две капли воды), as blind as a bat (слепой как крот), etc.*
- PERSONAL PRONOUNS are preferred to impersonal ones. Use *I, you, we, our, us*. It creates a sense of togetherness and motivates people, *e.g. “We are gathered here today...”, “I have a dream...”, “Your idea is a bad one, your idea is wrong. You don’t know how or why yet, but until you put the idea out there and see it collide with the real world, you won’t know what direction to go.” (Mark Randolph, Netflix co-founder)*
- RHETORICAL QUESTIONS get the audience to think about the subject of your speech and help them arrive at conclusions, *e.g. “What about the rat race in the first place? Is it worthwhile? Or are you just buying into someone else’s definition of success? Only you can decide that, and you’ll have to decide it over and over and over. But if you think it’s a rat race, before you drop out, take a deep breath. Maybe you picked the wrong job. Try again. And then try again.” (Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook CEO)*
- RHYME, when used in moderation, can make your speech more memorable. You can choose to rhyme the main message and make into a slogan for example, *e.g. “Screw it, let’s do it’ approach to new projects.” (Richard Branson, Virgin Group founder); “This isn’t job done; it is job begun.” (David Cameron)*
- HUMOUR can easily break the ice and work wonders. The audience that seemed distant and indifferent becomes open and welcoming. This can only be achieved provided the jokes are appropriate. If you see that your jokes fall flat, try the other techniques listed above. *“The first thing I would like to say is ‘thank you.’ Not only has Harvard given me an extraordinary honor, but the weeks of fear and nausea I have endured at the thought of giving this commencement address have made me lose weight. A win-win situation!”, “Delivering a commencement address is a great responsibility; or so I thought until I cast my mind back to my own graduation. The commencement speaker that day was the distinguished British philosopher, Baroness Mary Warnock. Reflecting on her speech has helped me enormously in writing this one, because it turns out that I can’t remember a single word she said. This liberating discovery enables me to proceed without any fear that I might inadvertently influence you to abandon promising careers in business, the law or politics for the giddy delights of becoming a gay wizard.” (Joanne Rowling, Harvard commencement speech)*

It is not only words that add to your speech colour and life. Certain **grammar structures** can also do the trick. They aim at emphasizing particular words in a sentence.

- INVERSION or sentences with the reversed word order, *e.g. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.” (Winston Churchill)*
- CLEFT SENTENCES *e.g. “And yet, it’s only been in the last couple of weeks that the discussion of race in this campaign has taken a particularly divisive turn” (Barack Obama)*
“What General Weygand has called the Battle of France is over... the Battle of Britain is about to begin.” (Winston Churchill)

Body Language and Intonation

Not only does it matter what you say in your speech, but also HOW you say it. You never get a second chance to make a first impression. From the very first glance the audience will be making assumptions about your confidence, credibility, common sense. While delivering a speech pay attention to the following

- BODY LANGUAGE, or posture and gestures.
 - Stand up straight
 - Smile

- Feel free to move around the stage (if you wish)
- EYE-CONTACT
 - Look at the people in the room. You don't have to establish eye-contact with each and every listener though. Never read from your notes unless you want your speech to be a trigger to sleep.
- INTONATION
 - Emphasize *focus words*.
 - Make impressive pauses.
 - Don't forget to breathe.
 - Speak clearly and confidently.

2. Holding a Round-Table Discussion.

Unlike a debate, a round-table discussion is a platform for a broad spectrum of opinion, which can be voiced and heard and thus clarify a situation, or help to find solutions to a problem. It is a blessing because everyone has a chance to participate in conversation, and, at the same time, it can be a curse for the very same reason: everyone has a chance to participate in conversation.

Stage 1: Prepare a Lead-In

Study some of the recent cases connected with the topic. Choose the one you would like to use in the lead-in as an introduction into the matter. The lead-in is down to the moderator, but the discussion stage is to be done as a group. Google Docs will come in handy when you need to share your findings with the other team members.

Each student is to contribute a case (find an article and bring it in class) to illustrate the topic of the round-table discussion. Discuss your findings in class.

Stage 2: Choose useful vocabulary

While preparing for the round table, you will be reading articles on the subject and watching related videos. Whenever you come across a word or a collocation related to the topic (within the topic of Political Correctness these could be words and phrases like *catcalling*, *blackface*, *blacklist vs deny list*, etc.), write it down in your useful vocabulary list. This is best done at Google Docs, where you group all of your findings in a table, as shown in the example below.

Name	Word/collocation	Definition	Example
Student 1			
Student2			

In order to have a clear understanding of when and how these new words and phrases can be used, please, consult the English language corpora online, following the links below. (A corpus is a compilation of authentic written and spoken language, which enables learners to trace patterns of grammar and vocabulary usage)

<https://corpus.byu.edu/>

<https://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>

Stage 3: Define perspectives for the discussion

At this stage, students do not assume roles yet, they rather speculate on the variety of opinions that could be voiced on the subject and do Internet and other media research.

It is better if the number of perspectives equals the number of attendees, which does not exclude the possibility of some of the speakers having points of convergence.

Report on your progress in class.

Stage 4: Assume roles and prepare for the role-play

Choose a public figure whose views you would like to present and prepare a set of arguments to support your stance. This task requires both analytical and critical thinking skills.

Prepare for your role with the help of the table below and upload the results to Google Docs

Student's name: Stance	Arguments	Facts / figures / examples
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

Stage 5: Role-play a round-table discussion in class

Chairperson:

DO	DON'T
Prepare thoroughly, study the positions of the speakers and think over the questions you are going to ask.	Take your role for granted - it's not a piece of cake.
Bear in mind the speakers' roles and direct your questions to them accordingly, so that they would be within the scope of a particular speaker. Think on your feet and be ready to improvise according to what is happening in the room.	Ask the participants randomly, without considering the speakers' roles or blindly follow the plan you have prepared beforehand
Direct the discussion and make sure it is lively. Ask questions in order to reveal clashes of ideas. You can choose to listen to opposing positions one right after the other.	Sit vacantly while the speakers present their opinions.

Be on top of it all: control the discussion, allow everyone to have a say. Try to find the right balance between lively and orderly.	Let the discussion turn into a mess when/if the tempers are rising.
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Speakers:

DO	DON'T
Prepare several arguments to substantiate your position. Get hold of facts, figures, or examples to go with each argument.	Beat about the bush or repeat the same argument over and over again.
Speak freely (better forget a word than read out from your notes).	Cling to your notes.
Be active listeners. Listen carefully to the other attendees and be ready to interact with them when the moment is appropriate.	Revise what you have prepared while other opinions are voiced.
Speak concisely and to the point.	Show everything you've learned on the topic down on the others.
React to what the others are saying - support the ideas you feel for and refute the ones you don't share. BUT Be polite!	Be afraid to show your emotions.

Everyone:

DO think about useful vocabulary in advance: better make up two glossaries, one based on the topic of the discussion, the other focusing on communicative patterns (agreeing, disagreeing, giving opinion and asking for opinion).

3. Guidelines on Verbal Jousts (One-to-one debates)

Debating may not be something that you encounter on a regular basis in your everyday life, but the skills you develop while debating are incredibly valuable, especially if your professional interests lie within the field of diplomacy. Debating encourages participants to structure both their thinking and speaking, construct compelling arguments, and be ready to substantiate whatever they claim. Moreover, if participants are allocated a position in a debate and they have to argue against their personal views, they learn to look at things from different angles and be tolerant to other opinions.

A verbal joust is a one-to-one debate which has the following procedure:

- The topic, which usually represents an idea/ policy/ strategy, etc., is chosen and announced in class. It is called a motion and is usually formulated as two opposing sentences e.g. *Public speaking skills can be developed and mastered to perfection/ The gift of public speaking is inborn.*
- A pair of students is allocated a motion, each student having to substantiate his/her position.
- Each speaker introduces the topic (with a few general sentences concerning the problem) and his/her position.
- The speakers in turn present several (two or three) constructive arguments, supporting each of them with facts/evidence/examples to substantiate their claim and rebut the opponent's arguments.
- The speakers **can** ask each other questions. They **don't have to** come to agreement.
- A one-to-one debate is supposed to last about 10 minutes.

- To conclude a debate you can choose one of these strategies:
 1. Thank each other for the discussion that helped you see the issue from a different perspective, but reaffirm your stance.
 2. Meet each other half way by making partial concessions and admitting certain strong points in your partner's arguments.
 3. Admit that your partner's position is stronger.

DO	DON'T
Prepare thoroughly in advance for both positions.	Falsify or manipulate facts.
Work out <u>a number of arguments</u> on both positions to keep them up your sleeve.	Cling to one and only argument or mistake another fact for another argument.
Attack the position, say "the idea is wrong."	Attack the opponent, or say "my opponent is wrong."
Use cautious language, e.g. <i>tend to</i> , <i>may/might/could</i> , <i>is likely to</i> , etc.	Exaggerate, especially using strong words, such as <i>always</i> or <i>never</i> .
Focus on the strong points of your position.	Disagree with facts or obvious truths for the mere sake of it.
Maintain eye-contact with the audience and the opposition.	Read from your notes. Never!

Useful Expressions

Expressing disagreement

I see what you mean but ...
 I see what you mean, but I do not think so
 I am not convinced ...
 I do see your point but ...
 I agree up to a point.
 I'm not at all convinced about that.
 I can't agree with you there.
 That's not how I see it.
 I beg to differ.
 I partially agree.
 It's very unlikely.
 I don't entirely agree.
 There may be some truth in what you are saying but...
 Let's look at it from another point of view/ from a different perspective.

Expressing opinion

If you ask me, ...
 As far as I am concerned ...
 It's obvious that...
 Nobody can deny that ...
 I reckon that ...
 To my way of thinking ...
 In my opinion ...
 In my view ...
 To my mind ...
 I am fairly sure ...

Admitting that you are mistaken

I must admit it is true/ I was wrong
 I hadn't thought of/ didn't think of

I suppose you are right

4. Guidelines on Making an Effective Presentation

A presentation, PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote, or whichever tool you opt for, is a very convenient, time-saving and effective way of getting a message across. It is a combination of a speaker's eloquence and visual aids that assists in communicating ideas; and ideas matter the most! There is hardly any point in making an academic presentation in order to merely inform, describe or give an insight into the history of an event, phenomenon, etc. Conversely, an analytical approach to the problem and an ability to critically assess information and forecast possible scenarios are more than welcome. Your personal input is an absolute must-have for a presentation!

While listening to the presentation the audience will be considering three main points

- content
- delivery
- visual effects

CONTENT

An academic presentation is the result of your research presented with the help of visual aids. Make an articulate, accurate and understandable CLAIM, provide REASONS to support and give EVIDENCE (facts, statistics, examples) to demonstrate that your reasons are sound ideas.

STRUCTURE

- Introduction (explains the choice of the topic and its relevance, provides an outline and a claim (states your position on the topic))
- Body (presents the reasons that support the claim, and evidence and statistics that give more weight to the reasoning)
- Conclusion (restates the main message and gives references to the sources used)

Make sure you start with a clear-cut outline, allowing the audience to see what is in store for them.

Pay attention to the transitions between the main points of your presentation. The mere switching of the slides is not enough; focus on lexical connections as well.

DELIVERY

Be confident, smile, and keep an eye-contact. Connect with the audience.

Keep a good posture, stand straight with your shoulders back. Resist the temptation to sit down to the computer as the minute you do so, you lose touch with the audience.

Keep to the time limit, speak no more than **10 minutes**.

VISUAL EFFECTS

Slides are visual prompts that only illustrate ideas, whereas the speaker is the main source of information. If slides are tastefully designed, contain appropriate pictures, cartoons, graphs, pies, or charts, and are not overloaded with text, they will help you get the message across and give your presentation a sophisticated and professional look.

- Combine textual and visual elements
- Keep text to a minimum (6-8 lines per slide)
- Use easy-to-read fonts Arial or Times New Roman
- Keep font size 24 or bigger
- Write in sentence fragments using key words
- Include graphs, charts, pies, cartoons in the slides to support your ideas
- Use eye-friendly colours for backgrounds

DO	DON'T
<p>Make an analytical presentation with a clear view of the problem/issue/phenomenon, etc. Begin with a thesis, support it with arguments. In developing the arguments, follow the formula "CLAIM – REASON(S) – EVIDENCE"</p>	<p>Make an exclusively informative, descriptive or entertaining presentation.</p>
<p>Introduce the outline at the very start of the presentation (slide 2, right after the cover slide), Announce the whole of it, then proceed to each point step by step.</p>	<p>Rush into telling about the ideas of the first point of your outline.</p>
<p>Engage the audience by asking questions, eliciting feedback, asking to vote by show of hands, etc. You can use some of the useful phrases below.</p>	<p>Be afraid to initiate communication with the audience.</p>
<p>Maintain eye-contact with the audience. Look at your fellow students - their friendly faces and responsive eyes will instill confidence in you.</p>	<p>Cling to your notes or look incessantly at the slides, or at your teacher alone.</p>
<p>Keep an eye on the balance between the number of slides and the time of your presentation.</p>	<p>Linger on one slide for more than 2 minutes.</p>
<p>Make lexical transitions between the slides. You may want to use some of the phrases below.</p>	<p>Make awkward pauses while silently switching the slides.</p>
<p>Design the slides elegantly, making sure the colours are eye-friendly and the words are readable. Present information with the help of pictures, cartoons, graphs or bullet points.</p>	<p>Use full extended sentences on the slides (Remember that slides are a prompt rather than the main source of information. It's the speaker that should steal the show!)</p>
<p>Make a powerful conclusion and thank the audience.</p>	<p>Finish by saying "That's all". It is an empty phrase that only ruins the impression.</p>

Useful Expressions

To begin a presentation

There are a number of points I'd like to make.

I'd like to begin/start by ...

Let's begin/start by ...

First of all, I'll...

... and then I'll go on to ...

e. g. *"I have decided to divide my presentation into three parts. In the first part I will give you an insight into... Then I will expand on/talk you through the reasons for/ problems in/ the trends in etc... In the final part of my presentation I will suggest the possible solutions to/ways out of/scenarios of, etc."*

To proceed to the next point

Then/ Next ...
Finally/ Lastly ...
Finishing a section
We've looked at...
So much for...
Starting a new section
Moving on now to ...
Turning to...
Let's turn now to ...
The next issue/topic/area I'd like to focus on
I'd like to expand/elaborate on ...
Now we'll move on to...
I'd like now to discuss...
Let's look now at...
Let's consider this in more detail...
The significance of this is...
A good example of this is...
As an illustration,..

To conclude a presentation

Right, let's sum up, shall we?
Let's summarise briefly what we've looked at...
If I can just sum up the main points...
Finally, let me remind you of some of the issues we've covered...
To conclude...
In conclusion ...
In short ...
So, to remind you of what I've covered in this talk, ...
Unfortunately, I seem to have run out of time, so I'll conclude very briefly by saying that
I'd like now to recap...

To engage the audience

Does anyone know who was the first...?
Raise your hand if you have ever...
Does anyone have any questions or comments?
Please feel free to ask questions.
If you would like me to elaborate on any point, please ask.