

AINGER AWARD BRIEFING NOTES

This competition concentrates on the **effective delivery of the spoken word**, with a lesser concentration on the **argument** presented, or **matter**. *"It is important to remember that effective public speaking is not just making yourself heard but making people listen."*

The audience responds to effective delivery when they feel **personally addressed and involved** by speakers who convey enthusiasm for their topic, conviction that it is important and interesting, and whose delivery results in attracting undivided attention. Maintaining eye-contact and using the full range of suitable gestures and voice to match the words and the message are essential ingredients. Above all they must be **themselves** rather than perform as actors. The aim is not to amass debating points nor to maximise the amount of material that can be covered in four minutes. Rather it is convincing an audience to listen, understand and remember the message.

Here are some guidelines for participants in the public speaking Award.

1. Speakers must choose their own topic **which should be based on fact**. It should be presented in a manner that will cause an audience to take a greater interest in a topic which may not appeal to them. In addition to the content, the speaker should use analogies, anecdotes and the music of the language to illustrate and enhance the delivery. The presentation should inform, interest and entertain. Take heed of Cicero's advice: *"Oft an argument of greater merit will be defeated by an argument of lesser merit, which is better presented."*
2. There is a time limit of 4 minutes.
3. **NOTES** (used discreetly) may be helpful. Remember **NOTES** are thought-starter headings. Thus do **NOT** work from a full script. Raise your notes rather than lower your eyes. Have your notes on **CARDS** - not larger than 20 x 15 cm. and written on one side only.
4. Speakers should establish and maintain, while speaking, eye-contact with their audience. This indicates you have mastered your subject.
5. **PLAN** your presentation - how much can you fit into 4 minutes. Usually the content is 120 words per minute, the rate which can be understood by an audience. (A common error is to cram too much into 4 minutes)
6. Pay strict attention to the **OPENING** and **CLOSING** - you need an attention-getting opening, and a very positive closing. Look for a more imaginative opening than "The subject of my talk tonight is".
7. How are you going to close your presentation?
8. It is preferable not to read or memorise a speech - rather use dot points on a card for spontaneity.
9. **FEEL ENTHUSIASTIC** about your topic - if you are enthusiastic, this will transmit to your audience.
10. Remember that this is not a "read your essay aloud" competition, but a chance for you to speak directly to and engage an audience.

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