

MY FIRST SPEECH 2025



Calling all Australian
students in years
10 to 12.

If all of Parliament
was listening,
what would you say?

Entries are now open!

Find out more at mfs.houseofrepresentatives.gov.au

The My First Speech competition is run by the Department of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Australia.



MY FIRST SPEECH

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How long should my speech be?

The written script of your first speech should be no more than 300 words in length.

2. What sort of issues should I talk about?

It is up to you but remember that as a Member of Parliament, you are representing the people in your electorate. For this reason, it would be a good idea to choose a topic that is of interest or concern to your community.

3. Is there anything I can't put in my speech?

Your speech must be all your own material. The script or subsequent video (taken if you are a winner and visit Parliament House) may be posted online for public viewing so, for your own protection, avoid mentioning your full name or providing any identifying information in your speech.

Your speech must be appropriate for a family audience therefore swearing, sexual content or hateful remarks will result in elimination.

4. Where can I find the first speeches of current or past Members of the House of Representatives?

Check out the Parliamentary Handbook on our website (<https://handbook.aph.gov.au/>), search for a Member, then scroll down to the 'Speeches' tab of their biography page. The 'First speech' link will take you to the Hansard entry for their first speech.

5. How is this year's competition different?

This year, you will not need to submit a video as your entry. We only require a written speech (300 words or less).

6. Will I still have to record a video?

If you are shortlisted, we may ask you to record a video of you presenting your speech for a second round of judging. If you are shortlisted, we will get in contact with detailed information about the submission of a video (including how to submit, tips for recording and any guidelines).

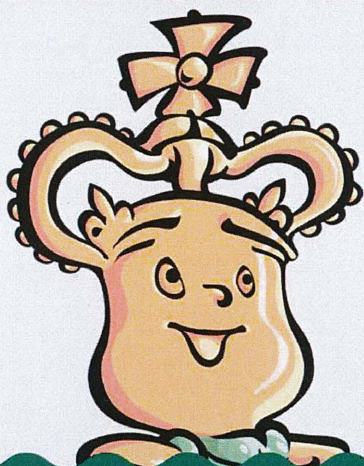
7. How do I submit my entry?

All submissions must be made through the online portal found on the My First Speech website (mfs.houseofrepresentatives.gov.au).

On the 'How to enter' page, you will see instructions on submitting your entry through the online portal.

8. Can I enter more than once?

No, there should only be one entry per person.



MY FIRST SPEECH

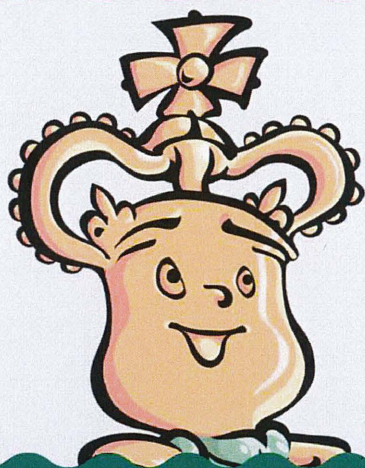
JUDGING CRITERIA

The following table is the criteria that the judges of the My First Speech competition will use to determine winning entrants.

Schools may wish to use these criteria to determine the best speeches to submit to the competition. Individuals may wish to consider these criteria when developing their speech.

CRITERIA		EVALUATION
Content (50%)		
Well-constructed arguments that engage the audience		/10
Demonstrated understanding of issues		/10
Original and creative ideas		/10
Demonstrated use of evidence and research		/10
Well-structured with an opening, body and conclusion		/10
Language (30%)		
Promotes clear understanding of the issues		/10
Language is kept simple and to the point		/10
Demonstrates respect and consideration of others and is appropriate to a broad audience		/10
Presentation and Organisation (20%)		
The entry feels like a finished, professional piece of work		/10
There has been effort made in the speech's creation		/10

The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



MY FIRST SPEECH

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

Keep it simple and have fun!

The My First Speech competition aims to raise awareness of the federal Parliament among young Australians by encouraging students to voice their opinions as if they were making their first speech in the House of Representatives.

The competition is open to Australian school students in years 10 to 12.



Get inspired

- Read transcripts and watch videos of first speeches by Members of the House of Representatives.
- Find out about current political issues through newspaper articles, radio news broadcasts, online news sites, forums and blogs.
- Look at famous, historical speeches from politicians and political figures from around the world.
- You can find speeches to everything you need to get inspired at:
mfs.houseofrepresentatives.gov.au



Write your speech

- Select your main topic and research it thoroughly.
- Decide on the point you want to make, what you want your audience to remember and make it the central theme of your speech.
- Your speech should be no longer than 300 words, or approximately 90 seconds when given verbally.
- After you have written a draft, read it out loud to see how it sounds.
- Refine your key points and stay on theme. You can even use repetition to drive home the message if you wish.

Judging criteria

Keep in mind how your entry will be judged. This year's criteria includes points for creativity, originality and presentation skills. Check out our Judging Criteria tip sheet for more details.



MY FIRST SPEECH

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Engage students with contemporary issues in politics, HASS or English.

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The competition is open to Australian school students in years 10 to 12.

Introducing the project

- Introduce the class to the My First Speech competition website.
- Explain the concept of a maiden speech delivered by a member of the House of Representatives.
- Initiate discussion by asking students: what makes a good speech?
- Ask students to discuss any big national issues that are important to them at the moment.
- You can find a range of useful resources such as videos and transcripts at:

mfs.houseofrepresentatives.gov.au

Learning outcomes

Students should have:

- Learned a key function of the Parliament is for elected representatives to debate and express ideas.
- Expressed their own opinions through discussion, speech-writing and oral presentation.
- Communicated an argument and explained their viewpoint.
- Engaged with, reflected on, and researched contemporary issues.
- Explored different ideas, opinions and beliefs about topical issues.

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Suggested activities

Activity 1: Debate

Set up the classroom to represent the House of Representatives. Ask the students to divide into two sections to debate a contemporary issue.

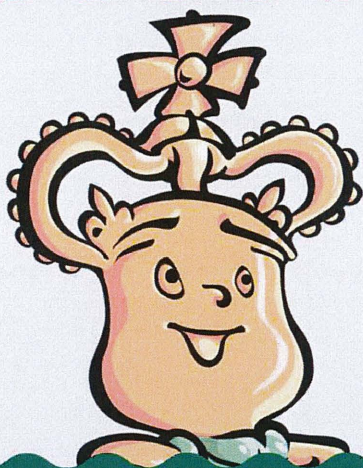
Activity 2: Identifying issues

Ask the class to work in groups of 5 or less to brainstorm issues in Australian society. Each group should identify:

- Why the problem exists
- Who is affected
- Who or what is responsible
- What solutions are there

Activity 3: Your local member

Find out the person who represents your electorate in the House of Representatives. Look up their first speech in the Parliament in Hansard. Discuss extracts from their speech with the class – do students agree or disagree with the issues that have been raised?



MY FIRST SPEECH

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. The purpose of the My First Speech competition is to raise awareness of the federal Parliament among young Australians by encouraging students to voice their opinions as if they were making their first speech in the House of Representatives.
2. The My First Speech competition opens 9am AEST Monday 28 July 2025 and closes 5pm AEST Friday 5 September 2025.
3. By entering the My First Speech competition the entrant agrees that copyright of their entry becomes the property of the Parliament and that the Parliament reserves the right to use, reproduce, adapt and exhibit the video at Australian Parliament House and online on the Parliament's websites.
4. Any person under 18 years old must have a parent or guardian's permission.
5. There is no cost to submit an entry into the My First Speech competition.
6. Each entry must be submitted in digital format via the online entry portal on the My First Speech website.
7. By entering the My First Speech competition the participant warrants that its entry is original work.
8. Entries must not include any material offensive to any specific racial, gender, religious, sexual or other group or contain swearing, slurs or sexual suggestions. Any entries deemed inappropriate will not be eligible for the competition.
9. Entries should be appropriate to a broad audience and demonstrate respect and consideration of others.
10. Entries must not contain any material (music, logos, text etc) that infringes the copyright of any third party.
11. The competition will be judged by a panel of professionals, which will include Members of Parliament and parliamentary officers.
12. The decisions of the judges are final and no correspondence will be entered into.
13. In the event that the entrant is awarded a prize, the person named as the entrant on the entry form will be the sole recipient of said prize. Prizes are not negotiable or transferable.
14. The entry must be no longer than 300 words, entries over 300 words will be disqualified.
15. The participant should make copies of their entry.
16. Winning entrants will be notified by phone. Winners will also be published on the Parliament's websites.
17. The Parliament manages information collected from entrants in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988. Personal information submitted by the entrant will be stored at the Parliament and only be used to notify winners and identify the creator and school of the entry.
18. Entrants that breach the Terms and Conditions are subject to disqualification.