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### **Celebrating 50 years: A special offer for Leadership examinations.**

As part of Speech New Zealand's celebration of 50 years helping our nation to communicate we are making a special promotional offer on our Leadership examinations – for both levels. Speech New Zealand has seen a large growth in this syllabus in schools and would like to promote the value of understanding the skills involved and in speaking in Leadership in all schools.

- Enter 5 students – and you receive a free copy of our Communicating in Leadership resource booklet.
- Enter 10 students – and you receive a free copy of our Communicating in Leadership resource booklet – AND – 1 free entry.
- For every 10 students thereafter you will receive one free entry.

This offer is effective from now until the end of Term2 in 2015.

The Communicating in Leadership resource booklet is valued at \$25 and contains invaluable teaching points to assist you in working with both the Introductory Leadership and the more senior Leadership examination.

The free entry can be used to reduce the cost of entry to other students or maybe to encourage a student who is less able to pay for the exam entry.

You might also use this as a promotional tool to help you get more teaching within a school environment.

### **Contributions for our special edition September ClipBoard:**

If you have a special memory relating to Speech New Zealand, or a student with a particular success story relating to Speech New Zealand, please send them through the office or direct to our Editor Margriet Theron: [theronm@yahoo.com](mailto:theronm@yahoo.com) by 31<sup>st</sup> July. We would love to be able to include these in this special edition.

Celebrations aside, the work of Speech New Zealand goes on for all of us. We continue to welcome your queries on aspects of teaching and our syllabuses. The following article arises from these.

## **Choosing Contrasting Poems for Grade 7:**

The requirement for Module 1 in Grade 7 Speech and Drama is to 'Speak from memory two poems of contrasting style'. Poems today do not necessarily fall into the obvious 'lyric' or 'narrative' category of old.

A poem, such as *For Heidi with Blue Hair* by Fleur Adcock cannot readily be fitted into a neat little slot. Adcock's poem could be said to be lyric because it talks about the poet's thoughts or feelings on a subject, however, it also has elements of narrative/storytelling. As teachers we may often ponder over the genre/style/form of a poem. What is important is that students learn the different approaches needed to speak each style and can explain these in discussion as they relate to the poems spoken in Section 1.

The following all require different approaches in the speaking:

Lyric; narrative; sonnet; ballad; metrical verse; free verse: serious; humorous; dramatic narrative; satirical; poems from different cultures, countries, periods etc.

The key aspect is that, in preparation for discussion in an examination, you and your students identify the contrasting features of the poems being presented and that students can readily discuss those features and what is required in speaking them. Perhaps in working with students it would be useful to explore some very obvious differences or some extremes and then look at the more subtle contrasts.

Certainly it is helpful to guide your students to choose poems where they can readily define and explain or justify those differences for their examiner.

## **Syllabus clarification: G7 Mod 3 Com Sp & Dr**

Just to clarify Section 1 in this module contains:

EITHER a 5 minute talk AND a 5 minute story

OR a thematic study programme of 10 minutes.

## **Plays at Grade 7 & 8:**

We have had some queries about whether a book may be used as a source for characterisations at Grade 7 and Grade 8. We also have queries from time to time about the use of, say, a comedy sketch by Rowan Atkinson. It is important that you, as teachers, understand the reason for this requirement for a 'play'.

If we look at the syllabus and the way it is developed you will be able to see why this is:

From Grade 5 upwards candidates learn to ‘communicate, analyse and synthesise ideas through drama’. The important learning is in that analysis and in drawing all the threads together to create a meaningful characterisation.

- Students are beginning to research and understand how a play is put together along with an understanding of the context of the extract being performed. This is the beginning of a more involved study of drama as literature.
- Students are also learning and developing more specific acting skills including those involved in preparing for a characterisation. This latter involves reading the text to answer questions about who they are as a character, that character’s relationships with others and their specific intentions within a scene.

From the above it can be seen why Speech New Zealand, in stair-casing the development of your students through the Grades towards Diplomas, calls for a deepening study of **plays as literature** and requires a study of acting skills that enables them to build on their own abilities and have a life-long appreciation of theatre.

With changes in the school curriculum many students are now unable to develop this understanding through English within schools – unless they are also taking drama as a subject.

Speech NZ does allow a characterisation to be taken from a novel up to and including Grade 6, however at Grades 7 and 8 we specifically require the study of a whole play. These are senior examinations and the candidate needs to be able to discuss characterisation and techniques, such as understanding the super-objective in the play. Speech NZ is seeking to develop in candidates the ability to ‘read’ a play for text clues in order to develop characterisations for themselves.

Do note the two definitions of Characterisation below:

**Characterisation:** A role from a drama. (Usually scripted from a play or novel – please note specific criteria for senior levels.)                      Glossary: SNZ Speech and Drama Syllabus 2012

**Characterisation:** The process whereby an actor creates a character, and the methods used by actor and writer to communicate this to an audience. The Batsford Dictionary of Drama’ by Terry Hodgson. *This also refers to C. Stanislavski, ‘Building a Character’, Theatre Arts, NY 1949.*

Certainly ‘sketches’ and comedic pieces can be invaluable in teaching and exploring a wide range of acting techniques and styles of stage presentation. They can also be a wonderful means of engaging students in aspects of theatre. Many students can recall whole screeds of Monty Python sketches and these can be usefully harnessed to teach elements of comic timing and use of physicality and vocal techniques.

Similarly in teaching aspects of voice, in addition to specific exercises, we may use a wide range of materials from nursery rhymes, ditties and gibberish to humorous and lyric verse to

Shakespeare: whatever is appropriate to engage our students and extend their knowledge and their ability.

Speech NZ want to enable teachers to help their students to develop and build a wide range of acting skills and to learn to communicate with an audience through the drama.

## **Visual Aids and Audiences:**

Recently we had some queries about audiences and visual aids:

**The first, on an audience for Grade 4 instructional talk** – is it possible to give an informal talk instructing in elements of water-skiing to a peer group of ‘mates’?

The problem in actually talking to a group of ‘mates’ is this would more than likely end up being highly informal and not really a talk at all!! It would be difficult to approach it in a way that would fit the criteria. For a talk such as this Speech New Zealand would suggest the student talks to a small group at school (still peers) who are about to go for an excursion to a Lake to water-ski. That way a degree of formality can be retained to fit the learning outcomes.

**The second was a query about the need for a visual aid for Grade 7 Module 3 Literature.**

Visual aids are not compulsory. However, as noted in the syllabus glossary, visual aids are encouraged throughout our syllabus. These can take a variety of forms, and if used it would be expected that they are neat, clear, prepared for the audience’s benefit and become an integral part of the talk. Although not specifically mentioned for this module, all Learning Outcomes for each section build on the skills developed from previous grade examinations. You may also have noted the emphasis on specifying an audience for talks from Grade 2 onwards.

As you will know Speech New Zealand advocates an extemporaneous style of speaking and in order to develop this we also encourage the use of charts of various kinds to help the speaker connect more directly with their chosen audience. Particularly at Grade 7, Module 3 Literature, if a student considers the needs of her/his audience to take in the relatively complex ideas involved in sharing information on a poet, a group of poets or a genre of poetry, then a visual aid will indeed help that audience to take in key information. Incidentally, that same visual aid will assist the speaker to share ideas naturally without feeling the need to memorise a specific wording, they can speak to the ideas in their own words in a fluent logically developed manner. Turning the page on, say, a flip chart also encourages the speaker to use pauses and links which further enhance the audience’s ability to absorb ideas. Some students do use power point, although they are then totally responsible for arranging the electronic equipment required. In this case it is also important that they have a back-up plan in case of any technical problems.

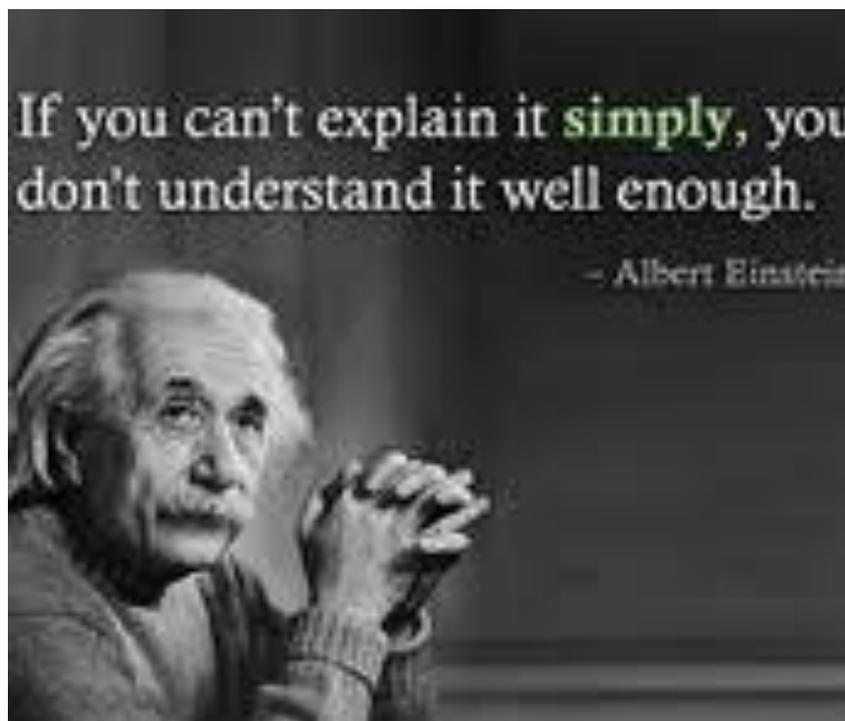
“For the speaker to connect in conveying a message, the audience must be brought into equal focus with the presenter’s objectives. This means learning to view yourself, as the speaker, and your message through the eyes of the audience.”

<http://www.speechnz.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/EXTEMPORANEOUS-SPEAKING.pdf>

Do explore [www.speechnz.co.nz](http://www.speechnz.co.nz) for further resources to use in teaching towards our syllabuses.

Be aware too, that if you order books from Amazon or Fishpond through the icons on the front page of our website, then you are also supporting Speech New Zealand.

And finally a useful maxim for both teachers and students to bear in mind!!!!



Have a stimulating Term Two.

*Pam*

P.S. You may enjoy viewing this Yankovic 'Word Crimes' video on youtube.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=8Gv0H-vPoDc>