

TIPS ON PREPARING A GREAT GRADUATION SPEECH

Here are some tips to help you prepare a GREAT graduation speech that has the best chance of being selected by the committee:

- **PLAN AHEAD AND MEET THE DEADLINE!** Begin writing your speech well in advance of the deadline; you'll want to leave plenty of time to write a draft, run it by someone (a teacher? a counselor? a parent?), rewrite it, and practice delivering it. Start thinking about your speech NOW!
- **FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES SET BY THE COMMITTEE!** Please keep your speech no longer than three minutes. If it is much longer or much shorter, it is less likely to be chosen.
- **KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE!** Think about who is in the crowd at graduation. Sure, your friends are there—but so are everyone's parents, grandparents, sisters and brothers, and members of the community. Graduation is a formal ceremony where the community gathers to celebrate and honor you! Your speech will have the best chance of being selected if it is appropriate and interesting for ANYONE who might be in the audience.
- **MAKE YOUR SPEECH PERSONAL . . . BUT UNIVERSAL TOO!** Your graduation speech should come from your heart, so it will definitely be about YOU! But you have the best chance of being chosen if your message is one that many people will relate to and understand.
- **PLEASE AVOID CLICHÉS!** Your speech has a better shot if it is not filled with phrases that we've all heard over and over again. Make it fresh! Make it you!
- **BE ORIGINAL AND CREATIVE . . . BUT KNOW THAT SOME SUBJECTS JUST WON'T FLY!** A graduation speech that has inappropriate language, that is about your relationship with your boyfriend or girlfriend, that is extremely negative or depressing, or that is wildly off the topic of graduation/education/your future is unlikely to be chosen.

If your speech is selected, you will be assigned (or be able to choose) a faculty advisor who will practice with you so that your delivery is perfect on graduation day!

So have fun with your graduation speech. Prepare something that will delight your friends, relatives, teachers and staff, and community members. And don't forget, if your speech isn't chosen for graduation, consider trying out for Senior Farewell; that's another great opportunity to express yourself!