Writing speeches:

Introducing a guest speaker

Your school has invited someone to speak during the school assembly, and you have been asked to give a speech introducing the guest speaker. Write the speech, with the following points in mind.

- Who the person is
- What his/her achievements are
- What topic he/she will be talking about
- Why he/she has the credentials for the talk

You are to address the speech to a school of students, so be sure not to be overly formal. You may begin as follows:

Ladies and gentlemen. I'm very pleased to introduce a very special guest.....

Features of a speech

1) Should we use formal or informal language in an introduction speech?
It depends on the audience. You have to know your audience

If you are speaking to a group of school students, you should not be overly formal. A touch of informality with the use of contractions:

- I'm very pleased.
- Let's give Mr Ang a round of applause

This helps to tone down the seriousness of the occasion and helps both the speaker and the audience to relax.

2)Variety of sentence structures:

- Avoid overly long and complex sentence structures.
- Short and simple sentences help to convey a speech message more effectively.

Readers can always go back to a written text to re-read a sentence if he/she doesn't get the idea on the first reading. But if your audience misses what you say the first time, the cannot"rewind" your message; and if they cannot understand what you say most of the time, their attention may wander, and you may be left standing, talking to no one in particular. This does not mean. however that you should avoid long sentences altogether.

- Using long sentences to pave the way for a short sentence can give your speech a strong impact.

3) How to write a good introduction

- The occasional anecdote gives a slice of interesting news about your guest speaker is a good start to an introduction. Your guest speaker will appreciate the complimentary gesture, and your audience will look forward to the speech.