Valedictorian speeches fall under the category of “special occasion” speeches. As such, they are more formal in tone and diction than other speeches, and strive to underline the values and emotions of the audience. In short, the speaker speaks about what he or she believes are the most important sentiments of the graduating class. A valedictorian must show the evaluators that he or she has mastered the basic components of speech design and delivery. Valedictory speeches are intended to be individual submissions.

Signs of a good speech design

- The audience should be able to follow the speech without ANY sense of confusion.
- The audience should know that the speaker has moved from the introduction to the main body of the speech, and from the main body to the conclusion.
- The audience should know which point the speaker is making based on solid transition words, e.g., “first”, “next”, etc.
- The audience should feel that the speech has been appropriate and satisfied the needs of the occasion.

Signs of a good speech delivery

- Energized, inspirational voice
- Regular and direct eye contact
- No distracting hand or body movement
- Sufficient projection of the voice

Evaluation rubric

Written statement /3
Achievements +1 (bonus only)
Presentation /3
Content /3
Thoroughness of application (draft supplied by deadline, etc.) -1 (deduction only)
SPEECH CRITIQUE FORM

2017

Speaker: ____________________________  Topic: ____________________________
Ceremony (AM/PM): __________________  Speech Length: ________________

CRITERIA

Design /3

Introduction
• gained attention and interest
• previewed topic
• demonstrated importance of topic

Body
• main ideas clearly presented
• relationship of ideas clear to audience
• effective transitions
• use of data or other relevant, illuminating content

Conclusion
• provided summary/clear signal speech was closing
• memorable statement

Language
• appropriate
• interesting

Purpose
• purpose was clear
• subject was appropriate to this audience

Authenticity/Originality
• Point of view or “take” on topic is highly original
• presentation and presence are genuine, personal, and allow her/his personality to come through

Delivery /3

Voice
• conversational manner
• loudness
• articulation

Other Nonverbal Factors
• use of notes
• posture
• movement and gestures
• eye contact

Written Statement /3  Bonus Deduction +1/-1  Total: /9