

Political Speeches: The “A Man Who” Speech

At every convention, before the nominated candidate gives his acceptance speech, he or she is introduced. The introductory speech has three functions:

1. To grab the audience’s attention.
2. To describe and praise the person being introduced.
3. To get the audience excited and cheering.

Read the introductory speeches delivered at the Democratic and Republican conventions in 2004.

Max Cleland’s introduction of John Kerry: <http://tinyurl.com/6fpknt>

George Pataki’s introduction of George Bush: <http://tinyurl.com/5vjfoo>

Why is this speech sometimes called the “A Man Who” speech? Because the phrase “a man who” often appears in the speech. Look at this example of an introductory speech:

“Ladies and gentlemen, our country is in a terrible situation and we need help! Only a truly great person can save us from the problems that we have! I stand here to introduce a man who has been an inspiration to this country for many years. He is a man who has proven himself to be an honest, faithful, hard-working leader. A man who will challenge, thrill, and delight you. A man who will lead you into the next four years of happiness and joy. Please join me in giving a warm welcome to the next President of the United States, Joe Jones!”

Of course, if the candidate is a woman, this becomes the “A Woman Who” speech. A good introductory speech can get the audience screaming and yelling, so that when the candidate comes onto the stage, they’re all ready to listen to what he or she has to say.

Assignment

1. Write down two problems that you see in the world, that you intend to fix as President. These can be big or small.
2. Write down two things about yourself that are amazing and great, that will qualify you to be the President.
3. Create a introductory speech for yourself in five sentences. The first two sentences should get the audience’s attention by describing the problems they are having. The second two sentences should praise you and tell good things about you. The last sentence should invite the audience to cheer for you as you come on stage.
4. Have your home teacher read the introduction and then burst into the room to thunderous applause.