



Speakers' Corner

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Read the speech [Equal Rights For Women](#) before listening to the program.

A. Listening Comprehension

1. Who was Shirley Chisholm?
 - a. The first Asian American elected to the US Senate
 - b. The first woman elected to the American Congress
 - c. The first African American woman elected to the United states Congress
2. When did she serve her office?
From 19____ to 19____
3. In 1972 Chisholm did something spectacular. What did she do?
 - a. She was the first woman to run for the presidency of the United States
 - b. She was the first African American to run for the presidency of the United States
 - c. She was the first Asian American to run for the vice presidency in the United States
4. What was her profession before she became a politician?
 - a. A secretary
 - b. A preacher
 - c. A teacher



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5. What is she talking about in her speech?
 - a. Equal rights for coloured people
 - b. Equal rights for poor people
 - c. Equal rights for women

6. What does she say about the arguments of the opposition to her point of view?
That their arguments are _____ and _____.

7. Amina Jamil of the Debating Society talks about knowing that her audience is listening to her speech. How does she say she knows they are listening?

8. What parts of a speech are most important, according to Nick Turnbull?

9. A good way to start a speech is to use
 - a. A song
 - b. A quote
 - c. An image

10. How long before Barack Obama became President of the United States did Shirley Chisholm die?

Key to Listening Comprehension:

- 1.c
- 2.1969 – 1982
- 3.a and b
- 4.c
- 5.c
- 6.ridiculous and silly, non-sensical and not worth thinking about
- 7.they are nodding (in agreement), they are shaking their heads if they disagree, they are looking at you, they don't zone-out, write little notes, daydream or look at the time, there is no whispering
- 8.the start and the finish
- 9.c
10. 4 years



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B. Further materials and links for inspiration and themes

- Women's Rights

Shirley Chisholm in Women's Hall of Fame:

<http://www.greatwomen.org/component/fabrik/details/2/38>

About Shirley Chisholm's Campaign in 1972

<http://www.jofreeman.com/polhistory/chisholm.htm>

<http://www.shirleychisholm.org/index.php/chisholm-72-documentary>

Speeches by Chisholm

<http://shirleychisholm.org/index.php/educational-resources/74-speeches>

Interview with Shirley Chisholm

<http://www.visionaryproject.org/chisholmshirley/>

From the film Chisholm '72 Unbought & Unbossed by Shola Lynch

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU0jtxf7-vo>

Interview about the the film Chisholm '72 Unbought & Unbossed with director Shola Lynch

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USftsSF9KPI&feature=related>

C. Rhetoric

Ridiculing or discrediting the opponent and his/her arguments is a rhetorical device or technique called *Poisoning the Well*. This technique uses negative emotions to distract the audience from the actual evidence and arguments of the opposition in a debate. In general, *to poison the well* means to pre-provide information that could produce a biased opinion of the reasoning, positive *or* negative of an opponent.

It can be done in different ways. A subtle way of *poisoning the well* would be to use particular adjectives in introducing something that would influence people who are about to hear an argument. In a more blatant way, someone can make an outright personal attack in an introduction.

This sort of "reasoning" is obviously fallacious. The person making such an attack is hoping that the unfavourable information will influence listeners against the person in question so that they will reject any claims he might make. However, just presenting unfavourable information about a person (even if it is true) hardly counts as evidence against the claims he/she might make. In other words, using this technique is not very honourable – it is a kind of cheating. It seems to be used quite frequently in politics.



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The following examples clearly show that this sort of "reasoning" is quite poor:

- "CITY COUNCILMAN: The Mayor's a very good talker. Yes, talk he can do . . . and do very well. But when it comes time for action, that's a different matter."

How can the mayor respond? If he remains silent, he runs the risk of appearing to accept the councilman's criticisms. But if he stands up and defends himself, then he is talking; and the more he talks, the more he appears to be confirming the accusations. The well has been poisoned, and the mayor is in a difficult position."
(Robert J. Gula, *Nonsense*. Axios, 2007)

- "The recent attacks by Republican leaders and their ideological fellow-travellers on the effort to reform the health-care system have been so misleading, so disingenuous, that they could only spring from a cynical effort to gain partisan political advantage. By **poisoning the political well**, they've given up any pretence of being the loyal opposition. They've become political terrorists, willing to say or do anything to prevent the country from reaching a consensus on one of its most serious domestic problems."
(Steven Pearlstein, "Republicans Propagating Falsehoods in Attacks on Health-Care Reform."
The Washington Post, Aug. 7, 2009)

D. Discuss/Debate

In a debate, try to anticipate what your opponent is going to say and use *poisoning the well* to move the audience against (or for) your opponent before he/she has delivered his/her argument! (Divide the class into groups and decide what groups should argue for and what groups should argue against a motion.) Also think about how important the beginning and the end of a speech and/or argument is!

Discuss for instance the following motions:

- a. Women are not as good at politics, economy and science as men.
- b. Everyone has an equal chance in today's society.
- c. Sweden should have a president instead of a king.



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Lgr11 and Speakers' Corner

In Lgr11 it is said that:

Teaching of English should aim at helping the pupils to develop knowledge of the English language and of the areas and contexts where English is used, and also pupils' confidence in their ability to use the language in different situations and for different purposes.

It is further pointed out that the teaching of English: ... *should essentially give pupils the opportunities to develop their ability to:*

- *understand and interpret the content of spoken English and in different types of texts,*
- *express themselves and communicate in speech and writing,*
- *use language strategies to understand and make themselves understood,*
- *adapt language for different purposes, recipients and contexts, and*
- *reflect over living conditions, social and cultural phenomena in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used.*

Basically all of the above points are touched upon in "Speaker's Corner". Part A is a listening comprehension for the pupils to hear conversational English as well as English in more formal speeches. In part B they have a chance to learn about and reflect on living conditions as well as social and cultural phenomena today and in history, in England and the USA. In part C the pupils will get tips and framework for giving a speech and arguing an opinion and thereby adapting the language for the purpose and the audience. In part D they practice trying to convince an audience of their views or ideas.

Thereby also some of the points of the *Content of Communication* are covered. For instance:

In years 7–9

Content of communication

- *Interests, daily situations, activities, sequences of events, relations and ethical questions.*
- *Views, experiences, feelings and future plans.*
- *Living conditions, traditions, social relations and cultural phenomena in various contexts and areas where English is used.*

Listening and reading – reception

- *Spoken English and texts from various media.*
- *Spoken English with some regional and social variants.*
- *Oral and written instructions and descriptions.*
- *Different types of conversations, dialogues, interviews and oral communications.*
- *Oral and written information, as well as discussions and argumentation for different purposes, such as news, reports and newspaper articles.*
- *How texts and spoken language can be varied for different purposes and contexts.*



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Speaking, writing and discussing – production and interaction

- Different ways of working on personal communications to vary, clarify, specify and adapt them for different purposes.
- Conversations, discussions and argumentation.
- Language strategies to understand and be understood when language skills are lacking, such as reformulations, questions and explanations.
- Language phenomena to clarify, vary and enrich communication such as pronunciation, intonation and fixed language expressions, grammatical structures and sentence structures.

When working with the materials in *Speaker's Corner* the pupils are given the possibility to reach the knowledge requirements for E (or higher) according to the following specification in Lgr11:

Knowledge requirements for grade E at the end of year 9

*Pupils can understand **the main content and basic details** in English spoken at a moderate pace and in basic texts in various genres. Pupils show their understanding by presenting an **overview** with discussion and comments on content and details and also with **acceptable** results act on the basis of the message and instructions in the content.*

*In oral and written production, pupils can express themselves **simply, understandably and relatively coherently**. To clarify and vary their communication, pupils can work on and make **simple** improvements to their communications. In oral and written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves **simply and understandably** and also **to some extent** adapted to purpose, recipient and situation. In addition, pupils can choose and apply **basically functional** strategies which **to some extent** solve problems and improve their interaction.*

*Pupils discuss **in overall terms** some phenomena in different contexts and areas where English is used, and can also make **simple** comparisons with their own experiences and knowledge.*