“How To” @ Home for Mom & Dad

Activity 2: Ringmaster’s Welcome to the Circus speech

In Brief: Write and record an exciting welcome speech for your circus audience.

Objectives: Oral presentation and emotional expression skills will be emphasized. Older children will be able to organize, connect and write clear paragraphs. Mindmapping is introduced as a means of presentation planning and organization.

Background: What is more thrilling and exciting than a welcome speech at the circus?! The ringmaster welcomes you to new world and gives a preview of the show. The welcome speech piques curiosity and makes the audience shiver with anticipation and excitement.

Materials: Paper, pen, computer or phone with an audio recorder/voice memos.

Preparation: Research and view a few examples of ringmasters’ speeches and talk about their purpose (how do you feel when you listen/look at them? What aspects of the speeches make you feel this way? What techniques do the different ringmasters have in common?). Use a Mindmap (see resources) to make notes of essential elements: key words, phrases, gestures, costume, props and content (beginning, middle & end).

Focus: The mission of the ringmaster is to connect with the audience and get them excited for the coming show with a speech that is less than two to three minutes long. Words must be chosen carefully! **Younger children can just do the oral presentation and not the written speech.**

With/for your Child: **Get Ready!** Review the Brainstorming Packet for Topic #2.

**Step 1. Write your speech in 3 paragraphs.** Put the Mindmap notes of your welcome speech research on a wall in front of you when you work on your speech. The written speech will be organized in three paragraphs:

1. Welcome everyone. Greet the audience with enthusiasm!
2. Name the main performers and the acts that are in the show. **Tip: you can use the nicknames and performances you used on your circus poster.**
3. Thank the audience for their presence, share a few wishes/hopes for them during the show and introduce the first performer.

**Step 2. Create oral presentation that is emotionally engaging.** In addition to word choice, a presentation includes voice quality, eye contact, timing, costume and gestures. Posting your written speech on the wall while standing to practice helps in both writing and performing. A mirror helps to guide
eye contact and gesture. Practice saying your words aloud to help you emotionally connect with the audience and the organization of your words.

**Step 3. Practice your speech before final recording!**

**Reflect:** Record your reflections on page 6 of your Brainstorming Packet.

**Extensions:** Consider drama and acting community connections.

**RESOURCES**

**Websites:**

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJb_KrFcdKc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJb_KrFcdKc) - circus video
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAT8gCeTF5g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAT8gCeTF5g) - 5 tips for ringmaster
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qes3WzNTMiI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qes3WzNTMiI) - Jerry Siggins ringmaster example
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCQM6fFGMPE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCQM6fFGMPE) - Watch the ringmaster’s speech from *Dumbo.*
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGyv6kgG-Qo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGyv6kgG-Qo) - Be a ringmaster (Circus Arts Conservatory)

**Mind Mapping Ring Master’s Welcome Speech**

Your first Mindmap lists key elements of a speech that you discover in your research on ringmaster speeches. A second Mindmap can then include your own specific content and information about your circus acts. Add notes for oral presentation including **key words, voice quality, gestures, costumes, props, pacing, etc.**
Tip: You can watch speeches you liked one more time to get inspiration from your favorite ringmaster(s). Before you record yourself, think about your breathing. Reading aloud and public speaking can be stressful sometimes. Do a few breathing exercises before you start to relax your mind and body (see below).

Follow up and Extensions: Time to act! If you are fond of visual arts, drama, acting... it is your chance to make a video recording of your speech. Here are two options:
1. Think about the best way to bring your speech to life: what should the ringmaster wear? Do you want to record inside or outside? What props should the ringmaster have? Should you use music? If so, what kind?
2. You can do activities 3 and 4 before you imagine the setting for the ringmaster’s speech. In Circus Activity 3, you will learn how to make a vision board to bring your ideas to life. In Circus Activity 4, you will learn about face painting that helps you create a face painting for the ringmaster before you record your video.

Reflections:
Now that your speech is done, think about how it sounds to an audience. Voice quality, pacing, intonations and other element that help to bring your speech to life. How does the audience hearing it feel?
Tip: The circus is comprised of many different “characters” that create the show: clowns, dancers, magicians, etc. The Ringmaster is very very important character that gets the audience ready for the Greatest Show On Earth!

Tips for Giving a Speech.
**Tummy Breathing**

Lie on the floor and place a small stuffed animal on your stomach. Breathe in deeply though your nose and feel the stuffed animal rise, and then feel it lower as you slowly exhale through your mouth. Rock the stuffed animal to sleep using the rise and fall of your stomach.

**Elephant Breathing**

Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant’s trunk. As you breathe in deeply through your nose, raise your arms up high above your head. Then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.