**Voice over:** The Plain English Speaking Award is a public-speaking competition open to all Australian secondary students aged 15-18 years. This includes all Secondary, Technical and Further Education Colleges, as well as home-schooled students.

Students are asked to present a speech to their peers in plain English about on a topic of their choice that they’re passionate about.

**Cree Oliviera:** The great thing about Plain English competition is that you can speak on any top that you can choose so there’s always a really interesting variety of topics.

Is also interesting insights into the kind of person that chooses to the talk about that thing.

**Terry Kenos:** It's exciting when you actually get the opportunity to talk about something that you care about any action given a platform we can research and have an audience is there to listen to you to talk about something is moving you would differently you might have had a chance to talk about before.

**Mary-Rose McLaren:** You know, when you’re adjudicating you do hear some sort of topics repeated over understandable. What stands out is when something is a different spin on something when you come up with a completely new idea.

**Cree Oliviera:** People can take that opportunity of all the topics that are out in front of you and really go for something left of centre and talk about really talk about something different and interesting and lighthearted.

**Ellie Jamonts: I**f they can bring a fresh perspective to it, then bringing a fresh perspective to tired speech topic is actually more impressive than finding some niche before but what they do it is what matters not necessarily the topic they choose.

**Voiceover:** Their prepared speeches at six minutes regional and semi-in eight minutes per state and national. Students are then presented with an impromptu topic for which they have four minutes to prepare a three minute speech.

**Fergus Dale:** The impromptu is a really interesting because everyone gets the same topic does really widely different responses. It really just show what they are passionate about and their personality.

**Ellie Jamonts:** To be able to think on your feet, not only think on your feet, but rationally and back it up – to have structure - to be able to do that without any preparation is hard and takes a lot of practice.

I think by doing that with PESA that’s probably the greatest skill I've learnt.

**Voiceover:** The most important criteria is the effective use of plain English. Speeches are then judged on their preparation, subject matter, structure and delivery.

**Mary-Rose McLaren:** The capacity to speak in plain English is not as common as you would think. And to have students focus on communicating ideas clearly and concisely, unpacking an idea clearly and concisely, is really important.

**Terry Kenos:** We are not looking for an Oscar performance from an actor. I think those skills are something quite different. We are really looking for the plain use of the word, I gues, their very intention of the language to convey a message.

**Ellie Jamonts:** For my style of speaking of Plan English Speaking Award is casual and it’s natural, and it’s simple and it’s not overcomplicated. So for me, I think it let me just be myself and be really natural and that’s an amazing advantage that it has.

**Voiceover:** Competitions begin at a regional level across Victoria before students progress to a semi-final, then state and national final. The winner of the national final each year is awarded a trip to London to compete in the International Public Speaking Competition.

**Luke Macaronas:** When you go to an international competition. There are so many people from so many different walks of life that me being Australian was nothing out of the ordinary. And that was really powerful because I felt like I was welcomed and felt part of this group of people regardless of nationality who were working together

**Mary-Rose McLaren:** Those skills around how you communicate targeting your audience, thinking rigorously, you know, they are lifelong skills that transfer to so many things.