



# Resolved: Negroes should be admitted to state universities

**EXPLORE**

• **Speech:** *Negroes should be admitted to state universities*

■ **WARM UP**

1 Have you ever spoken in public? Maybe in front of your classmates? How did you feel? Choose the most appropriate adjective (you can choose more than one).

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|--|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> nervous     | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> self-confident |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> excited     | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> terrified      |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> embarrassed |   |

According to most studies, **public speaking** is people’s number one fear. Number two is death. So, as the American actor and comedian Jerry Seinfeld once put it, “That means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you’re better off in a casket than doing the eulogy”.

**Public speaking** is considered as one of the most **important** forms of communications. It allows us to form connections, influence decisions, and motivate change. Without communication skills, the ability to progress in life would be nearly impossible.

But if public speaking is one of your worst fears, here are some tips for you:

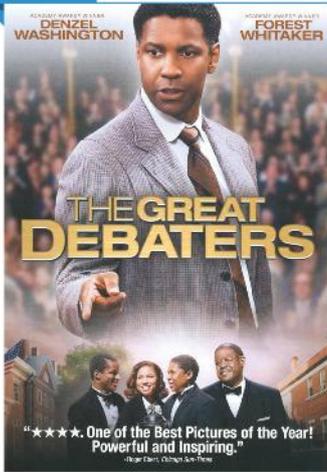
## 10 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIPS



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| <p><b>1 PREPARE</b><br/>Plan to make 1-3 good points</p>   | <p><b>6 PAUSE FOR EFFORT</b><br/>Pause to let a point settle in – it creates an impact</p>                     |
| <p><b>2 PLANT YOUR FEET</b><br/>Stand firmly – it shows confidence</p>   | <p><b>7 SPEAK NORMALLY</b><br/>Be deliberate &amp; carefully say your words – so you are better understood</p> |
| <p><b>3 EYE CONTACT</b><br/>Make a gentle sweep of the audience – it builds connection fast</p>                            | <p><b>8 HANDS</b><br/>Keep your hands visible to the audience – it builds trust</p>                            |
| <p><b>4 PROJECT YOUR VOICE</b><br/>Aim for the back row &amp; use your breath – it helps you project without straining</p> | <p><b>9 EXPRESSION</b><br/>Match your facial expression with your message – the audience loves that</p>        |
| <p><b>5 BREATH</b><br/>Take a deep breath – so you do not pass out</p>   | <p><b>10 STRONG POINTS</b><br/>Plan your points – end with one that is clear</p>                               |

A popular form of public speaking is the debate. A **debate** is a discussion or a structured contest about an issue or a resolution involving two sides: one supporting a resolution and one opposing it.

SPEECH <http://tiny.cc/mvr7tz>



## ■ UP TO THIS POINT

The scene we are going to watch is taken from the 2007 movie *The Great Debaters* with Denzel Washington. Based on the true story of a debate coach who transformed a group of promising and talented black students of a small college in Texas into a formidable team competing at a national level, this movie praises the power of words and of knowledge to change people’s minds and behaviour through public speaking, even when it comes to sensitive topics such as racism and discrimination. The debate we are going to focus on involves 4 speakers: two black debaters from the Wiley college, Samantha Brooke, the first woman ever to be admitted into a National debate team, and Henry Rowe, opposing two white debaters representing the Oklaoma City College.



## ■ THE SPEECH

**Samantha Booke:** Resolved: Negroes should be... should be admitted... Resolved: *Negroes should be admitted to state universities.* My... My partner and I will prove that blocking a negro’s admission to a state university is not only wrong, it is absurd. The negro people are not just a color in the American fabric. They are the thread that holds it all together. Consider the legal and... and historical record: May 13th, 1865, Sergeant Crocker, a negro, is the last soldier to die in the civil war. 1918, the first U.S. soldiers decorated for bravery in France are negroes Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts. 1920, *The New York Times* announces that the “n” in “Negro” would hereafter be capitalized.

10 **Oklahoma City College Debater 1:** Force upon the South what they are not ready for would result in nothing but more racial hatred. Dr. W.E.B Dubois, he’s perhaps the most eminent negro scholar in America. He comments, “It’s a silly waste of money, time, and temper, to try and propel a powerful majority to do what they are determined not to do”.

15 **Henry Rowe:** My opponent so conveniently chose to ignore the fact that W. E. B. Dubois is the first negro to receive a Ph.D. from a white college - called Harvard.

**Oklahoma City College Debater #1:** Dr. Dubois, he adds, “It is impossible”, impossible! for a negro to receive a proper education at a white college.

20 **Henry Rowe:** The most eminent negro scholar in America is the product of an Ivy League education. You see, Dubois knows all too well the white man’s resistance to change; but that’s no reason to keep a black man out of any college. If someone didn’t force upon the South something it wasn’t ready for us, I’d still be in chains, and Miss Booke here would be running from her own master.

### 🔍 FACT FILE

- **WHO?** Samantha Brooke, the only female member of the Wiley Debate Team
- **WHERE?** In a scene from the movie *The Great Debaters* (2007)
- **WHY?** To fight racism and discrimination
- **WHEN?** In 1930s



- 25 **Oklahoma City College Debater 2:** I do admit it. It is true: Far too many whites are afflicted with the disease of racial hatred. And because of racism, it would be impossible for a negro to be happy at a Southern white college today. And if someone is unhappy, it is impossible to see how they could receive a proper education. Yes, a time will come when negroes and whites will walk on the same campus, and we will share the same classrooms; but, sadly, that day is not today.
- 30 **Samantha Booke:** As long as schools are segregated, negroes will receive an education that is both separate and unequal. By Oklahoma’s own reckoning, the state is currently spending five times more for the education of a white child than it is spending to educate a colored child. That means better text books for that (white) child than for that (negro) child. Oh, I say that’s a shame. But my opponent says today is not the day for whites and coloreds to go to the same college, to share the same campus, to walk in the same classroom. Well, would
- 35 you kindly tell me when is that day going to come? Is it going to come tomorrow? Is it going to come next week? In a hundred years? Never?! No, the time for justice, the time for freedom, and the time for equality, is always - is always - right now!

## ■ LET’S WORK ON IT

### 2 Answer the questions.

- 1 What’s Samantha Brooke’s main thesis?
- 2 What does she want to prove?
- 3 Which historical records does she use to prove that ‘Negroes’ are a fundamental part of American society?
- 4 According to debater 1 from the Oklahoma City College, what would happen if ‘Negroes’ were introduced into State Universities?
- 5 How does Henry Rowe rebut his opponent’s claim that ‘It is impossible for a Negro to get a proper education in a white college’?
- 6 What’s the main thesis of the second white debater?
- 7 Who do you think wins the debate in the end? Why?

## ■ BEYOND THE WORDS

### 3 What’s the situation nowadays? Read the text, describe the picture you see and the message behind it.

British street artist Banksy posted this anti-racism artwork on his Instagram immediately after George Floyd’s death as part of the ‘black lives matter’ movement on May 25th 2020. George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man died in Minneapolis Minnesota after a white police kneeled on his neck for at least 8 minutes while arresting him for allegedly using a counterfeit 20 dollars note in a shop. The event was filmed and went immediately viral triggering waves of protest and demonstrations all over the world against racism.



### 4 How can Banksy artwork be linked to the speech we have previously analyzed?

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