



Planning your talk & Themes

Please ensure you allow at least an hour for the talk. A suggested format for a Speakers for Schools event is made up of a 15-30 minute talk from the speaker followed by 30-45 minutes Q&A with the students, making it an open and interactive session with your students. Or it can be a moderated Q&A throughout. We have put together a checklist of the essential requirements for planning a talk, to make it as simple as possible:

- ✓ Ensure the exact date and time of the event is confirmed with the charity directly once agreed. This can be done well in advance with finer logistics confirmed nearer the date of the talk.
- ✓ It is essential to have a phone call with the speaker prior to the event to discuss what you are hoping your students will gain from the talk whilst finding out what your speaker is happy to speak about.
- ✓ Inform the speaker of the cohort they will be addressing (size, age, prior subject knowledge etc.).
- ✓ Inform students who is coming and prepare them for a Q&A session (more below)

Below are suggested our talk themes which our speakers use to frame their talk, and a great starting place when speaking to your speaker or their office about the desired focus. *N.B. It's important the focus is agreed in advance so please don't assume your speaker will know what to speak about without a phone call!*

<u>Core Talk Themes</u>	<u>Theme concept</u>	<u>Outcomes for Students</u>
<u>Challenging the Status Quo</u>	Helping challenge misconceptions, and focus on social change in a key area, e.g. gender equality in STEM or reinvigorating modern democracy.	Talks of this nature engage students as to how issues are manifested, how progress can be measured and implications for students as potential activists for change.
<u>Expert Insights</u>	One particular topic of expertise, e.g. <i>the 2008 Financial Crisis</i> or the <i>Science of the Food Industry</i> , rather than broad personal journey or industry advice.	Ideal for a smaller group on a more tailored topic where the speaker is aware of their knowledge level. Despite having a subject focus, the hope is to engage young people as to bigger issues and how a subject or specific topic can relate to a wider picture.
<u>Future Citizens</u>	Where do students fit into the modern UK? How are communities/engagement changing? Informing students about how they might be involved in the world around them and their role in democratic, economic and social issues.	The topic is particularly successful at schools in rural or regional areas to help your students see where they fit into history and the world stage, as well as inspiring students to think about the world they are going into. The hope is that it will encourage young people to think critically about their role as active citizens.
<u>Industry Workings</u>	The wider context/significance of a profession, the future of the industry and the speaker's own experience within the industry.	This can engage your students as to bigger issues, ingredients for success (in general) and to raise their aspirations. This may alert students to opportunities they may not have been aware of.
<u>Life Lessons & Advice</u>	Reflections on personal journeys and how speakers got to where they are today, e.g. <i>What advice I would give to my 16 year old self</i> , <i>Why failure is good</i> .	This kind of talk is ideal for a broad student group. The hope is that regardless of the exact angle the speaker takes, and no matter their background, it will help young people relate to the speaker, draw on their experiences and raise their aspirations.

Core themes can be combined or explored throughout the session. For more about preparing for the Q&A, please refer to the [S4S Q&A Prep Sheet for Students](#). For more about step-by-step logistics to confirm, please see the [Planning a Talk Guide](#).