

# My Name



For your first speech, you will talk about your name. Be creative and try to include the following:

- How your parents named you
- Whether your name means something in another language
- Who in your family has your name
- Whether you like your name and if not, what you'd prefer
- What you think your name sounds like
- Whether people misspell or mispronounce it
- What your name reveals about your character and/or personality
- How common/uncommon your name is

Keep your speech between 1 and 2 minutes. This will give you time to pause when you need to yet keep it interesting for us. Make sure you have a grabber for an opener, concrete details in the body, and a conclusion that ties your points together.

If you don't know the stories behind your name, ask your relatives. You can also try "Googling" your name. You can also add the following search words: origin, spelling, family name, family crest, baby names.

Practice your speech in front of a classmate, friend, or family member. Have them time you or time yourself to make sure that your pacing is on target.

Your speech (quiz grade) will be assessed on the following:

Expectations for My Name speech	Doesn't meet expectations	Needs work	Meets expectations
Student uses appropriate volume when speaking.	5 6 7	8 9 10	13 14 15
Student uses appropriate pacing when speaking.	5 6 7	8 9 10	13 14 15
Student uses emphasis and tone that enhance subject matter.	5 6 7	8 9 10	13 14 15
Concrete details in speech spark interest.	5 6 7	8 9 10	13 14 15
Personality and voice shine through words, presentation.	5 6 7	8 9 10	13 14 15
Student makes frequent eye contact with audience.	5 6 7	8 9 10	13 14 15
Speech was 1 to 2 minutes.	Under 1 min. 4	Over by >20 sec. 8	On time 10
TOTAL 100			

Please note that you will receive a classwork grade for your rough draft, **which you will upload to Google Documents**, under the My Name collection I share with you. Save the file like the following ex.:  
WILSONA\_myname

Please place your speech on note cards or make bullet points on note cards for your speech. Do **NOT** bring up a sheet of paper with your speech on it. You will also earn a classwork participation grade for your behavior and feedback while your classmates are presenting.

## Example: “My Name” by Ms. Ridal

"Ms....how do you say your last name miss?" my students ask me every year. Rye-Dell I tell them, as in rye bread and Dell computers. Or farmer in the Dell, as the old nursery rhyme goes. My name dates back to the time of English kings and an agrarian lifestyle, a name 1,000 years old. A name that my father tells me was mispronounced and misspelled for generations (Spelling wasn't a big deal back when there were more important things to do like surviving.). A name that my great-great grandfather, Bobby Ridal, was ashamed of. He could kick a ball the length of a football field, a great soccer player who changed the pronunciation and spelling of our family name when he came to America because he didn't want to be associated with farming. My grandfather changed the pronunciation back to the original but kept the odd spelling. Now I'm blessed with a last name that no one spells or pronounces properly.

As for my first name, Sheri, that gets misspelled too, even when I spell it for people. At the DMV, on my teaching certificate, letters from teachers, junk mail...S h e r r y. No. S h e r r i. Nope. S h e r i. One r and one i. My name was spelled three different ways in my senior yearbook. Why bother trying to correct people anymore? But I love the name that my father gave me. A curvy S and an i that can be transformed with the flick of a pen. There are a plethora of Sherry songs, so many so that a friend burned me a CD of them all. Like the wine sherry -- red, dark, bold -- somewhat like me.

Best of all, I have no middle name. My father wanted me to pick one when I grew up. But I never did decide on a middle name; that's too big of a decision, like picking out a tattoo, an indelible mark that stays under your skin. So for now, I will remain Sheri Ridal. Ms. Ridal to my students, or Ms. to a few who might forget how to pronounce it.

## Example: from *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

### “My Name”

In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. It is like the number nine. A muddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing.

It was my great-grandmother's name and now it is mine. She was a horse woman too, born like me in the Chinese year of the horse--which is supposed to be bad luck if you're born female-but I think this is a Chinese lie because the Chinese, like the Mexicans, don't like their women strong.

My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild, horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry. Until my great-grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. Just like that, as if she were a fancy chandelier. That's the way he did it.

And the story goes she never forgave him. She looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't want to inherit her place by the window.

At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth. But in Spanish my name is made out of a softer something, like silver, not quite as thick as sister's name Magdalena--which is uglier than mine. Magdalena who at least can come home and become Nenny. But I am always Esperanza. I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees. Esperanza as Lisandra or Maritza or Zeze the X. Yes. Something like Zeze the X will do.