

SPEECH

Event Description

Judges are some of the most vital contributors to the speech and debate community. Without judges, tournaments would not be possible.

[ProTip: Conscious Style Guide](#)

All judges are encouraged to be mindful of how they provide feedback to students verbally and/or in writing. One valuable resource we use at the NSDA is the [Conscious Style Guide](#). We encourage all community members, especially those providing constructive criticism to students, to consider the words they use. Simply put, words matter. Learn more about the words you choose by checking out www.consciousstyleguide.com.

Terms You Might Hear

IHSFA - The Indiana High School Forensic Association is composed of high school and junior high schools and coaches who run invitational speech and debate contests throughout the year, as well as sectional and state. An executive secretary presides over the group, and an elected executive council comprised of coaches helps to enact and interpret the laws of the organization.

Constitution and Tournament Manual - the rulebooks of the IHSFA - If you have a question of the legality of material, consult this document, a member of the council or the executive secretary.

NFL - National Forensic League, the lifetime speech and debate honor society - Membership and its higher levels are earned through competing.

NCFL - National Catholic Forensic League, a national speech/debate organization and tournament

Schematic - the schedule of where and when you compete at that tournament

Round - one group of competitors competing in that room at that time to see who is best

Doubling - Doing two events at that tournament; some events/tournaments do not allow doubling

Code - Each entry is assigned an identifying number to use for competition. Each team has a letter code assigned as well, so the student code may look like "Z38."

Scores - The tournament office keeps track of the judges' scores for each competitor in each event and adds them up to determine who receives what place after finals. The best competitor in each round is awarded a "1," the second best receives a "2," and so on. No two students may receive identical scores from a single judge in a round of competition. At the end of the tournament, the student with the lowest total score wins, second lowest gets second place, etc.

Four straight rounds-Most schools choose to have all students go 4 straight rounds of competition, where students do their speeches 4 times in a row and receive scores from 4 different judges.

Double flight - Some events or sections competing at one time and the rest at another time

Finals-The top ranked competitors after preliminary rounds are placed in a final round together to determine placings. Preliminary round scores are used in addition to the final round judges' scores.

Awards and double ribbons - At the conclusion of a tournament, the host school presents ribbons to the best competitors in each event (usually the top ten) and trophies to the top schools. Sometimes the host school gives out two ribbons for each place in each event (two 1sts, two 2nds, two 3rds, etc).

Sweepstakes - The number of points a team earns from its individual ribbon winners determine the team trophy.

Binder - your little black folder for the scripted events

Critique sheet - a paper on which your judge comments about your speech and performance

Cutting - taking a long play, story, or novel and shortening it; also the finished "piece"

Ballot - the paper where the judge writes the rankings for the round

Postings - where the finished ballots are placed for contestants and coaches to see

Drop - when you are entered in a tournament but don't compete

Speech

In speech, a typical round will contain six different contestants, although this number can fluctuate depending on how many students are entered in the event. Prior to the start of the round, the judge will pick up a set of **ballots** from the tournament organizer.

These **ballots** are where judges will record their thoughts on each performance, suggestions for improvement, and general feedback for the performer. At the end of the tournament, each school will receive all the **ballots** written about their competitors so contestants can use your feedback to improve!

The judge will meet the students in the assigned room and watch the entirety of the round, which usually lasts for one hour. During each speech, the judge will make notes on the **ballot**, keep the contestant's time, and ensure the round runs smoothly.

Students will occasionally ask for **time signals**, it is up to you whether or not you would like to honor that request. **Time signals** are a simple system that let competitors know how much time they have used throughout the speech. The most common **time signals** are to alert the student when they have two minutes remaining by holding two of your fingers in the air, like a peace sign, and to alert them when they have one minute remaining by holding one finger in the air.

In speech, it is common for competitors to enter in more than one event for the tournament, this is called being **double-entered**. Student's who are **double-entered** should be allowed to speak earlier in the round if they have another event to go to, and should be excused for entering the round late if they were competing in a different event in the same round.

At the end of the round, the judge will evaluate the speakers and rate them on a scale from one to six, with the best performance receiving the one ranking. After the rankings are complete, judges should return their ballots to the tournament organizer.

During preliminary rounds of the tournament, there is usually only one judge per round. However, when student's begin competing in elimination rounds, rounds will have more than one judge. This is called a **panel**.

SPEECH EVENTS

INTERPRETATION (ACTING) EVENTS

Drama or Humorous Interpretation ★

Students memorize selections from plays, short stories, essays or novels. The speakers' selections will have two or more characters telling a story. Each selection cannot be longer than 10 minutes. Each student speaks as an individual.

Duo ★

Two speakers work together presenting a selection from a play, short story, or novel. Each speaker must do at least one character. Duos can be performed from a script in November and December, but memorization is recommended thereafter. Each duo program cannot be longer than 10 minutes.

Program Oral Interpretation ★

Using selections from Prose, Poetry, and Drama, students create a ten minute performance around a central theme. POI is designed to test a student's ability to intersperse multiple types of literature into a single, cohesive performance. A manuscript is required and may be used as a prop within the performance if the performer maintains control of the manuscript at all times. Performances can also include an introduction written by the student to contextualize the performance and state the title and the author of each selection.

Prose

Students prepare a prose program. The program must be a short section taken from a novel, short story, or essay. The program must be at least 5 minutes long. The program is read from a manuscript. Each student speaks as an individual.

Poetry

Students prepare a poetry program focusing on a single theme. Program must be 5-10 minutes long and include 2 or more poems. Poems must be written by someone other than the reader and be published. The poetry is read from a script. Each student speaks as an individual.

Original Performance

Students write and perform their own material. Students may write poems, brief stories, plays, or essays. The performance may be read or memorized. Students may work as a duo team or as an individual speaker.

PUBLIC ADDRESS EVENTS

Original Oratory ★

Students write a speech focusing on individual concerns or an issue they find interesting or important. The speech cannot be longer than 10 minutes. Speeches should be memorized and each student speaks as an individual.

Impromptu

Students are given a word, a quotation, or a current events question 30 seconds before they speak. After 30 seconds of preparation, students give a speech up to 5 minutes long. Each student speaks as an individual.

Informative Speaking ★

Students author and deliver a ten-minute speech on a topic of their choosing. Competitors create the speech to educate the audience on a particular topic. All topics must be informative in nature; the goal is to educate, not to advocate. Visual aids are permitted, but not required. The speech is delivered from memory.

★ NSDA event

ARGUMENTATION EVENTS

Extemporaneous Speaking ★

Students give speeches up to 7 minutes long answering a current issues question drawn and prepared at the tournament. Students use major newsmagazines as sources for the speeches they prepare. Students may enter divisions focusing on either international issues or United States issues. Each student speaks as an individual.

Discussion

Students participate in round-table type discussions on current events, art, literature, music, social sciences, philosophy, mass media, and science. Discussions are conducted using a Socratic seminar format. Topics are released on Mondays preceding Saturday meets. Each student speaks as an individual.

Congress ★

Congress speakers are modeling a state or national congress legislative session. Speakers give short speeches on model legislation. The goal is to convince the congress members to vote for or against the model legislation.

MASS MEDIA

Broadcasting (Radio)

Students present their material over a microphone to a judge in another room. Some material is prepared ahead of time, other material is prepared at the tournament, and other material is impromptu. Broadcasting contestants present newscasts, commercials, editorials, and on-the-spot reporting. Each student speaks as an individual.

Radio

Basis for judging each round

a) News Program

- (1) News copy - Selection of news items for newsworthiness, arrangement, accuracy.
- (2) Commercial - Effectiveness of persuasive techniques in writing, organization, use of detail, clarity, salesmanship, friendliness, fluency, voice production and articulation.
- (3) Music lead-in/lead-out - Selection of items, copy arrangement and transitions to create a logical yet interesting flow, broadcast persona, radio station identity.
- (4) Other considerations - Transitions, voice variety, articulation, authority, accuracy, sign-on and sign-off show awareness of broadcast techniques.
- (5) Target time: 5 minutes
- (6) Broadcast (speaking) time is one criterion for judging. Vocal performance, writing, organization, and other elements are properly viewed as equally if not more important than speaking time. Prescribed speaking times are target times, not maximums.

b) On-the-Spot

- (1) Awareness of procedures for live reporting, ability to describe and make vivid, ability to see for the listener, language, directness, accuracy, voice variety, conversational pattern.
- (2) The contestant should be basically accurate, but should not be penalized for accuracy of details.
- (3) Target Time: 2 minutes
- (4) Broadcast (speaking) time is one criterion for judging. Vocal performance, writing, organization, and other elements are properly viewed as equally if not more important than speaking time. Prescribed speaking times are target times, not maximums.

c) Original Editorial

- (1) Effectiveness of persuasive techniques in writing, organization, persuasiveness, understanding of content, use of detail, authority, dignity, accuracy, articulation, voice variety, fluency.
- (2) Target Time: 2 minutes
- (3) Broadcast (speaking) time is one criterion for judging. Vocal performance, writing, organization, and other elements are properly viewed as equally if not more important than speaking time. Prescribed speaking times are target times, not maximums.

d) Radio Program

- (1) Selection of items, copy arrangement and transitions to create a logical yet interesting flow, editing techniques, broadcast persona, voice production, articulation, sign-on and sign-off show awareness of broadcast techniques, effective inclusion of required content (news, commercial, editorial, and music lead-in/lead-out) to meet time framework.
- (2) Target Time: 7 minutes
- (3) Broadcast (speaking) time is one criterion for judging. Vocal performance, writing, organization, and other elements are properly viewed as equally if not more important than speaking time. Prescribed speaking times are target times, not maximums

Discussion Rules

1. The discussion topics for the sectional and state tournaments may be drawn from History, Art, Literature, Current Events, Music, Mass Media, Science, and Philosophy. The IHSFA Discussion Committee will prepare specific artifacts (e.g. documents, video, audio, three dimensional objects, etc.) and essential questions for each round. The round order of discussion topics will be determined by a random draw. (Jan. 2014)
2. The state final discussion topics will be related to the sectional topics, but no topic may be an exact version of any sectional topic. The IHSFA Executive Board will select the topics from a list prepared by the Discussion Committee at its meeting prior to the state final speech tournament. (Jan. 2014)
3. All sectional rounds will use the provided discussion topics. A topic will be blind drawn before each round, and no topic will be repeated, including the final round and semifinal, if needed. (Oct. 2013)
4. Discussion will take the format of a Socratic Seminar (see appendix), an extemporaneous round-table discussion focused on values. The discussion shall follow the process of logical thinking: analysis of the artifacts and essential questions provided. The goal of each discussion group is to rigorously examine the Purpose, Content, Inferences, Conclusions, Concepts, Assumptions, Implications, Consequences, Points of View, and Further Queries raised by the artifacts and essential questions. (Oct. 2013)
5. The contestants shall be judged on their skills in the following areas: Relevant Information, Analysis of the Topic, Collaboration, Participation, and Delivery. (Oct.2013)
6. The number of times a person speaks is not as significant as the quality of what the person says.
7. Each contestant shall be given a rank 1, 2, 3, etc. (no ties)
8. The maximum time limit is 60 minutes. At the state tournament, preliminary rounds will be 60 minutes in length. Semi-finals and final round will be 60 minutes. (passed July 2006)
9. No one student should assume the role of moderator. The members of the group must work together to conduct the round using the steps listed in item 4 above. (February 2013)
10. Using its customary process for appointing committees, the IHSFA Board of Directors shall appoint a state Discussion Committee that will create the topics.

Extemporaneous Speaking Rules: International (Foreign) and United States (Domestic)

1. Topics for this contest will come from current events that occurred or were discussed in the media from September 1st of the current school year to the present. Topics must be in question form. The Extemp Chair shall prepare potential topics to be rated by the Extemp Committee. The Committee Chairperson will choose a minimum of 12 topics per round and place them into categories. Those categories will then be sent out to the IHSFA body two weeks before the sectional tournament.
2. There is no minimum time limit. Brevity should be penalized only if it reveals lack of information on the subject. The maximum time limit is 7 minutes. Overtime shall be a detriment.
3. The first contestant shall draw three topics 30 minutes before speaking time and will discard two and speak on the third. The remaining contestants shall draw in like manner in the order of speaking, at intervals of 7 minutes. Drawing will precede every round. A different topic area will be used in each round.
4. After topics have been selected and recorded, the contestant will begin to prepare for their speech without consultation or discussion with anyone. Computers, reference books, news clippings, and magazines shall be furnished by the contestants. Card files or Reader's Guides may be consulted only for the purpose of locating magazine articles. Highlighting of extemp magazines is legal. A clipping file of extemp material is legal. No outlines of previous speeches or annotations of magazine articles or other pre-prepared material shall be used. Disqualification from the tournament will follow violations of this rule.
5. Every contestant will check out of the preparation room with the Extemp Chairperson. Any contestant who fails to check out will be ranked last in that round.
6. The contestant in extemporaneous speaking should be held accountable for: (1) Strict adherence to the precise statement of the topic he or she has drawn, and severely discounted for shifting to some other base of the topic on which he or she might prefer to speak; (2) Well-chosen information relative to the subject as presented in current periodicals; (3) Organization of this material according to some logical plan to produce a complete speech within the time allowed; and (4) Effective delivery, including all the mechanics of speech--poise, quality and use of voice, gestures, directness, and the ability to enlist and hold the interest of the audience.
7. The extemporaneous speech is an original synthesis of current fact and opinion of the designated topic.
8. Extemp will be scheduled in two divisions--International and United States.
9. Notes may not be used while speaking in front of the judge(s).
10. The Tournament Manager shall appoint an Extemp Prep Manager whom shall be in complete charge of the preparation room(s). Any infraction of the rules shall

- (6) Internet: Extemporaneous Speaking contestants shall not access the Internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep. room.
- (7) All wi-fi or other methods of connection to the Internet, computers, or other devices for the purposes of accessing information or of sending or receiving messages must be disabled.
- (8) These changes allowing the use of electronic retrieval devices do not exclude the previous methods of using paper-based files.

Impromptu Speaking Rules

1. The time limit is 7 minutes in total. The speaker may use as much time in preparation as he/she desires. There is no minimum time limit. Brevity should be penalized only if it discloses a lack of knowledge of the subject or a lack of a complete speech. Overtime will be a detriment.
2. Topics should be presented to the contestants individually. Call the first speaker on the ballot into the room; present the topic to him or her, and begin the seven-minute time period. The student may use a blank notecard or blank paper during the preparation time they use but may NOT use those notes while speaking. When he or she is finished, call the second speaker into the room and follow the above procedure. Speakers must stay in the room until the round is completed. They should not leave after they speak, unless they are double-entered.
3. The speaker should be judged for his or her ability to think on one's feet. The speaker is judged for the continuity of the speech and the material he or she is able to call forth on the spur of the moment and mold that information into a logical speech. The speaker should also be judged on the mechanics of speech—poise, quality and use of the voice, body action, and the ability to hold the attention of the audience. The student should be penalized if he or she does not stay within the time limit.
4. Topics will be: a word, a quotation, or a current event. The topics will be alternated each round. No specific order of topics will be announced. The current event topic will be in the form of a question.
5. Rules
 - a) Those arriving while another speaker is speaking should not listen at the door.
 - b) Doublers in the extemporaneous events must report to the extemporaneous preparation room for instructions.
6. Instructions for the director of the impromptu event:
 - a) All judges should be in place in each room.
 - b) The Tournament Director and his/her staff shall staple the appropriate SEALED topic envelope to the starred judge's ballot. The sealed envelope will be opened in the presence of the first speaker.
 - c) The Tournament Manager will assign a tournament official to monitor the hallway(s) during impromptu competition rounds to assure contestants do not listen at doors or reveal topics.
 - d) Contestants discovered listening at the door to his/her competition room prior to entering will be disqualified.
 - e) Disqualification means a last for that round only.

Informative Speaking Rules

1. Purpose: An informative speech is an original speech designed to explain, define, describe, or illustrate a particular subject. The general purpose of the speech is for the audience to gain understanding and/or knowledge of a topic. Any other purpose such as to entertain or to convince shall be secondary. The use of audio/visual aids is optional.
2. Contest: This contest comprises only memorized speeches composed by the contestants and not used by them during a previous contest season.
3. Subject: Effective speeches provide new information or perspectives on a topic, including those that are widely known. The responsibility for choosing a worthwhile topic rests with the contestant. A fabricated topic may not be used. Any non-factual reference, including a personal reference, must be so identified.
4. Aids: Audio/visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. During the presentation, no electronic equipment is permitted. The use of live animals or any additional people as visual aids is not allowed during the speech. Items of dress put on and removed during the course of the presentation are considered costumes and may not be part of the contestant's presentation. Visual aids may not violate law (weapons, drugs, etc.) The host school is not responsible for providing any facilities, equipment, or assistance in a contestant's use of visual aids. Expedient set up and take down of aids is expected. If a visual aid displays published pictorial material, the source must be included in the work-cited page but does not need to be cited orally.
5. Length: The time limit is ten minutes. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated. Timing of the speech begins with the student begins speaking. Setup time for audio/visual aids is not counted toward the time of the speech.
6. Quotation: Not more than 150 words of the speech may be direct quotation and such quotations must be identified orally and in a printed copy of the speech supplied prior to registration.
7. Script: Manuscripts must be available at the sectional and state contests in the event of a protest. The script must identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, include a work-cited page in APA or MLA format, and both the speaker and the coach must attest by signature that the speech is the original work of the contestant.

Original Oratory Rules

1. This oration is composed by the student who delivers it.
2. Any appropriate subject may be used--a eulogy to some great man or institution; a plea for some solution of some current problem, political, social, or economic. Since these orations have been written by the contestants delivering them, the judges should consider thought, composition, and delivery. However, as this is a contest in speech, rather than in essay writing, the emphasis should be placed on the speech aspect. Thought and composition should be considered primarily in the way they are employed to make the speech effective.
3. The oration shall require from 5 to 10 minutes for delivery. A written copy will be available for the tournament director if requested.
4. Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing. Violation of this rule will result in an automatic last in the round.
5. Plagiarism will bring disqualification from the tournament.
6. Hypothetical illustrations should not be personalized.
7. The orator should not be expected to solve any of the great problems of the day. Rather he or she should be expected to discuss intelligently, with a degree of originality, in an interesting manner, and with some profit to the audience, the topic chosen. He or she should be given wide latitude in the ideas expressed, but held accountable for the manner in which they are expressed.
8. The composition should be considered carefully for its rhetoric and diction. The use of appropriate figures of speech, similes, and other rhetorical devices to make the oration more effective should be noted especially. Use of English should be correct; it should reveal a discriminating choice of words and altogether fine literary qualities. It should be especially adapted to oral presentation.
9. Delivery should be judged for mastery of the usual mechanics of speech--poise, quality and use of voice, and bodily expressiveness; and for the qualities of directness and sincerity which impress the oration upon the minds of the audience.
10. No particular style of delivery is to be set up as the one correct style to which all contestants must conform. Rather, each contestant is to be judged upon the effectiveness of his or her delivery, free to choose or develop whatever style will best give that effectiveness with the particular oration.
11. No props are allowed.
12. The speech is to be delivered from memory without notes.

Original Performance Rules

1. The script must be written by the student performing the material. When a duo is written for performances, it may be written by one or both of the performers.
2. The original selection may be dramatic, humorous, narrative, poetic, or any combination of these writing styles.
3. The selection should be five to ten minutes in length. Failure to meet this requirement may be a detriment.
4. A written copy will be available for the tournament director, if requested.
5. A scripted piece must utilize a script for all parts of the presentation (with the exception of a memorized introduction or transitions if utilized). A memorized piece must be entirely memorized.
6. No more than 50 words of the piece may be quoted from another source.
7. Character movement may be utilized in the speaking area of the room.
8. No costumes, properties (hand or stage), or character make-up will be permitted.
9. If the original performance is a duo
 - a) The duo must have two participants (there can be more than one character played by each).
 - b) Participants may not play to each other. No eye or physical contact may occur with the exception of a clearly identified introduction or transition.
10. When judging this event, please consider both the writing and the performance of the material.

Guidelines for the Selection of Appropriate Interpretation Material

Please note--the following are suggested guidelines to consider. They do NOT constitute set RULES.

1. As a contestant you must understand that judges may rank you lower because they might believe that the selection of material you have chosen is inappropriate for a variety of reasons. Hopefully, these guidelines will help you make an appropriate selection.
 - a) The material should be appropriate for your abilities and appearance.
 - b) The material should be appropriate for a high school performance.
 - c) The literature selected should match the intellectual and psychological abilities of the performer.
 - d) Rude, lewd, and obscene material should be avoided; however, mature subject matter can be performed if done seriously and skillfully.
 - e) Substituting words may make the material acceptable for performance if the substitution does not change the meaning of the line.
 - f) When creating a duo cutting, there should be a balance between the two performers, not necessarily in the number of characters portrayed, but in terms of amount of material performed.

Interpretation: General Interpretation Rules

1. The art of interpretation is to be regarded as recreating the story presented and making it seem real to the audience.
2. The selection must be legally published in one print, recording, or Internet source that is or has been available to the public. See poetry rules for exceptions.
3. Neither props, character costumes, or character makeup are permitted.
4. Interpretation selections must be 5-10 minutes in length.
5. All interpretation selections must have a memorized introduction that must at least include the title and author.
6. Transitional materials may or may not be used.
7. Brief adaptations may only be made for transition and appropriateness.
8. A student may not use material from the same source in more than one year or in more than one event.
9. Selections from an anthology are not considered the same source.
10. Limited gestures, pantomime, and movement are permitted to help with interpretation of material.
11. Coaches must bring an original source or a photocopy of the original source and publication verification to the sectional and state tournaments.
12. Interpreters for deaf contestants must stand at the back of the room and minimize vocal inflection while interpreting a student's speech.

Interpretation: Duo Rules

1. Each duo must have two participants who may portray more than one character each. Scripts may be utilized, but if they are, both participants must have a script.
2. Participants using a script must hold the script (in their hands) and refer to their scripts. The folder may be used as a prop so long as one folder remains open and the folder does not leave the possession of the student using it as a prop.
3. No eye or physical contact should occur with the duo partner outside of the introduction and any transitional material.
4. If one registered duo partner drops before the tournament begins the coach may substitute another of the school's students, provided that the substitute does not cause the team to violate other IHSA rules.

Interpretation: Drama and Humor Rules

1. A drama or humor shall be performed by one person.
2. Drama and humor selections shall be memorized.
3. One or more characters may be performed by students in drama / humor.

Interpretation: Prose Rules

1. Prose is performed by one person.
2. Prose cuttings cannot be taken from plays, film script, movie script, screenplays, or poetry.
3. The focus of the cutting should be on narration.
4. The participant must hold the script (in his/her hands) and refer to the script. The folder may be used as a prop so long as the folder remains open does not leave the possession of the student using it as a prop.

Interpretation: Poetry Rules

1. One person performs poetry.
2. The poetry program must include one or more poems.
3. The poems must have been legally published in print, recording, or Internet sources that are or have been available to the public.
4. Transitions may or may not be used. If used, transitions shall be memorized.
5. The poetry selected should have something in common. For example but not limited to: poems by the same author, poems by different authors, but expressing the same ideas, or two or more poems using the same pattern of structure, rhythm, or rhyme.
6. The participant must hold the script (in his/her hands) and refer to the script. The folder may be used as a prop so long as the folder remains open and does not leave the possession of the student using it as a prop.

Interpretation: Programmed Oral Interpretation Rules

1. POI is a program of oral interpretation of thematically-linked selections chosen from two or three genres: prose, poetry, and/or drama (plays). A primary focus of this event should be on the development of the theme or argument through the use of narrative, story, language, and/or characterization. Competitors are encouraged to devote approximately equal times to each of the genres used in the program. At least two pieces of literature that represent at least two separate genres must be used. The use of a manuscript is required.
2. All selections must be verbally identified by title and author. However, where, when, and how these are accomplished are the speaker's decisions.
3. The intact manuscript may be used by the contestant as a prop so long as it remains in the contestant's control at all times.
4. Adaptations may be used only for the purpose of transition.
5. This is a contest in oral interpretation. The contestant should be evaluated on poise, quality, and use of voice, inflection, pronunciation, and the ability to interpret characters consistently.
6. The contestant should also be evaluated on how effective their argument/theme is projected in the total program.
7. In developing a creative, thematic program, attention should be given to the design and organization of a cohesive and carefully conceived whole by linking authors and ideas inherent in the literature.
8. The contestant must address the script; however, introduction and transitional material may be memorized.