



# NEW JERSEY SPEECH AND DEBATE LEAGUE

## **New Jersey Speech and Debate League JUDGE MANUAL 2015-2016 Academic Year**

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This publication is made available by the *New Jersey Speech and Debate League*, a volunteer, not-for-profit, member-led organization that exists to promote the arts of effective communication among students in public and independent schools in New Jersey. This document reflects the rules of events offered under the NJSDL's auspices as of the current academic year.

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## **The Purpose of This Publication**

One of the greatest difficulties currently facing secondary forensics programs is the availability and training of adult judges to adjudicate student contests. This challenge is not unique to the New Jersey Speech and Debate League; it is a national concern. In some states, mandatory judge training and certification programs have been organized and administered with a great deal of success. The larger barrier to such an effort here stems from the differing characteristics and goals of speech and debate programs in New Jersey. For example, some schools and programs are able to generate the resources necessary to travel nationally, while others can compete only at the local level. Crafting a single, statewide program that would effectively serve the needs of all programs has never been practical.

With all of the other responsibilities that coaches have, judge training needs are often overlooked. When this happens, the results can be unfortunate—well-prepared and dedicated students become frustrated when their ballots contain little or no helpful feedback.

This new manual is the best effort to date at providing a baseline for the training of new judges. It provides an overview of each event and distinguishes between NSDA, CFL, and NJSDL rules. Please remember that this document is intended to be a starting point for judge training, but it should not be the finish line. Judges typically say that the best training comes from actually watching rounds, but we owe to it our students to provide new judges with at least some background information on an event they are seeing for the very first time.

Experienced judges may find this manual helpful as well, particularly in reviewing technical rules and differences between leagues.

The greatest difficulty in crafting this document has been in accounting for the myriad of “local practices” at tournaments. We have done our best to highlight those distinctions here, but this document is no substitute for listening to verbal instructions from tournament staff and reviewing written instructions on ballots.

We hope that judges will find this document to be a useful tool in their training. We welcome feedback from all coaches and judges, which can be submitted to any member of the New Jersey Speech and Debate League Executive Committee (found at [www.njflonline.org](http://www.njflonline.org)).

The NJSDL Executive Committee gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the coaches of the Florida Forensic League in providing the main material for this document: Darcy Butrimas, Rob Carraway, Paul Gaba, Beth Goldman, Rick Herder, Wayne London, Dean Rhoads, Mary Schick, and Jason Wyson. The Policy Debate glossary included here was originally designed by Richard Edwards, Rick Herder, and Jackson Mumey.

# Frequently Asked Questions for New Judges

## 1. I keep hearing acronyms used for tournaments. What do they mean?

**NSDA:** National Speech and Debate Association. This is the largest secondary speech and debate organization in the country. The NSDA is comprised of many districts. There is one district in New Jersey that encompasses the entire state:

**CFL:** National Catholic Forensic League. This organization was started so that private, Catholic schools could compete in their own organization. Now it is open to all schools, both public and private. The CFL is comprised of many local leagues, following the same boundaries as Roman Catholic dioceses. There are two diocesan leagues in New Jersey that include schools in the following counties:

1. Archdiocese of Newark (Essex, Union, Bergen, Hudson, Somerset counties)
2. Diocese of Paterson (Morris County)

**NJSDL:** New Jersey Speech and Debate League. This is an independently governed organization open to all public and private schools in New Jersey. This organization sanctions the State Championship tournament, the Borelli Scholarship Tournament and the statewide, open Novice Festival.

**Invitationals:** Tournaments hosted by high schools, colleges, and universities that “stand alone.” They are not controlled by any league, and thus they are usually open to all schools. Invitational tournaments may or may not offer all standard events. Each invitational has its own set of rules, which are often a hybrid of NSDA and CFL rules. The major invitational tournaments in the state of New Jersey are *The Ridge Debates* at Ridge High School, *The Princeton Classic* at Princeton University, and *The Newark City Invitational* at Science Park High School, and a number of smaller invitational tournaments sponsored by NJSDL member schools. There are many other invitational tournaments outside of New Jersey.

## 2. Why is each school required to provide judges?

**Without judges, there are no tournaments.** Judges are probably the most important logistical aspect of any tournament. If the school or league that organized a tournament had to provide all of the judges, the expenses of putting on the event would be much higher because each judge would have to be paid. By requiring each school to bring judges, we keep students’ costs down. Since most forensics programs operate with little or no funding from their schools, all of the New Jersey tournaments strive to keep student costs as low as possible.

## 3. Why does my school need so many judges?

The more students your school brings to compete, the more judges the school must supply. For each room where a round is going on, there must be a judge. Thus, for most tournaments, each school must abide by the following quota:

Public Forum Debate:	1 judge per 3 teams or fraction thereof
Lincoln Douglas Debate:	1 judge per 3 debaters or fraction thereof
Speech Events/Congress:	1 judge per 5 contestants or fraction thereof

At some tournaments like the NJ District qualifier for NSDA Nationals, the judge quota may be even more stringent because of special needs, such as the use of panels of three judges in preliminary rounds.

#### **4. Who is qualified to be a judge?**

Generally, anyone who has completed high school and has been properly trained can serve as a judge. Most judges fall into three categories of individuals:

- A. Coaches
- B. Former high school competitors, many of whom also compete(d) in college.
- C. Parents and community volunteers

At most tournaments, the last category makes up at least half of the judge pool.

#### **5. What types of events will I be judging?**

The coach of the school you judge for will place you in a judging pool (there are separate pools for each of the debate events and then one pool for all of the speech events). Once you know which pool to which you have been assigned, you can review the section(s) of this manual that cover your pool.

Regardless of which pool you are assigned to, you may want to read the Student Congress section because many tournaments use judges for this event from all of the pools. Also, particularly at small local tournaments, the tournament staff may ask you to change pools. In those cases, just read the section of the manual for the new event you've been asked to judge!

#### **6. I'm hesitant to judge because I'm afraid I'll make the wrong decision. How do I make sure I'm making the right decision?**

**There are no right and wrong decisions!** No tournament official, coach, judge or student should ever tell you that you made the wrong decision. **YOU ARE THE JUDGE**—the debaters/contestants are responsible for **PERSUADING YOU**. If they don't persuade you, they lose! Several judges could watch the same round, and no two judges' rankings or reasons for their decisions would likely be the same.

Speech and debate is a "human activity;" we are all persuaded or affected by different things. One of the jobs of the debaters/contestants is to adapt to their audience. As the judge, you are the primary audience. Students must adapt their performances to what they think will persuade or entertain you. You are the sole determiner of which speeches are effective, and which speeches are not effective. Your decision should not be questioned by tournament officials (and should never be questioned by coaches or other adults) unless you have failed to provide a clear explanation for your decision(s) on the ballot(s) for the round. You should keep in mind that there are rules and standards for each event.

The training sessions cover those rules and standards. Following them—and making sure that student contestants follow them—will keep everyone on a level playing field, allowing you to make easier and more fair decisions.

## 7. As a judge, what should I bring to a tournament?

- Writing utensils, especially those that are easy and comfortable for you to use.
  - If you are judging debate events, it is helpful to have two different colors of ink.
- Paper or legal pads, especially for judges of debate events.
- **A digital timer for timing speeches/debates/presentations.** A watch with a second-hand is **not** acceptable. (Many judges choose to use their mobile phones, which in turn necessitates bringing a charger.)
- Reading material or business work: most judges usually have at least one round off.
- A copy of this judge manual.

## 8. Where should I sit in the room to which I am assigned as a judge?

Wherever you are most comfortable! If your hearing or eyesight is poor, you will probably want to sit in the front of the room. If you want lots of distance between you and the other contestants in the round, you may want to sit in the back. Also, some events permit movement around the room and thus contestants may not always be standing in the center. Make sure you have an unobstructed sight line from wherever you want to judge. It is perfectly acceptable to move chairs, desks, and contestants as needed to clear your sight line.

## 9. Should I talk to the contestants in the round?

Most judges do not interact with contestants. It is permissible to say “Hello” to the students when you enter the room. Do not be overly friendly with one student you may happen to have judged before or know from another school because this will cause other students to think that you will be a biased judge. In speech events, the round starts as soon as you are seated and ready to hear speeches. In the debate events, competitors may ask you for your “judging preferences.” They want to know what type of judge you are, what arguments you find most persuasive, etc.

For new judges, the only thing you should say is that you are a “lay judge.” That term tells the debaters that you want them to speak slowly, clearly explain all of their arguments and evidence, and that you are not well versed in “debate theory,” which means they will be less likely to make highly technical and theoretical arguments.

Generally, it is **NOT** permissible to talk to students after a round about how you voted/ranked their performances. In the speech events, this is **an absolute taboo**. In debate events, this process is called an “oral critique.” **Oral critiques are allowed and encouraged at some tournaments in debate events (LD, PFD, Policy), but they are prohibited at many others in all debate events in the interests of keeping results secret and moving the tournament along.** If you wish to give an oral critique at a tournament where it is permissible to do so, make sure that you have made your decision, written the ballot, and turned it in **before** the critique begins. If you judge at a tournament that allows oral critiques and you do not feel comfortable giving one, then simply tell the debaters that you do not

give oral critiques and that your decision and comments will be available to them after the tournament on your ballot. If you encounter a pressuring coach or student, report him/her to tab.

## Guidelines for All Judges

Most people enjoy their experience as a judge. Following these guidelines will go a long way toward making your time as a judge pleasant and rewarding.

### DO...

- Attend all judge calls, which are the brief meetings where judge assignments are handed out.
- Accept all judging assignments that are given to you.
- Report to the assigned room on-time.
- Ask students to turn off all electronic devices. Make sure you have turned yours off as well!
- Take careful notes of each presentation/debate.
- Keep time on all presentations and provide time signals to the contestants if you have a digital timer.
- Complete the ballot(s) with as many substantive comments as possible. In speech events, write the ballots as each contestant is performing/speaking.
- Use a pen and press down hard on debate ballots with multiple copies so that your writing is legible on all copies.
- Provide a clear reason for each of your ranking/win-loss decisions.
- Complete the master ballot for speech events properly.
- Turn in your ballot(s) promptly after the round's conclusion.

### DO NOT...

- Judge any round in which a student from the school you represent, or any other student from another school whom you should not judge because of a personal relationship, is also assigned to the same room. Return the ballot to the person assigning judges and explain the situation.
- Switch ballots with other judges or take other judges' assignments.
- Allow anyone to video tape, audio tape, or photograph any round.
- Allow students to keep time for you.
- Ask students for a copy of their scripts or orations.
- Ask students what school they are from, as they will think you may be a biased judge.
- Interrupt, or allow anyone else to interrupt, a speaker or performance once it has begun.
- Penalize speakers for failing to dress professionally—not all students can afford business attire. You can, however, penalize a student for attire that is distracting to his/her performance.
- Discuss the students you judged, or your ranking/decision, with other judges. This rule is necessary to ensure that judges are not influenced by the opinions of others.
- Confer with other judges if you are in a round where a panel of judges is used. Each judge should make his/her decision independently.
- Observe student performances when you have a round off, as you may be asked to judge those students in a future round.

## General Instructions for All Judges

- 1. Scope of This Manual:** This manual offers a brief introduction to each event along with the *rules* that students must follow. However, the *standards* you use to evaluate students you judge are up to you! At many tournaments, specific instructions can also be found directly on the ballots. In the event of a conflict between instructions in this manual and instructions on the ballot, please ask the coach from your school or a tournament official for assistance.
  - 2. Meeting for Judges:** Before the first round at most tournaments, an official will provide instructions to you and may also remind you of tournament-specific policies. If you have any questions regarding your responsibilities as a judge or the rules for an event, the judges' meeting is a great time to ask questions.
  - 3. Judge Calls:** It is imperative that you be present for all judge calls. This is the time when assignments are handed out for each round. Missing a judge call delays the start of the round and may jeopardize students from your school, who can be dropped from the tournament if you fail to pick up a ballot that is assigned to you. **You may not leave a judge call until all ballots have been distributed AND a tournament official has announced that all unassigned judges are released for that round.**
  - 4. Getting Ready for IE (speech) Rounds:** When you are assigned to a round, you will be given a **master ballot** (see addendum for samples). This form tells you what event you will be judging, what room to report to, and what time the round begins. Please be in your assigned room 10 minutes prior to the "Round Start" time. Some tournaments give individual critique sheets to the judge along with the master ballot, while other tournaments give critique sheets to the contestants, who will then give them to you before the round starts.
- If you are at a tournament where double entries are permitted (a student can enter two or more events), not all students may be present at the start of the round. Do not wait for everyone to show up before starting the round, but do give any missing speakers a chance to perform if they show up late. Each tournament will give you more specific information about how to handle double entries.
- 5. Getting Ready for Debate Rounds:** When you are assigned to a round, the white label on the back of your ballot (or the printed information on the front) will tell you where to report. Please be in your assigned room 10 minutes prior to the "Round Start" time. At most tournaments, the debaters must be present 10 minutes after you arrive or the posted start time of the round, whichever is later. When the debaters arrive, please make sure that you confirm with them which debater is to be affirmative and which debater is to be negative by checking their responses against the label or handwritten information on your ballot (often a label is affixed to the back of the ballot). Fill out the front of the ballot before the round begins. **All NSDA, NCFL and NJSDL tournaments prohibit the use of electronic devices (smart phones or any sort of computer) that accesses the Internet during rounds. Computers *unattached* to the Internet are permitted to be used.**
  - 6. Timing:** Most tournaments will want you to keep time IF you have a digital timer. Classroom clocks and "second hands" on watches are unreliable! Before each contestant speaks or each debate begins, ask those involved how they want you to give time signals. Record the time of each speech on the IE master ballot (this is not necessary for debate events).



**7. Writing Ballots for IE Events:** All judges are strongly encouraged to write comments **directly on each contestant's ballot as he/she speaks**. Please do not wait until after each speaker (or after the round is over) to write comments; doing so delays the tournament. In general, IE ballots should include comments on content and delivery. You should also clearly explain what the contestant could have done better in order to earn a higher ranking in the round.

**8. Writing Ballots for Debate Events:** Generally, judges keep a "flow" (listing of the major arguments) of the round on a separate sheet of paper and then fill the ballot out when the round is over. As you get more experience with writing down the arguments, also try to determine how the arguments that each side presents interact with one another. Which negative arguments answer or respond to the affirmative's arguments? Which affirmative arguments answer or respond to the negative's arguments? An accurate flow may help you to make a decision in rounds where many complex and competing arguments were presented.

When the round has ended and you are ready to write the ballot, try to comment on each debater's argumentation and delivery. Most important, however, is the explication of a concise "Reason for Decision" (why you voted for the contestant/team that won the debate). It is not necessary to rewrite your flow on the ballot.

**9. Making Decisions in IE Events:** At the end of the round, you must rank the performances you saw in order from best to "least best." Each contestant **MUST** get a different ranking (the best performance is 1<sup>st</sup>, the next best performance is 2<sup>nd</sup>, etc.). In addition to the ranking, each contestant may (depending on the tournament's specific rules) also be assigned a rating (often a score from 70-100, but sometimes on another kind of scale). Rating ranges (at tournaments that use numerical points instead of letter grades) vary from tournament to tournament, but all require whole points.

At most tournaments, you may give the same rating (tie) to two or more contestants, but **NO TIES IN RANKS ARE PERMITTED EVER**. Make sure that, in addition to recording this information on the master ballot, you also record each speaker's ranking on his/her individual ballot.

**10. Making Decisions in Debate Events:** At the end of the round, after consulting your flow sheet, you must decide which debater/team won the round. After making this determination, you must also award speaker points to each contestant. At most tournaments, the winning debater/team must get a number of speaker points that is greater than or equal to the losing debater/team.

**11. Rules Violations, No Shows, & Non-Performance:** If you believe that a contestant has violated a rule in the round you judged, finish the entire round and then report to the ballot check-in table, where a tournament official can answer your questions before you make your final decision. Judges cannot disqualify a contestant. If a student who has been assigned to your room never shows up to compete or arrives but refuses to perform, notify the ballot check-in table personnel. **Please do NOT interrupt or stop a debate or speech in any way unless a health or safety problem arises.**

**12. Disclosure/Critiques:** Generally, it is **NOT** permissible to talk to students after a round about how you voted/ranked their performances. In the speech events, this is **an absolute taboo**. In debate events, this process is called an "oral critique." **Oral critiques are allowed and encouraged at some tournaments in Policy Debate, but they are prohibited at many others in the interests of keeping results secret and moving the tournament along.**

If you wish to give an oral critique at a tournament where it is permissible to do so, make sure that you have made your decision, written the ballot, and turned it in **before** the critique begins. If you judge at a tournament that allows oral critiques and you do not feel comfortable giving one, then simply tell the debaters that you do not give oral critiques and that your decision and comments will be available to them after the tournament on your ballot. If you encounter a pressuring coach or student, report him/her to tab.

**13. Submitting Your Ballot:** When you have completed your ballot, please bring it to the ballot check-in table unless you are a debate judge and the tournament is using ballot runners. You should wait at the ballot table until you are dismissed by the ballot table officials. It is imperative that you turn in your ballot(s) within ten minutes of the end of a round.

**14. Report Vandalism:** Destruction of property has become a serious problem at tournaments in recent years. You should immediately report any vandalism you witness. Some tournaments now require students to wait for the judge to arrive before entering the competition room; your help enforcing that guideline is appreciated!

### **Traits of a Good Judge**

- Writes concrete, helpful comments in a sufficient amount so students can learn from them.
- Pays attention, shows genuine interest in the speaker
- Not prejudiced or biased against a school or a contestant; gives fair treatment to all contestants
- Actively listens, looks at the contestant, smiles, is polite
- Knows the events and the rules
- Objective; doesn't refute while listening
- Provides constructive criticism in a helpful way; doesn't cut the contestant down.
- Gives clear reasons for low ranks and negative constructive comments
- Evaluates the student based on ability, not preference for the material
- Open-minded

### **Traits of a Bad Judge**

- Seems inattentive, no eye contact, writing
- Looks bored, uninterested, not listening carefully
- Appears uninvolved, doesn't want to be there
- Seems biased against a school or contestant, shows partiality
- Judging an event they have made no effort to educate themselves about
- Comments on the ballot are too general, lack specifics
- Comments are inconsistent with rank/grade
- Comments which praise but seem insincere, untruthful, unhelpful
- Reacts to the topic/selection and not the quality of the performance
- Is subjective, arbitrary – uses personal standards unknowable to the contestant
- Doesn't write any comments on the ballot

# Lincoln-Douglas Debate

## General Information

Lincoln-Douglas debate is a two-person format where the affirmative supports the resolution and the negative attacks it. The resolution, which changes every two months, is always a question of value.

The debaters will try to show why their position supports the more important, fundamental principles inherent in their position and why that position is superior to the opponent's.

Each debater will present a case that includes:

1. **Value:** A universally held principle that the debater advocates in order to affirm or negate the resolution. Example: justice
2. **Criterion:** The standard by which the debater achieves the value that he/she presents. It is a measuring stick. Example: How is the value of justice achieved? By ensuring equality before the law.
3. **Definitions:** These may be given by the affirmative to clarify terms in the resolution that are ambiguous. Not every word in the resolution must be defined. Sometimes the negative will offer a counter-definition because they disagree with the affirmative's interpretation.
4. **Arguments:** Also called contentions/areas of analysis/justifications/levels of argumentation, these are the reasons the debater gives in support of the position presented.

The debaters will construct their cases using logic, theory, and philosophy. Arguments are to be substantiated by analysis, testimony, comparison and contrast, analogy, example, and/or factual data. As the official NSDA ballot states: neither debater is responsible for providing a plan to solve for the problem(s) identified with the resolution.

In this event, debaters take different approaches to delivery. The most important requirement for a debater's delivery is that you are able to understand them and write down their arguments. If the arguments do not make sense to you, be sure to comment on that problem on the ballot. You are not expected to consider arguments that are presented at such a rapid pace that you cannot understand them.

Ultimately, a balance between relevant content and persuasive delivery is optimal.

Judges ought to put aside their own attitudes and preferences where the issues in the round are concerned. The judge's purpose is to decide who has done the better job of debating, and not to decide which side is the "correct" one. Debaters cannot be expected to read the mind of the judge. It goes without saying that a judge should not predetermine which side of the resolution is the true one, automatically voting for one side or the other.

Judges should never stop a debate to question the debaters about their position or the issues in the resolution.

Judges should write comments to the debaters on the ballot. This assures that the coach will also get to see the feedback that the judge is providing. These comments can be largely critical; debaters want

to know what didn't work, what the judge didn't buy as an argument or strategy. Comments on delivery problems that affected the judge's ability to comprehend the arguments are always helpful. Debaters expect that the ballot will give a Reason For Decision (RFD). These are the arguments which you felt were the important ones in the round and who you think won them.

Speaker points are very important to the tournament in breaking ties.

## Speaking Order and Times

Affirmative Constructive:	6 minutes
Cross-Ex by Negative:	3 minutes
Negative Constructive:	7 minutes
Cross-Ex by Affirmative:	3 minutes
First Affirmative Rebuttal:	4 minutes
Negative Rebuttal:	6 minutes
Second Affirmative Rebuttal:	3 minutes

Judges are expected to keep official time, including prep time, for the debaters. If a debater goes overtime, you may disregard those arguments. Each debater is entitled to preparation time, which can be used between speeches to prepare for the next speech. Prep time for each debater is four (4) minutes, to be used at their own discretion. They should tell you how they want time to be indicated: often, they will ask for hand signals which count time down—6,5,4,3,2,1, ½, Stop.

## Sample LD Topics

### 2015-2016

- November/December - Resolved: In the United States criminal justice system, jury nullification ought to be used in the face of perceived injustice.
- September/October - Resolved: Adolescents ought to have the right to make autonomous medical choices.

### 2014-2015

- 2015 National Speech & Debate Tournament - Resolved: Inaction in the face of injustice makes individuals morally culpable.
- March/April - Resolved: Just governments ought to ensure food security for their citizens.
- January/February - Resolved: Just governments ought to require that employers pay a living wage.
- November/December - Resolved: The "right to be forgotten" from Internet searches ought to be a civil right.
- September/October - Resolved: A just society ought to presume consent for organ procurement from the deceased.

# Public Forum Debate

## General Information

Public Forum debate is a team event that advocates or rejects a position posed by the resolution. A central tenet of the debate is that the clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or “citizen judge.” Public Forum values persuasion as much as it values argumentation and reasoning.

While anyone can judge Public Forum Debate, adults who are not trained in debate theory are preferred.

The topic is a current event and changes monthly. The topic is always phrased as a resolution. The pro team must uphold the resolution, and the con team must negate the resolution.

At CFL tournaments, in preliminary rounds, the affirmative and negative positions are pre-set and the affirmative always speaks first.

At NSDA and NJSDL tournaments, a coin toss will determine the organization of the round—generally one team will flip and the other will call, or the judge can flip and one team can call. If the former is done, the coin toss must be witnessed by the judge(s) assigned to the round. The team that wins the coin toss shall select **EITHER**:

1. Which side of the topic they wish to uphold (Pro or Con)
- OR
2. Which speech they would like to give (First Speech—Team A or Last Speech—Team B)

The team which lost the coin toss will select from the remaining option.

Judges should look for clear, well-structured cases that use logical arguments and evidence as support. Unlike Policy Debate, evidence in Public Forum may be less formal, more anecdotal forms of evidence like CNN or newspaper reports. Judges should expect to see clash, meaning the debaters refute their opponents’ arguments, showing why they are flawed or insufficient.

Delivery is an important part of this event. Rate of speech should be at a conversational pace. Good speaking in this event will approximate good speaking in front of community groups. Debaters should be fluent, articulate, free of slang and jargon, have good vocal variety and good eye contact with the judge. Argumentation should be organized and vigorous but civil (teams should not be obnoxious, rude or loud).

## Speaking Order and Times

First Affirmative (Pro):	4 minutes
First Negative (Con):	4 minutes
First Crossfire:	3 minutes

Second Affirmative:	4 minutes
Second Negative:	4 minutes
Second Crossfire:	3 minutes
Affirmative Summary (First Pro Speaker):	2 minutes
Negative Summary (First Con Speaker):	2 minutes
Grand Crossfire:	3 minutes
Final Focus (Second Pro Speaker):	2 minutes
Final Focus (Second Con Speaker):	2 minutes

Judges are expected to keep official time, including prep time, for the debaters. Each team is entitled to preparation time, which can be used between speeches to prepare for the next speech. Prep time for each team is 2 minutes, to be used between speeches at its discretion.

### **Specific Round Information**

The First Speaker presentations, which can be prepared in advance, cover the reason for adoption or rejection of the topic. The First Speaker representing Team B has the option of responding to the most important arguments made by Team A in their First Speaker speech.

In the First Crossfire, both debaters shall share the floor and the allotted time. The first question must be asked by an opponent to the Team B 1<sup>st</sup> Speaker. After that first question and answer exchange, either debater may question and/or answer.

In the Second Speaker presentations, each speaker should refute the arguments made by the opposition and answer attacks made upon their own arguments by the opposition.

In the Second Crossfire, both debaters shall share the floor and the allotted time. The first question must be asked by an opponent to the Team B 2<sup>nd</sup> speaker. After that first question and answer exchange, either debater may question and/or answer.

In the Summary Speeches, each team should summarize its key arguments and refute opposition arguments. New arguments are not permitted in these speeches but new evidence to advance previous arguments is permitted.

In the Grand Crossfire, all four debaters have the floor to interact with questions and answers. The first question must be asked by the team giving the earlier summary speech to the team that just completed the summary speech. After that first question and answer exchange, any of the debaters may question and/or answer.

The Final Focus is a last restatement of the reasons why each team believes they have won the debate. New arguments are not permitted in these speeches but new evidence to advance previous arguments is permitted. The Final Focus is NOT limited to a single argument.

In the regular crossfire segments, the two debaters should stand. In the Grand Crossfire, all four debaters will sit.

Plans and counterplans (specific proposals to change public policy) are not to be presented. Kritiks (philosophical arguments made by the Con team that ask the judge to reject the resolution on its face, without discussing the specifics of the issues presented by the Pro team) are also prohibited.

The NSDA or NJSDDL Public Forum ballot can be complicated because the judge must put the team names in the correct place (on most ballots, the pro team goes on the left; the con team goes on the right regardless of which team actually speaks first). **PLEASE CONFIRM AFTER THE COIN TOSS THAT YOU HAVE PLACED THE CORRECT NAMES ON THE AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE SIDE OF THE BALLOT.** You will award speaker points to each team on a scale of 20-30, with scores below 25 reserved for extreme circumstances.

You must decide which team was most persuasive in the debate. Judges should do their best to be objective about the issues, setting aside their own opinions and attitudes. The judge's job is to determine which team did the better job of debating, not which side is right and which side is wrong. The ballots should explain your reason for decision, which should include which arguments were most persuasive. Suggestions for improvement in delivery are also helpful. Ballots are written as much for the coaches as for the debaters, so be as helpful as you can.

## **Sample Topics 2015-2016**

- November - Resolved: In response to the current crisis, a government should prioritize the humanitarian needs of refugees over its national interests.
- September/October - Resolved: The United States Federal Government ought to pay reparations to African Americans.

## **2014-2015**

- 2015 National Speech & Debate Tournament - Resolved: The benefits of First Amendment protection of anonymous speech outweigh the harms.
- April 2015 - Resolved: Committing United States ground combat troops to fight ISIL is in the best interest of the United States.
- March 2015 - Resolved: In the United States, students should be guaranteed two years of free tuition to a community or technical college.
- February 2015 - Resolved: On balance, economic globalization benefits worldwide poverty reduction.
- January 2015 - Resolved: United Nations peacekeepers should have the power to engage in offensive operations.
- December 2014 - Resolved: For-profit prisons in the United States should be banned.
- November 2014 - Resolved: On balance, the benefits of genetically modified foods outweigh the harms.

- September/October 2014 - Resolved: On balance, public subsidies for professional athletic organizations in the United States benefit their local communities.

# **Congressional Debate (Student Congress)**

## **General Information**

Contestants in Student Congress become legislators charged with the task of fulfilling the responsibilities of the legislative branch of the federal government. Prior to the tournament, schools are given the opportunity to submit legislative proposals (bills, which are proposed laws; resolutions, which express the opinion of the Congress; and constitutional amendments) for debate. The tournament staff then publishes all of the topics that were submitted so that students can research those areas and prepare speeches.

Usually the tournament staff divides the students into chambers (usually 20-25 students in each chamber) and assigns judges (usually called *Scorers*). At some tournaments, an adult who has experience judging Student Congress is appointed as the *Parliamentarian*, who makes sure that the chamber runs smoothly. From there, the event is almost totally “student run!” At most tournaments, students elect the leaders of their chamber, decide what topics (“legislation”) to debate, the order that each student will speak in, and often they also choose who wins the tournament!

Time for debate is divided into sessions of two to four hours each. Usually a new set of judges is brought in for each session. The session is run by a student *Presiding Officer*; this contestant has been elected by his/her peers to lead the chamber. His/her job is to recognize legislators who want to speak on a topic, conduct all votes, and keep the chamber in order. The chamber uses a modified version of *Robert’s Rules of Order* to conduct business. The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to facilitate debate. If the use of procedure in the chamber you are in is abused or obstructs debate, you should contact the tab room immediately.

## **Student Congress Runs Differently in Every League**

This event is the most difficult to write a uniform set of guidelines for because every league has different methods for running the event. Thus, it is not possible to cover specific rules here. At most tournaments, Student Congress is run by a specialist in that event (a veteran coach or a former contestant in the event) who can answer all of your questions and give you specific instructions about how the chamber will operate.

Whenever you are judging this event and a question or problem arises that neither you nor the Presiding Officer can resolve, send a student to the tab room.

## **Your Role as a Judge/Scorer**

Serving as a Scorer is not a difficult task if you follow the procedures and guidelines stated below. Always remember that, if you are not absolutely sure that you understand your responsibilities, you should ask a tournament official.

If you are called to serve as a Scorer, you should make sure that you find out what room the chamber is in and at what time the session is going to begin. You should try to arrive about ten (10) minutes

early so that you can familiarize yourself with the room, the seating chart, and the procedures for the tournament.

You should sit facing the front of the room or the area that speakers will be using to present their arguments. You should try to sit as far away from contestants and observers as possible. At some tournaments, a *Judge's Table* may be set up for your use.

At all tournaments, you will be given lots of copies of a *Speaker Ballot*. This ballot might be set up by school (all students from the same school go on one ballot), by individual (each student gets a ballot each time he or she speaks; or one ballot per student (with multiple areas to critique and score speeches by the same legislator). You will use these forms to formally evaluate every speech that is given in the chamber.

The first speech on a bill, often called the *authorship* or *sponsorship speech*, includes an additional two (2) minute mandatory questioning period. The Presiding Officer will recognize legislators to ask questions of the speaker.

**A quick word on Affirmative and Negative speech times:** The rules vary depending on whether it is a CFL or NSDA/NJSDL tournament.

**CFL:** After the authorship speech for each item of legislation, alternating negative and affirmative speeches are given. Each of these speeches allows a **maximum of three minutes to both speak and question**. Whatever time is left over after the speaker concludes the speech is used for questioning by fellow legislators. If the speaker speaks for the full three minutes, no questions may be asked.

**NSDA/NJSDL:** After the authorship speech for each item of legislation, alternating negative and affirmative speeches are given. ***The first negative speaker has three minutes to speak with a mandatory two-minute questioning period by fellow legislators.*** After that, each speaker is allowed a **maximum of three minutes to speak, with a mandatory one-minute questioning period**. Members of the assembly may request suspending the rules to extend questioning.

All speeches are a maximum of three (3) minutes in length. The Presiding Officer will recognize legislators to ask questions of the speaker.

Each time a student is recognized for the purpose of making a three (3) minute speech on an item of legislation, you should complete a ballot for him or her. Make sure that you do not confer with any other judge about the quality of any speech or legislator before, during, or after the session has ended.

Here are some tips for completing a Student Congress speaker ballot:

1. Fill out all identification information on the ballot so the student will know which speech it was written for.
2. Write comments on the ballot. Tell the speaker what you thought of his/her delivery and the content of the speech. You should provide a balance of both positive and constructive feedback.

3. At the end of the speech, assign a score on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 6 (excellent). Unlike other speech events, you will give the same number to several different speakers. It is always a good idea to save the score of 6 for truly outstanding speeches. Likewise, scores of 3 or below should be reserved for short, poorly delivered, or inappropriate commentary.

Several tournaments present scorers with a Student Congress Master Ballot. Some pre-enter student names and codes; some do not. Indicate the Presiding Officer by placing a checkmark or “x” in the box labeled “PO?” by his or her name. You will also circle the speech score you gave the legislator in the appropriate column. At the end of the session, total up the legislators’ speech scores and enter them in the far-right column.

At some tournaments, you will also be asked to judge the Presiding Officer. You may be given a ballot to comment on his/her performance, or you may simply be asked to observe him/her closely. When evaluating a Presiding Officer, ask yourself these questions:

1. Has the PO called on speakers in a manner that was fair and consistent?
2. Has the PO used parliamentary procedure correctly, and in a way that makes the chamber run smoothly?
3. Has the PO kept control of the chamber, but without become autocratic or tyrannical?
4. Has the PO conducted himself/herself with decorum and dignity?

At most tournaments, the Presiding Officer’s score will be based on a maximum of twelve (12) points. In these cases, total scores below eight (8) should be reserved for extreme circumstances.

Your other major responsibility during the session is to note how well each legislator performs with respect to participation in questioning periods, level of involvement in parliamentary disputes, interaction with other legislators, decorum, behavior, and attendance.

## **At the End of a Session**

At some tournaments, only your numerical scores will determine which legislators advance to Super Congress (Congress Finals) or place in the tournament. At most tournaments, however, you will be asked to select a designated number of students as the *Best Legislators* in the session. You will usually note this information on a separate form. When deciding who to choose, you should look for students who were excellent speakers (as defined by the scores you have given on your ballots) and excellent legislators (defined by your assessment of each legislator’s performance in the areas listed above). A tournament official will tell you how many legislators to select. At some tournaments, the league official may also give you a “preclusion list” of legislators that you may not nominate.

Please double check to make sure that you do not accidentally select one of these legislators, and **do not reveal your selections or any of the names on the “preclusion list” to anyone**. Do not confer or collaborate with any other official when making your selections. Remember that the Presiding Officer is almost always eligible for selection as one of your *Best Legislators*. You can determine whether the P.O. should be placed on your rank form by answering the following question: “*Did the P.O.’s performance in the session benefit the chamber at least as much as the performance of the last speaker that I can select?*” If your answer is yes, then you should nominate the Presiding Officer.

After the session is over, make sure that you have signed all ballots. You can return all of your materials to the ballot check-in location, which will vary from tournament to tournament.

# Policy Debate

## General Information

Policy Debate is also called Team Debate or Cross Examination Debate. It is two teams of two debaters where the affirmative supports the resolution and the negative attacks it. The resolution, which remains the same the entire year, is always a proposition of policy. The debaters will try to show why their position is superior to the opponents'. The affirmative is responsible for providing a plan to solve for the problem(s) identified in the resolution.

Judges should never stop a debate to question the debaters about their position or the issues in the resolution. Neither should a judge try to educate the debaters about the issues in the round until after the ballot has been signed and turned in to the ballot check-in table. Oral critiques are permitted at some tournaments but prohibited at others.

A priority concern for judges of policy debate should be that most claims must be backed up by "evidence." This usually means quotations from experts on the issue as found in current periodicals, on the Internet, etc. Currency of the information, credibility of the source, and credentials of the writer may become important issues in the debate.

As a judge, you should state your concerns, prejudices, and paradigms prior to the start of the round. Some debaters, for example, speak very quickly (called "spreading"). If you prefer that students speak at a more normal speed, tell them this before the round begins, and they should adjust. This also applies to any special judging theories or paradigms. Be sure to keep these announcements short and to the point, and be sure both teams are present to hear your preferences.

Please be objective, setting aside any preconceived ideas you may have regarding the topic. Judge the round on who has done the best job of presenting persuasive, well-documented arguments. Ignore external factors such as the number of boxes available or "name dropping" concerning debate camps, tournaments, awards, etc.

If you are not an experienced judge, you will not be expected to write a complete "flow sheet" for the round. However, it is still a good idea to write down what you perceive to be the most important arguments. Judges should write comments to the debaters on the ballot. This assures that the coach will also get to see the feedback that the judge is providing. These comments can be largely critical; debaters want to know what didn't work, what the judge didn't buy as an argument or strategy. Comments on delivery, which impact judge comprehension, are always helpful. Debaters expect that the ballot will give a Reason For Decision (RFD). These are the arguments which you felt were the important ones in the round and which side you think won them.

Speaker points are very important to the tournament in breaking ties. At some tournaments, points awarded to speakers will be used to give awards to the top individual speakers.

Judges are expected to keep the official time for the round. Debaters often have their own timepieces and can time themselves or one another. That's fine, but the judge must also keep time. It is especially important for the judge to keep prep time for each team. They should tell you how they want time to be indicated.

## Speaking Order and Times

First Affirmative Constructive Speech (1AC)	8 minutes
1AC cross-examined by 2 NC	3 minutes
First Negative Constructive Speech (1NC)	8 minutes
1NC cross-examined by 1AC	3 minutes
Second Affirmative Constructive Speech (2AC)	8
minutes	
2AC cross-examined by 1NC	3 minutes
Second Negative Constructive Speech (2NC)	8 minutes
2NC cross-examined by 2AC	3 minutes
First Negative Rebuttal (1NR)	5 minutes
First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	5 minutes
Second Negative Rebuttal (2NR)	5 minutes
Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	5 minutes

Each team is entitled to preparation time, which can be used between speeches to prepare for the next speech. The amount of preparation time given to each team depends on the individual tournament.

## Sample Topics

*Resolved:* The United States federal government should substantially decrease its authority either to detain without charge or to search without probable cause. (2005-2006)

*Resolved:* That the United States federal government should establish a foreign policy substantially increasing its support of United Nations peacekeeping operations. (2004-2005)

## Glossary of Terms

*Policy debate uses a specialized vocabulary that is extensive and often complex. This is an alphabetized compilation of terms and expressions that are frequently used by contestants in this event. The glossary is intended as a reference guide for use during and after a round.*

**Abuse/abusive**—a strategy or argument which, although it may technically be within the rules, places the other team at an unfair disadvantage. Abuse may be structural (new arguments in rebuttals), or it may be interpersonal (making inaccurate assumptions about a person’s gender, race, or culture is abusive). Either team may allege that the other team has committed an abusive action. The judge is the sole determiner of what actions are considered abusive, whether a team is guilty of abuse, and what penalty should be applied to abusive teams.

**Advantages**—the advantages the affirmative claims will result from adoption of the plan. Advantages are a voting issue. Typically, the affirmative team must show that the advantages of adopting their plan outweigh any *disadvantages* presented by the negative team.

**Affirmative**—The team which advocates the resolution and offers a specific *plan*.

**A priori**—a question of theory which must be considered before other issues. A negative team may argue that *topicality* arguments are *a priori*.

**Block**—a fully developed, pre-written argument.

**Brink**—an argument employed by the negative as part of a *disadvantage*. The negative argues that the status quo is facing some sort of crucial decision or imminent danger. The affirmative plan, if adopted, will “tip the scales” and lead to the *impact* of the disadvantage.

**Burden of Proof**—The affirmative is required to prove the inadequacies of the status quo, the viability of the affirmative plan, and the advantages that will accrue from the plan. The negative is required to prove the validity of *off case arguments*.

**Card**—a piece of evidence used in support of an argument.

**Case**—the content of the first affirmative speech. Typically, this includes harms, inherency, the plan, and solvency. The speech may also include advantages.

**Case Arguments**—arguments in which a debater directly attacks or defends the affirmative case.

**Clash**—vigorous argumentation that directly answers the arguments of the other team. Clash is good. Losing one’s composure is not.

**Competition**—This is the key question in determining the legitimacy of a negative counterplan (see counterplan). The negative team must show why the counterplan competes with the affirmative plan; if it is possible to do both the plan and the counterplan, then the counterplan gives no justification for rejecting the plan. The two normal standards for competition are (1) mutual exclusivity: a claim that it is logically impossible to do both the plan and the counterplan, and (2) net benefits: a claim that adopting the counterplan alone would be more advantageous than adopting both the plan and the counterplan. Competition answers the question for the judge, “Why can’t I do both the plan and the counterplan?” Mutual exclusivity says one **can not** do both the plan and the counterplan; net benefits says one **should not** do both the plan and the counterplan.

**Constructive Speeches**—the first four speeches of the debate. The entire affirmative case is introduced in the first affirmative constructive speech. The primary negative arguments are introduced in the first negative constructive speech.

**Counterplan**—an alternative plan proposed by the negative team. The negative team must prove that the counterplan offers a greater net benefit than the affirmative plan. Therefore, they may claim that the counterplan offers better solvency, or they may offer a disadvantage argument and claim that the counterplan would escape the disadvantage. See- *competition*

**Cross Examination**—(Cross-Ex or CX)—the question and answer period which follows each constructive speech. In traditional cross-examination, two debaters stand side by side facing the judge. The debaters who remain seated do not ask or answer questions. If the judge allows “*open cross examination*,” the students’ partners may ask or answer questions in a tag team format. Only *one* person should be talking at any given time, however.

**Disclosing**—(Disclose)—To release arguments to the opposing side before the round begins.

**Disadvantage**—(Disad; DA)—a block argument in which the negative maintains that a significant problem will occur if the affirmative plan is adopted. Disadvantages are usually divided into three parts: *uniqueness*, *link*, and *impact*.

**Documentation**—the author, name of a source, date, etc., for a piece of evidence (card).

**Effects topicality**—see *mixing burdens*

**Evidence**—see *card*.

**Fiat**—in Latin, this word means “Let it be done.” The affirmative has the power of fiat when proposing a plan. In other words, they can assume that the plan would be adopted by the status quo. Therefore, the negative cannot simply argue that the plan would be unpopular and would be unlikely to be adopted.

**Flow**—the mapping of arguments in a debate.

**Flow Chart (flow sheet)**—a sheet or sheets of paper, divided into columns, on which debaters and judges map arguments in the debate. Typically, debaters and judges use one piece of paper for each major argument. Often affirmative arguments are written in black ink and negative in red.

**Generic Disadvantage**—a disadvantage which can be used against almost any plan.

**Impact**—a serious problem that will occur if the affirmative plan is enacted. It is the last argument of a disadvantage. An impact can be a single event such as a nuclear war or an economic depression; or it can be linear, meaning a related increase in a negative situation such as racism or imperialism.

**Inherency**—an affirmative argument showing that the harm is deeply rooted in the present system (that the harm will continue absent the adoption of the affirmative plan). The negative team will try to show that the status quo can and will solve the problem even without adopting the affirmative plan.

**Irony**—The debater advocates a radical, counterintuitive plan that would have to be rejected. Rejecting the plan, it is argued, necessitates deep nationwide reflection and leads to lasting solvency. For example, a team might argue that the U.S. should drop a nuclear weapon on a coral reef, thus forcing a national debate on the environment and weapons of mass destruction.

**Kritik**—(kri-teek) is a philosophical argument. A kritik argument can be introduced by either the affirmative or negative team, though it is more commonly a negative argument. There are many types of kritik arguments, but topics such as justice, Marxism, and language theory are common. If kritik arguments sound confusing and you do not wish to hear more about them, you may, before the round begins, request that the debaters not use kritik arguments.

A kritik is part of a negative strategy that makes global observations by which the judge can evaluate the affirmative plan. Negative teams usually use kritiks to prove that the affirmative team cannot achieve solvency because they have ignored a fundamental, underlying problem. They are sophisticated arguments that question fundamental issues of the world in which the affirmative plan exists. A kritik argument is similar to a *DA* in that there must be a clear *link* to the affirmative plan. One distinction is that the *DA* concludes with an *impact* whereas a kritik concludes with one or more *implications*. Implications are the logical end-result of the kritik. If a judge accepts the kritik, he/she is accepting that there is sufficient warrant for the implications. This may include a fundamental shift in the manner in which one is to perceive issues of policy. *Procedurally, a judge considers a kritik after topicality and before stock issues.*

**Lexis-Nexis**—an advanced, fee-based online service that offers full-text access to many newspapers, magazines, law reviews, and government documents.

**Link**—the specific connection between the plan and a disadvantage argument. An *internal link* is the specific connection between two ideas within the disadvantage argument.

**Mixing Burdens**—a *topicality* argument which claims that “topicality by effects” is illegitimate. Some affirmative plans will claim to be topical even though the plan (on its face) fails to implement the *resolution*, but the plan would lead to something topical. The negative team often answers that “topicality by effects” is illegitimate because it mixes the judge’s mutually exclusive burdens of evaluating topicality and solvency. In this case, one does not know whether the plan is topical until after the affirmative solvency evidence is evaluated. Since topicality is an *a priori*, procedural issue, it is inappropriate to force a judge to evaluate *solvency* before he/she can determine whether the case is topical.

**Multiple Actor Fiat**—when a plan or *counterplan* mandates simultaneous action by several “actors” it strains the bounds of credulity or normality. An example would be a counterplan proposing that all fifty states simultaneously adopt the affirmative plan. Against such a counterplan, an affirmative team might argue that it is abusive to fiat by multiple actors.

**Mutual Exclusivity**—one of the methods for establishing the *competitiveness* of a *counterplan*; see *competition*.

**Need**—(also called harm)—the problems in the status quo which demonstrate the need for the affirmative plan. Need is a *voting issue*.

**Negative**—the team which opposes the *resolution*. Typically, the negative will defend the status quo. Some negative teams, however, choose to defend a *counterplan* as an alternative to the status quo.

**Net Benefits**—one of the methods for establishing the competitiveness of a counterplan; see *competition*.

**Non-unique**—an affirmative answer to a disadvantage claiming that the *disadvantage* will happen regardless of whether the plan is adopted. Consider, for example, a budget disadvantage claiming that any new federal spending will destroy the budget consensus in Congress. The affirmative team could read evidence that Congress has just adopted some new spending program. Given this action, the

*disadvantage* should happen with or without the adoption of the plan. Since the *disadvantage* will happen in any event, it gives no reason to reject the affirmative plan.

**Observation**—a term used to label arguments.

**Off Case Argument**—negative arguments which are not direct attacks on the affirmative case. *Disadvantages, counterplans, topicality,* and the *kritik* are all examples of off case arguments.

**Performance**—the debaters introduce an artistic element such as a rap, a skit, poetry, or even props. This is typically done in the first affirmative speech. The purpose is to introduce compelling themes that cannot be captured by traditional methods. See also *irony*.

**Permutation**—a test of counterplan *competition*. Negative *counterplans* are relevant ONLY if they offer some reason to reject the affirmative plan. The negative team must show that the *counterplan* is *competitive*: that the adoption of the counterplan ALONE is more desirable than the plan plus the *counterplan*. The affirmative team will often describe a particular way that one could adopt the plan and *counterplan* at the same time and achieve a net benefit: such descriptions are called permutations.

**Plan**—the affirmative team’s proposal for changing the status quo. Debaters will present the plan in the first affirmative speech. The plan is a *voting issue*.

**Plan Meet Need**—(PMN, also called *solvency*) the plan must *solve* some or all of the problems *inherent* in the present system. The affirmative does not need to prove 100% solvency in order to win.

**Policy** – (also *policy issues*) Matters of political and/ or governmental policy related to the resolution.

**Presumption** – The assumption that conditions and policies should remain as they are. The affirmative side has the burden to prove that the *status quo* should be changed.

**Prima Facie**—a Latin phrase which means “on first view.” In debate, the term means that the affirmative team has the responsibility in the first affirmative speech to offer a case which establishes the essential stock issues of (1) *significance of harm*, (2) *inherency*, and (3) *solvency*.

**Reason for Decision (RFD)**—the specific reason why a judge votes for one team rather than another.

**Rebuttal Speech**—the last four speeches in the debate. No new arguments may be presented in rebuttals, but new evidence may be presented in defense of existing arguments.

**Resolution**—the debate topic for the year written out in sentence form.

**Reverse Voting Issue (RVI)**—When a team claims that an argument of the other team is so clearly abusive that a judge should give them a loss despite any other arguments in the round.

**Significance**—(also *significance of harm*) a *voting issue*; the affirmative team must prove that a serious problem exists in the present system.

**Sign Posting** – listing of arguments in outline form. Some debaters use sign posting; some do not. Sign posting can be helpful, but is not a requirement.

**Solvency**—the plan must *solve* for the problems the affirmative team claims are *inherent* in the status quo. Solvency is a voting issue.

**Spread**—to speak rapidly in order to introduce more evidence and more arguments. The opposing team is forced to “spread” itself thin because it must respond to more arguments and evidence.

**Status Quo**—the current governmental policy situation regarding the topic.

**Stock Issues** – See *voting issues*.

**Topicality**—(sometimes just called “T”) a procedural argument used by the negative team. They will claim that the plan proposed by the affirmative team is outside the bounds of the topic of the resolution. The negative team should win if the judge agrees that the plan is non-topical since topicality is an *a priori* issue. There are several varieties of topicality arguments, but most will focus on one word in the resolution.

**Turn**—an argument usually made by an affirmative team against a disadvantage. The “turn” or “turnaround” can take one of two forms: (1) “Link turns” claim that the plan, far from causing the disadvantage, would actually prevent the disadvantage from happening; (2) “Impact turns” claim that if the plan did cause the disadvantage, it would actually be a good thing rather than a bad thing. One of the worst mistakes debaters can make is to turn BOTH the links and the impacts, creating a “double turn”, and thus reinforcing their opponents’ case.

**Uniqueness**—the first argument in most disadvantage arguments. It establishes what is happening in the status quo, and that the status quo is not problematic. Typically the debater then moves to the *link* in the disadvantage.

**Voting Issue (voter)**—the key issues of the debate. The primary issues which the judge must consider in rendering his/her decision. The traditional voting issues are (1) *topicality*, (2) *significance of harm*, (3) *inherency*, (4) *solvency*, and (5) *advantage over disadvantage*. Traditionally, if the negative team wins any one of these issues, they should win the debate. In contemporary debate, several judging paradigms have emerged that tend to prioritize certain voting issues.

## Judging Paradigms

In some cases, you may hear contestants use these terms to describe a certain type of judge. This overview of approaches to judging policy debate (also called *paradigms*) is included merely so that you can understand the meaning of these terms.

**Games Playing** The debate is viewed as a game played according to a fair set of rules. There are many possible ways to play the debate game, including all of the other paradigms.

**Hypothesis Testing** The resolution is viewed as a scientific hypothesis and the debaters are like scientists, testing it from every conceivable direction.

**Policymaker** The judge serves as a pseudo-legislator, weighing the relative advantages and disadvantages of the plan.

**Stock Issues** The judge evaluates the five primary voting issues. This is the most conservative voting paradigm and generally excludes off-case arguments such as counterplans, kritiks, and sometimes disadvantages.

**Tabula rasa** A Latin term meaning 'blank slate'. Also called Tabs. The judge claims to have no preconceptions regarding the arguments.

# Extemporaneous Speaking (All Forms)

## General Information

1. In this event, students are given thirty (30) minutes of preparation time to deliver a speech of not less than four (4) and not more than seven (7) minutes that answers a question about a topic of public interest, almost always pertaining to current events.
2. Unlike other speech events, only the judge and one contestant at a time will be present in the room. The first speaker will arrive when his/her 30 minutes of preparation time have elapsed, and then each subsequent speaker will come into the room at approximately seven (7) minute intervals. In elimination rounds at some tournaments, cross examination is added to each speech. This procedure will be explained if it is used at a tournament where you are judging.
3. It is imperative that you keep time and give time signals in this event because the student is delivering the speech for the first time. Ask the student how he/she would like you to give time signals.
4. Ballots should be written during the speeches. Do not take extra time between speakers to write ballots because the delay will give some students more preparation time than others.
5. Unless you are at a tournament where different instructions are given, students should not speak with the aid of notes.

## Criteria for Judging

1. The speaker should use the same wording as the question that he/she drew (when the contestant gives you his/her ballot, the question will be stapled to or written on the ballot).
2. The speaker should give you sufficient background information to understand the topic that he/she is speaking about.
3. The speaker should give a clear, focused answer to the question that may include evidence, analysis, and interpretation.
4. The speech should be well organized, including a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
5. The speaker should use a variety of evidence—quantitative, qualitative, and/or analytical/logical—to support his/her answer. When evidence is from a published source, that source must be cited properly (at a minimum, the name of the source and the date it was published). Whenever a source is quoted directly, the name of the person who said or wrote it must also be stated.
6. A sufficient amount of evidence and analysis must be presented such that an objective person would find the speaker's answer to be reasonable. **Caution:** Many Extemp speeches deal with topics of a controversial nature. It is important that you not allow your own personal viewpoints to impact

your judgment of the speaker's performance. Also, it is not appropriate for you to discuss the contents of the speech with the speaker after the speech is finished, nor should you ask questions of the speaker.

7. Consider the speaker's delivery. The speaker should be engaging, use an appropriate tone, and incorporate natural hand gestures and movement. The speaker's delivery should enhance the persuasiveness of his or her speech.

## **League Differences**

### *1. Events & Topics*

In NSDA & NJSDL, Extemporaneous Speaking is split into two events: International (IX; also called Foreign or FX) and United States (USX, also called Domestic or DX). In the former category, students only draw questions about diplomacy, global problems, and American foreign policy. In the latter category, students only draw questions about events inside of the United States (political, economic, social, cultural) as well as American foreign policy.

In the NCFL, students compete in Mixed Extemporaneous Speaking (MX). At these competitions, students alternate between answering questions relating to events in the United States (politics, the economy, social/moral issues, modern culture, etc.) and international events (domestic and economic issues in other countries, international institutions, diplomatic concerns, American foreign policy, etc.)

### *2. Timing*

NSDA: Extemporaneous speeches are a maximum of seven (7) minutes. There is no minimum time. Overtime may be penalized at the discretion of the judge.

NJSDL: Extemporaneous speeches must be four (4) minutes minimum and seven (7) minutes maximum. There is a 30 second grace period, as in the NCFL (see below).

NCFL: An Extemporaneous speech lasts for a maximum of seven (7) minutes with up to thirty (30) additional seconds as a grace period. If the student speaks beyond the grace period, he/she may not be ranked first place in the round. You must keep time, give time signals, and record the time of each speech on the master ballot.

# **Impromptu Speaking**

## **General Information**

Each contestant will draw three topics and choose one. The other two are returned to the judge/topic pool. Time starts after the contestant selects his topic. The contestant will have a total of seven minutes to use for preparation and delivery of the “speech”.

Topics will cover a variety of areas. The contestant will be free to develop any approach to the topic; however, information presented should be well-chosen, pertinent, and sufficient to support the central thought of the topic.

The material should be organized according to some logical plan to produce a complete ‘speech’ with the time allowed.

The judge in the room will conduct the drawing and keep time.

## **Criteria for Judging**

### **Content:**

1. Originality in subject matter.
2. Correctness and emphasis of composition, particularly with regard to rules of grammar, word usage, and sentence structure.

### **Delivery:**

1. Effective use of vocal qualities such as force, rate, enunciation, and pronunciation.
2. Effective use of gesture and facial expression.
3. General poise.

## **League Differences**

Impromptu is a consolation event at NSDA Nationals. It is a main contest event in the NJSDL. It does not exist in the NCFL.

# **Improvistional Acting**

## **General Information**

Each contestant will draw three situations and choose one. The other two are returned to the judge/topic pool. Time starts after the contestant selects his/her scenario. The contestant will have a total of seven minutes to use for preparation and delivery of a scene.

The scene may be humorous or dramatic in nature and may be delivered as a monologue or as a dialogue between multiple characters.

The scene should be organized with a clear development of plot, including a clear opening and closing. Movement and blocking should be appropriately utilized in the creative expression of plot and/or character. The judge in the room will conduct the drawing and keep time.

## **Criteria for Judging**

### **Content:**

1. Originality in subject matter.
2. Creativity in plot and character development.

### **Delivery:**

1. Effective use of vocal qualities such as force, rate, enunciation, and pronunciation.
2. Effective use of gesture and facial expression
3. Appropriate blocking and movement.

## **League Differences**

Improvistional Acting is a main contest event in the NJSDL. It does not exist in the NCFL or NSDA.

# Original Oratory

## General Information

1. Oratory is a speech of up to ten (10) minutes that must have been composed by the student delivering it and must be memorized. The purpose of the oration should be to inform and/or persuade (convince, stimulate, actuate, etc.). It may be presented as a problem solution.
2. The oration must be primarily composed and delivered from the standpoint of the speaker.
3. Visual and audio-visual aids are not permitted.
4. No more than one hundred and fifty (150) words of the oration may be direct quotations from any other speech or writing. Extensive paraphrasing of any other source is prohibited as well.
5. An oration may be used in one year of competition only.

## Criteria for Judging

1. **Topic:** The topic should be interesting, stimulating, and of some importance. Speakers must not be penalized for expressing views with which the judge happens to disagree.
2. **Structure:** The introduction should gain attention and include a transition that leads to the purpose of the speech (problem or topic). It should present a clear thesis and give some direction as to how the speech will unfold or develop. The body should be organized for easy understanding. Transitional words/devices should help to sign post or preview points. The conclusion should recap key points and make you want to think more about the topic. Frequently, the conclusion will refer to something from the introduction.
3. **Development:** The speaker should be held accountable for substantiating and supporting main positions. There should be a variety of effective supporting material from qualified sources. There should also be clear explanation that helps the listener follow the speech's flow and appreciate the use of supporting material. Quotations, paraphrasing, examples and personal anecdotes are methods of support that are common in oratory.
4. **Language:** The word choice should be clear and potent. Figures of speech and rhetorical devices should be used effectively.
5. **Vocal Delivery:** The speaker should be articulate and fluent. The speaker should make use of contrast and the elements of vocal variety: pitch, volume, rate, pausing, phrasing, stress, and tone. The speaker should stress words to enhance meaning. The speaker should be conversational and concerned, passionate and pleasing. The speaker should be in control of the words and the emotions.
6. **Physical Delivery:** The speaker should vary facial expression to accentuate the natural flow of thoughts and feelings. The speaker's eyes should show thinking and feeling. The speaker should make eye contact with the audience. The speaker's stance should be erect and controlled, without

distracting movements. Movement (walking), if used, should be motivated by transitions in thought or mood. Gestures should be natural, visible, and effectively used for emphasis. Gestures should be used to enhance the performance, not detract from it. There should be a balance between content and delivery.

## **League Differences**

### *1. Timing*

An oration lasts for a maximum of ten (10) minutes with up to thirty (30) additional seconds as a grace period. If the student speaks beyond the grace period, he/she may not be ranked first place in the round. You must keep time, give time signals, and record the time of each speech on the master ballot.

### *2. Performance Limits*

In the NCFL, while singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance. In the NCFL, the speaker may adopt another persona for no more than one (1) minute in the entire performance. The NSDA and NJSDL have no rules regarding these issues.

# Oratorical Declamation

## General Information

1. In Declamation, students present a memorized speech of not less than five (5) and no more than ten (10) minutes in length that must have been actually delivered in real life as a speech by a speaker other than the present contestant. Selections may include, but are not limited to, professional speeches, public orations, eulogies, sermons, etc. Declamations may not be oratories previously presented by other competitors.
2. The introduction must name the work and author and describe the actual circumstances under which the speech was originally presented.
3. The original speaker's words may not be altered for Declamation, with the exception that cutting is permitted.

## Criteria for Judging

**Introduction:** The introduction must name the work and author, provide necessary background information, and establish the mood. If using a teaser, or if lines from the selection are used in the introduction, the speaker must adhere to the rules of the event.

**Presentation Style:** The speaker should convey the message in a sincere, honest, and realistic attempt to recreate the spirit of the original presentation. Although the style of delivery chosen by the speaker should be judged in light of the purpose of the speech, artificiality is to be discredited. The message should be conveyed credibly and convincingly as if the words were the speaker's own. This event is an interpretation, not an impersonation.

**Vocal Delivery:** The speaker should be articulate and fluent. The speaker should make use of contrast and the elements of vocal variety: pitch, volume, rate, pausing, phrasing, stress, and tone. The speaker should be conversational and concerned, passionate and pleasing. The speaker should be in control of the words and the emotions. The speaker should sound confident, self-assured, and seem eager to enlighten the audience. The speaker should convey the message in a sincere, honest, and realistic style in an attempt to recreate the spirit of the original presentation.

**Physical Delivery:** The speaker should use body language that enhances the performance. The speaker should vary facial expression to accentuate the natural flow of thoughts and feelings. The speaker should make eye contact with the audience. The speaker's stance should be erect and controlled, without distracting movements. Movement, if used, should be motivated by transitions in thought or mood. Gestures should be visible, effectively used for emphasis, and varied.

**Overall Effect:** The speaker should project an understanding of the speech's message. The speaker should instill in the audience a concern for the speech's content. The original speaker's message should not be overshadowed by the delivery.



## **League Differences**

### *1. Event Offering*

Declamation is a CFL event but is also available at NJSDL tournaments. It is only open to students in grades 9 and 10 at NJSDL and CFL tournaments. This event does not exist in NSDA.

### *2. Timing*

In the NJSDL, a declamation lasts for a minimum of five (5) minutes and a maximum of ten (10) minutes with up to thirty (30) additional seconds as a grace period. If the student speaks beyond the grace period, he/she may not be ranked first place in the round. You must keep time, give time signals, and record the time of each speech on the master ballot.

This event does not exist in NSDA.

### *3. Introductions*

The introduction and transitional material (“teaser”) is limited to one (1) minute of the entire presentation. The introduction must name the work, author, and describe the circumstances under which the speech was originally presented.

# Oral Interpretation of Literature (Prose and Poetry)

## General Information

1. An interpreter reads either prose or poetry selections while holding a script. Students must prepare separate prose and poetry selections, which they will perform in alternating rounds. In any given round, a judge will hear either all poetry or all prose.
2. The selection should be literature, either as a single piece, a cutting, or a series of short pieces united by theme or author. Literature includes ALL forms of prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction, except plays and oratorical compositions.
3. The author's words may not be altered except that cutting is allowed. A reordering of lines or scenes or sections of scenes is allowed as long as the intent of the author is not changed. Speakers may not reassign lines from one character to another.
4. Since this is a reading, a manuscript is required. The manuscript consists of a copy of the selection placed in a small binder. Students may not read from the original source.
5. No costumes or props are allowed. The script should not be used as a prop.
6. Walking is not permitted. The student must remain "planted;" touching a knee to the floor is not permitted.

## Criteria for Judging

1. **Delivery:** The interpreter should be able to demonstrate the feelings and thoughts of character(s) through the use of vocal inflection, facial expressions, and appropriate intensity. If they are utilized, character voices should be distinctive, consistent and appropriate to the character(s). Interpreters should make direct eye contact with the audience. Characters, if used, should have distinct focal points. Gesture, if used, must be appropriate to the selection.
2. **Introduction:** The introduction must name the work(s) and the author(s). It should provide enough background information to set the mood and tone of the reading selection. The introduction may precede the selection or come after a brief "teaser." The introduction must be memorized, with the manuscript closed.
3. **Projection of Literature:** The interpreter should demonstrate a clear understanding of the literature and project its meaning. The interpreter should establish a strong sense of environment, seeing and replaying the events in literature. There should be no preference given to the serious or humorous nature of the selection. Readings should be judged upon the merits of performance, not the use of humor or tragedy. Literature chosen by the interpreter should be appropriate to the audience. Consideration should be given to the literary merit of the selection.

4. **Audience & Script:** Interpreters should refer to the script regularly. They should not be so dependent upon the script that they are bound to it. There should be a natural balance between the audience and the script. One should not take precedence over the other.

## **League Differences**

### *1. Event Offering*

Oral Interpretation is a main event in the NCFL.

In the NSDA, Oral Interpretation is only performed as a supplemental event at the National Tournament in June, and it is divided into two separate programs (prose and poetry). In the NJSDL, OI is split into Prose and Poetry, but is a main contest event.

### *2. Timing*

In the CFL and NJSDL, an OI lasts for a maximum of ten (10) minutes with up to thirty (30) additional seconds as a grace period. If the student speaks beyond the grace period, he/she may not be ranked first place in the round. You must keep time, give time signals, and record the time of each speech on the master ballot.

In the NSDA, an oral interpretation (of EITHER Prose OR Poetry) is a maximum of five (5) minutes. Overtime may be penalized at the discretion of the judge.

### *3. Singing*

While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance.

NSDA has no rules regarding these issues.

### *4. Introductions*

In the NCFL, the introduction and transitional material ("teaser") is limited to one (1) minute of the entire presentation.

The NSDA and NJSDL have no specific rule about time limits on introductions.

### *5. Movement*

In the NCFL, speakers should keep gesture and bodily movement to a minimum. The selection should be delivered from center stage. Movement and gestures, if used, should be appropriate to the selection. Speakers should not walk during performances. They should emphasize vocal variety and facial expression to enhance the literary interpretation.

The NSDA and NJSDL have no specific rule about gesture and movement.

# Duo Interpretation of Literature

## General Information

1. Duo Interpretation is an event that challenges two students to render a dynamic moment utilizing appropriate vocal expression, movement, and interaction. These features enable a well-prepared Duo team to produce a believable scene without the use of costuming or props.
2. The material may be humorous or dramatic or may combine both tones. The selection must be memorized; no scripts are to be used.
3. The author's words may not be altered except that cutting is allowed. A reordering of lines or scenes or sections of scenes is allowed as long as the intent of the author is not changed. Speakers may not reassign lines from one character to another.

## Judging Criteria

1. **Introduction:** An introduction must be provided that names the work and author. Other pertinent information may be used to establish the mood. The only time characters may look at one another or touch one another is in the introduction. The introduction may be at the beginning of the performance or may come after a teaser.
2. **Overall Effect:** The performers should convince you that they truly see the other character(s) and/or narrator. Each character should listen and react with face and body, especially as the other is talking. The characters should see and respond to what is around them. They should take the audience into the physical world of their story, but they may not look directly at each other or make any physical contact with the other.
3. **Movement:** Movement is unique to each league—see *League Differences* below.
4. **Appropriateness of Selection:** Consideration should be given to the literary merit of the selection.

## League Differences

### 1. *Timing*

In the NJSDL, a duo presentation lasts for a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of ten (10) minutes with up to thirty (30) additional seconds as a grace period. If the student speaks beyond the grace period, he/she may not be ranked first place in the round. You must keep time, give time signals, and record the time of each speech on the master ballot.

### 2. *Literature*

In NSDA and NJSDL, the selection must be from a single published literary work: one novel, one short story, one play, or one poem.

In CFL, the selection must be from a single published play, single fictional or non-fictional work, poem or series of poems united by a single author.

### 3. *Characters*

**Contestants in this event may portray more than one character.** Regardless of league, the performance should be balanced between both partners.

### 4. *Movement*

In NSDA and NJSDL, there are no limitations on movement. However, the performers may not make any physical contact with one another, except during the introduction.

In the NCFL, the selection must begin from center stage. Performers are not allowed to make physical contact except during the introduction. Physical movement is restricted to performers moving around one another, switching positions, pivoting from side to side or turning around completely.

### 5. *Singing*

NSDA and NJSDL have no specific rules about singing.

In the NCFL, while singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance.

### 6. *Introductions*

In the NCFL, the introduction and transitional material ("teaser") is limited to one (1) minute of the entire presentation.

NSDA and NJSDL have no specific rule about time limits on introductions.

# **Dramatic Performance and Humorous/Dramatic Interpretation**

## **General Information**

1. In this set of events, a student performs a memorized cutting from a published piece of literature for a minimum of five (5) minutes to a maximum of ten (10) minutes for the purpose of creating a compelling scene.
2. The student may portray one (1) or more characters. No preference should be automatically given to a performance on the basis of the number of characters presented.
3. The student may not use props or costuming. The performer should not use their own clothing or jewelry as a prop in the scene.
4. The author's words may not be altered except that cutting is allowed. A reordering of lines or scenes or sections of scenes is allowed as long as the intent of the author is not changed. Speakers may not reassign lines from one character to another.

## **Judging Criteria**

1. **Overall Effect:** The overall performance should build to various moments and have a climax. The story should be complete and easy to follow. The performance should display another world outside of the performance space.
2. **Movement:** The performer should effectively utilize movement to create the character's (or characters') world in the minds of the audience. Movement and gesture should enhance development of the character/scene. However, no physical action should be performed if it distracts the audience from the focus of the literature.
3. **Introduction:** A student must provide an introduction in which he/she states the title and author of the selection and establishes the theme. The introduction may be at the beginning of the performance or may come after a teaser.
4. **Eye Contact:** Students should use "off stage focus," except during the introduction and when portraying characters who address the audience directly. Generally, the performer's "focal points" should be kept within the bounds of the audience.
5. **Appropriateness of Selection:** Consideration should be given to the literary merit of the selection.
6. **Delivery:** If multiple characters are used, each character portrayed should be vocally and physically distinct throughout the performance.

## League Differences

### 1. *Events*

In the NCFL, students may perform dramatic or humorous scenes in a single event called Dramatic Performance (DP). You will probably hear both dramatic and humorous selections in the same round. Some students may even do selections that mix both genres. **However, neither humorous nor dramatic material should have an advantage.** Consider each selection and performance based on its merits.

In the NSDA and NJSDL, students are entered into either Humorous or Dramatic Interpretation depending on the nature of their selection.

### 2. *Timing*

The presentation lasts for more than five (5) minutes at a minimum up to a maximum of ten (10) minutes with up to thirty (30) additional seconds as a grace period. If the student speaks beyond the grace period, he/she may not be ranked first place in the round. You must keep time, give time signals, and record the time of each speech on the master ballot.

### 3. *Literary Selections*

In the CFL, the presentation must be from a single published play, or a single published script, single fictional or non-fictional work, excluding poetry.

In the NSDA and NJSDL, the selection must be from a single published literary work: one novel, one short story, one play, or one poem.

### 4. *Singing*

The NSDA and NJSDL have no specific rules about singing.

While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance.

### 5. *Introductions*

In the CFL, the introduction and transitional material ("teaser") is limited to one (1) minute of the entire presentation.

The NSDA and NJSDL have no specific rule about time limits on introductions.

# Informative Speaking

## General Information

1. In Informative Speaking a student delivers a self-written, memorized speech on a topic of his/her choosing for a maximum of ten (10) minutes with a 30 second grace period. There is no mandated minimum time.
2. The purpose of the speech is to inform, explain, describe or illustrate a particular topic for the audience. Any other purpose such as to entertain or to convince is secondary.
3. The student must orally cite source materials throughout the speech and only 150 directly quoted words may be used. The use of audio or visual aids to supplement and reinforce the message is optional. Costumes and live animals or additional people as visual aids are not allowed.

## Judging Criteria

1. **Subject:** The topic should primarily enhance the knowledge and understanding of the audience.
2. **Structure:** The introduction should gain attention and include a transition that leads to a clear thesis that gives some direction as to how the speech will unfold or develop. Since the speech is not persuasive, the goal of the argument is not to advocate for change; instead the goal is to inform. Therefore, the 2-4 arguments that make up the body are used to establish the significance of the topic or to argue that the topic merits discussion. The body should be organized for easy understanding. Transitional words/devices should help to sign post or preview points. The conclusion should recap key points and make you want to think more about the topic.
3. **Development:** The speaker should be held accountable for substantiating and supporting major arguments. There should be a variety of effective supporting material from credible sources. There should also be clear explanation that helps the listener follow the speech's flow and appreciate the use of supporting material.
4. **Language:** The word choice should be clear and potent. Figures of speech and rhetorical devices should be used effectively.
5. **Vocal Delivery:** The speaker should be articulate, fluent, and engaging. The speaker should make use of the elements of vocal variety: pitch, volume, rate, pausing, phrasing, stress, and tone. The speaker should stress words to enhance meaning. The speaker's style and message should be appropriate for the audience. The speaker should be in control of the words and the emotions.

**6. Physical Delivery:** The speaker should vary facial expression to accentuate the natural flow of thoughts and feelings. The speaker's eyes should show thinking and feeling. The speaker should make eye contact with the audience. The speaker's stance should be erect and controlled, without distracting movements. Movement (walking), if used, should be motivated by transitions in thought or mood. Gestures should be natural, visible, and effectively used for emphasis. Gestures should be used to enhance the performance, not detract from it. There should be a balance between content and delivery. Audio/visual aids should enhance the content.

## **League Differences**

Informative Speaking is a new pilot event that is being offered by the NSDA in 2015-16. Member schools may enter up to two students in the event at their District Tournament. The entries will not count toward the school's entry quota. The NCFL does not offer this event.

# Program Oral Interpretation

## General Information

1. Program Oral Interpretation (POI) is a program of thematically-linked selections chosen from two or three genres: prose, poetry, drama (plays).
2. 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.
3. 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. Adaptations may be used only for the purpose of transition.
4. The time limit is a maximum of ten (10) minutes with a 30 second grace period. There is no mandated minimum time.
5. The use of manuscript is required. No costumes or props may be used except for the manuscript. The intact manuscript may be used by the contestant as a prop as long as it remains in the contestant's control at all times.
6. Sources must meet all NSDA Interpretation rules for publication.

## Criteria for Judging

1. **Delivery:** The interpreter should be able to demonstrate the feelings and thoughts of character(s) through the use of vocal inflection, facial expressions, and appropriate intensity. If they are utilized, character voices should be distinctive, consistent and appropriate to the character(s). Interpreters should make direct eye contact with the audience. Characters, if used, should have distinct focal points. Gesture, if used, must be appropriate to the selection.
2. **Introduction:** The introduction is written by the student and must name the work(s) and the author(s). The introduction should set the stage, enhancing the interpretation of the literature to the audience, providing information and analysis to the chosen theme. All selections must be verbally identified by title and author. However, where, when, and how these are accomplished are the speaker's decisions.

3. **Thematic Program:** Contestants should be evaluated on how effective their argument/theme is projected in the total program. 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. There is an expectation to use at least two pieces of literature each presenting a different genre with approximately equal times devoted to each genre. This distinction pertains to these three genres as whole, not types of literature within a genre, such as fiction/nonfiction. Literature chosen by the interpreter should be appropriate to the audience and argument/theme.

4. **Audience & Script:** Interpreters must refer to the script regularly. They should not be so dependent upon the script that they are bound to it. There should be a natural balance between the audience and the script. One should not take precedence over the other. The intact manuscript may be used by the contestant as a prop as long as it remains in the contestant's control at all times.

## **League Differences**

Program Oral Interpretation is a new pilot event that is being offered by the NSDA in 2015-16. Member schools may enter up to two students in the event at their District Tournament. The entries will not count toward the school's entry quota. The NCFL does not offer this event.

## Resources for Individual Events (Speech) Judges

### Generic Comments

Please note that these are general comments to use as a guideline only. The comments you write on the ballot should be specific to the individual performance.

#### Positive Comments

#### Constructive comments

<p>Excellent attention-getter and transition to main points          Good conclusion; tied to introduction          Excellent use of sign posting (stating points in advance and then referring back to them)          Excellent vocal variety          Effective eye contact          Good use of gestures; very natural!          Excellent rate of speaking          Volume was appropriate for size of room          Excellent facial expressions          Effective use of evidence/support/citations          Good choice of topic/selection</p>	<p>Need to transition to main point          Weak introduction          Weak conclusion; restate points and tie into introduction          You need 3 areas of analysis          Performance was too monotone          Look up more; make eye contact          Too much unnecessary movement          Gestures were distracting/stiff          Delivery was too fast/too slow          Adjust volume for the room          Inappropriate facial expressions          Not enough evidence to support your argument/point          Give specific citations for your evidence          Topic/selection was weak/offensive</p>
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### Judging Grid

This matrix is used by many speech judges to assist them in tracking the rankings of contestants as the round progresses.

Speaker #	Code	After 1 <sup>st</sup>	After 2 <sup>nd</sup>	After 3 <sup>rd</sup>	After 4 <sup>th</sup>	After 5 <sup>th</sup>	After 6 <sup>th</sup>	After 7 <sup>th</sup>
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								

Start by writing in the code numbers of the contestants in the order in which they will speak (the first speaker's code goes next to the "1" box). After each speaker has finished, mark down the rankings of all speakers up to that point. For example, after the first speaker has finished, give that person "1"

since he/she is in 1<sup>st</sup> place. After the second speaker has finished, you are ready to give one of the speakers a “1” ranking and the other speaker a “2” ranking. If you do this for all speakers, then you will be done ranking the round as soon as it has ended! Transfer this information to the master ballot and the speaker’s individual ballots.

Here is a sample of a completed grid:

Speaker #	Code	After 1 <sup>st</sup>	After 2 <sup>nd</sup>	After 3 <sup>rd</sup>	After 4 <sup>th</sup>	After 5 <sup>th</sup>	After 6 <sup>th</sup>	After 7 <sup>th</sup>
1	AB102	1	1	2	3	4	5	5
2	BC104		2	3	4	5	6	6
3	AT109			1	1	1	2	2
4	BF117				2	3	4	4
5	AH101					2	3	3
6	AR105						1	1
7	AX104							7

It may also be helpful to use the grid to assign speaker points. Remember that the contestant you ranked first should have points greater than or equal to the contestant you ranked second, the contestant you ranked second should have points greater than or equal to the contestant you ranked third, etc.