

Judging Individual Events

Individual events are speeches and performances that students present. There are 12 distinct individual events, but they fall into just a few categories. This guide will tell you what equipment you need, what to expect, how to judge these events, and some general tips on how to make the judging experience more enjoyable for you and the competitors.

What you need to bring

Please bring a pen, a digital timer, a book (or something to do while waiting) and an open mind.

Ballots and Judging

Before each round, you will be given a Cover Sheet and 7 ballots/feedback forms. Each ballot will be filled out during and/or after each speech you watch. Be prepared to give both positive feedback and constructive criticism on the ballots. Remember that these competitors are children, so please be constructive and polite while leaving feedback that can help them find areas for improvement. NEVER use the ballot as a means of contacting students (no email addresses, phone numbers, etc.) In all individual events, you will rank students 1st to 7th, (1st being the best in the round). No ties are allowed. Please record the Rank on the ballots, along with notes for the students. The ranks must be recorded on the cover sheet as well.

Please time each speech and **write down the length of the speech** (MM:SS) next to the speaker's name on your Cover Sheet

Your criteria for judging should generally include clarity, organization, memorization, fluidity, and poise. More information about specific judging criteria for each event, as well as violations will be on the coversheet for each specific event. When you turn in your ballot, please wait a moment for the ballot worker to double check it for you. If there is a mistake, they will ask you to make a change- please do so and turn in your ballot for a second review.

Original Events

Originals are speeches that are meant to inform and/or persuade. They are generally 8-10 minutes in length and should be memorized. They can be on just about any topic and will often include citations of sources. These speeches are written by the students and represent the student's original work. These are very similar to many types of speeches you have heard before in public speaking. When judging originals, look for quality of *writing, organization, quality of sources, smooth and clear delivery, eye contact, enthusiasm, and confidence*. Please time the students and record the times on the cover sheet. **DO NOT** give them time signals!

- **Original Oratory** - an original speech to persuade you on any appropriate topic or issue. This speech is meant to inspire you to a new way of thinking and/or behaving. Sources encouraged.
- **Original Advocacy** – similar to original oratory. The speech must advocate a specific solution changing a law, policy, or regulation. Sources encouraged.
- **Expository** - an original speech informing you about something. Visual aids are encouraged. Sources encouraged.
- **Original Prose & Poetry** - literature written by the performer. The quality of the writing as well as the performance should be considered in the judging.

Limited Preparation

With Limited Prep speeches, the competitor has a limited amount of time to prepare the speech. With all types of speeches you give time signals (unless the tournament provides a timer to come along with you).

- **Extemp** - students will receive a question on a current event in a separate “prep” room. They have 30 minutes to prepare and will walk into the room one at a time, 7 minutes apart. You will give them time signals from 5 minutes down. Listen for their organization and the efficiency in answering their question. NO notes should be used during the speech!
- **Impromptu**, you will give the student a piece of paper with 3 topics on it. The student has 2 minutes to select their topic and prepare for a 5 minute speech. After two minutes, tell the student to begin speaking. During the speech, give time signals counting down from 4 minutes (4, 3, 2, 1, 30 seconds, finger count down from 10 seconds).

Interpretation Events

Interpretation events are events written by a 3rd party performed by the student. They are generally 8-10 minutes in length and should be memorized. These will be a variety of topics and will include an introduction of the piece with the title of the piece(s) and authors name(s). When judging interp, look for *smooth and clear delivery, development of a character and/or story, ability to portray multiple distinct characters, confidence, and poise*. Please time the students and record the times on the cover sheet. **DO NOT** give them time signals!

- **Thematic Interpretation** - communicate a theme using 3+ pieces. Competitors should use a black book.
- **Humorous Interpretation** - should be funny, but goal is best performance.
- **Dramatic Interpretation** - should be serious, but goal is best performance.
- **Duo Interpretation** - 2 people, any subject matter; students will not make eye contact with or touch each other **except** during the intro.
- **Oratorical Interpretation** - performing someone else's speech. Speaker, occasion, and date of original speech should be given in the introduction.

Congress

Students will give a three-minute speech either in favor of or in opposition to a bill. There will also be one minute of cross examination. Please note that students are not necessarily guaranteed speaking time. It is the competitor's responsibility to make sure that they are heard if they so desire. Each room will have a Parliamentarian – a coach or former competitor who is there to assist you and the chamber with procedure. You will be provided a seating chart to help mark speakers, take notes, etc. At the end of the round, you will rank participants similar to the speech rounds. For Preliminary rounds of Congress there will be multiple judges, please make an independent decision on your ranking sheet. Please do not discuss your judging decisions until AFTER you turn in your ranking sheet.

PLEASE DO NOT TALK TO COMPETITORS ABOUT YOUR JUDGING DECISIONS UNTIL AFTER YOU TURN IN YOUR BALLOTS! They will read your comments after the tournament.