



# National Tournament Competition Events

This guide is provided to give an overview of events offered at the National Junior Forensic League National Middle School Forensic Tournament.

***Some rules and regulations are subject to change, and will be finalized by March 1, 2013.***

Entry limits, tournament procedures and other guidelines will be determined by March 1, 2013.

## Time Limits

Declamation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Congress: sponsor speech	3 min. + 2-min. questioning
Dramatic Interpretation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Congress: first negative	3 min. + 2-min. questioning
Duo Interpretation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Congress: other speeches	3 min. + 1-min. questioning
Extemporaneous Speaking	7 min. + 30-sec. grace		
Humorous Interpretation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Lincoln-Douglas Debate	Varies – see LD page
Impromptu Speaking	8 min. + 30-sec. grace	Policy Debate	Varies – see Policy Debate page
Original Oratory	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Public Forum	Varies – see PF page
Poetry Interpretation	7 min. + 30-sec. grace		
Prose Interpretation	7 min. + 30-sec. grace	TV Commercial (Exhibition)	3 min. + 30-sec. grace
Storytelling	5 min. + 30-sec. grace		

## Topics

Throughout the school year, click “Current Topics” on the website to view debate topics for both the middle and high school levels.

### Policy Debate

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its transportation infrastructure investment in the United States.

### National Tournament Topic Release Dates

- **Extemporaneous Speaking** topic areas will be released by March 1.
- **Storytelling** will be released by April 1.
- **Lincoln-Douglas**, and **Public Forum Debate** will be released May 1.
- **Congressional Debate** legislation will be released by May 12.

# Overarching Rules: Debate Events

- A. Oral prompting, except for time signals, by a speaker's debate partner is *not prohibited* but is *discouraged* and may be penalized by some judges. Oral prompting, except for time signals, by **any person other than the speaker's debate partner** is *strictly prohibited* and can result in the disqualification of the debater(s).
- B. **Reading of evidence**
1. An entry is responsible for the validity of all evidence it reads in the round.
  2. In all rounds of Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum, debaters should, at a minimum, orally deliver title of the source and the author's name. In Policy Debate, all debaters shall orally deliver the name of the author title of source (e.g., title of book, not chapter; title of journal, not article), and complete date.
  3. In all rounds of debate, complete citations for each piece of evidence introduced in the round must be available in the round. Written citations must include name of the author, qualifications, complete title of source (e.g., title of book, not chapter; title of journal, not article), and complete date. Online sources must also include the title of the site, database, or access point, the date accessed, and the web address. The additional citation required for online sources must appear on all evidence, but is not required to be read. Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author and title need be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. In the subsequent oral citation, only the author's name is required.
  4. No internal ellipsis (Ellipses occur after the first word of the quotation and before the final word) may be used in evidence cited on a card, or ellipses may be shown on cards, if the original source or a Xerox copy is present. The evidence may be read in ellipsed form, but the entirety of the evidence must be available in one of the two ways previously cited.
  5. Personal letters, emails, interviews and telegrams are not admissible as evidence.
  6. A debater – when asked by opposing debater(s) for a copy of a card, plan text, case, etc. – is free to decide whether or not to provide the requested information. If a debater refuses to supply the information, s/he shall not be penalized. However, in such instances where a judge requests to see a card, plan text, case, etc. for the purpose of making his or her decision the debater should comply.
  7. Challenging evidence cited in a debate: definitions of Non-existent evidence or evidence which seriously distorts the intention of the original source –
    - i. "Serious Distortion" exists when the evidence itself contains added or deleted word(s) which do not clarify but in fact change the position of the author with respect to the issues in question.
    - ii. "Non-existent evidence" means that
      01. Reasonable search is unable to produce the original source and/or the team reading the evidence is unable to provide the original source or a Xerox copy of the relevant pages.
      02. The evidence cited is not located in the original source cited.
      03. Typographical errors in citation will not automatically result in the evidence being labeled non-existent, if the team reading the evidence can produce the correct information.
  8. Procedures for initiating and reviewing evidentiary challenges
    - i. Responsibilities of teams challenging evidence:
      01. Indictments or protests of the validity of evidence must be made on substantive grounds.
      02. A challenger must have either the original source or a Xeroxed copy of the source being cited, or
      03. A challenger must demonstrate that reasonable search has not been able to locate the source – Xeroxed copies of relevant pages in Books in Print, Readers Guide, P.A.I.S., etc.
    - ii. Initiating and reviewing protests:
      01. Any official protest on the validity of evidence citing specific violations must be presented in writing to the Tournament Director, the school being challenged, and the tournament ombudsperson immediately following the round in which the contested evidence was used and prior to the beginning of the next round of debate.
      02. The Tournament Director shall rule on the protest no later than 7 days of its receipt.
    - iii. Appeals
      01. Appeals of the Tournament Director's decision shall be made in writing within 5 days to the Tournament Protest Panel.
      02. The Protest Panel shall use whatever means necessary in making the final decision on the dispute.

- iv. Penalties
  - 01. Evidence lacking the required citation and challenged by the opposition shall be disregarded by the judge unless said citation is proffered immediately in the subsequent speech. At the conclusion of a challenge related to the oral presentation of or the in round availability of a citation, the judge is the sole determiner of the level of penalty in the round in relationship to the level of the violation, not to exceed a maximum penalty of a loss with zero points, as part of the judge's decision making process.
  - 02. If an evidence violation is presented where a debater is found to have committed a "serious distortion" or to have used "non-existent evidence," at the conclusion of due process, the offending debater(s) may be disqualified from the tournament at the Tournament Committee's discretion.
  - 03. Depending on the severity, an offense MAY result in notification of said offense to their school administration, loss of all tournament award, including trophy and School of Excellent participation points for the offending student(s), and/or revocation of membership.
- v. Tournament Adjustments:
  - 01. Under no circumstance shall a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
  - 02. In the case of a disqualification of a contestant, all previous ranks and decisions of other contestants stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place.
- C. Judging Conflicts: Contestants in any debate event who are scheduled to be judged by someone who has, at any point in time, coached or taught them or with whom they have a close personal relationship are responsible for reporting that fact to the ombudsperson immediately. Failure to comply may result in disqualification from the tournament.
- D. **Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events**
  - 1. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
  - 2. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
  - 3. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
  - 4. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited. (This does not prohibit non-electronic communication between debate partners during prep time.)
  - 5. Penalty: Contestants found to have violated provisions A through C above will forfeit the round of competition. Contestants found to have violated provision D (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the tournament ombudsperson can be contacted for a ruling.
  - 6. Availability of Evidence: Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically, but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge.
  - 7. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants.
  - 8. Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, all debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking.
  - 9. Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and related equipment accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.
  - 10. By choosing to use laptop computers in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

# Public Forum Debate: Rules & Overview

Public Forum is a team debate event that advocates or rejects a position posed by the monthly resolution topic. The clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or “citizen judge”, i.e. a member of the American jury. The debate should:

- Display solid logic, lucid reasoning, and depth of analysis
- Utilize evidence without being driven by it
- Present a clash of ideas by countering/refuting arguments of the opposing team (rebuttal)
- Communicate ideas with clarity, organization, eloquence, and professional decorum

The round starts with a coin toss; the winning team selects either:

- ❖ The side (pro or con) they will argue
- ❖ The speaker order (begin the debate or give the last speech).

The team that loses the toss will then decide their preference from the option not selected by the winner (i.e., if the winning team decides to speak last, then the losing team may decide which side they will argue). The debate, therefore may begin with the con side, arguing against the topic.

During "**crossfire**," the two previous speakers stand, asking and answering questions in a polite, but argumentative exchange. Unlike traditional cross-examination, both speakers may question each other, however, the first question of the crossfire period is asked to the speaker who just finished.

**Summary speeches** are rebuttals that extend earlier arguments made or answer opposing refutations, and may incorporate new evidence, but not new arguments.

In the **grand crossfire**, all four debaters may remain seated, asking and answering questions. The first question is asked by the team that had the first summary to the team which had the last summary. After that, any debater may question or answer.

The **final focus** is a compelling restatement of why the judge should vote pro or con. Given the short period, the team must decide what arguments weigh most importantly on the decision. No new arguments are accepted in the final focus speeches.

The judge is the chairperson of the round (facilitating the coin flip and giving time signals if requested), and may halt any crossfire lacking civility. S/he may not interact in the crossfire.

Judges evaluate teams on the quality of the arguments actually made, not on their own personal beliefs, and not on issues they think a particular side should have covered. Judges should assess the bearing of each argument on the truth or falsehood of the assigned resolution. The pro should prove that the resolution is true, and the con should prove that the resolution is not true. When deciding the round, judges should ask, “If I had no prior beliefs about this resolution, would the round as a whole have made me more likely to believe the resolution was true or not true?” Teams should strive to provide a straightforward perspective on the resolution; judges should discount unfair, obscure interpretations that only serve to confuse the opposing team. Plans (formalized, comprehensive proposals for implementation), counterplans and kritikis (off-topic arguments) are not allowed. Generalized, practical solutions should support a position of advocacy.

Quality, well-explained arguments should trump a mere quantity thereof. Debaters should use quoted evidence to support their claims, and well-chosen, relevant evidence may strengthen – but not replace – arguments. Clear communication is a major consideration. Judges weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained, and they will discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a well-informed citizen. A team should not be penalized for failing to understand his or her opponent’s unclear arguments. In short, Public Forum Debate stresses that speakers must appeal to the widest possible audience through sound reasoning, succinct organization, credible evidence, and clear delivery. Team points provide a mechanism for evaluating the relative “quality of debating” by each side.

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.	
Speaker 1 (Team A, 1st speaker)	4 min.
Speaker 2 (Team B, 1st speaker)	4 min.
Crossfire (between speakers 1&2)	3 min.
Speaker 3 (Team A, 2nd speaker)	4 min.
Speaker 4 (Team B, 2nd speaker)	4 min.
Crossfire (between speakers 3&4)	3 min.
Speaker 1 Summary	2 min.
Speaker 2 Summary	2 min.
Grand Crossfire (all speakers)	3 min.
Speaker 3 Final Focus	2 min.
Speaker 4 Final Focus	2 min.
Prep time for each team	2 min.

# Policy Debate: Rules & Overview

Policy debate focuses on the advocacy of a plan or policy action. The affirmative team should outline the harms in the current system or some sort of need. Then they should present a policy that would satisfy the need they have outlined. In addition the affirmative may discuss additional advantages to the policy.

The negative team may argue that the affirmative policy fails to meet the need they have outlined (i.e. the affirmative does not solve). The negative also has the option to present disadvantages to the policy (the policy may solve the problem, but it will create new problems).

Other ways do exist for structuring an affirmative case or negative strategy, but in the end the debate should focus on whether or not a particular policy is an appropriate course of action.

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.		Each individual debater must give one and only one constructive speech, one period of questioning, one period of answering, and one rebuttal.
Affirmative Constructive	8 min.	
Negative Cross-Examines Aff.	3 min.	
Negative Constructive	8 min.	
Affirmative Cross-Examines Neg.	3 min.	
Affirmative Constructive speech	8 min.	
Negative Cross-Examines Aff.	3 min.	
Negative Constructive speech	8 min.	
Affirmative Cross-Examines Neg.	3 min.	
Negative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Negative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Prep time, per team	8 min.	

## Stock Issues

Often, judges view the round in terms of stock issues, or major questions that both teams need to address. They are:

- ❖ Inherency: Does the plan exist in the status quo (the way things are now)?
- ❖ Harms: What's the problem with the status quo?
- ❖ Significance: How big is the problem in the status quo?
- ❖ Solvency: Does the affirmative plan solve the problem?
- ❖ Topicality: Does the affirmative plan meet the terms of the resolution? Is it an example of the resolution?

In the traditional view, the affirmative has to successfully defend the argument that their plan meets all five of the stock issues: it can't exist already (inherency), it has to address an important problem (harms and significance together), it has to fix that important problem (solvency), and it has to be an example of the resolution, to ensure a fair debate (topicality). If the negative can prove that the affirmative violates any one of the stock issues – for example, that the plan won't fix the problem (solvency) – then the negative wins the debate.

## Disadvantages

Sometimes an affirmative plan can solve for all five of the stock issues and still be a bad idea. For example, an affirmative plan to dissolve the entire U.S. prison system would certainly remedy the problem of excessive detention, doesn't exist in the status quo, and very substantially decreases the government's ability to detain without charge. However, there are still extremely good reasons not to vote for such a plan: prisoners might run rampant on the streets; people would be less afraid to commit crimes since they would know that there were no prisons to punish them for breaking the law; lots of prison staff would be out of employment, and so forth.

A disadvantage is a somewhat more structured way of arguing that the negative consequences of a plan provide a reason not to vote for it. Disadvantages have several important parts:

- ❖ Uniqueness: is the disadvantage happening in the status quo? If a disadvantage argues that an affirmative plan will cause the economy to stagnate (stop growing), then it can be proved non-unique if an affirmative effectively argues that the economy is already stagnating and, hence, the plan wouldn't make the economy any worse than it already is.
- ❖ Link: does the plan cause the problem to happen? If a disadvantage argues that releasing detainees held at Guantanamo Bay would cause terrorism to increase, the negative has to prove that prisoners there are involved in terrorism and that their captivity is important to preventing terrorism.
- ❖ Impact: does the plan cause something bad to happen? If a disadvantage argues that limiting the government's ability to conduct sneak and peek searches under Section 213 of the USA PATRIOT Act would impair the government's law enforcement ability, the negative has to prove that law enforcement by the government is a good thing.

## Cross-Examination

The questioner shall control the use of the time and may interrupt the respondent, but may not comment on the answers or make any statement of his/her own views.

# Lincoln-Douglas Debate: Rules & Overview

Lincoln-Douglas debate centers on a proposition of value, which concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is. Values are ideals held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. Neither side is permitted to offer a plan (a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation); rather, they should offer reasoning to support a general principle. Debaters may offer generalized, practical examples or solutions to illustrate how the general principle could guide decisions. Hallmarks include:

- Parallel Burdens:** No question of values can be determined entirely true or false. This is why the resolution is debatable. Therefore neither debater should be held to a standard of absolute proof. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.
  - **Burden of proof:** Each debater has the equal burden to prove the validity of his/her side of the resolution as a general principle. As the resolution is a statement of value, there is no presumption for either side.
  - **Burden of clash:** After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his/her opponent.
  - **Resolutional burden:** The debaters are equally obligated to focus the debate on the central questions of the resolution, not whether the resolution itself is worthy of debate. Because the affirmative must uphold the resolution, the negative must also argue the resolution as presented.
- Value Structure:** The debater establishes a value structure (or framework) to serve two functions: a) to provide an interpretation of the central focus of the resolution, and b) to provide a method for the judge to evaluate the central questions of the resolution. The value structure often (but not always) consists of:
  - **Definitions:** The affirmative should offer definitions, be they dictionary or contextual, that provides a reasonable ground for debate. The negative has the option to challenge these definitions and to offer counter-definitions.
  - **Value Premise/Core Value:** A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. that serves as the highest goal to be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved. In general, the debater will establish a value which focuses the central questions of the resolution and will serve as a foundation for argumentation.
  - **Value Criterion/Standard:** Generally, each debater will presents a standard, used to:
    - ❖ explain how the value should be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved.
    - ❖ measure whether an argument protects, respects, maximizes, advances, or achieves the value.
    - ❖ evaluate the relevance and importance of an argument in the context of the round.

The relationship between the value premise and the criterion should be clearly articulated. During the debate, the debaters may argue the validity or priority of the two value structures. They may accept their opponent's value structure, prove the superiority of their own value structure, or synthesize the two.
- Argumentation:** Debaters are obligated to construct logical chains of reasoning which lead to the conclusion of the affirmative or negative position. The nature of proof may take a variety of forms (e.g., a student's original analysis, application of philosophy, examples, analogies, statistics, expert opinion, etc.). Arguments should be presented in a cohesive manner that shows a clear relationship to the value structure. Research should be conducted and presented ethically from academically sound and appropriately cited sources.
- Cross-Examination:** Questioning should clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments in the round.
- Delivery:** Effective oral communication requires clarity of thought and expression. Arguments should be worded and delivered in a manner accessible to an educated non-specialist audience. This communication encompasses:
  - **Written:** Cases and arguments should be constructed in a manner that is organized, accessible, and informative to the listener. The debater should employ clear logic and analysis supported by topical research.
  - **Verbal:** The debater has the obligation to be clear, audible and comprehensible, and to speak persuasively to the listeners. Additionally, debaters should strive for fluency, expressiveness, effective word choice, and eloquence.
  - **Non-verbal:** The debater should demonstrate an effective use of gestures, eye contact, and posture.

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.	
Affirmative Constructive	6 min.
Negative Cross-Examines Aff.	3 min.
Negative Constructive	7 min.
Affirmative Cross-Examines Neg.	3 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min.
Negative Rebuttal	6 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 min.
Prep time for each debater	4 min.

Throughout a round, debaters should demonstrate civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.

# Congressional Debate: Rules & Overview

1. Recognizing Speakers: the correct way to obtain the floor is to rise immediately at the conclusion of the preceding speaker's remarks and say "Mr./Madam President (or Mr./Madam Speaker)." If another legislator is recognized, take your seat until he/she relinquishes the floor
  - a. When more than one speaker seeks the floor, the presiding officer must follow the recency method:
    - i. First recognize students who have not spoken during the session
    - ii. Next recognize students who have spoken fewer times
    - iii. Then recognize the student who have spoken least recently (earliest)
    - iv. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should explain his/her recognition process and it must be fair, consistent and justifiable. S/he may not use "activity," "longest standing," or "standing time," or anything that ties recognition for speeches to questions or motions.
    - v. Precedence/recency resets for each session.
  - b. A student may be recognized to speak as often as possible and may speak more than once on the same issue.
  - c. A speaker may yield time on the floor during debate (for questions or clarifications) but that speaker will remain in control of his/her three minutes (see #4 below regarding questioning).
2. Speeches introducing legislation and the first negative/opposition speech are allotted up to three minutes, followed by two minutes of questioning by other delegates. A student from the school who wrote the legislation gets the privilege of recognition (called authorship), regardless of recency; otherwise the presiding officer may recognize a "sponsor" from the chamber, provided this recognition follows the recency guidelines above. Regardless, this speech of introduction must be followed by two minutes of questions. Should no student seek recognition for the authorship/sponsorship, the chamber should move to lay the legislation on the table until such time that a student is prepared to introduce it.
3. Following the first two speeches on legislation, the presiding officer will alternately recognize affirmative and negative speakers, who will address the chamber for up to three minutes followed by one minute of questioning by other delegates. If no one wishes to oppose the preceding speaker, the presiding officer may recognize a speaker upholding the same side. When no one seeks the floor for debate, the presiding officer may ask the chamber if they are "ready for the question," at which point, if there is no objection, voting may commence on the legislation itself. There is no "minimum cycle" rule, however, if debate gets "one-sided," the chamber may decide to move the previous question.
  - a. In the event a student speaks on the wrong side called for by the presiding officer and the error is not caught, the speaker shall be scored and the speech shall count in recency, but the speaker must be penalized at least three points for not paying close attention to the flow of debate.
  - b. In the event a student speaks on an item of legislation not currently being debated, said speech shall count in recency, but zero points shall be awarded.
4. The presiding officer fairly and equitably recognizes members to ask questions following each speech. It is unnecessary for speakers to state they yield to questions, because the rules specify the period for questioning. The presiding officer – who has a seating chart – controls calling on questioners. S/he starts timing questioning periods when s/he has recognized the first questioner, and keeps the clock running continuously until the time has lapsed. Speakers are encouraged to ask brief questions, and may only ask one question at a time (two-part/multiple-part questions are not allowed, since they monopolize time and disallow others to ask their questions). There is no formal "permission to preface," however, presiding officers should discourage students from making statements as part of questioning, since that is an abusive use of the limited time available.
5. The presiding officer will pause briefly between speeches to recognize any motions from the floor, however, he/she should not call for motions (at the beginning of a session, the presiding officer should remind members to seek his/her attention between speeches).
6. Amendments must be presented to the presiding officer in writing, with specific references to lines and clauses that change. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.
  - a. The presiding officer will recommend whether the amendment is "germane" – that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation – otherwise, it is considered "dilatatory."
  - b. A legislator can only move to amend between speeches. Once that motion is made, the presiding officer will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless he/she rules it dilatatory.
  - c. Should students wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the presiding officer will recognize them as per recency, and the speech will be counted toward their total, accordingly.
  - d. Simply proposing an amendment does not guarantee an "author/sponsor" speech, and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal one minute of questioning.
  - e. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.

- f. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debating it.
7. The PO determines the method of voting on each question that comes before the chamber. ALL simple majority votes are based upon the number of legislators PRESENT and VOTING in the chamber; therefore, the PO does not need to call for or count abstentions. For all votes requiring a fraction of the chamber to agree to a motion or question (2/3, 1/3, 1/5, etc.), the chair determines whether the chamber agrees with the motion/question using the number of legislators PRESENT in the chamber at the time of the vote. Because of this system, the PO must track the number of legislators in the chamber at all times. Notes on voting:
  - a. Final votes on legislation, amendments, and motions to appeal the chair require a recorded vote.
  - b. Voice voting is acceptable for all other votes, but a recorded vote must be taken if any one legislator calls for a division of the chamber.
  - c. A roll call vote is permitted if such a request is agreed to by 1/5 of the chamber.
8. Ask permission to leave and enter the chamber when it is in session (move a personal privilege). However, do not interrupt a speaker who is addressing the chamber.
9. Since the rules above ensure fairness for competition, they may not be suspended; the presiding officer should rule such motions out of order.
10. Ethics and Evidence
  - a. Conduct
    - i. A congressperson's conduct shall be above reproach and he/she should never be guilty of intentional harassment. Impeaching and censuring other participants is not allowed.
    - ii. Participation in this event demands the seriousness of purpose and maturity possessed by real world policymakers. All adult officials, including scorers, will hold each participant to this standard.
    - iii. Congresspersons should have a cooperative nature and if there is a problem, then the student should take any concerns to an adult official.
    - iv. Participation in the legislative debate is essential. Extended absence from the chamber during a session will affect a contestant's overall impression and performance. The practice of "open chambers" interferes with the parliamentarian's ability to monitor student participation.
  - b. Evidence and Use of Electronic Devices
    - i. Visual aids are permitted in Congressional Debate, provided they do not require electronic retrieval devices in the chamber.
    - ii. All evidence used is subject to verification. Honesty and integrity are of utmost importance in legislative debate. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the legislator being suspended by tournament officials.
    - iii. Please see guidelines for use of laptops/electronic retrieval devices in debate events. Cell phones, music players and games are not to be used in the chamber during a session. Traditional timing devices are permitted.

See the NFL's Congressional Debate Guide ([www.congressionaldebate.org](http://www.congressionaldebate.org)) for more information.



# Extemporaneous Speaking: Rules

## Topics

Topics will cover United States domestic policy, United States foreign policy, and the foreign policies of foreign nations. The tournament director will obtain a list of questions aimed for middle level ages and phrased for contest use, based on subjects discussed in standard periodicals during the current school year.

## Drawing

Thirty minutes before the round is to begin, the first speaker shall draw three questions, choose one, and return the other two. Other contestants shall draw in like manner, in the order of speaking, at intervals of seven minutes.

## Preparation

As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant shall withdraw and prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers, and journals or articles, provided:

- They are originals or Xeroxed copies of originals.
- There is no written material on original or copies.
- Original articles or copies must be intact & uncut.
- Topical index without annotation is allowed.

No other material shall be allowed in the extemp prep room other than stated above. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs, and outlines shall be barred from the extemp prep room. Underlining or highlighting on materials will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. Source citations of such materials must meet MLA standards.

## Recusal

A contestant may not leave the prep area without first checking out with the proctor. A student leaving without permission will be ranked last in that round.

## The Speech:

Time: Contestants shall speak not more than seven minutes. No minimum time is mandated. Judges should provide time signals at 6:00 and 6:30. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank. Speakers may use one index card per round, up to 4-inches by 6-inches. These cards may only be written on in the preparation area.

## Extemporaneous Speaking: Computer Use

- A. Extemporaneous Speaking contestants may make use of electronic retrieval devices to store and to retrieve their subject files. Students can retrieve extemporaneous files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. This rule in no way prevents students from still utilizing traditional paper copy files to enable the competitor to successfully compete in Extemporaneous Speaking. The NJFL takes no position on which form of file storage is preferable for use.
- B. The use of electronic retrieval devices at the district competition will be the autonomous decision of each individual district committee.
- C. Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop computers, netbooks, iPads, or other portable electronic retrieval equipment. Secondary devices such as flash drives or external hard drives are allowed as well. Cell phones or smart phones are prohibited from being used while preparing or before speaking.
- D. Source Materials: Students may consult published books, periodical articles, newspaper articles, think tank articles, government reports or journal articles saved on their electronic retrieval device or present in hard copy form provided:
  - a. There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.
  - b. Any highlighting or underlining of the articles is done in only one color within each article. Bolding, italicizing, or any other manipulation of the original text of sources (other than highlighting or underlining as previously stipulated) is prohibited.
- E. No other source materials will be allowed in the Extemporaneous prep room other than stated above. Pre-written Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.
- F. Power Source: Power plugs or outlets may not be used in the prep room at any time. All computers used in the prep room must be battery operated at all times.
- G. Competitors are responsible for making certain their electronic retrieval devices are fully charged at the start of each competition day and for proper power management ensuring that their device remains functional throughout the competition day. Contestants may not use external power sources in the prep room, such as wall outlets and/or extension cords.
- H. Internet: Extemporaneous Speaking contestants shall not access the Internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep room. All computers must comply with the following provisions:
  - a. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
  - b. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
  - c. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
  - d. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited.
  - e. Penalty: Contestants found to have violated provisions i through iii above will be ranked last in the round. Contestants found to have violated provision iv (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all round credits. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the acting tournament ombudsperson may be contacted for a ruling.
- I. Liability: Extemporaneous Speaking competitors accept full responsibility for the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entire course of the tournament. The NJFL may put stickers and/or tape on computers to ensure they are not opened or used, or to ensure appropriate owners take their own machines. The NFL/NJFL does not assume any liability for computers, including if they are lost, stolen, or broken. Students are welcome to use Kensington locks or other such devices to secure their computers in the prep room. Students, parents, and coaches should be aware that the students are bringing and using the computers at their own risk.
- J. File Monitoring: The NFL retains the right to view and search any electronic retrieval devices to ensure compliance with any and all rules.
- K. Devices should be muted in the prep room. Contestants should not play games or engage in other distracting activities on their electronic devices in the prep room. Tournament officials may ask a student to power-off the device if it becomes distracting.
- L. Students from the same school may share computers during preparation. However, communication among contestants during preparation time is strictly prohibited.

## Original Oratory: Rules

This contest shall comprise only memorized orations actually composed by the contestants and not used in any previous contest year. No visual aids are permitted.

Subject – Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified. A student may not reuse the same speech topic from any competition in a previous academic year.

Length – Delivery shall require not more than 10 minutes. Judges should provide time signals at 9:00 and at 9:30. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank.

Quotation – Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing and such quotations shall be identified in a printed copy of the oration supplied prior to registration. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited.

Script – The Tournament Director must receive a copy of the orator's script by May 30, 2012, emailed from the same address as the head coach who registered – to: [orations@juniorforensicleague.org](mailto:orations@juniorforensicleague.org). The script should identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, and by virtue of submitting the script, the orator and the coach attest that the oration is the original work of the contestant.

## Declamation: Rules

Declamation involves a student delivering a non-original oration written by another person.

Material – The speech must have been delivered in public. The original speaker's words may not be altered for this presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted. A student may not reuse material presented at any competition from a previous academic year. The coach should bring a copy of the transcript for verification purposes.

The presentation should include an introduction that provides the title of the speech and the author, and should include relevant information about the situation in which the speech was originally delivered. This event is an exercise in interpretation, not mimicry, so the contestant should avoid trying to reproduce the delivery style of the original speaker.

Length – Each speech is presented as a memorized selection without the use of physical objects, script, or costume. Presentation shall not exceed 10 minutes. A speaker that exceeds the maximum speaking time for the event by more than :30 seconds is not eligible to receive a 1st place ranking. Judges should provide time signals at 9:00 and at 9:30.

The speaker should develop the ability to convey another speaker's message in a sincere, honest, and realistic style. The mechanics of speech must be observed faithfully: poise, quality of voice, effectiveness and ease of gesture, emphasis, variety, and enunciation. In addition, the speaker must be able to interpret the meaning of the speech and be able to carry the interpretation over to the minds of the listeners. The speaker must be able to interest the listeners and to hold their attention. No particular style should be demanded of the speaker; rather, the contestant should be free to select and to develop a personal style and be judged according to the degree of perfection attained and the effectiveness in influencing the listeners. While the specifics of the speech and any style of delivery which the speaker adopts should be judged in light of the purpose of the speech, artificiality is to be discredited. This event is an interpretation, not an impersonation.

# Literary Interpretation: Rules

## **Dramatic, Duo, Humorous, Storytelling, Poetry, and Prose Interpretation**

**Selections** – Selections used in these contests shall be cuttings from published, printed novels, short stories, plays or poetry. A cutting must be from a single work of literature: one story, or one play, or one novel (this rule is exempt for Poetry Interpretation). No school publications or recorded material that is not printed and published is acceptable. Adaptations may be made for the purpose of transition. A cross-entered student may not draw literature from the same source for different interpretation events. A student may not reuse material presented at any competition from a previous academic year. Monologues or dialogues are acceptable in Dramatic and/or Humorous Interpretation. Adaptations of television skits or other non-published material are prohibited. In duo interpretation, each of the two performers may play one or more characters, so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible. (If the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.) The cutting used in the first round of competition must be used throughout the entirety of the tournament in that event.

**Focus** – Use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction and the performers may look at each other but must be indirect (off-stage) during the performance itself.

**Introduction** – The contestant should give an introduction that names the author(s) and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made, and may create the atmosphere/mood for the selection. This may be done after a “teaser,” or short excerpt of performance.

**Poetry** is writing which expresses ideas, experience, or emotion through the creative arrangement of words according to their sound, their rhythm, their meaning. Poetry may rely on verse and stanza form. No plays or other dramatic materials may be used. Material may be drawn from multiple printed, published works. Please note: Poetry does not need to rhyme, and judges should take this into consideration.

**Prose** expresses thought through language recorded in sentences and paragraphs: fiction (short stories, novels) and non-fiction (articles, essays, journals, biographies). No plays or other dramatic materials may be used.

**Storytelling** uses vocal variation and physical movement to suggest different characters and character relationships in order to make the story come alive in the mind of the listener. The story as told must be true to the original tale. The teller should create a mood wherein a spoken narrative transports the audience to the time and place of the story being recounted, and should be appropriate content for a five year old. The NJFL releases an annual topic area that the story must follow.

### **Presentation & Time**

DI, HI, DUO: Each selection is presented as a memorized selection without the use of physical objects, script, or costume. Presentation shall not exceed 10 minutes. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than 30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank.

**Poetry, Prose:** Presentations shall not last more than 7:00 minutes. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank. Performances must be from a manuscript (which may be in a binder/portfolio). Reading from a book or magazine is not permitted. Excessive movement below the waist (i.e., walking) is discouraged; the emphasis on interpreting poetic and prose scripts is on vocal delivery and suggestive gestures, rather than acting movements.

**Storytelling:** Presentations shall not last more than 5:00 minutes, but may be briefer without penalty. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank. The presentation must be memorized, not read. No book or script may be used. Movement is allowed and one chair may be used, or the speaker may stand. A storyteller is a narrator - not an actor or actress - and although gestures, pantomime, movement, and characterization are not barred, they must be used with restraint. No other props or costumes will be allowed. The performer should present the piece to the audience as if they were very young children.

## Impromptu Speaking: Rules

Topics – Impromptu topics will include proverbs, abstract words, events, quotations, and famous people.

Drawing – Each section/room shall be provided with an envelope containing topics. Once the first speaker is called, the other speakers shall leave the room, and wait outside the door. Each speaker will draw three topics, choose one, and return the other two. The speaker then has eight minutes in which to prepare a response and speak.

The same list of topics shall be used for the drawing by each section. A different subject area will be used for each round.

### Preparation

As soon as a topic is chosen, the contestant shall withdraw and prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may not consult outside materials during their preparation or speaking time. However, prior to each round, they may consult any material that may inspire them during the round.

Notes – Speakers may use one index card per round, up to 4-inches by 6-inches. These cards may only be written on in the preparation area.

Time – There is no minimum qualifying time, but the contestant must cover the subject adequately. Maximum time for preparation and speaking is 8 minutes. Judges should provide time signals at 7:00 and at 7:30. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank. (Please note: this is one minute longer than the high school level).

## TV Commercial Exhibition: Rules

**This is an exhibition event for students who do not advance to late elimination rounds in their main event.**

TV Commercials are for one to three people. The art of a commercial lies in the student's ability to say a lot about the product or service in a short amount of time. The product being presented must be an original idea of the students presenting it, not something taken from another source (such as spoofs from Saturday Night Live). Props, costumes, music, and anything else necessary to try to sell the product will be allowed. Attire appropriate to the presentation may be worn. Catchy jingles or phrases are encouraged.

This event gives students an opportunity to use imagination in preparing and delivering a brief presentation. This is a simulation of a television commercial; therefore there can be no interaction between presenter(s) and audience. Rhetorical questions, however, are allowed. The speech must be presented from memory, using notes, or extemporaneously. Each contestant may use of one 4x6 card (or smaller), but note cards are not required.

Delivery shall require 1-3 minutes. A contestant/team who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank.