

MSDL SPEECH JUDGE QUICK GUIDE

Conducting a Round

1. Please take attendance (by code) before you start the round. If the tournament allows double entry, some students may not be there at the start of the round or may have signed in on the board and left to do their other event; they should return prior to the end of your round. If you have a student whose code number does not appear on your ballot, please have them check the posting for the correct room assignment. Students may be penalized for speaking in an incorrect room.
2. Remind everyone to turn off cell phones. If you will be using your phone to time, please remember to silence it by putting it.
3. Determine the speaking order. Some students may be double-entered and will need to speak at the beginning of the round so that they can leave for their other event. Others may arrive late, after having spoken in their other event, and will need to be inserted into the speaking order. You may use the speaking order listed on the ballot, making accommodations for double-entered students, or you may ask the students to draw for speaking order.

Timing

1. It is your responsibility to time the students and record the time on the ballots. You should indicate the exact elapsed time on the ballots and note any time violations. The tab staff will assess appropriate penalties; you should score the round without consideration of the time violation.
2. If requested by the student, you should give students hand signals for time. In prepared vents, students may opt for "1 down" (1 at 9:00, fist at 10:00). In Extemp and Impromptu, a student may opt for "5 down". For "5 down", the following intervals are usually signaled: Time Remaining: 5 4 3 2 1 ½ 0. If a time signal is requested but missed by the judge, resulting in a time violation, the judge should report that to the TAB room, where the tournament director will determine if the time violation will stand or be waived.

Filling Out the Ballots

1. Your ballot will list the code numbers of the students you will judge. Judge only the students listed.
2. Students will write the name of their pieces on the board. Copy the information onto the ballots.
3. Time each performance and include the time elapsed in your comments on your ballot. If there is a time violation, remember to check the appropriate box on your ballot.
4. After you hear all contestants in a round, rank them 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. without ties.
5. Quality points must also be assigned. The range is 80-100 and should correlate to the ranks (i.e. highest quality points for the 1st rank). 100 points should only be awarded to an extraordinary performance.
6. Immediately after the round is completed, submit your ranks. You will have time to complete comments afterwards.
7. The ballots are the only feedback that students will receive from you. Please be constructive and supportive. Include both positive comments and suggestions for improvement. Students will be very interested in which parts of their performance need work. Please you write comments while students are speaking; the students expect this. If you are using electronic balloting, you may go back and update comments throughout the day until the awards ceremony begins.
8. If you question the suitability of a student's material or feel there may have been a rule violation, do not mark the student down. Base your rank on the performance given, and report your concern to the TAB room after the round.

MSDL EVENTS

Full event descriptions can be found on the MSDL Website at www.msdlonline.org.

READING INTERPRETATION EVENTS:

These events require the use of a manuscript. The author's words as published in the literature may not be altered for this presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted. The student may use vocal skills, facial expressions, and/or hand gestures to develop a narrator and character/s. Speakers may not take lines belonging to one character and apply them to a different character in the performance. The presentation should include an introduction that cites the name of the piece and the author. No costumes or props may be used in the presentation. All reading interpretation events have a 10 minute time limit, including introduction. There is a 30 second grace period beyond the 10 minute limit. There is no minimum required time.

Note: Reading events are inherently different from memorized interpretation events. Students in reading events are required to hold a manuscript, which they should reference (as if they are reading) from time to time during the presentation. While students create characters by differentiating how they use their voices, stances and gestures in both genres, in reading events students should not move more than a step or two from the center of the performance space. In memorized interpretation events, students may move freely around the space. The only exception to this rule is Program Oral Interp (POI). See event rules, below.

Children's Literature Reading (KL)

The student should present material designed to be read to children. (Note: This does not mean the literature must fall under nursery level only). The selection must be from a single published fictional or non-fictional story, play, a single long poem or a program of poetry. Material from more than one source is not allowed with the exception of programs of poetry.

Play Reading (PL)

The material may be either serious or humorous in nature. The selection must be from a single published play. Material from more than one source is not allowed.

Poetry Reading (PO)

The student will present material chosen from published poetry. Students may present either a single long poem or several shorter poems connected either by theme or by poet. The poetry need not have a rhyming pattern. Free verse poetry is acceptable in this event. Verse dramas, including the plays of William Shakespeare, are not classified as poetry.

Prose Reading (PR)

The student will present material chosen from a single published short story, novel, or essay, fictional or non-fictional. The material may be either serious or humorous in nature. Material from more than one source is not allowed.

Program Oral Interp (POI)

Using a combination of Prose, Poetry, and Drama, students construct a program using at least two out of the three genres. With a spotlight on argumentation and performance range, Program Oral Interpretation focuses on a student's ability to combine multiple genres of literature centered around a single theme. Competitors are expected to portray multiple characters. No props or costumes may be used, with the exception of the manuscript. An introduction, written by the student, should contextualize the performance and state the titles and authors used in the program.

MEMORIZED INTERPRETATION EVENTS

Material performed in memorized interpretation events must be from a single published play, a fictional or non-fictional work, or a poem. Material from more than one source is not allowed. Each presentation must include an introduction that cites the name of the piece and the author. The material may be humorous or dramatic, or may combine both tones, depending on the work selected. The presentation should develop the narrative and/or character(s) via vocal and physical techniques. Speakers may not take lines belonging to one character and apply them to a different character in the performance. All memorized interpretation events have a 10 minute time limit, including introduction, There is a 30 second grace period. There is no minimum required time. No scripts, costumes, or props may be used in the presentation.

Dramatic Performance (DP)

One student performs in this event. Neither monologues nor works with multiple characters are inherently better.

Duo Interpretation (DUO)

Duo is a unique event, challenging two performers to render a dynamic moment utilizing appropriate vocal expression, gesture, and interaction between partners. As a unit, the two performers will vocally and physically respond to each other's verbal and non-verbal cues while maintaining an offstage focus. Thus, a scene featuring disciplined interplay between partners and the environment is created in the minds of the audience. The students may only touch and make eye contact during their own written introduction. If lines from the selection are used in the introduction, the contestants must adhere to the rules of the event. Performers may play more than one character if they choose, but it is not required.

PLATFORM EVENTS

Platform events are memorized. No scripts or costumes are allowed. Visual Aids may only be used in Informative Speaking.

Declamation (DEC):

The student delivers a speech that has been written and presented as a public address by someone other than the student performing. Speeches that have been used only for forensic competition are not acceptable. The presentation must include an introduction that provides the name of the original speaker and should include relevant information about the theme and date of the oration or its historical significance. Dialects of the original speaker need not be mimicked.

Original Oratory (OO):

The student presents original thought and commentary on a topic of their choice. Generally, but not always, the speech is of a persuasive nature. A maximum of 150 directly quoted words is allowed in the oration. Students will be judged on their delivery skills and ability to discuss the topic effectively and intelligently. Students must use their own work. Students must cite facts and analysis from source material accurately and in keeping with the author's intent.

Informative Speaking (INFO)

Students author and deliver a ten-minute speech on a topic of their choosing, with the intent of educating the audience on a particular topic. Because the goal is to educate, not to advocate, all topics must be informative in nature. A maximum of 150 directly quoted words is allowed in the speech. Informative Speaking competitors craft a speech using evidence, logic, and optional visual aids. If used, the student is expected to set up visual aids in an expedient manner. Students cannot use electronic equipment or any banned material (guns, controlled substances, etc.) as a visual aid, nor can they use live animals or another person. Visual aids should contribute to the audience's understanding, emphasize information, and provide a creative outlet that augments the content of the Informative speech. The speech is delivered from memory.

LIMITED PREPARATION EVENTS

Extemporaneous Speaking (VX)

In a prep room, students will draw three topics of current interest from the material prepared by the tournament director. Prior to arriving to speak, students select a topic and have a 30-minute preparation period during which evidence may be used to put together the presentation. This preparation period is the responsibility of the prep room, not the judge. After the presentation period, the student should deliver a speech to be evaluated for content and delivery. The topic slip must be presented to the judge in the round. No visual aids are allowed. Students must cite facts and analysis from source material accurately and in keeping with the author's intent.

Time: 7 minute maximum (30 second grace); no minimum

In the final round of Extemp, a 3-minute cross-examination period will follow each speech. Each speaker will be cross-examined by the speaker who spoke before them in the round, with the first speaker being cross-examined by the student scheduled to speak last in the round. As a student speaks, the student who will ask questions will observe. Immediately following the speech, the questioner will engage the speaker in cross-examination. The purpose of cross-examination is to expand upon important points in a speaker's speech and test their full knowledge of the subject. Cross-examination periods should be cordial and concentrate solely on the topic of the speech. Speakers should not talk over each other, nor should they monopolize the time; they must permit one another time to answer or ask questions. Judges should consider each speaker's answers and the questions they ask in their final ranking of the round. Neither student may refer to notes during the cross-examination period.

Novice Extemporaneous Speaking (NX)

The rules for this event are the same as those for Extemporaneous Speaking except that this event is limited to first-year extemporaneous speaking competitors ONLY and a single note-card with no more than 50 written words is permitted. If a note-card is to be used, the judge must review it prior to the presentation. Any note-card violation should be brought to the attention of the prep room coordinator prior to the speech; or, the student may choose to proceed without the use of the note-card. This event does not have a cross-examination period in the final round.

Time: 7 minute maximum (30 second grace); no minimum

Impromptu Speaking (IMP)

Topic slips for this event will be delivered to the judge at the start of the round. Each contestant will select three topics from an envelope at the start of their turn. After choosing one, they return the other two to the envelope and the judge begins to time the event. The contestant has a total of 6 minutes to prepare and deliver a presentation inspired by the topic selected. The time may be divided up as the contestant chooses. (Ex: 2 minutes prep, 4 minutes speaking). A student has the option of creating up to one 3"x5" index card of notes during the preparation period. No outside materials, notes, props or costumes shall be used during presentation. Impromptu topics may include proverbs, words, events, quotations or famous people.

Time: No minimum time, but the contestant must cover the subject adequately, 6 minute maximum (30 second grace)

Radio Broadcasting (RB)

Radio Broadcasting is a public address event in which a student presents a classic, "top-of-the-hour" news broadcast in the voice of a single professional broadcaster. In this event, each student will receive a packet of news-copy or a newspaper. The student will report to a preparation room where they have 30 minutes to select and organize the material into a 5-minute radio news broadcast. Judges will listen to (not watch) the presentation. Throughout the broadcast, the judge will keep the student informed of time at the student's request. Students may use minimal introductory remarks and transitional material. Advertising, including sponsorship taglines, is not allowed even if it is included in the copy provided by the tournament staff.

Time: 5 minutes exactly. (5 second grace over or under-time)

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

Multiple Reading

This event requires the use of a manuscript; students may speak or sing lines of text only if they are holding a manuscript. A group of 3-8 students will present a scene or scenes from published material (play(s), work(s) of prose, and/or work(s) of poetry). The material must be found in printed literature and may be either serious or humorous in nature. The students may use vocal skills, facial expressions, and/or hand gestures to develop a narrator and character/s; however, the focus of the performers should be off-stage. The students may only make eye contact during their own written introduction. Similarly, except during the introduction, students may not touch each other nor may they touch the binders of other students. If lines from the selection are used in the introduction, the contestants must adhere to the rules of the event. The presentation should include an introduction that cites the name(s) of all piece(s) and the author(s). The cutting should provide a cohesive scene or storyline (containing a definite beginning, middle and end). Speakers may not take lines belonging to one character and apply them to a different character in the performance. Theatrical props and costumes are prohibited, with the exception of reader's stands, chairs, tables or stools. Furniture may be simultaneously moved by more than one student, but if used as a hand prop, no more than one student may touch furniture at one time. Students are prohibited from placing chairs or stools on top of tables. Teams must provide any/all of their own furniture.

Time: 12 minute maximum (30 second grace); no minimum

Group Discussion (GD)

Group Discussion is an event in which students discuss and argue a topic set at the beginning of the round. Students are given the generic nature of the issue in the tournament invitation, with a specific focus to be discussed at the start of the round. Students should research the topic in advance and may bring notes and outside resources into the competition. After the topic is revealed, students will be given 5 minutes to formulate their argument, draw for speaking order, and then each shall be given 2 minutes to deliver an opening statement. An open discussion period of up to 15 minutes shall follow in which the issue is discussed and criteria for a resolution or recommendation are established, followed by another period of open discussion of up to 15 minutes to present and discuss possible solutions that meet those criteria. The students will then have 1 minute to prepare their final arguments and 2 minutes to present their final argument in the reverse order of their opening.

Electronic device use in Group Discussion will be allowed with the following stipulations:

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 competition occurs. Internet access, use of email, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited. Host schools are not required to provide power for electronic devices.

Congressional Debate

In this event, students simulate a working session of the US Congress. Students debate peer-authored legislation. Students do not pretend to be members of the real US Congress, but instead speak for themselves and debate their own viewpoints. Students should debate the issues with eloquence, strong analysis and research on the legislation, as well as answering and countering the arguments of the opposing side where appropriate. Students should also conduct themselves fairly and responsibly in the workings of the chamber, and may be penalized for inappropriate or disruptive actions. The Student Congress will be run under the direction of a league official called the Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian will provide guidance on matters of Parliamentary procedure and serves as a resource to whom judges can direct questions. A student-elected Presiding Officer (PO) facilitates debate and manages the chamber under standard rules of procedure (Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.) Judges do not need to keep time or manage speaker order. There are no time violation penalties.

The first affirmative (often called authorship or sponsorship) and the first negative speeches are up to three minutes in length, followed by four 30-second periods of direct questioning by students in the chamber. All subsequent speeches are up to three minutes in length, followed by two 30-second periods of direct questioning. Once debate on a piece of legislation has been exhausted, the chamber will move the previous question and vote on the matter. Generally, but not always, a five- to ten-minute recess follows the vote, allowing students and judges the opportunity to take a break.