



Massachusetts Speech & Debate League

QUICK GUIDE FOR SPEECH JUDGES (2018-2019 edition)

Conducting a Round

1. When you arrive at the room with your ballots, please take attendance. If the tournament allows double entry, some students may have signed in on the board and left to compete in their other event; they will return prior to the end of your round. If you have a student whose code number does not appear on your ballot, please send him/her to the Tab room 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.
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 label, 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 events, students may opt in for “2 down” (2 at 8:00, 1 at 9:00, fist at 10:00) or “1 down” (1 at 9:00, fist at 10:00). In Extemp and Impromptu, students may opt in 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 label will list the code numbers of the students you will judge. Please judge only the students listed. If a student not on your label comes to your round by mistake, please send them to the TAB room for clarification.
2. Students will write the name of their pieces on the board. Copy the information onto the ballots.
3. Time each performance and write it under “Time Elapsed”. If there is a time violation, remember to alert the staff when you turn in your ballots.
4. The ballots are the only feedback that the student 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. It is essential that you write comments while students are speaking; the students expect this. Time constraints do not allow for writing all comments after students have finished speaking.
5. After you hear all contestants in a round, rank them 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. without ties.
6. 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.
7. 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 ballot table after the round.
8. Please hand in your ballots as quickly as you can after the round; holding onto the ballots delays the tournament. If you need more time to write comments, check in at the ballot table first.

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 binder 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 time.

- **Children's Literature.** The student should present material designed to read to children so that it may be understood and appreciated by a young child or 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 poem or a program of poetry. Material from more than one source is not allowed, with the exception of programs of poetry. The author's words as published in the literature may not be altered for this presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted.
- **Play Reading.** 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. The author's words as published in the play may not be altered for this presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted.
- **Poetry Reading.** The student will present material chosen from published poetry. Students may present either a single, long poem or a program of several shorter poems connected either by theme or by author. The poetry need not have a rhyming pattern. Free verse poetry is acceptable in this event. Verse dramas such as *For Colored Girls . . .*, including the plays of Shakespeare, are not classified as poetry.
- **Program Oral Interp.** 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, POI 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, including the manuscript. An introduction, written by the student, should contextualize the performance and state the titles and authors used in the program.
- **Prose Reading.** 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.

MEMORIZED INTERPRETATION EVENTS: The presentation should be memorized and 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. No scripts, costumes, or props may be used in the presentation. The presentation should include an introduction that cites the name of the piece and the author. All 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 time.

- **Dramatic Performance.** The selection must be from a single published play, a fictional or non-fictional work, or a poem. Neither monologues nor works with multiple characters are inherently better. Material from more than one author is not allowed. The author's words as published in the literature may not be altered for this presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted.
- **Duo Interpretation.** The students present a selection from a single published play, a fictional or non-fictional work, or a poem. Neither monologues nor works with multiple characters are inherently better. Material from more than one author is not allowed. The author's words as published in the literature may not be altered for this presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted.

PLATFORM EVENTS: These are memorized events. No scripts, costumes, or props may be used in the presentation. All platform 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 time.

- **Declamation.** The student delivers a speech written by some other person and presented as a public address and found in print, on video, DVD or on an audio recording. Speeches that have been used only for forensic competition are not acceptable, even if they can be found in print. The presentation should include an introduction that provides the title of the speech and the author, 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.

- **Informative Speaking.** 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. 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.
- **Original Oratory.** The student presents original thought and commentary on a topic of his/her 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 must use their own work, and may not copy the same speech or substantial sections of the same speech as another contestant. Students in Original Oratory are responsible for the accuracy of citations of evidence. Students must cite facts and analysis from source material accurately and in keeping with the author's intent. Judges may request to see original copies of the sources cited, and bring discrepancies to the attention of the tournament director

LIMITED PREPARATION EVENTS

- **Extemporaneous Speaking.** In a prep room, the students will draw three topics of current interest; the student must pick one to prepare for a presentation. In the prep room, the students will have a 30-minute preparation period during which evidence may be used to put together the presentation. After the preparation period, the student should deliver a speech to be evaluated for content and delivery. 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. 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. There is a time limit of 7 minutes maximum with a 30 second grace period beyond the 7 minute limit. There is no minimum time.
 - In the final round of Extemporaneous Speaking, a 3-minute cross-examination period will follow each speech. Each speaker will be cross-examined by the speaker who spoke before him/her 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 him/her questions will watch. Immediately following the speech, the questioner will engage the speaker in cross-examination for a three-minute period. 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.** 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. This event does not have a cross-examination period in the final round. There is a time limit of 7 minutes maximum with a 30 second grace period beyond the 7 minute limit. There is no minimum time.
- **Impromptu Speaking.** On the speaker's turn, he/she will select three topics from an envelope (or other such container), choosing one of them to perform. After the choice is made, the judge begins to time the event. The contestant has a total of 6 minutes to prepare and deliver his/her presentation. The time may be divided up as the contestant chooses. (Ex: 2 minutes prep, 4 minutes speaking). No outside materials, notes, props or costumes shall be used during presentation. A student has the option of using up to one 3"x5" index card of notes created during the preparation period. Impromptu topics may include proverbs, words, events, quotations or famous people. There is a time limit of 6 minutes maximum with a 30 second grace period beyond the 6 minute limit. There is no minimum time.
- **Radio Broadcasting.** 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 s/he will have 30 minutes to select and organize the material into a 5-minute radio news broadcast. Judges will listen (not watch) the presentation. Throughout the broadcast, the timekeeper or judge will keep the student informed of time. 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. There is a strict time limit of 5 minutes with a 5 second grace period over or under time.

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

- **Student Congress.** A mock legislative session simulating the workings of the United States Congress. Students debate peer-authored articles of legislation. A student-elected Presiding Officer (PO) facilitates debate and manages the chamber under standard rules of procedure (Robert's Rules of Order, Revised). The Parliamentarian is an adult tournament official who monitors the activities of the chamber for the purpose of preserving competitive equity. He or she also provides guidance on matters of parliamentary procedure and serves as a resource to whom judges can direct questions. The Presiding Officer (PO) is a student competitor in the chamber, chosen by his or her peers. The PO calls upon speakers to debate each piece of legislation, alternating speeches from affirmative (in favor) to negative (opposed). He or she also calls upon questioners, handles motions and voting, and keeps time. Judges do not need to keep time or to manage speaker order. There are no time violation penalties. The students, under the leadership of the PO and the guidance of the Parliamentarian, manage the chamber. 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.
- **Group Discussion.** Group Discussion is an event in which students discuss and argue a topic set at the beginning of the round. The topics will present an issue, designed to introduce a variety of conflicting opinions. Students are given the generic nature of the issue in the 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.
- **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. There is a time limit of 12 minutes maximum with a 30 second grace period beyond the 12 minute limit. There is no minimum time.