

Extemporaneous Speaking

Judging Criteria

- **TOPICALITY:** The speaker should state and answer the question accurately. The speech should be organized so that all content contained therein is relevant to the question’s answer. The speaker should be held accountable to the strict adherence to the precise statement of the topic selected and should be penalized for any obvious shifting to a different topic. The speaker is permitted a personal opinion or interpretation of the subject.
- **STRUCTURE:** The introduction should gain attention, lead to the question, provide an answer to the question and/or justify the importance of the topic, and give some direction as to how the speech will unfold or develop. The body should be organized to best answer the question. Transitional words/devices should help to move the speech from point to point. The conclusion should restate the question and answer, succinctly summarize the speech’s main points highlighting how they led to the question’s answer, and end interestingly.
- **CONTENT:** This presentation should be an original speech developing the issue(s) raised by the selected topic. It should be a synthesis of current facts and opinions on the subject, not a mere listing of current data. The information presented in the speech should be accurate and timely. Sources consulted by the speaker during the preparation time should be cited effectively in the speech. These sources should be varied and credible. The speaker should make clear and reasonable use of the research and provide explanation of the issues that is easy to follow.
- **LANGUAGE:** The word choice should be clear and precise, interesting and easy to understand. If employed, creative devices, analogies, metaphors, alliteration, word plays, and the like should be effectively used and advance the purpose of the speech.
- **VOCAL DELIVERY:** The speaker should be audible, articulate, and fluent. The speaker should make use of contrast, making use of the elements of vocal variety: pitch, volume, rate, pausing, phrasing, stress, and tone. The speaker should stress words to enhance meaning. The speaker should be conversational and concerned, passionate and pleasing. The speaker should be in control of the words and the emotions. The speaker should sound confident throughout the presentation.
- **PHYSICAL DELIVERY:** The speaker should vary facial expressions to accentuate the natural flow of thoughts and feelings. The speaker should make eye contact with the audience. The speaker’s stance should be erect and controlled, without distracting movements. Movement, if used, should be motivated by transitions in thought or mood. Gestures should be visible, effectively used for emphasis, and varied.

Rules of Procedure

- The speech must be an original synthesis by the contestant of the current fact and opinion on the designated topic as presented by numerous sources. Source materials must be represented with relative accuracy in the speech. The speaker is responsible for the ethical use of source information.
- The speech must be extemporaneous and delivered without notes. If the speaker refers to prepared notes of any kind or a script during the presentation, the speaker must be ranked last.
- During the competition round, students must not access any research materials--oral, written, or electronic--outside of the preparation room.
- Speakers must not be penalized for expressing views with which the judge happens to disagree.
- Positions other than standing should not be excessive in length or dominate the performance.
- **TIME LIMIT:** Maximum 7 minutes. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period, that speaker may not be awarded first place. No minimum time.

SPEAKER POINT SCALE

(whole number points only)

99-100	Exemplary [A+]
96-98	Accomplished [A/A-]
94-95	Competent [B+/B]
92-93	Developing [B-/C+]
90-91	Emerging [C or below]
< 90	Justify to Tab

We are all influenced by implicit bias or stereotypes that, when unchecked, influence our judging in ways that may negatively impact the students we are called to judge impartially. Before writing comments or making a decision, please take a moment to reflect on any preconceived notions you may hold that may impact your decision-making process and/or jeopardize the student experience.

To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.