

Limited Preparation Speaking Events (aka- Extemporaneous Speaking)

Description

This event requires competitors to have an in-depth understanding of current events that allows them to formulate an original synthesis of the topic. It tasks the individual to prepare a 7 minute speech in 30 minutes (from choosing a topic, to organizing a speech, to practicing it). Competitors are given 3 questions from which to choose. Hence, the event focuses on critical thinking and public speaking in a taxing environment.

Long-term Benefits

- Develops the skills needed in classes using a seminar format
- Enhances paper writing skills
- Hones public speaking skills
- Enhances knowledge of current events
- Enhance comprehension of popular media, as well as college- and graduate-level material

Things to Look for as a Judge

Does the student directly (and clearly) answer the question?

Does the competitor's answer make logical sense?

- This does not mean you have to agree with his or her conclusions.

Is the competitor's answer supported with research, quotations, statistics for credible sources?

Does the student provide a useful introduction and conclusion?

- Attention-getters, restate the question, answer the question, wrap-up, etc

Does the competitor deliver the speech effectively?

- Fluency, pronunciation, gestures, nonverbals, eloquence, etc.
- Provides a clear intro, body, and conclusion

Types of Extemp

Domestic Extemp (DX)

- Questions related to specifically to the United States

Foreign Extemp (FX)

- Questions related to foreign affairs with a global focus
- Generally, US foreign policy questions would fall under DX

Extemp Commentary (XComm)

- Questions are less specific than in DX or FX
- Questions often relate to pop culture or "fuzzy" issues
- Speeches are shorter (5 min) and students have less time to prepare (20 min)

Platform Speaking Events

Original Oratory

Description

Competitors present a pre-prepared speech. The focus is on thought, composition, and delivery. The primary goal is to communicate effectively through speech communication. Thus, an effective delivery is paramount. The thought and composition competitors put into their speech serve mainly to aid the delivery. The topic should be both interesting and thoughtful. A simple informative speech will not do well in this event. Rather, speeches should be geared towards persuasion. Examples can include: alerting the audience to a potential danger, strengthen devotion to a cause, or eulogize a person. Rhetoric and diction are very important in this event.

Long-term Benefits

- Enhances paper writing skills
- Hones public speaking skills

Things to Look for as a Judge

Does the student provide a clear thesis?

Does the competitor present a topic of relevance/significance (or attempt to explain why the topic is significant)?

Does the competitor's argument make logical sense?

- This does not mean you have to agree with his or her conclusions.

Is the competitor's answer supported with research, quotations, statistics for credible sources?

Does the student provide a useful introduction and conclusion?

- Attention-getters, restate the question, answer the question, wrap-up, etc

Does the competitor deliver the speech effectively?

- Fluency, pronunciation, gestures, nonverbals, eloquence, etc.
- Provides a clear intro, body, and conclusion

Informative Speaking

Description

This is very similar to Original Oratory; however, speeches tend to be more informative in nature.

Long-term Benefits

- Enhances paper writing skills
- Hones public speaking skills

Things to Look for as a Judge

Does the student provide a clear thesis?

Does the competitor's argument make logical sense?

Is the competitor's answer supported with research, quotations, statistics for credible sources?

Does the student provide a useful introduction and conclusion?

- Attention-getters, restate the question, answer the question, wrap-up, etc

Does the competitor deliver the speech effectively?

- Fluency, pronunciation, gestures, nonverbals, eloquence, etc.

Interpretation of Literature Events

Description

Competitors recreate the characters in a published story, making them seem living and real to the audience. The piece must be memorized. The presentation must be devoid of props, in any form. Movement should be kept to a relatively confined area in one location of the room, meaning they should not be moving around the entire room/using furniture, etc.. Examples of the types of pieces that may be “cut”: novel, short story, play, comic books, screenplays, or one or more poems. The literary merit is judged, in addition to the actual performance. Contestants are also evaluated on their poise, quality and use of voice, inflections, emphasis, pronunciation, enunciation, physical expression, and especially the ability to interpret multiple characters correctly and consistently. The audience should feel as though it is actually watching the story unfold in real life.

Long-term Benefits

Develop an appreciation for and understanding of literature

Enhance acting abilities

Understand how body language, tone of voice, movement, etc. impact communication

Things to Look for as a Judge

Does the student deliver the piece from memory without stumbling?

Does the selected piece have literary merit and/or social significance?

- Does the student's interpretation (meaning or understanding) of the piece shine through?

Does the competitor make you believe they are the character(s) they are playing... despite not being allowed to use props and costumes?

- In other words, do they demonstrate acting ability?

Generally, more technical pieces (multiple characters, difficult settings) are regarded more highly than less technical pieces.

Types of Interp

Dramatic Interp (DI)

- Pieces are dramatic in nature... "dramatic" does not necessarily mean "sad"

Humorous Interp (HI)

- Pieces are humorous in nature

- While a humorous piece is good, the primary focus is on judging the competitors ability to make the piece humorous

Duo Interp (Duo)

- Performed with a partner (2 people)

- Either humorous or dramatic

Drama/Acting Events

Description

Very similar to Interpretation of Literature events, except that students are given more freedom to move and may use a prop and a chair.

Long-term Benefits

Enhance acting abilities

Things to Look for as a Judge

Does the student deliver the piece from memory without stumbling?

Does the competitor make you believe they are the character(s) they are playing?

- In other words, do they demonstrate acting ability?

Types of Acting Events

Solo Acting (Solo)

- 1 person

Duet Acting (Duet)

- 2 people

Readers' Theater (RT)

- Performed with 2 or more people

- Not memorized... it is a *Readers' Theater*

Pantomime (Mime)

- Self-explanatory... no words

Improvised Duet Acting

Description

Improvised Duet Acting is an improvised acting event composed of two students who portray an original scene created after drawing: two characters, one location, and one situation. The scene should establish both characters, a situation or problem, and a solution to the conflict. Students may not present a scene previously performed at the tournament., to include repetition of dialogue, characters, or conflict structure.

Long-term Benefits

- Enhance acting abilities
- Develop storytelling abilities
- Develop quick thinking skills
- Develop teamwork
- Understand how body language, tone of voice, movement, etc. impact communication

Things to Look for as a Judge

Completeness of Scene

- Does the scene develop the topic drawn?
- Does the scene build to a climax?
- Does the scene have a beginning, middle, and end?
- Does the scene flow well (naturally incorporating the prompts without feeling artificial)?

Direction

- Is the movement well planned (not haphazard)?
- Is the relationship between the characters clearly defined?
- Does the presentation have tempo and rhythm appropriate to the scene?

Dialogue

- Is the dialogue natural? Meaningful?
- Did the dialogue move the plot toward a climax?
- Do the actors peak with energy and meaning?
- Was the dialogue appropriate to the characters?

Acting

- Do the individual actors have distinct characterizations?
- Are the characters believable?
- Do the actors act and react to each other?
- Is the scene original?
- Does the competitor make you believe they are the character(s) they are playing... despite not being allowed to use props and costumes?
- In other words, do they demonstrate acting ability?

Debate Events

Things to Look for as a Judge

Do the debaters present sound, logical arguments?

- This does not mean you agree with his or her conclusions
- This question has to do with how well they build and counter each other's arguments
- Debaters are supposed to debate each other's arguments, not the judge's thoughts

Do the debaters engage their opponents ideas and arguments?

Do the debaters use research, quotations, statistics, anecdotes, analogies, analysis, etc.?

Note: Never judge a debate event based on whether or not you agree with the debater. Your task is to evaluate his or her argumentation relative to that of the opponent(s). In three of the formats (policy, Lincoln Douglas, public forum) the students do not get to choose their side... it is assigned to them a few minutes before the start of the round.

Policy Debate

Description

This is a team event, consisting of 2 people. **The focus of the event is on Analysis, Argumentation, Refutation, Adaptation, and Organization.** Arguments are rooted heavily in the area of study referred to as political science. Competitors debate the same topic all year; however, the specifics of each round can vary substantially.

Long-term Benefits

Ability to quickly develop a coherent argument in support of your position

Ability to quickly identify the flaw's in another person's argument

Develop organizational skills

Gain knowledge in the fields of social sciences, political science, behavioral science, government, international relations, inter-cultural relations, economics, etc.

Enhance comprehension of popular media, as well as college- and graduate-level material

Develop research skills

Develop the skills needed in classes using a seminar format

Current Topic (Academic Year 2024):

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase fiscal redistribution in the United States by adopting a federal jobs guarantee, expanding Social Security, and/or providing basic income.

Key Issues the affirmative and negative may debate about

1. Is there a need for the affirmative?

Does the affirmative demonstrate a problem (something bad or harm) with the world?

Does the affirmative demonstrate that the system has failed to properly fix the problem?

2. The affirmative should advocate a solution that falls within the bounds of the debate topic.

3. Does the affirmative lead to more good than bad? (Yes, vote Aff. No, vote Neg.)

Does the affirmative demonstrate that their proposal (aka- plan) reduces the problem?

The affirmative may provide other reasons or examples of how its plan does good things.

The negative should provide reasons why the affirmative plan leads to "bad things"

- Does the negative demonstrate disadvantages of adopting the plan?

- Does the negative present an alternative (aka- counterplan) that is better than the plan?

- Does the negative demonstrate that the affirmative uses flawed reasoning, which in itself causes bad things to happen?

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Description

Rather than debating specific policies, this form of debate focuses on the values behind our choices. In other words, it encourages competitors to look at and challenge the assumptions behind our decisions. Arguments are rooted heavily in philosophy. Competitors debate a different topic every two months. **Emphasis is balanced between delivery and philosophical analysis of the topic area.**

Long-term Benefits

Encourages you to challenge the assumptions behind another person's framework of thought

Ability to understand the nature of our world, society, species

Knowledge of Philosophy (Aristotle, Kant, Mill, Marx, etc.)

Enhance comprehension of popular media, as well as college- and graduate-level material

Current Topic (Jan/Feb 2024):

Resolved: The United States ought to substantially reduce its military presence in the West Asia-North Africa region.

Key Ingredients

Both Affirmative and Negative debaters should present an overarching value that they believe is of primary importance. This becomes the standard by which the round should be evaluated.

Examples of Values include: Justice, Fairness, Utilitarianism, Equality, Knowledge

Both the Affirmative and Negative should present a criteria for determining whether affirmation or negation of the resolution achieves the value in question.

Examples of Criteria include: Rule of Law, Fairness, Education, Justice (Yes, "Criteria" can be "Values." Typically, a criteria is a stepping stone to the value. For example, a debater might argue that we cannot have a "Just" society (the value) if we do not abide by the "Rule of Law" (the criteria).)

Public Forum

Description

This is a team event, consisting of two people. Discussions focus on current events and change monthly. The event is not technical and is designed to be presented with layperson appeal. The event looks similar to shows like Crossfire or other roundtable type talk shows.

Current Topic (Jan/Feb 2024):

Resolved: The United States federal government should repeal Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act.

Congressional Debate/Student Congress

Description

This is an individual event in which each member of the chamber (including the Presiding Officer) is in competition against everyone else. Debates focus on current events and follow basic standards of parliamentary procedure, as you might find in congress. The event is not technical. Ultimately, the goal of every member of the chamber is to make the debate better and to advance our understanding of the issue being debated.

Topics:

Varied. Students are given the legislative docket about 1 week prior to the tournament.

Other Thoughts for Judges

- You will have a timekeeper in the round
- You are in charge, but the competitors can help you out (before the round starts)
- You cannot converse with other individuals about "who should win"
- The Judge is ALWAYS Right
- Be critical of the competitors... provide constructive criticism
- Double check your ballot before turning it in to the ballot table
- The students are glad you are there to judge, regardless of your experience-level