

Judging Speech & Debate



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Judging Speech & Debate Basics

The most important rule is: Don't judge the student, judge their performance. Don't judge clothing, appearance, background, or video quality.

Cultural Competence Training: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/judge-training/>

If you know a competitor, alert the tournament staff, it is not ethical for you to judge that round.

Don't judge or comment on their attire or background.

If their camera is off, do not penalize them.

To help ensure that comments are done in a respectful and appropriate manner: <https://consciousstyleguide.com>

This course, developed by the National Speech & Debate Association & the National Federation of High Schools, is the gold standard for judge training. It is a free course, you need to add to cart, but the cost is \$0.00

<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/adjudicating-speech-and-debate>

Tabroom

Tabroom.com is the hub for S&D tournaments. It's where you'll find the rounds you're judging once they are assigned to you and the link that will take you to the NSDA Campus Room where the competition will take place, and where you'll fill out your online ballot.

The first step is to go to [tabroom.com](https://www.tabroom.com) and create an account. How to create an account on tabroom:

<https://youtu.be/DyTqMwhRJpo> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4PlvjxixB8>

Using online ballots on tabroom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8dSkHnfbj4>

How to edit feedback on ballots: <https://screencast-o-matic.com/watch/cYh0FupcDv>

NSDA Campus

NSDA Campus is the platform that hosts tournament rooms. Similar to google meet or zoom.

In tabroom, once you've been assigned a round and click start on your ballot, you will see a camera button. You will click on that button and it will take you to the virtual room to judge. Only you and the competitors assigned to that room will be allowed entry. If for some reason, someone else is able to get in, please contact tabroom. **TAB Staff are able to enter any room, so if you see someone with TAB in front of their name, they are just there to check on things and will likely leave quickly if not needed. **

How to use NSDA Campus: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aw7J8_ags6s&feature=emb_logo

Test NSDA Campus on your device: <https://campus.speechanddebate.org/>

Speech Events

Humorous Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duo, and
Program Oral Interpretation.



Judging a Speech Event

- 10 minute speech with a 30 second grace period. The only penalty for breaking the grace period, is that they can't be ranked 1st.
- Should include an introduction, as themselves/breaking character, to give context.
- Students should include blocking (the way they move around the space), hand gestures, vocal variety, good projection, easily distinguishable characters, pace, filler words, and an easy to follow storyline.
- Ranking: As you move from one speech to the next, come up with a system for keeping track of what your ranks would be so far. When you are done with the second performance, would you rank it higher or lower than the first performance? After the third speech, does it move to the top, to the bottom, or to the middle? Trust your gut when giving ranks. Did a piece make you cry? Did a speech leave you wanting to tell all of your friends about it? There's your easy 1st place.
- Assigning Speaker Points: Speaker points may be on a 85 point scale or a 100 point scale.
- Feedback on the Ballot: Comments: Remember to help the student improve. Tell students if they weren't loud enough, you couldn't understand them, you couldn't understand what was being acted out, or what the point of their speech was. Give them suggestions for improvement.
- How to Use Online Ballots - Speech: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prCyYf-KbM0>
- How to Judge Interp (Interp = Speech)
- Example Completed Interp Ballot

Sample feedback for Speech Ballots

- “Great delivery! Your blocking, facial expressions, and hand gestures all worked and increased audience engagement.”
- “Nice job distinguishing between characters.”
- “Could use more energy.”
- “Other students included more research, that could help this speech”
- “You might want to add more movement to this speech”
- “I had a bit of hard time following the storyline.”
- “You may consider...”
- “Have you thought about a different accent for this character?”

Example of Virtual Duo Interp

Example of HI

*A few sentences per student would be adequate, as the tournament staff needs the ballots returned in a timely manner. Explaining your reason for decision for ranking is helpful.

Humorous Interpretation (HI)

Using a play, short story, or other published work, students perform a selection of one or more portions of a piece up to ten minutes in length. Humorous Interpretation is designed to test a student's comedic skills through script analysis, delivery, timing, and character development. Competitors may portray one or multiple characters. No props or costumes may be used. Performances should include an introduction written by the student to contextualize the performance and state the title and author.

Humor can be created through strategic choreography, creative characterization, and dynamic non-verbal reactions. Typical selection topics range from light-hearted material including interpretations of comics, children's literature, plays, short stories, and more.

Traits of Successful HI Performers

Here are some traits of successful HIers to keep in mind:

- Creative
- Physical control
- Bold/high energy
- Ability to think outside the box
- Dynamic physical and vocal techniques
- Risk taker

TEASER • 0:00 – 1:30

Previews the topic and mood of the selection

INTRO • 1:30 – 3:00

Explains the purpose of the performance

EXPOSITION • 3:00 – 3:30

Introduces characters and setting

INCITING INCIDENT • 3:30 – 4:00

Sends the conflict into motion

RISING ACTION • 4:00 – 7:30

Complicates the conflict

CLIMAX • 7:30 – 8:30

Emotional peak of the performance

FALLING ACTION • 8:30 – 9:30

Resolves the conflict

Dramatic Interpretation (DI)

Using a play, short story, or other published work, students perform a selection of one or more portions of a piece up to ten minutes in length. With a spotlight on character development and depth, Dramatic Interpretation focuses on a student's ability to convey emotion through the use of a dramatic text. Competitors may portray one or multiple characters. No props or costumes may be used. Performances may also include an introduction written by the student to contextualize the performance and state the title and author.

Dramatic Interpretation 2019
National Finalist:



DUO

Just like HI & DI, but with a partner.

Partners may not touch or make eye contact with each other.

Program Oral Interpretation (POI)

Using a combination of Prose, Poetry, and Drama, students construct a program up to ten minutes in length using at least two out of the three genres. With a spotlight on argumentation and performative 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 except for the manuscript. Performances also include an introduction written by the student to contextualize the performance and state the titles and authors used in the program.

Traits of Successful POI Performers

- Ability to characterize multiple perspectives
- Strong argumentation skills
- Controlled performance
- Depth/breadth of emotion
- Knowledge of poetic, prosaic and dramatic convention

Program Oral Interpretation relies on the performer's ability to portray a wide range of characters and literature all held together under a common theme. Each program must contain at least two of the three genres and students are encouraged to include all three. There is a set time limit of ten minutes, with a 30-second grace period. Students who choose to compete in POI should focus on making an interesting argument that is supported in different ways by each piece of literature they select.

TEASER • 0:00 – 1:30

Previews the topic and mood of the selection

INTRO • 1:30 – 3:00

Explains the purpose of the performance

EXPOSITION • 3:00 – 3:30

Introduces characters and setting

INCITING INCIDENT • 3:30 – 4:00

Sends the conflict into motion

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Complicates the conflict

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Emotional peak of the performance

FALLING ACTION • 8:30 – 9:30

Resolves the conflict

Speech-Public Address Events

United States Extemporaneous, International Extemporaneous,
Informative, Original Oratory.

United States/International Extemporaneous Speaking:

- Students are generally given three questions to choose from, once one is chosen the student has 30 minutes to prepare their speech.
- Speeches are generally a maximum of 7 minutes, no minimum
- Rounds are usually given a topic, e.g. environmental issues, politics.
- Speakers present their answer to the questions and support their arguments with evidence.
- Cross examination is usually held in the final round.
- Students need to be efficient with their research.
- Total freedom to make a persuasive speech.
- Speech is delivered from memory. No note cards or reading screens.

Informative:

- Solo Event
- 10 minute speech about a topic that a student chooses
- Goal is to educate the audience on that topic
- Allowed posters!
- 30 second grace period

Informative 2017 National Finalist



Original Oratory:

Students deliver a self-written, ten-minute speech on a topic of their choosing. Limited in their ability to quote words directly, competitors craft an argument using evidence, logic, and emotional appeals. Topics range widely, and can be informative or persuasive in nature. The speech is delivered from memory.

Debate Events

Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum, Policy, Big Questions, & Congress.

Debate event commonalities:

- Present both sides of an issue.
- Debaters have to be prepared to debate both sides of the topic.
- Evidence is presented.
- Cross examination questioning.
- Strict time limits without a grace period.
- Winning debater is the one that did the best job of articulating their position and refuting their opponents' arguments.

Judging a Debate Round:

- Keep notes! Try as best as you can to keep track of the major arguments brought up by both sides and whether the opposing team refutes those arguments.
- You cannot, unfortunately, interrupt a round, unless one person is using their speech to harass another student—calling them a vulgarity/slur, etc.
- Do not ask debaters questions about their cases before during or after a round.
- After the debate round: Do not give verbal feedback directly to the debaters; a brief “thank you” to the debaters is fine.
- Provide written comments to the debaters on the ballot: Do they need to improve using evidence, analyzing, speaking clearly?
- Describe your reason for decision (RFD.)
- You can consider who had the most evidence, who had the best evidence.
- Who analyzed the whole round better.
- Who analyzed the details better.
- Who spoke more persuasively.
- Whose points you understood better.
- How to Use Online Ballots - Debate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SrO56i4MII>

Resources for Judging Debate

- [How to Judge LD Debate](#)
 - [Example Completed LD Ballot](#)
 - [Judge Guide to LD](#)
 - [How to Judge PF Debate](#)
 - [Example Completed PF Ballot](#)
 - [Judge Guide to PF](#)
 - [How to complete a Congress ballot on Tabroom.](#)
 - [How to complete a Debate ballot on Tabroom](#)
 - [How to complete a Speech ballot on Tabroom](#)
- [How to Judge CX Debate](#)
 - [Example Completed CX Ballot](#)
 - [Judge Guide to CX](#)

CX = Policy

Lincoln Douglas (LD) Debate

LD Overview

January/February 2021 Topic: Resolved: States ought to ban lethal autonomous weapons.

- Students debate a resolution that changes every two months.
- One on One Debate Event.
- Named for the 1858 Lincoln-Douglas Debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas.
- Considered a values debate. Asks broader, moral, more philosophical questions.
- Values and criteria.
- Topics range from individual freedom vs collective good to economic development vs. environmental protection etc.

Speech	Time Limit	Responsibility of Debater
Affirmative Constructive	6 min	Present the affirmative case
Negative Cross-Examination	3 min	Negative asks questions of the affirmative
Negative Constructive/ Negative Rebuttal	7 min	Present the negative case and refute the affirmative case
Affirmative Cross-Examination	3 min	Affirmative asks questions of the negative
First Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min	Refute the negative case and rebuild the affirmative case
2nd Negative Rebuttal	6 min	Refute the affirmative case, rebuild the negative case, and offer reasons that negative should win the round, commonly referred to as voting issues.
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal	3 min	Address negative voting issues and offer crystallization for why the affirmative should win.

Students may consult evidence gathered prior to the debate but may not use the internet in round.

An entire debate is roughly 45 minutes and consists of constructive speeches, rebuttals, and cross-examination.

There are 4 minutes for prep time.

**Each debater is also entitled to four minutes of prep time during the round.*

Public Forum Debate or PF/Puff

January/February 2021 Topic:

Resolved: The National Security Agency should end its surveillance of US citizens and lawful permanent residents.

- Tabroom will prompt you and students to do a coin flip. Whoever wins the coinflip will be allowed to pick one of these decisions: whether they want to debate affirmative or negative, OR whether they want to speak first or second. The team who loses the coinflip will be allowed to make the remaining decision.
- Students debate in pairs against another pair.
- Debate a topic or resolution that typically rotates every month or two months.
- Topics are geared toward current events.
- Either the Negative/Con or Affirmative/Pro can speak first.
- Students may be assigned Neg or Aff before the round or judge may do a coin flip.
- Requires specific refutation of opponents' arguments.
- Judges should double check speaker name and order on their ballots.

Public Forum Round Structure:

- A round is typically 45 minutes long
- Each speech is generally shorter than other debates
- Focused on impacts and the status quo

Speech	Time Limit	Responsibility of Debater
Team A Speaker 1 - Constructive	4 min	Present the team's case
Team B Speaker 1 - Constructive	4 min	Present the team's case
Crossfire	3 min	Speaker 1 from Team A & B alternate asking and answering questions
Team A Speaker 2 - Rebuttal	4 min	Refute the opposing side's arguments
Team B Speaker 2 - Rebuttal	4 min	Refute the opposing side's arguments
Crossfire	3 min	Speaker 2 from Team A & B alternate asking and answering questions
Team A Speaker 1 - Summary	3 min	Begin crystallizing the main issues in the round
Team B Speaker 1 - Summary	3 min	Begin crystallizing the main issues in the round
Grand Crossfire	3 min	All four debaters involved in a crossfire at once
Team A Speaker 2 - Final Focus	2 min	Explain reasons that you win the round
Team B Speaker 2 - Final Focus	2 min	Explain reasons that you win the round

**Each team is entitled to three minutes of prep time during the round.*

Policy Debate or CX/Cross Examination

2020-2021 Topic:

Resolved: The United States federal government should enact substantial criminal justice reform in the United States in one or more of the following: forensic science, policing, sentencing.

- Partner event
- Topic debated is the same for the entire year.
- Research intensive activity.
- Considers the best policy for society, such as law, regulation, or advocacy.
- Proposal of a plan/advocacy statement from the Affirmative team, while the Negative team offers reasons to reject that proposal due to a better competing proposal, or the proposal itself does not address the root problem, or the status quo is preferable.
- Students should present well reasoned arguments that offer a thesis, justifications, and state the importance of their argument.
- Students use evidence to back up claims.

Policy Round Structure:

- Each round is about 90 minutes.

1st Affirmative Constructive	1AC	8 minutes
Negative Cross-Examination of Affirmative		3 minutes
1st Negative Constructive	1NC	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross-Examination of Negative		3 minutes
2nd Affirmative Constructive	2AC	8 minutes
Negative Cross-Examination of Affirmative		3 minutes
2nd Negative Constructive	2NC	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross-Examination of Negative		3 minutes
1st Negative Rebuttal	1NR	5 minutes
1st Affirmative Rebuttal	1AR	5 minutes
2nd Negative Rebuttal	2NR	5 minutes
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal	2AR	5 minutes
Prep Time (each team)		5 minutes

Big Questions

2020-2021 Topic:

Resolved: Math was discovered, not invented.

Big Questions resource: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/wp-content/uploads/Big-Questions-Format-Manual.pdf>

Congress:



- Model Congress following Robert's Rules of Order.
- Students compete in a room with other students.
- Role of students is to conduct themselves as members of Congress.
- Debate for and against proposed laws or resolutions, written and submitted by participating schools
- Use of powerful delivery to strengthen the persuasiveness of argument.
- At the end of a round, judges rank students to determine a winner.
- Students are assessed on research, argumentation, delivery skills, knowledge, and use of parliamentary procedure.
- Combination of preparedness and improvisation
- Passing a bill does not equate to winning. Ranking is based on quality of speeches.
- Congressional Debate Round Guide:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tIcKTUEBMf30rRETPNaDW3CFfQtrgktvV5w3MMIYYbY/edit?ts=5fb451a2>
- [Link to how to complete a Congress ballot on Tabroom.](#)

What to do if there are technical difficulties:

- The most common tech-fix for students and judges is to leave the “room”, restart google chrome, and come back in.
- We trust you to use your best judgement at this tournament—at other tournaments, like state, we may have more formalized procedures.
- If a student’s tech fritzes for just a few seconds, proceed with the round. • If a student’s tech fritzes for a substantial length, pause the timer, and allow them an about-equal amount of time to repeat what they said during the tech glitch. • Please do not allow the student to email a case for you to read to substitute for what should be a spoken event.
- Please don’t allow a technical glitch to give one competitor an advantage. Don’t give the glitched-out student EXTRA time to speak; don’t let the student with no-tech-issues win the round because they were the only student you could understand.