

How To Judge Informative Speaking | National Speech & Debate Association

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How To Judge Informative Speaking Basic Understanding

Informative Speaking is a 10-minute presentation written and performed by the student. Informative requires students to balance that content with delivery and style. Students in Informative must be articulate, engaging, and smooth with their delivery at both a vocal and physical level. The purpose of the event is to inform and educate the audience on a topic of significance. Students may or may not employ the use of visual aids in the performance.

Structure

While Informatives are all different, the structure should provide a framework for the audience to understand the topic. Each main point should explore a specific aspect of the topic the student is presenting. Research is a very important component in Informative. All claims should be backed up with evidence that verifies the information the speaker is conveying. If a student has presented two or three components of the topic in an educational and logically sound manner, it is likely they have displayed an adept command of structure.

Evaluating the Round

There are three key areas to consider when evaluating an Informative.

First, relevance: to assess the relevance of the speaker's Informative, focus on the timeliness of their topic. Gauge whether the student has done an adequate job of explaining why this topic should be discussed at this point in time. This can happen in a multitude of ways. Pay attention to how the topic is framed within the speaker's introduction. If the thesis of the Informative speech enables you to understand why this topic should be examined now, then they have accomplished a significant goal.

by the topic. Logical evidence supporting this sentiment should be given throughout the speech. Judges should consider whether they are personally educated and examine whether they feel the student educated the audience.

Third, originality: when evaluating originality, it is important to note that there are few truly original topics. Instead, consider how inventively the speaker addresses the topic. Judges ought to consider whether the rhetoric is unique, as well as how new and exciting the approach is to the topic.

Visual Aids

Students may or may not use visual aids within their Informative speech. 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. If a student has included a visual aid that is justified and interesting, then they likely have effectively incorporated a visual aid into their speech.

Filling Out the Ballot

Performers are ranked compared to the other students in their room with the best performance receiving the one ranking. The judge may also assign speaker points, typically in a range from 90 and 100, with 100 being outstanding.

The judge writes on the ballot how the speaker can improve—e.g., eye contact, clarity, emotion, etc., and what the student did well. This is an educational activity and all feedback is welcome. Please make sure the feedback is constructive and not merely critical.