



REGENT LEGACY ACADEMY

ONLINE COMPETITION BEST PRACTICES FOR FALL 2026

Welcome to the world of speech and debate competition! This activity is a crazy little world in which you will likely find some of the most interesting and fun people you will ever meet in your life, and over time will find some your best friends. But first, you have to get connected!

1. Have a **wired** Internet connection. Wifi signals can cut in and out due to electromagnetic interference from other devices like microwaves, TV sets, etc. as well as have a lower bandwidth (especially if other people in the household are using the Internet), so the best, most stable connection you can have while competing online is with a wired Internet connection. LAN cables thankfully are not very expensive nowadays, so you'll want to make sure you have at least a "cat 5" cable or above. This would only be a few dollars from Amazon or Best Buy.

2. Without a wired Internet connection, get as close as you can to your router. This will reduce the likelihood of signal interference but the connection won't be as fast or reliable.

3. Have a backup plan. This would include having a cell phone hotspot connection ready to go if your Internet connection fails, or being able to go quickly to your local Starbucks or public library to use their connection. Be aware of bad cell phone reception too if you live in a canyon. You can expect to use 10 gigabytes of data per day if you're hotspotting for a tournament.

4a. Prepare your competition area for debate. That means having a clean surface to take notes on or a second device like a laptop or an iPad to use to read your case. When flowing your opponents' speeches, you'll want to have a good wired headset that will connect to your computer so you can hear everything said in round. A lot of rounds are won and lost by what students fail to hear from their opponents and connection issues put judges in a difficult spot to fairly adjudicate the round.

4b. Prepare your competition area for speech. That means having a clean, vanilla performance space. If possible, use empty classrooms at your school to perform your speeches as giving your speech with a blank whiteboard behind you is what real in-person competition is like.

If you are competing from home, try to find a quiet place like a bedroom, a spare bedroom, an office, etc. that will have a blank wall behind you so that when you are up there giving your performance, the audience will focus on you and not any other distractions. If you are in a cluttered area, you can drape a monochrome bedsheet behind you to create that vanilla background.

Be sure to put your laptop at least at chest height so that when you step back, the audience will be able to see you