

TOURNAMENT OF THANKFULNESS

River Valley Speech and Debate League

EVENTS OFFERED

IPDA / Public Debate

In competitive public debate (IPDA), each round has a different topic presented 30 minutes before the debate begins. Immediately after topic selection, debaters must write and find evidence for a case to use. Public debate is designed to mirror debates that occur in modern society, ranging from intricate policy advocacy to lighter metaphorical argument.

Debaters get 30 minutes after receiving the topic to build an argument. Each debater addresses the overarching logic, value, or policy of the round without giving overt details on how to fix or change the issue at hand.

Extemporaneous Speaking

Students are presented with a choice of three questions related to current events in the U.S. and, in 30 minutes, prepare a seven-minute speech answering the selected question. Students may consult articles and evidence gathered prior to the contest, and some tournaments allow internet use during preparation. Topics range from political matters to economic concerns to U.S. foreign policy. The speech is delivered from memory.

Improvised Duet Acting (IMPROV)

A team of two competitors draws three topics and chooses one for performance. Performers use creativity, plot development, and characterization to craft a short, original scene that tells a story and entertains.

- No costumes, props, or makeup. One chair per performer may be used.
- Introduction must include the topic, characters, and necessary background.
- Performance is from memory; scripts may not be used.
- 7-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performers. Suspected plagiarism should be documented and reported to the tournament director.
- Rule violations other than time violations result in disqualification from the round. Piloted rules do not apply to the State Tournament.



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Poetry Interpretation (PO)

Students interpret one or more poetry selections. Poetry conveys ideas, experiences, and emotions through language and expression. Traditional or nontraditional poetry may be used; prose and drama (plays) may not.

- Creative introduction explaining necessary background.
- Title(s) and author(s) must be stated.
- A manuscript must be used in a uniform black binder.
- Limited movement may be incorporated.
- 5-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performer(s).
- Current NSDA manual rules apply; rule violations other than time violations result in disqualification. Piloted rules do not apply to the State Tournament.

Congressional Debate

Congressional Debate simulates a session of the United States Congress. Students debate pre-written mock legislation - bills and resolutions - on a variety of topics. Participants act as members of Congress, researching and advocating for or against legislation. Judges evaluate performance based on research, argumentation, and speaking ability.

Storytelling (ST)

Students select a story appropriate for young children and tell it as if presenting to that audience. A chair may be used.

- Creative introduction explaining necessary background.
- Title and author must be stated.
- 5-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performer(s).
- Rule violations other than time violations result in disqualification. Piloted rules do not apply to the State Tournament.

Public Forum Debate

Public Forum is a middle and high school competitive debate event centered on current events and the use of logic and evidence.

Competitors complete a coin flip at the beginning of the round. The winner of the flip determines which side of the debate they want to take (affirmative or negative). The team that loses the flip chooses which side will speak first.



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Informative Speaking (INF)

Competitors craft an original speech designed to explain, define, describe, or illustrate a subject. The goal is for the audience to gain understanding and/or knowledge; the purpose is to educate, not advocate.

- Speech should be well researched and organized, using evidence, logic, emotional appeals, and humor where appropriate.
- A visual aid may be used but is not required.
- Speech is delivered from memory; scripts may not be used.
- No more than 150 words may be direct quotation, and quotations must be identified orally.
- 10-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Current NSDA manual rules apply; rule violations other than time violations result in disqualification. Piloted rules do not apply to the State Tournament.

Original Oratory (OO)

Competitors craft an original argument using evidence, logic, and emotional appeals. Topics may be informative or persuasive, but the general purpose of the speech is to persuade.

- Speech should be well researched and organized with evidence, logic, emotional appeals, and sometimes humor.
- Scripts may not be used.
- Content should be the original work of the speaker, with no more than 150 directly quoted words. Extensive paraphrasing is discouraged.
- 10-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performer.

Dramatic Song Lyric Interpretation (DSL)

A single performer presents a spoken-word interpretation of the lyrics of one or more songs.

- Introduction must provide necessary background and relevant context.
- Title(s) and lyricist(s) must be stated.
- A manuscript must be used in a uniform black binder.
- 5-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performer.



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Impromptu Speaking (ISP)

Students have seven minutes to select a topic, brainstorm ideas, outline, and deliver a speech from memory using an introduction, body, and conclusion.

- Speech should be well researched and organized with evidence, logic, emotional appeals, and humor where appropriate.
- Scripts may not be used.
- 7-minute total time, including preparation and delivery, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Time begins as soon as the speaker selects between the two topics presented by the judge.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performer(s).

Declamation (DEC)

Students select a speech that was delivered in public and perform an excerpt. The event is not designed for students to mimic the original speaker; instead, competitors develop an original and engaging interpretation that delivers the author's message.

- Introduction must provide necessary background and relevant context.
- Title and author must be stated.
- Speech is delivered from memory; scripts may not be used.
- 10-minute limit, including introduction, with a 30-second grace period; no minimum.
- Performances are expected to be the artistic creation of the performer(s).
- Rule violations other than time violations result in disqualification. Piloted rules do not apply to the State Tournament.