



American Speech and Debate Association

2022-2023

Junior Handbook



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ASDA recognizes that there are ambitious young students counting the years until they are eligible to compete in speech and debate. For tournaments where coordinators can accommodate, students 8-11 years old will be given the opportunity to compete in a Junior Speech Tournament during tournament semifinals and/or finals. This is an excellent opportunity for younger students to get a real idea of what future competition will entail without fear of penalty. The competitors that did not advance to semifinals and/or finals may serve as the judges for the Junior Competitors.

Junior Speech Rules

1. Self timing is optional, if the student feels confident, otherwise a judge will keep time.
2. No penalty for using script during speech.
3. No penalty for going over or under time.
4. No script submission.

Junior Speech Events

Impromptu Speech

In Impromptu Speaking, competitors are given two possible topics to speak on. The students have two minutes to think and make notes about the topic followed by five minutes to present an informative or persuasive speech. Topics may be single words, phrases, quotes, or questions.

1. Competitors may bring blank paper/note cards and a writing utensil into competition rooms.
2. Competitors may use blank paper/note cards to make notes during preparation time. They may hold or view any notes during delivery of their speech.
3. Competitors may ask a judge to read possible topics to them if they need help reading.

Original Oratory

An Original Oratory is a five-minute speech written by the competitor. The topic is entirely of



the competitor's choosing. The speech may seek to inform, to inspire, or to persuade the judges. It may be serious or humorous in tone.

Values and Faith Oratory

A Values and Faith Oratory is a five-minute speech written by the competitor. The speech should focus on a personal value or belief of the competitor. Examples of appropriate topics might include an explanation of some tenet of American values or the competitor's religion, encouragement in upholding a value of importance to the competitor, a biography of someone who upheld American values or their own faith to the benefit of others, et cetera. The speech may seek to inform, to inspire, or to persuade the judges. It may be serious or humorous in tone.

Open Interpretation

Open Interpretation is a five-minute literary interpretation event in which the competitor chooses a published piece of literature, cuts the work into a presentation, acts out all the roles, and directs all the action. Open Interpretation provides substantial freedom of imagination to competitors. Without sets, props, or costumes available, competitors use body language, facial expressions, and voice to create rich characters and settings. Open Interpretation gives competitors the opportunity to present classic literature and works with high literary merit in a dynamic, entertaining way. Open Interpretation Speeches may be dramatic or humorous in tone.

1. If competitors choose to include singing, it should be motivated by the original source.
2. Dancing should be limited in nature and make sense with the original source material.
3. Sound effects are allowed.
4. One published or self-authored work must be used as the source material for each speech.
5. The introduction must include the title and author of the literature selection.

Judge Expectations

1. Be a responsive audience.
2. Judge on speaker merit and performance.
3. Refrain from personal bias when possible.
4. Silence Cell Phones.
5. Do not discuss speeches with speakers or other judges.



6. Feedback is an essential component to competitor's growth.
7. Provide positive feedback along with critical suggestions.
8. Do not leave room until all speeches have been presented.
9. Review the speech categories and the rules for the events you will judge.
10. Rank speakers as you see fit. Do not worry about script use or going over time.

