

# 2023-2024 INDIANA MIDDLE SCHOOL SPEECH AND DEBATE EVENT RULES

Middle School meet dates available on Coach Spreadsheet– email:  
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## **Discussion and Debate Topics for 2023-24** (approved 10/24/23)

- a. Discussion Theme: Technology
- b. MS Debate (26-minute LD format) Resolution: Dress codes improve educational outcomes in learning environments
- c. Trial Congress (Westfield): Bullying Legislation

# **RADIO BROADCASTING**

## **A. There will be three rounds of participation for all contestants.**

The order will be as follows:

For Each Round:

- Prep Time
- Speaking Time

### **Round I**

Commercial 30 minutes 1 minute

### **Round II**

Editorial 1 minute 1 minute

### **Round III**

News Program 2 minutes

## **B. Instructions for each round are as follows:**

**Round 1** = The commercial copy will advertise a product which is recognizable in its nature or use. All competitors will receive the same informational copy about the product such as product name, effects and contents, cost, and availability. Each competitor shall be given 30 minutes in which to write, edit, and rehearse a one-minute final version of his or her original commercial.

**Round 2** = Editorial material will be chosen by the Tournament director. The editorial will already have been cut to fit within the 1 minute time frame. Each competitor will receive the same copy and have one minute to prepare for its delivery.

**Round 3** = News Program: All competitors should bring a two minute prepared news program which they have arranged, edited, and practiced beforehand. The news program, presenting events of local, state, or national importance, along with entertainment, sports, weather, etc. should not exceed two minutes.

## **C. Basis for judging each round:**

**Round 1** = Salesmanship, friendliness, fluency, conviction, accuracy, voice, and articulation

**Round 2** = Persuasiveness, dignity, accuracy, articulation, fluency, voice variety, authority

**Round 3** = Selection of items for news worthiness, arrangement, transitions, voice variety, articulation, accuracy, sign on and sign off, authority, sense of timing.

## **D. Competitors should not see each other perform in the round.**

## **E. Judges will not be able to see competitors while they are "on the air."**

# IMPROMPTU

## Topics:

Round 1 = WORD

Round 2 = QUOTATION

Round 3 = CURRENT EVENT (Which will be written in question form.)

## Judges:

1. When running a round of impromptu, all competitors enter the room at the beginning of the round, just like any other event, and are audience members.
2. The exception to this is if a competitor is double-entered (in two events) causing him/her to enter the room once started (this should be done between competitors) or leaving the room before the round is finished. You must allow this!
3. It is required to use a stopwatch.
4. It is required to provide verbal time signals during prep and hand time signals during the speech.
5. See below under “process” for more details.

## Ranking:

1. Brevity should be penalized only if it disclosed a lack of knowledge of the subject or makes the speech incomplete.
2. Each competitor should be judged for his or her ability to think under pressure. He/She should be judged for the continuity of the speech and the material that he/she is able to recall on the spur of the moment and mold that information into a logical speech.
3. Each competitor should also be judged on the mechanics of speech— poise, quality, and use of voice, body action, and the ability to hold the attention of the audience.
4. Competitors may choose to use a note card when speaking. However, competitors are not to be marked down if they do not use a note card.

## Process:

1. Judges are given an envelope of topics before the round begins (the judge picks this up from the tournament office).
2. The envelope is not opened until the judge and at least one competitor are in the room and ready to begin the round.
3. During each round, all sections have the same topic. However, each competitor in his/her section will speak on a different aspect of this topic.
4. Each competitor has a total of 8 minutes to prep and speak. There is no minimum time limit for prepping or speaking.
5. Competitors draw three slips of paper from the envelope, reads each slip of paper, chooses one, puts the two rejected slips back into the envelope (this is so other competitors have the opportunity to draw them), shows the judge what was chosen, and begins prepping. While prepping, the competitor may sit or stand, as well as choose to write notes.
6. The judge begins timing and verbally informs the competitor of time used in 30 second increments.
7. When the competitor is ready to begin speaking, the judge continues the timer/stopwatch and now gives hand time signals to inform the competitor of time used in 1-minute increments.
8. Repeat the above until all competitors have spoken.

# DISCUSSION

Round table discussion is characterized by the many informal, spontaneous, brief exchanges of views rather than by a series of long, prepared speeches.

Five to seven students will be assigned to a table (this can vary depending on the amount of entries).

## **Judging:**

1. The judge should sit near but not at the table.
2. The topics for discussion have been pre-determined.
3. The judge is not to participate in the discussion under any circumstance.
4. The number of times a competitor speaks is not as significant as the quality of what is said.
5. Competitors are judged on their skills in analysis and evaluation, contribution and information, validity of reasoning, integrative and cooperative thinking, relevancy of remarks, and presentation.

## **Process:**

1. Competitors will cover the first question in round 1, the second question in round 2, and the third question in round 3.
2. No formal opening statements. (The skill of this event is to have kids learn to listen to others.)
3. There is no moderator. (This includes the judge not becoming involved.)
4. Definitions will be defined within the discussion, not at the beginning of each round.
5. Competitors will use an index card or name tent and write their first name and competition number on it to be displayed on the table in front of them.
6. One-page, front and back, outlines are allowed by each competitor for each round. However, the outlines should not merely be a cut/paste from the Internet. They are also not to be written in paragraph format.

# EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING

Topics will be taken from articles discussed in leading magazines during the three-month period immediately prior to the tournament. The topics will deal with people, social, economic, scientific or political events of state, national or international interest. Typical magazines to be used for the selection of topics will include Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News and Report since September 1st. Other magazines such as Science Christian Monitor, Economist, etc. are allowed. Topics must be written in question form.

## Process:

1. Receiving question:
  - a. During prep, competitors will draw three slips of paper with a number and question corresponding to an article.
  - b. He/She will choose one question, return the other two, and receive the appropriate article(s) for the chosen question.
  - c. Competitors will draw in the order of speaking at intervals of five minutes (it is five instead of seven because MS students rarely go past 4-5 mins).
2. Judges should be aware that competitors may arrive at their room at different times (especially in Round I). Judges should listen to the first speaker as soon as s/he arrives, checking outside the door for new arrivals after each speech. Competitors may choose to remain in the room to listen to other speakers or leave after their turn.
3. Researching question:
  - a. Competitors will use this provided article as their source, but they can supplement with files/non-annotated articles, if they so choose, that they bring to the tournament.
  - b. No internet usage for prep, but a computer may be used to access files that are saved to a desktop or hard drive (the student would just have to show the person running prep that the internet is turned off before beginning prep).
4. Competitors may use 1 - 4X6 note card
  - a. Can use front and back of note card
  - b. No word count maximum on note card
  - c. Judges are not to take the note card away from a student for any reason.
5. Competitors may choose to use a note card when speaking. However, competitors are not to be marked down if they do not use a note card.
6. There is no minimum time limit; maximum time limit will be seven minutes. Brevity will be penalized only if it discloses lack of knowledge of the subject or makes the speech incomplete.
7. The same speech will be used all three rounds.

## Ranking:

1. Competitors are to follow strict adherence to the precise statement of the topic drawn and can be penalized for shifting to another topic on which the competitor might prefer to speak.
2. Competitors are to have well-chosen information relative to the subject.
3. There is to be organization of materials according to a logical plan to produce a complete speech within the time limit.
4. Each competitor should also be judged on the mechanics of speech— poise, quality and use of voice, body action, and the ability to hold the attention of the audience.
5. The Extemp speech is not to be a memory test of the material contained in any one particular magazine article but rather an original synthesis of current fact and opinion on the designated topic.

# **SCRIPTED DUO INTERPRETATION**

Duo is the only event where two students are allowed to work together.

The selection may be dramatic, humorous, or a combination of both.

1. Must have a memorized introduction which includes the title and author.
2. Memorized transitions may be utilized (but are not required).
3. Participants may portray more than one character.
4. Competitors will usually be facing the audience during their presentation, although they may “roll” behind each other or stand angled for effect.
5. Partners must not play to or make eye contact with each other.
6. No touching each other when performing. This is interpretation without interaction, choreographed in collaboration without direct, physical contact.
7. Use of focal points and/or direct eye contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted.
8. Movement is not limited.
9. No costumes, properties (hand or stage), or character make-up is permitted.
10. Time Limit is 5-10 minutes.

# **MEMORIZED DUO INTERPRETATION**

1. 1-10 SAME AS SCRIPTED
2. Competitors may use their folder as a prop, as long as one character has his/her folder open and it is being used as a script at the time the other folder is a prop for the other character.

# **DRAMATIC AND HUMOROUS INTERPRETATION**

Although dramatic and humorous interpretation are two separate events, because the rules are the same, they will be discussed together.

1. The art of interpretation is to be an attempt to recreate the characters in the story presented and make them living and real to the audience.
2. The selections used in both events must be memorized.
3. The selections chosen must be sections from a play, short story, essay, or novel of "recognized literary quality" which has been published in a book or magazine.
4. The choice of material is legal if it is readily available to the public.
5. Selections should be judged for the appropriateness as competition material and its suitability to the particular competitor using it.
6. This is an event in oral interpretation. The contestant should be judged on poise, quality and use of voice, inflections, emphasis, pronunciation, enunciation, and especially the ability to interpret characters correctly and consistently.
7. Narrative should be vivid and animated, but not acting as if on a stage, so as to be interesting and an integral part of the story rather than just "filler" between portions of dialogue.
8. No costumes, properties (hand or stage), or character make-up is permitted.
9. Time Limit is 5-10 minutes.

# **ORIGINAL PERFORMANCE**

1. The script must be written by the student performing the material. When a duo is written for performances, it may be written by one or both of the performers.
2. The original selection may be dramatic or humorous, using poetic, narrative, playwriting, essay or any combination of writing styles.
3. The selection should be 5-10 minutes in length.
4. A written/typed copy must be available for the tournament director, if requested.
5. A scripted piece must utilize a script for all parts of the presentation (with the exception of a memorized introduction or transitions if utilized). A memorized piece must be entirely memorized.
6. No more than 50 words of the piece may be quoted from another source.
7. Character movement may be utilized in the speaking area of the room.
8. No costumes, properties (hand or stage), or character make-up will be permitted.
9. If the original performance is a duo
  - a. The duo must have two participants (there can be more than one character played by each).
  - b. Participants may not play to each other. No eye or physical contact may occur with the exception of a clearly identified introduction or transition.
10. When judging this event, please consider both the writing and the performance of the material. Keep in mind that this is a judging guideline and not a rule governing competition.

# ORATORICAL DECLAMATION

1. Declamation is the delivering of a speech that was presented by someone else other than the speaker. The author may or may not be an expert speaker.
2. Any subject matter appropriate for competition may be used.
3. The speech must be delivered from memory.
4. Within the introduction, the competitor should provide the original time, place, and circumstances of the speech's original presentation.
5. The mechanics of speech must be observed faithfully - poise, quality and use of voice, effectiveness and ease of gesture, emphasis, variety, and enunciation.
6. No particular style of delivery should be demanded by every speaker; rather he/she should be free to select or develop an individual style and then be judged according to his/her effectiveness in influencing the audience.
7. Time Limit is 5-10 minutes.

# ORIGINAL ORATORY

1. In this event, the competitors have written the speech and deliver it themselves.
2. Any subject matter appropriate for competition may be used.
3. Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing.
4. Judges must consider both the composition (thought and content), as well as delivery. ○ However, as this is a contest in speech rather than essay writing, the emphasis should be placed on the speech aspect.
5. The orator is not expected in any way to solve the great problems of the day. Rather, he or she should be expected to discuss intelligently, with a degree of originality, in an interesting manner, and with consideration to the audience, the topic chosen.
6. The composition should be considered carefully for its rhetoric and diction.
7. The use of appropriate figures of speech, similes, and other rhetorical devices to make the oration more effective should be considered.
8. English usage should be correct.
9. Qualities of directness and sincerity which impress the oration upon the minds of the audience should be considered.
10. The mechanics of speech must be observed faithfully - poise, quality and use of voice, effectiveness and ease of gesture, emphasis, variety, and enunciation.
11. The speech must be delivered from memory.
12. Time Limit is 5-10 minutes.



# **POETRY INTERPRETATION**

1. The poetry selected should have some common theme that is established in the introduction, and transitions if they are used.
2. The poetry selection(s) should be taken from a published source. However, the internet may be used.
3. The poetry must be read from a script which is placed inside a folder.
4. While eye contact is important, it should be remembered that this is a reading event. The presentation itself is not to be memorized but interpreted from the script.
5. Introductions and transitions (if used) should be memorized.
6. The judge's decision should be influenced mainly by the reading of the poetry rather than the introductory and transitional material.
7. Use of focal points and/or direct eye contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted.
8. Excessive movement below the waist (ex. Walking) is discouraged.
9. The emphasis on interpreting poetry is on vocal delivery and suggestive gestures, rather than on acting movements.
10. Time Limit is 5-10 minutes.

# **PROSE INTERPRETATION**

1. The prose selected may be from one short story, from a longer work that was not originally in script form, or an essay, either fact or fiction, taken from a book, magazine or newspaper.
2. The focus of the piece should be on narration as opposed to dialogue.
3. Emphasis should be placed on literary quality.
4. An introduction should include the title of the work and its author, as well as any other background material essential to the audience's understanding.
5. Introductions and transitions (if used) should be memorized.
6. The judge's decision should be influenced mainly by the interpretation of the selection rather than the introductory and transitional material.
7. The story must be read from a script which is placed inside a folder.
8. While eye contact is important, it should be remembered that this is a reading event. The presentation itself is not to be memorized but interpreted from the script.
9. Use of focal points and/or direct eye contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted.
10. Excessive movement below the waist (ex. Walking) is discouraged.
11. The emphasis on interpreting prose scripts is on vocal delivery and suggestive gestures, rather than on acting movements.
12. Time Limit is 5-10 minutes.

# DEBATE

In Middle School Debate, each side (affirming or negating the resolution) may be represented by one or two debaters, and they may speak using any order/frequency they choose as long as one speaker covers each speech (with no penalty/preference for these decisions). Sides are assigned rather than chosen, and competitors will debate on both the affirmative and negative sides during the course of each tournament.

Affirmative Constructive – 4 minutes

*Negative Constructive – 4 minutes*

Crossfire – 2 minutes (Negative asks 1st question)

Affirmative Rebuttal – 2 minutes

*Negative Rebuttal – 2 minutes*

Crossfire – 2 minutes (Affirmative asks 1st question)

Affirmative Defense – 2 minutes

*Negative Defense – 2 minutes*

Affirmative Final Focus – 1 minute

*Negative Final Focus – 1 minute*

Prep – 2 minutes per side

**Constructives:** 1. **Define key terms** that may be challenged. 2. Offer decision **framework** for the outcome of the debate. This framework may seek to cover the central issue at stake in the debate and/or identify a value that society should pursue—alongside a norm for knowing when that value has been advanced enough to merit a vote for your side. 3. Argue in favor of one or more contentions, supporting claims with warrants (evidence/logic) and impacts (why it matters).

**Crossfire:** The speakers who delivered the constructives take turns asking each other **questions** (i.e. if there are two persons on a side, they cannot switch places between the speech and crossfire). Use cross-fire to: 1. Understand the other side's case. 2. Reach an agreement on definitions and frameworks.

**Rebuttals:** Respond in order to each of the **other side's arguments**. You may accept or contest definitions. You may accept the other side's framework, offer a competing framework, and/or argue that your side better achieves the goals of the other side's framework. **Counter** each of the other side's contentions using evidence and/or logic. Explain why your evidence more credible or relevant, why their warrants actually support your side, and/or why the links connecting their claims, warrants, and impacts are questionable.

**Defense:** 1. Respond to the **other side's attacks** on your case and explain why your arguments still stand. 2. Explain why your rebuttals merit rejection of the other side's case and/or why your arguments should be given more weight. New defenses may be introduced, but no new attacks.

**Final Focus:** **Summarize** the debate down to one or two central voting issues (introduced in framework) and explain why you won and/or why your voting issues should be given more weight. Any new arguments will be ignored.