



BISHOP BLANCHET HIGH SCHOOL MIDDLE SCHOOL SPEECH TOURNAMENT

Description and Rules for Speech Events

Original Oratory

In Original Oratory, speakers deliver a **self-written** speech on a topic of their choosing. Speakers craft an argument using evidence, logic, and emotional appeals. Topics range widely and can be informative or persuasive in nature. The speech is delivered from memory. (NSDA). Give the orator free choice of subject and judge them solely on the effectiveness of its development and presentation. The presentation must be memorized. Anyone who refers to a script or notes during their speech must rank below those who do NOT. The time limit for this event is EIGHT (8) MINUTES for OPEN and SIX (6) for NOVICE. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period (timer reaches 8:31 OPEN or 6:31 NOVICE) the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. There is no minimum time limit. Oratory is about the art of speaking and rhetoric. Speakers like Winston Churchill, Aristotle, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are prime examples of well-known orators.

Editorial Commentary

In Editorial Commentary, the speaker will present a scripted speech that is intended to be an analysis of a news event or public concern. Original commentary should enhance the overall effect of the news event or public concern. The speaker delivers the manuscript from a seated position and have the illusion of looking at a camera. The script should be timed to end between 1:45 and 2:00 minutes. Any speaker ending before 1:45 or after 2:00 minutes will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. Time signals will NOT be given to the speaker.

Expository

In Expository speaking, speakers write and deliver a speech on a topic of their choosing. Speakers create the speech to educate the audience on a particular topic. All topics must be informative in nature; the goal is to educate, not to advocate. Visual aids are permitted, but not required. (NSDA) Responsibility for choosing a worthwhile topic rests with the speaker. Worthwhile means many things- not just socially or politically relevant. Things that are interesting, entertaining, bring new insight or share a speaker's passion/interest can all be considered worthwhile. There is no penalty for the use of notecards/manuscripts in this event. The time limit for this event is EIGHT (8) MINUTES. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period (timer reaches 8:31) the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. There is no minimum time limit.

Impromptu

Impromptu is a public speaking event where speakers have 5 minutes to select a topic, brainstorm their ideas, outline the speech, and finally, deliver the speech. The speech is given without notes and uses an introduction, body, and conclusion. The speech can be light-hearted or serious. The speech can be based upon prompts that range from nursery rhymes, current events, celebrities, organizations, and more. (NSDA) A good impromptu speaker will discuss intelligently and with adequate speaking skills their chosen topic. Topics are provided by the tournament. The speaker listed first in the round should receive the speaker number one topics. The speaker must identify the chosen topic as part of the introduction. JUDGES MUST GIVE TIME SIGNALS: oral signals at 30-second intervals for preparation time and hand signals for the remaining minutes. Time limit: preparation and speaking time shall be a total of FIVE (5) minutes. Speakers may use the time as they wish for instance take 2 minutes to select a topic and brainstorm and speak for 3 minutes. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period (timer reaches 5:31) the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. Any other ranking is acceptable. In order to qualify for a rank, a speaker must speak for at least ONE (1) minute.

Storybook

Speaker reads a children's story as if they are reading it to a group of children (think preschool/kindergarten kids) The illusion of reading must be maintained. The speaker may stand or sit and should have a self-written introduction. Showing the pictures are not required but may affect the overall performance. The time limit for Storybook is SIX (6) minutes with a 30 second "grace period". Should a speaker go beyond the grace period (timer reaches 6:31) the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. A speaker should edit down a longer story and do their best to bring a longer story to its conclusion by 6:30. There is no penalty being under 6 minutes.

Humorous Interpretation

Using a play, short story, or other published* work, speakers perform a selection of one or more portions of a piece up to ten minutes in length. Humorous Interpretation is designed to test a speaker's comedic skills through script analysis, delivery, timing, and character development. Speakers may portray one or multiple characters. No props or costumes may be used. Performances should include an introduction written by the speaker to contextualize the performance and state the title and the author. (NSDA) The time limit is EIGHT (8) minutes with a 30-second "grace period." Should a speaker go beyond the grace period, (timer reaches 8:31) the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. No minimum time is mandated. The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. The contestant must name the author and the source from which the cutting was made. Movement must be limited to a one step radius.

Dramatic Interpretation

Using a play, short story, or other published* work, speakers perform a selection of one or more portions of a piece up to EIGHT (8) minutes in length. With a spotlight on character development and depth, this event focuses on the speaker's ability to convey emotion using a dramatic text. Speakers may portray one or multiple characters. No props or costumes may be used. Performances should include an introduction written by the speaker to contextualize the performance and state the title and the author. (NSDA) The time limit is EIGHT (8) minutes with a 30-second "grace period." Should a speaker go beyond the grace period, (timer reaches 8:31) the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. No minimum time is mandated. The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. Movement must be limited to a one step radius.

Dual Interpretation (EVENT NOT OFFERED FOR VIRTUAL TOURNAMENT)

Two speakers team up to deliver an EIGHT (8)-minute performance using a play, story, or other published* work. Using off-stage focus, speakers convey emotion and environment through a variety of performance techniques focusing on the relationships and interactions between the characters. Performance must include an introduction written by the speakers to contextualize the performance and state the title and the author. (NSDA) The time limit is EIGHT (8) minutes with a 30-second "grace period." Should a speaker go beyond the grace period, the speaker will be dropped ONE (1) rank in the round. No minimum time is mandated. The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. Movement must be limited to a one step radius.

Each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible. If the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both performers may present the narration. Focus may be direct during the introduction (the speakers may look at each other) but must be indirect (off-stage- no eye contact with each other) during the performance itself. However, speakers should not touch each other during the performance.

*FROM NSDA Middle School Unified Manual

Material: Selections used in the oral interpretation main events of Dramatic, Humorous, and Duo Interpretation must be cuttings from a single work of literature (one short story, play, or novel), unless poetry is used, in which case cuttings may come from one or more poems from a single source. If the source is an anthology collection of short stories, plays, or novels, each selection of literature is independent and only one selection can be used, even if it is from the same author. If the source is an anthology which includes poetry, multiple poems may be used from this single source by one or a variety of authors. Song lyrics may be used if the performer has an original, hard copy of the lyrics such as sheet music or a CD jacket. Lyrics may only be used from online sources that appear on the approved websites list.

A. Print Publications:

- 1) Print publications include novels, short stories, plays, or poetry, published in print as per 4A.
- 2) In addition, published, unaltered PDF documents that are commercially or professionally available are also eligible sources.

3) E-books (such as Kindle, Nook, etc.) may also serve as eligible sources. NOTE: In addition to these sources, certain online materials are allowed as per 3B.

4) Also, if a treatment of a movie script is ordered from a company that provides printed movie scripts, keep the original treatment. Please note that text of the treatment may differ from the actual film, so students are advised against transcribing directly from the film.

B. Digital (Online) Publications: Material is only allowed from pre-approved online publishing sources listed at <https://www.speechanddebate.org/approved-websites/> Online material must meet the **web page standards** outlined below:

1) If the website offers online material in a variety of formats, only material that can be printed directly from the web page is allowed.

2) The Association defines a web page as a document coded with hypertext markup language (HTML), displayed in a web browser.

3) The following guidelines determine digital (online) publication sources selected:

a. The literary material is from a website with strict editorial submission standards that include editorial review and acceptance. Also, websites that have editorial review for their own staff writers are permissible. In either case, the website must be on the NSDA Approved List. See submission guidelines below.

b. Unacceptable sites include

i. Personal sites (social network content, such as Facebook posts, tweets, and unmoderated blogs)

ii. Personal professional sites (those where a writer who has their own site and can place their works for sale or view such as Wix or similar platforms)

iii. Publish it sites (those with one click upload or that accept submissions without a selection process)

c. Texts must come from a verifiable website that can be accessed universally by any user. The site and literary text need to be verifiable on the web if challenged.

i. Unmarked or casual sites where individuals can easily post work either for performance or criticism will not be accepted.

ii. The website has been in existence for a minimum of two years prior to submission for consideration by the National Speech & Debate Association for the upcoming school year (several online tools allow for verification of the existence of a website).

C. Prohibited Material: not published in print or allowable online material as per above, including:

1. Recorded material (videotape, DVDs, audio tape, CDs, MP3s, or phonograph recordings).

2. Original material published in a high school publication such as a newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.