

Speech Judges' Training



Welcome to the Academic Decathlon® orientation session for speech judges. We appreciate your willingness to volunteer your time to this very important event.

Goals of Judges' Training

- * Ensure consistency in procedures and instructions to students.
- * Ensure consistency in the criteria used for judging student speeches (outlined on the scoring form).
- * Provide all students with an equal opportunity for a positive experience.
- * Provide judges with all the information they will need, so they will feel at ease and in turn create a relaxed welcoming atmosphere for students.

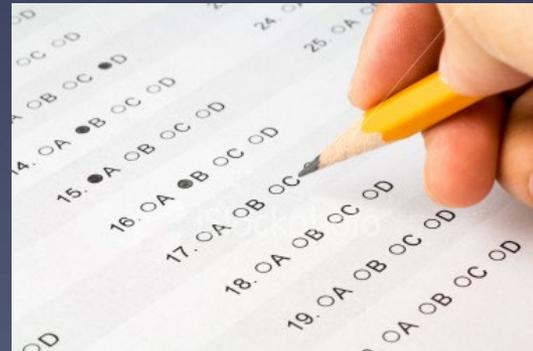
Team Make-up

A unique aspect of the Academic Decathlon® is that each team includes students from all academic levels. A team typically consists of nine students:

- * Three “Honors” students (3.8 gpa and above)
- * Three “Scholastic” students (3.2 to 3.799 gpa)
- * Three “Varsity” students (3.199 and below)

Objective Events

The USAD program provides a format in which high school students compete in ten areas. Seven of the events are considered objective in nature. These events have written examinations; they consist of economics, art, literature, mathematics, social science, science and music.



Subjective Events

Three events involve communication skills – students compete in speech, interview and essay, which are referred to as subjective events.



Two Parts of the Speech Event

Each student will present the following two speeches:

1. Prepared Speech
2. Impromptu Speech

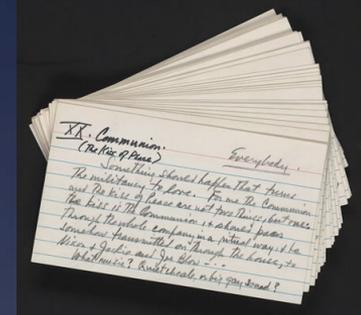
Rules for the Prepared Speech

- * Topic is open – chosen by the student
- * The speech must be:
 - * Original work of student
 - * Presented during current year only, not from previous year
 - * Delivered from a standing position without a lectern
 - * Between 3 ½ and 4 minutes in length
- * Note cards may be used, but speech may not be read. Gestures are acceptable, but “props” are not.



Rules for the Impromptu Speech

- * The speech must be:
 - * Delivered from a standing position
 - * Between 1 ½ and 2 minutes in length
- * Student is permitted 1 minute of preparation after receipt of topics
- * Student may use notes on 3x5 note cards, but may not read from the cards. *Note: All note cards must be surrendered to the head judge at the conclusion of the speech.*

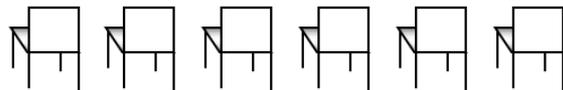
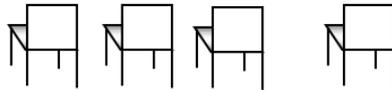


Setting Up

SAMPLE ROOM SETUP

○ Competing Decathlete

3 Judges + 1 Timer



Additional
Decathletes

Speech Procedure

1. Head Judge greets students at the door, welcomes students to take seats in student seating area, calls scheduled student forward, and confirms name and ID.
2. Head Judge and Timer read their instructions to student (scripts provided).
3. Student delivers his/her prepared speech. During the speech the Timer **shows each of the three time cards at the appropriate time.**

Timing of Prepared Speech

- * The **Timer** will:
 - * **Start the stopwatch** as soon as the student begins to speak.
 - * Hold up the “**1 minute**” card when the watch reads **3:00**.
 - * Hold up the “**30 seconds**” card when the watch reads **3:30**.
 - * Hold up the “**0**” card when the watch reads **4:00**.
 - * Write the time of the student’s speech in the **timing log**.

Impromptu Procedure

1. After the student has finished his/her prepared speech, the Head Judge will thank the student and then read the Impromptu Instructions script to the student. After the instructions from the Head Judge, the Timer will read the Impromptu Timing Instructions.
2. The Head Judge will then instruct the student to begin preparing his/her impromptu speech
3. The Timer will begin timing when the student turns over the topic card and will call "Time" when 1 minute has elapsed.

Impromptu Procedure (cont.)

4. The Head Judge will ask the student to indicate his/her chosen topic, collect the impromptu card from the student, and then instruct the student to begin. The Timer shows each of the three time cards at the appropriate time.
5. Judges thank the student after his/her speech. The student takes a seat in the student seating area.

Impromptu Topic Cards

- * There is a unique card of impromptu topics (each card has three possible topics) for each student who is assigned to your room. Before the student comes forward to present his/her prepared speech, the head judge should have the appropriate impromptu card face down on the preparation table, along with notecards and pencils.
- * These topic cards have been provided and labeled in sequence and should be presented in this sequence, e.g., the first student receives Card A, the second student receives Card B, etc. After each student completes his/her impromptu speech, the Head Judge should place the next topic card face down on the prep table, so it is in place and ready for the next student.
- * Once the student has turned the topic card over, the Timer will allow **1 minute** for the student to prep and then will announce **"Time."**

Timing of Impromptu Speech

- * The **Timer** will:
 - * Time the **1 minute** preparation time and announce “**Time**” and then **reset** the stopwatch.
 - * **Start the stopwatch** as soon as the student begins to speak.
 - * Hold up the “**1 minute**” card when the watch reads **1:00**.
 - * Hold up the “**30 seconds**” card when the watch reads **1:30**.
 - * Hold up the “**0**” card when the watch reads **2:00**.
 - * Write the time of the student’s speech in the **timing log**.

Reviewing the Scantron Sheet

USA U.S. ACADEMIC DECATHLON
SPEECH EVALUATION FORM

DIRECTIONS

PLEASE -

- MAKE DARK MARKS
- ERASE COMPLETELY TO CHANGE
- ENTER: STUDENT'S NAME AND NUMBER
YOUR NAME AND NUMBER
ROOM NUMBER
- MARK 1 STUDENT PER FORM

STUDENT'S NAME _____

JUDGE'S NAME _____

ROOM NUMBER _____

JUDGE

1	2	3
4	5	6

STUDENT ID NUMBER

0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

VOLUNTEER NUMBER

0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

PREPARED SPEECH

		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
SPEECH DEVELOPMENT	• ORGANIZATION • BODY • OPENING/CLOSING	10	8	6	4	2
EFFECTIVENESS	• ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE • INTEREST • RECEPTION	10	8	6	4	2
CORRECTNESS	• GRAMMAR • PRONUNCIATION • WORD SELECTION	10	8	6	4	2
APPROPRIATENESS	• WORD SELECTION AND STYLE APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE	10	8	6	4	2
SPEECH VALUE	• IDEAS • LOGIC • ORIGINALITY	10	8	6	4	2
VOICE	• FLEXIBILITY • VOLUME • VARIETY	10	8	6	4	2
NON-VERBAL	• APPEARANCE • MOVEMENT • ASSURANCE	10	8	6	4	2

IMPROMPTU SPEECH

		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
CONTENT	• ORIGINALITY • IDEAS • ORGANIZATION	10	8	6	4	2
DELIVERY	• MOVEMENT/GESTURE • BODY LANGUAGE • VOICE	10	8	6	4	2
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	• ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE • VERBAL COMMUNICATION • NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION	10	8	6	4	2

SPEECH PENALTIES

	BOTH SPEECHES	PREPARED ONLY	IMPROMPTU ONLY	NO PENALTY
TIMING VIOLATION	-10	-7	-3	0

Scoring Procedure

- * Be an active and engaged listener – do not mark the Scantron Sheet during the student's speeches!
- * Score Prepared Speech during Impromptu prep time and score Impromptu Speech as soon as the student has finished speaking.
- * Timing violations are marked after the student takes his/her seat and the Timer has shown the judges the timing results.

Scoring Procedure (cont.)

- * Score each student's speeches immediately, before the next student comes forward to speak. Do **not** leave any scores blank. Mark a score for every category. There should be no stray marks on the score sheets.
- * You may go back and change a score after you have marked it. Be sure to erase fully.
- * Judges should score speeches **independently**. The judges should not discuss scoring with one another and should **NOT** try to come to consensus.

Scoring Procedure (cont.)

- * The Timer will inform the other judge(s) if there has been a timing infraction and judges will mark score sheets accordingly.
- * Judges should maintain the sequence of score sheets. The score sheets will be collected intermittently throughout the competition, so judges should have a separate pile of completed score sheets ready to be handed off.

Speech Development

- * Does the speech have an opening that engages the audience?
- * Does the speech have a clear purpose and focus? Are ideas presented in a well-organized, logical fashion (or does the speech meander, ramble or lack focus)?
- * Does the student present specific facts, details and/or examples to develop and support his/her main idea?

Speech Development (cont.)

- * Does the student transition effectively and smoothly from one subtopic to the next so that the various parts of the speech blend to form a unified whole (or does the speech feel choppy, scattered or disconnected)?
- * Does the speech have an effective and powerful conclusion?
- * Do all aspects of the speech contribute effectively to the main purpose/topic?

Effectiveness

- * Was I able to determine the student's purpose?
- * Was I thoroughly engaged and interested throughout the speech?
- * Was I exceptionally moved or greatly impressed?
- * Was the speech memorable and impactful?

Correctness

- * Was the student's use of language, word choice and vocabulary effective?
- * Did the student's use of language convey his/her thoughts clearly and precisely?
- * Did the student use a variety of words and phrasing and avoid repetition?
- * Was the student's pronunciation accurate?

Appropriateness

- * Did the student choose words and an expression and delivery style that was appropriate for the audience?
- * Was the vocabulary impressive and precise but understandable? Did the student define any unusual terms?
- * Was the tone of the speech appropriately formal? *(The student's tone should be appropriate for imparting information to adults and should be markedly different from the tone the student might use while chatting with friends.)*

Speech Value

- * Was the speech meaningful and original?
- * Did the student's ideas make sense – were they logical?
- * Did the student's speech provide the audience with meaningful insight into, or a greater understanding of, his/her topic?
- * Did the student provide a unique perspective or insight?

Voice

- * Did the student effectively use his/her voice to engage the listener and to impart meaning or emphasis and express emotion as appropriate?
- * Did the student vary the volume and rate of speaking to add interest and effectively communicate his/her thoughts and emotions?
- * Could I hear the speaker easily?
- * Was their voice fluid or were there distracting pauses?

Non-Verbal

- * Did the student use movement, body language, facial expressions and gestures to effectively communicate his/her ideas and to engage the audience?
- * Did the student's nonverbal delivery indicate confidence and assurance?
- * Did the student maintain consistent eye contact?
- * Was the student's use of non-verbal communication appropriate for a speech? *(Students should present well-developed speeches, not entertaining song and dance routines or dramatic interpretations!)*

Lengthy Pauses

- * If a student has a long pause(s) in his/her speech, this should negatively affect his/her scores in speech development, effectiveness, voice, non-verbal, etc. categories.
- * If a student pauses for an extended period of time or forgets his/her speech, the judges should remain quietly engaged (eye contact, smile, no writing/scoring) to allow the student to focus, regain his/her composure and continue with his/her speech.

Reading from Note Cards

- * Note cards are to be used in an effective manner.
- * If a student reads at length from his/her note cards, this should negatively impact the student's scores in speech development, effectiveness, nonverbal and voice categories.
- * Judges should not comment in any way on the student's use of, or overreliance on, note cards.

Reminders

- * Score independently and do not discuss scoring with fellow judge (other than timing violations).
- * A perfect score is **rare** and should be reserved only for a speech of the highest quality across all categories.
- * Do not reward excessive dramatics, singing, dancing...the students are charged with presenting a well-developed speech!
- * **Do not applaud, comment on or ask questions about a student's speech; it is essential to stick to the time schedule, which is very tight!**

Impromptu - Content

- * Does the speech have a clear purpose and focus – did the student effectively address and stay focused on the given prompt?
- * Do all aspects of the speech contribute effectively to the main purpose/topic (or does the student meander off topic, introduce too many tangents and/or ramble stream-of-consciousness rather than present a well-organized speech)?
- * Does the speech have an engaging opening?

Impromptu – Content (cont.)

- * Does the student use specific facts, details and/or examples to effectively develop and support his/her main idea?
- * Does the speech have an effective and powerful conclusion?
- * Does the student transition effectively and smoothly from one subtopic to the next so that the various parts of the speech blend to present a unified whole (or does the speech feel choppy, scattered or disconnected)?

Impromptu - Delivery

- * Did the student effectively use his/her voice to engage the listener and to impart meaning or emphasis and express emotion appropriately?
- * Did the student vary the volume and rate of speaking to add interest and effectively communicate his/her thoughts and emotions?
- * Could I hear the speaker easily? Was his/her voice fluid or were there distracting pauses?

Impromptu – Delivery (cont.)

- * Did the student use movement, body language, facial expressions and gestures to effectively communicate his/her ideas and to engage the audience's interest?
- * Did the student's non-verbal delivery indicate confidence and assurance?
- * Did the student maintain consistent eye contact?

Impromptu - Overall Effectiveness

- * Was I thoroughly engaged and interested in the speech throughout?
- * Was the speech meaningful and original? Did the student's ideas make sense – were they logical?
- * Did the student provide a unique perspective or insight?
- * Scoring for impromptu is not as stringent as for the Prepared Speech, as the parameters are very different. However, students should still present an effective speech.

Lengthy Pauses

- * If a student has a long pause(s) in his/her Impromptu Speech, this should negatively affect his/her score in speech content, delivery and overall effectiveness categories.
- * If a student pauses for an extended period, the judges should remain quietly engaged (eye contact, smile, no writing/scoring) to allow the student to focus, regain his/her composure and continue with his/her speech.

Reading from Note Cards

- * Note cards are to be used in an effective manner.
- * If a student reads at length from his/her note cards, this should negatively impact the student's scores in content, delivery and overall effectiveness categories.
- * Judges should not comment in any way on the student's use of, or overreliance on, note cards.
- * **Head judge must collect Impromptu Speech note cards at the end of the speech!**

Timing Violations

- * Timing penalties will be determined by the timer (or Timer, if no separate timer is present).
- * The timer should inform the judges as to whether or not there were any timing violations AFTER the student has completed his/her impromptu and taken a seat.
- * The timing violations are the only aspect of scoring that may be discussed; **judges should not discuss their scores and should score independently of one another.**

Reminders

- * Score independently and do not discuss scoring with fellow judge (other than timing violations).
- * A perfect score is **rare** and should be reserved only for a speech of the highest quality across all categories.
- * Don't reward excessive dramatics, singing, dancing...the students are charged with presenting a well-developed speech!
- * **Do not applaud, comment on, or ask questions about a student's speech; it is essential to stick to the time schedule, which is very tight!**

No Shows

- * If a student does not show up at your speech room at the start of the speech session to which he/she has been assigned, please write “**NO SHOW**” at the top of the student’s evaluation form and put the form at the bottom of your stack of evaluation forms.
- * If it was an emergency situation or the student was delayed through no fault of his/her own, then he/she may (at the discretion of USAD) be assigned to speak after the final student has gone. So, you should hold onto “No Show” evaluation forms until the end of the evening.

Time Outline

- * Welcome & scripted instructions – 35 seconds
- * Prepared Speech – 4 minutes
- * Impromptu scripted instructions – 20 seconds
- * Student Impromptu preparation – 1 minute
- * Impromptu Speech – 2 minutes
- * Thank you to student – 5 seconds
- * Finalize scoring of both speeches – 2 minutes
- * TOTAL time – 10 minutes

Judge Responsibilities

- * Duties of Head Judge
 - * Greet students
 - * Verify student name and ID number
 - * Read instructions to student
- * General Duties of Judges
 - * Be positive, objective, consistent and uniform
 - * If you are personally acquainted with a student, please recuse yourself from scoring that student.
 - * **Be an active listener – do not mark Scantron Sheet during speeches!**
- * Duties of Timer
 - * Read timing instructions to student
 - * Keep time accurately, holding up timing cards
 - * Note time infractions to judges immediately after student's Impromptu Speech

Preparing

- * Judges should arrive in assigned speech room no later than 2:40 p.m.
- * Verify that you have all necessary materials (instruction scripts, Scantron forms, timing cards, Impromptu Speech cards, note cards, pencils, etc.).
- * Set up Impromptu Prep Station with pencils, notecards, and Impromptu Topic Set 1 face down on the table.
- * Confirm duties of Head Judge and Timer.
- * Review event procedures.
- * **Set all electronic devices to silent!**

Final Duties for Judges

- * Secure and maintain Scantron Sheets until transferred to appropriate USAD personnel.
- * Return all materials.

Head Judge Packet Materials

- * Instructions for Head Judge
- * Time outline
- * Head Judge script
- * Roster of students/speech schedule
- * Scantron Sheet for each student
- * Index cards, pencils, Impromptu prompt cards
- * Speech guidelines
- * Folder for Scored Answer Sheets
- * Speech Judge Badge

Judge Packet Materials

- * Roster of students/speech schedule
- * Scantron Sheet for each student
- * Speech guidelines
- * Pencils
- * Speech Judge Badge

Thank You!

Thank you for volunteering your time and talent to serve as a speech judge!

We hope your involvement will be rewarding and enjoyable, and we appreciate your help in making the Academic Decathlon speech competition a positive experience for all our participants!