



Middle Level Forensic Association of Wisconsin

Impromptu Speaking Preparation

Tournament Director:

1. Prior to the meet, the host school will prepare a different set of topics for each round. There must be at least 2 more topics per round than the maximum number of speakers in a room. (A tournament with two rounds and a power round that has a maximum of 8 entries in any room will need ten topics for each preliminary round plus ten different topics for the power round, for a total of 30.)
2. All rooms in a given round can use the same set of topics. The host school should also prepare a set of **four 8-1/2 x 11 time cards**, labeled “2 minutes”, “3 minutes”, “3 1/2 minutes” & “4 minutes”. These cards should be clearly and easily seen by the contestants when displayed from the back of the room.
3. The host school needs to provide a set of 4 x 6 cards per room for each round. There must be as many cards in each room as speakers plus a few extras.
4. The host school should assign both a judge and a timekeeper to each room.
5. Topics might be a single word such as: puppies, birthdays, rainbow, anger, mountains, Earth Day, etc. They could also be given as a phrase or a question: My favorite teacher; What was your best birthday ever?; “The leaves have turned green”; Older siblings; What color do you like best?; How do you feel about sports?; etc. **Topics should be age appropriate and within the knowledge or experience of middle school student.** All topics in a given round should be in the same format and about the same level of familiarity and difficulty.
5. Each room of Impromptu Speaking needs to be assigned a timer. It should be an adult, who could be, but is not required to be someone trained as a judge. **The timer should be given an envelope with the topics, a stop watch, a set of 4x6 cards, and the four cards marked 2, 3, 3 1/2, and 4 minutes.**



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Impromptu Speaking Procedure

Timekeeper

1. The timekeeper should be provided with a **stop watch**, an **envelope containing the topics for each round**, a **set of 4x6 note cards**, and **four 8 ½ by 11 inch cards**. The cards should have “2 minutes”, “3 minutes”, “3 ½ minutes and “4 minutes” printed on them large enough to be easily seen from the back of the room. Check to make sure there are at least two more topic cards than the number of speakers in the section and enough 4x6 note cards, one for each speaker. Place the topics face down on the table. If the topics can be read through the paper, cover them partly with a sheet of paper.
2. The timekeeper has three primary responsibilities: To supervise the drawing of topics, to do the timing, and to collect note cards that were used by each speaker. The timer needs to sit in the direct line of sight of the speaker.
3. **Selecting topics by each participant:** Each participant has two minutes to select his or her topic and prepare. When the judge calls a participant, the timekeeper will begin timing. The participant will draw three topics, choose one, and return the other two to the timer. The two that are not selected are mixed back into the choices for the next speaker. After the selection is made, the participant is offered a 4x6 card, and may use the remaining preparation time in any manner he or she chooses. The other students will remain in their seats during the draw/preparation time.
4. **Timing:** At the end of the mandatory two-minute preparation time, the timekeeper should reset the stopwatch, collect the card drawn from the speaker and hand it to the judge. The participant, will go to the front of the room and present his/her speech. Start timing the speech when the speaker actually starts talking. During the speech the timekeeper will signal to the speaker using the time cards after the speaker has used 2 minutes, 3 minutes, 3 ½ minutes, and 4 minutes. It is important to display the time card accurately and to hold it up long enough to be sure the speaker sees it.
5. **Collect note card:** Stop timing when the speaker is finished speaking. Report the time privately to the judge and collect the note card from the speaker. You are finished until the judge calls the next student.