N Y C F L

GUIDE TO JUDGING SPEECH CONTESTS

New York Catholic Forensic League

2025 TABROOM Edition
Rev 3.0

This document is intended as a general guideline.
Rules for specific competitions may vary.
Please check with your team's coach/moderator or the executive council for specific rule changes.

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Sue Wurster for her work on the original Judges' Manual
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Welcome

On behalf of the NYCFL, I would like to thank you for your willingness to give up a Saturday for our students. Our contests would not be possible without your support.

I believe you will find judging a rewarding experience. That is not to say that it will be completely without a little anxiety. Our students will do their best to make it difficult to decide which speaker gets ranked first and which speaker gets ranked last.

However, rest assured that no one is more qualified to make that decision than you are. I trust you to watch and listen to the various presentations and to make a thoughtful and intelligent decision about which speaker you honestly believe was the best in that round.

This manual is intended to be a guide to help you understand the rules and criteria for each category. I hope you find the information in here helpful.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me or any of the coaches in our league.

Thanks

Charles J. Sloat

NYCFL Tournament Director

Introduction

This guide is designed to help you become an effective judge at New York Catholic Forensic League speech tournaments. We hope that it will answer many of your questions about:

1. The operation of NYCFL speech contests
2. The effective evaluation of speakers in contest rounds
3. The rules and practices in each speech event

Our students are serious about their work. They put a great deal of time, energy, and care into the preparation of their contest speeches. We want, of course, for them to have positive and successful experiences in forensics.

To this end, we hope that each of you will take the time to read this guide thoroughly before arriving at your first tournament as a judge or observer. It does not take special talent or expertise to become an effective judge. It does, however, take time, energy, and care. It takes a positive and supportive outlook. It takes a willingness to "fine-tune" your critical listening skills and apply them to the contest setting.

We hope that this information will help to make your judging experience a positive one – for you and for the speakers you hear as well. We know that you will enjoy hearing them. These talented and motivated students truly are the future leaders of our society, and we can help prepare them to assume these leadership roles by helping them improve their communication skills. We are grateful to you for your time and hope to see a good deal of you in the contests to come.

Overview

For all speech tournaments, except for The Grand Tournament, the NYCFL provides three preliminary rounds of competition in as many as six different events. All events take place simultaneously, and these rounds occur without a break. Most judges will be scheduled for at least two and often all three rounds and should expect to travel directly from one to the next. If you should happen to find yourself without a judging assignment for any one round, you should remain in the judges' lounge or in the general meeting area during that round so that it will be easy to locate you should it become necessary to change the schedule in any way. If you should have a round off, we ask that you not sit in on a preliminary. It may influence your judging at a later point in the tournament if you see one of those speakers again. On the other hand, if you are not scheduled to judge a final round, you are more than welcome to watch our students perform.

Upon completion of the third round, the contestants and judges will have a lunch break. During this time, the tab room members will finish tabulating results. As soon as they have completed this task, announcements will be made via the live doc, which will identify the speakers in each category who will advance to the final round of competition. There will be three judges assigned to each final. If you are not scheduled to judge a final round, you are more than welcome to watch our students perform in finals.

TABROOM

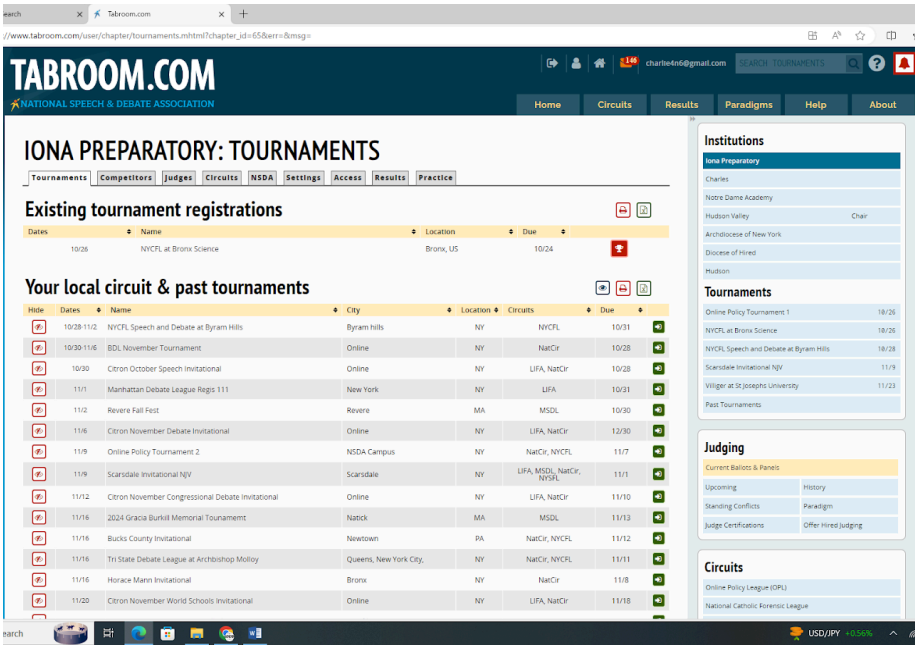
TABROOM.com hosts the software system used to generate schematics and tabulate a tournament; therefore, it would be useful for judges to be familiar with the software and learn how to access ballots and schematics. In addition, when a judge creates and links a TABROOM account, they would have easy access to tournament announcements, 'Live Docs,' and schedule changes.

The following is a simplified and incomplete guide to using TABROOM at NYCFL tournaments.

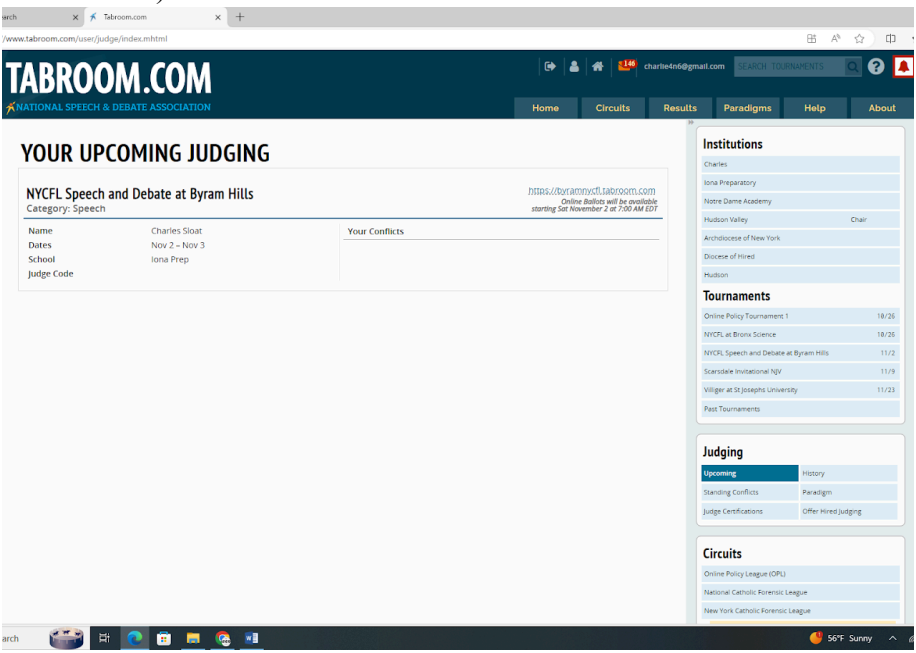
Make sure you have a TABROOM.com account that you can access from the device you are using. WIFI will be posted on the 'Live Doc' and will be made available to you before the tournament.

Also, make sure the coach from your school knows what email address you used to create the TABROOM.com account.

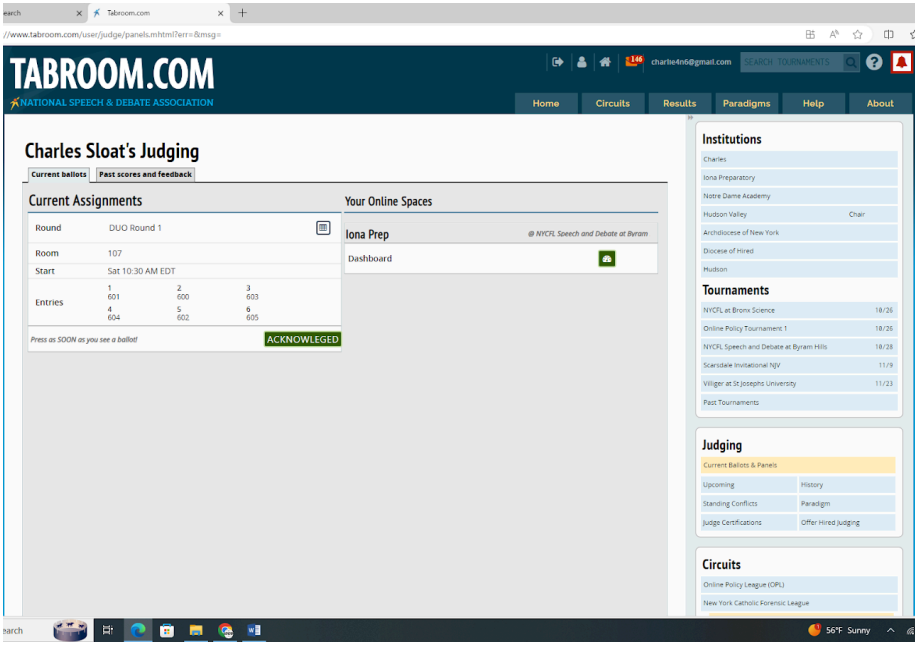
Log in to tabroom:



Click on your email address in the upper right-hand corner and then click on UPCOMING; you should see the current (and any future tournaments):



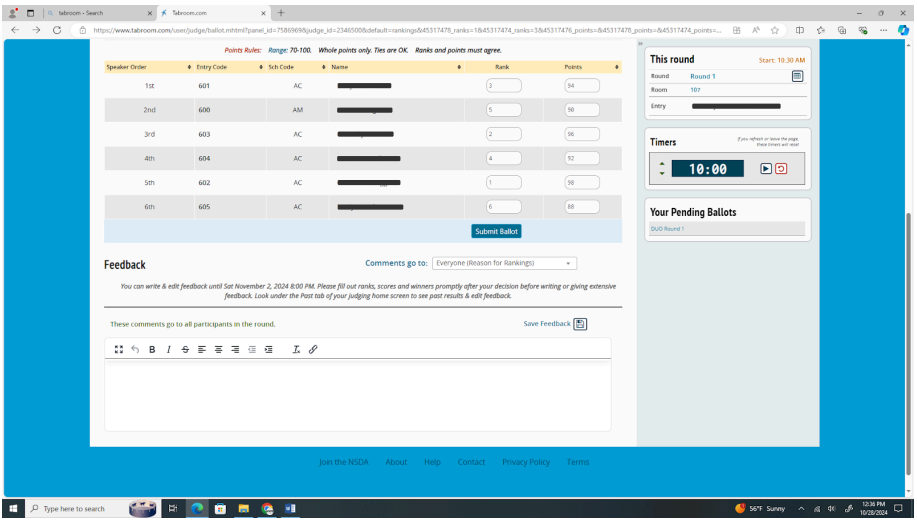
When ballots are released (usually ½ hour before the round), you should see an assignment. This screen will show you the Event, the Room, and all of the Competitors. If you do not see an assignment, then you are on standby and should hang around the judge's lounge in case we need a replacement. As soon as you see the ballot, CLICK the GREEN BUTTON - this one says ACKNOWLEDGED.



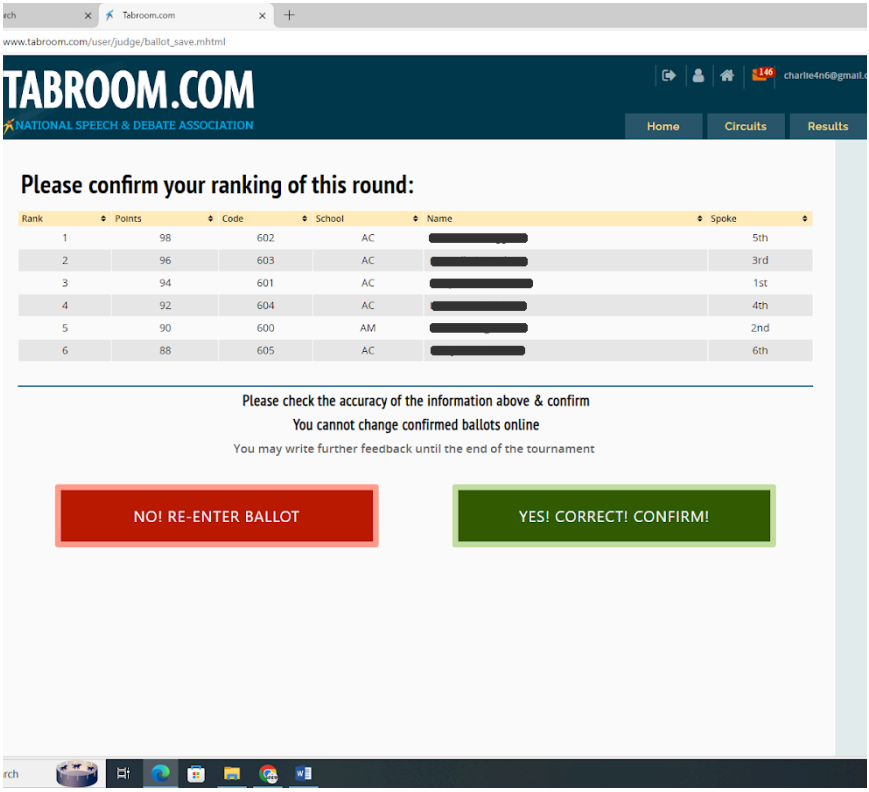
Once you click the button, you should head immediately to the room to begin the round.

Your ballot will list all the students scheduled to compete in that round. Before the round starts, check that the students in the room are the students on your ballot. Students should speak in the order listed in TABROOM. Note that in Extemporaneous Speaking, students will come to you one at a time. You should still confirm with each student before they start speaking their name and code.

Start the round promptly. During the round, take notes for all the performances and give time signals as requested by the students. We STRONGLY suggest that you take notes in an APP or Document other than TABROOM and then copy them over. Once the round ends, submit your RANKS (and points if required). You will always have an opportunity to revise your comments later in the day.



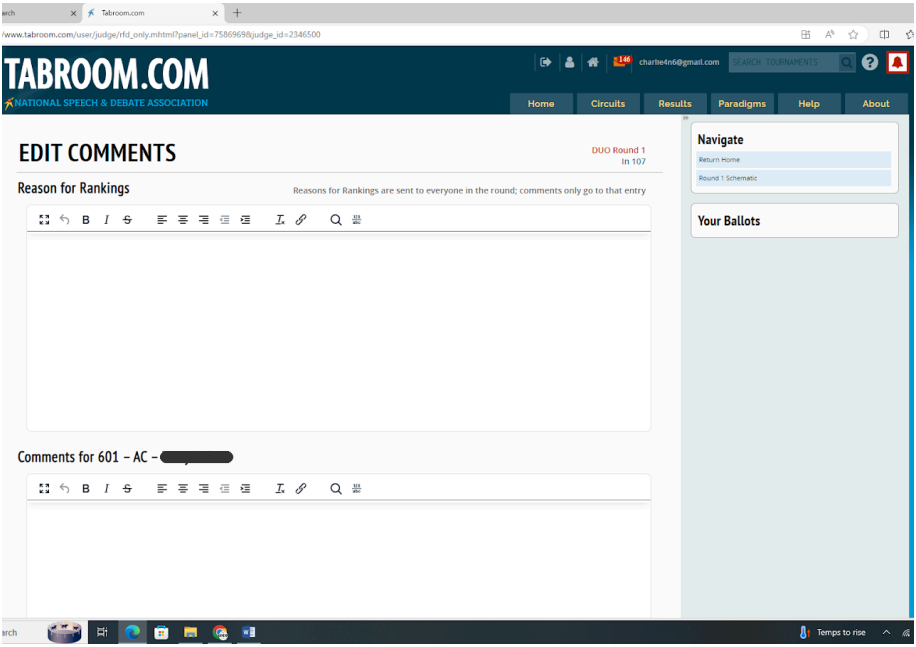
You will then see a Double Check Screen. Your ballot is not complete until you have confirmed the ballot on this screen. Please note the speakers will be listed in the order in which you ranked them and not their speaking order.



If you notice a mistake, you can RE-ENTER the ballot to correct it and then submit it again. When you are sure everything is correct, hit the GREEN button, and your ballot is complete.

Once your ballot is submitted, you will be able to edit your Round Comments until the end of the tournament.

The first box is seen by all competitors in the room, and then there are comment boxes for each entry; only the speaker(s) and their coach(es) will be able to see those comments after the tournament ends.


Tabroom.com
/www.tabroom.com/user/judge/rfd_only.mhtml?panel_id=75869698judge_id=2346500
TABROOM.COM
NATIONAL SPEECH & DEBATE ASSOCIATION
charlie4n6@gmail.com
SEARCH TOURNAMENTS
Home
Circuits
Results
Paradigms
Help
About
EDIT COMMENTS
DUO Round 1
In 107
Reason for Rankings
Reasons for Rankings are sent to everyone in the round; comments only go to that entry
Comments for 601 – AC –
Navigate
Return Home
Round 1 Schematic
Your Ballots
Temps to rise

Arrival at the Contest

As a judge, you do not need to check in with the tournament, but you should make sure the coach who recruited you knows you have arrived at the tournament location.

Please bring a working laptop or iPad. Tabroom can be run off a phone, but that is not always optimal. Please be aware that some school and work computers can have restrictions that conflict with TABROOM and the local school's Wi-Fi. It is best to bring a personal device if possible.

As soon as all members of any individual group (speakers, judges, coaches/moderators) are in attendance at a tournament, the school's coach/moderator (or his/her representative) should register the team with the executive committee, usually by checking in on their TABROOM dashboard.

Students and judges will be able to see their assignments on TABROOM as soon as schematics are released, usually 45 minutes prior to the start of the next round.

Live Docs

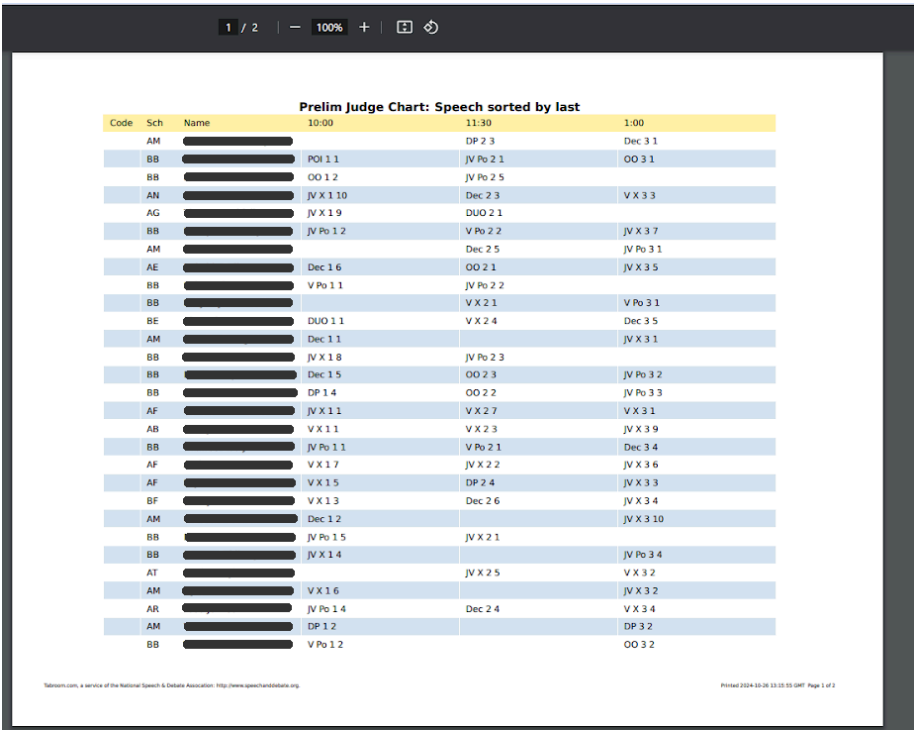
Each coach and judge will be sent a link to what we refer to as the 'Live Doc' prior to the tournament. This is an online document that will answer most of the commonly asked questions at a tournament.

This document will contain some or all of the following:

- Tournament Address
- WIFI Information
- Prose/Poetry Round Order
- Links to Congress Legislation
- Link to the TABROOM page for the tournament
- Extemp Instructions
- Tournament Schedule
- Congress Instructions
- Tournament Rules and Logistics

Judge Chart

As soon as schools finish checking in and usually 45 minutes before the start of the first round, we will post a judge Chart in the 'Live Doc.' This will give judges an idea of their assignments for the day, but it is important to remember that your assignments are subject to change. Please refresh your TABROOM prior to the scheduled start of each round to confirm whether you are judging. If you are not on to judge, you are considered 'STAND BY.' Note that this chart only gives times and events. The actual speakers and rooms will be sent when the round is released, prior to the round's scheduled start time.



1 / 2 100%

Prelim Judge Chart: Speech sorted by last

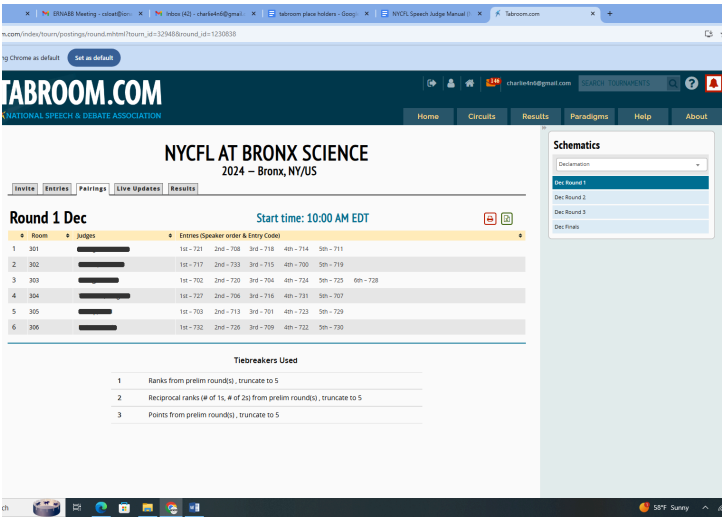
Code	Sch	Name	10:00	11:30	1:00
	AM	[redacted]		DP 2 3	Dec 3 1
	BB	[redacted]	POI 1 1	JV Po 2 1	OO 3 1
	BB	[redacted]	OO 1 2	JV Po 2 5	
	AN	[redacted]	JV X 1 10	Dec 2 3	V X 3 3
	AG	[redacted]	JV X 1 9	DUO 2 1	
	BB	[redacted]	JV Po 1 2	V Po 2 2	JV X 3 7
	AM	[redacted]		Dec 2 5	JV Po 3 1
	AE	[redacted]	Dec 1 6	OO 2 1	JV X 3 5
	BB	[redacted]	V Po 1 1	JV Po 2 2	
	BB	[redacted]		V X 2 1	V Po 3 1
	BE	[redacted]	DUO 1 1	V X 2 4	Dec 3 5
	AM	[redacted]	Dec 1 1		JV X 3 1
	BB	[redacted]	JV X 1 8	JV Po 2 3	
	BB	[redacted]	Dec 1 5	OO 2 3	JV Po 3 2
	BB	[redacted]	DP 1 4	OO 2 2	JV Po 3 3
	AF	[redacted]	JV X 1 1	V X 2 7	V X 3 1
	AB	[redacted]	V X 1 1	V X 2 3	JV X 3 9
	BB	[redacted]	JV Po 1 1	V Po 2 1	Dec 3 4
	AF	[redacted]	V X 1 7	JV X 2 2	JV X 3 6
	AF	[redacted]	V X 1 5	DP 2 4	JV X 3 3
	BF	[redacted]	V X 1 3	Dec 2 6	JV X 3 4
	AM	[redacted]	Dec 1 2		JV X 3 10
	BB	[redacted]	JV Po 1 5	JV X 2 1	
	BB	[redacted]	JV X 1 4		JV Po 3 4
	AT	[redacted]		JV X 2 5	V X 3 2
	AM	[redacted]	V X 1 6		JV X 3 2
	AR	[redacted]	JV Po 1 4	Dec 2 4	V X 3 4
	AM	[redacted]	DP 1 2		DP 3 2
	BB	[redacted]	V Po 1 2		OO 3 2

Tabroom.com, a service of the National Speech & Debate Association: http://www.speechanddebate.org.

Printed 2024-10-26 13:15:55 GMT Page 1 of 2

Pairings

About 45 minutes before the start of round 1, pairings will be available on TABROOM. They will be released without judges at first, and then as we get closer to the round start time, judges will be added. If you are judging, you should receive an email and a notification in TABROOM. Notifications may sometimes be delayed. Not seeing a notification is not an excuse for missing your round.



On the schematic, you will see that the speakers in each event are divided into groups of approximately six or seven and are assigned to separate classrooms for competition. One judge is assigned to each section. When looking at the schematic, each team, with its coach/moderator, should check it carefully to make sure that you are:

- Not scheduled to judge a speaker from the school for which you are judging.
- Not scheduled to be in more than one place at any one time
- Not judging any speaker with whom you might have a conflict of interest

Should a schematic problem occur, speak to your school's coach/moderator or come directly to the executive committee so that it can be remedied immediately.

As soon as the last school arrives, a general meeting will be held with speakers and judges. Please be attentive at this meeting because important instructions will be given out. Students will be dismissed to go to their assigned Round I classrooms while the judges remain for a brief orientation meeting. In addition, general reminders about tournament operations and the rules of each event are covered. We encourage judges to ask questions at these sessions.

Specific Judging Responsibilities During the Round

When the judges' meeting comes to a close, you will be directed to proceed to your individual classrooms for the first round of competition. In general, the students involved are nervous, concerned about making a good impression on you, and anxious to perform to the best of their abilities. It tends to make them even more nervous to hear a judge say, "I've never done this before, so just bear with me." They are not, in general, experienced or mature enough to realize that this does not automatically mean that you are incapable of making sound decisions. It is not our aim to impose any additional "stress factors" upon our students. It is our aim to draw what is best from each speaker. To help you be as supportive of their efforts as possible, here is a list of guidelines for you to follow in conducting a round of competition. Certainly, many of the points made here are rooted in simple common sense and courtesy, but a friendly reminder is never harmful.

- **Greet the students:**
  Greet them in a friendly and confident manner. Again, it is not your aim to intimidate. Rather, you should encourage the students to function at the very best of their respective abilities. Please keep all interactions professional. Remember that you are the responsible adult in the room.
- **Take "roll":**
  Just read through the list of codes on the schematic for the group so that you are certain that the right speakers are in the right place. If there is a question about a certain student, please bring it to the attention of the executive committee. Under no circumstances should you ever ask for the school affiliation of a student.

- **Choose a seat:**
  Although this may initially seem a facetious remark, it is important to seat yourself in a comfortable and convenient place. It is often preferable to sit approximately ¾'s of the way back in the middle of the room, where you will have an unobstructed view of the performance area and where the students can see you easily. By and large, the students have been instructed not to stand behind desks or podiums. Therefore, you and the students in your group may wish to do a little shifting of furniture to establish a space for speaking that will make clear sight lines possible for all. Please be respectful of the spaces that our host schools have generously given us to use, and put any furniture that you move back into place after the round.
- **Verify Speaker Order:**
  Unless otherwise instructed, speakers will speak in the order listed on the schematic.
- **Ask the students to "sign in" on the board:**
  The speakers should write their speaker codes, selection, title(s), and author(s) on the board. In the case of Extemp, please verify the speaker's code and ask for his/her topic slip (See "Extemporaneous Speaking").
- **Begin the round:**
  Once your ballots are ready, ask the first speaker how he/she would like to be made aware of the passage of time. Try to do so in a relaxed, friendly, and comfortable way. Accurate timekeeping is your responsibility. Even if the speaker does not wish to see time signals, you must keep track of the time of the presentation. If you do not carefully keep track of the time or fail to provide time signals if the speaker requests them, you may not penalize the speaker.
- **Write your critical comments on the ballot:**
  Write comments while the speaker is performing. Although it is desirable for you to make eye contact with the speaker fairly frequently, it is not necessary for you to be "glued" to the speaker throughout the entire speech.

Simply try to maintain a reasonable balance in your focal attention. While you can put these directly into TABROOM, it is best if you put them in a separate notes app and copy the comments over.

- **Thank the group for their efforts:**
  At the end of the last speaker's presentation, you may excuse the speakers to move on to their next rooms or to lunch after the third round. Never single out an individual speaker or performance, or give any oral critiques.
- **Rank and rate each contestant in the round:**
  The speaker you feel performed the best should be ranked 1st; the next best should be ranked 2nd; and so on. No ties may be given in rank. You also need to give each speaker points on the scale indicated on the ballot (generally from 80 to 100). Think of these points as a school grade, where 95 and higher is A, 90-94 is an A-, etc. See the last page of this booklet for some guidelines on speaker points. Try to avoid overusing either end of the rating scale. These are hard decisions to make, but they need to be made quickly because speakers will be waiting for the room, and the executive committee is waiting for the results of your decision.
- **Overtime penalty:**
  If a speaker exceeds the time limit for the category and the allowed 30-second grace period, then that speaker may not be ranked first. You do not need to penalize the speaker any further. However, if you feel the excessive length of the presentation detracted from the performance, you may take that into account in your ranking. Please keep in mind that there is no required minimum time in any of the events.
- **Submit your ballots:**
  Immediately submit your ballots and go to the next round. This will keep the tournament running smoothly.
  Submit Ranks and Points Immediately. You can enter comments later.

General Comments and Suggestions

- **Help every speaker to finish their performance:**
  This may mean letting them sit for a while, get a copy of their manuscript, or take a deep breath. This should be reflected in the speaker's rank, but the student will have at least completed the round.
- **Quietly correct behavior that is inappropriate:**
  Remind students that it is as important to be good audience members as it is to be good speakers. Mention it on the student's ballot and bring it to the attention of the executive committee if you believe the behavior warrants it.
- **Do not give oral critiques:**
  The ballot is the place for your comments about the speaker's presentation. That performance is the result of much concentrated work on the part of both the student and the coach. A "helpful hint" (no matter how noble the intent) might actually do a student a disservice. If you feel that you want to clarify or further explain your comments or decisions, speak to the student's coach or moderator at some point.
- **Familiarize yourself with the rules:**
  The criteria for each category are given on the ballot. Rules about materials permitted, time limits, and evaluation criteria are detailed in this document. Read it thoroughly and become familiar with the requirements for the category that you are judging.
- **Personal biases have no place in your evaluation:**
  Speakers may take positions that are contrary to beliefs that you feel strongly about, and may perform speeches with content that you feel is questionable. Allow the speaker as much freedom as possible and evaluate their performance rather than their beliefs. If any material is questionable or in conflict with what you believe the league stands for, then rate the round based on performance and bring the objection to the executive committee.
- **Judge the performance as a whole:**

Do not take the easy way out and rank a person or team last simply because they were too loud or too fast. Evaluate their performance against the performances of the other speakers in the round.

- **Make your comments supportive and helpful**:
  This does not mean that all of your comments should be glowing, but neither does it mean that all should be negative. Provide speakers with an indication of why you ranked them as you did. It is important for you to remember that you are the adult and that your comments should be written as if the speaker were your student or child.
- **Look interested in each speaker's presentation:**
  It should not be necessary to ask that you not read the newspaper, search through a briefcase, or wander about opening and closing windows, etc. All cell phones, your own and the students', should be turned off. If you need to use your cell phone as a timing device, leave it on silent and do not text or scroll during a student's performance. When possible, doors should be closed. These are basic courtesies, but strange things have been known to occur during rounds of competition.

Appendix A – Category Descriptions and Ballots

Extemporaneous Speaking

(Ext - The NYCFL Offers Varsity and Junior Varsity Divisions)

Overview

Speakers have 30 minutes to prepare a speech to answer a prescribed current events question.

Time Limit

7 minutes plus a 30-second grace period

Judge Notes

- Unlike other categories, speakers will arrive one at a time, speak, and then leave the room.
- Speakers should give judges the slip of paper with their topic/question.
- The judge must make students aware of the passage of time, and students should demonstrate the time signals they expect to see
- Content is at least as important as delivery
- The speaker should be held strictly accountable for answering the question
- The students are allowed their opinions, but these must be backed up by credible sources
- Extemp speech has no prescribed format, and while some speakers may use points of analysis, some may not
- A JV speaker should not be penalized if he/she uses a note card effectively. Note cards are actual paper with 50 words or fewer.
- A speaker should not be penalized if her/his opinion or answer differs from your own

Bottom Line Criteria

Which speaker best answered the question using credible sources and information with a well-organized, well-reasoned argument.

***

PLEASE NOTE:

NOTE CARDS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN VARSITY EXTEMP

BUT

NOTECARDS ARE PERMITTED IN JUNIOR VARSITY EXTEMP

***

NCFL BYLAWS: EXTEMP

1) The speech should be an original synthesis by the contestant of the current fact and opinion on the designated topic as presented by numerous sources. Source materials should be represented with relative accuracy in the speech. The speaker is responsible for the ethical use of source information.
2) The contestant should be held accountable for strict adherence to the precise statement of the topic selected and should be penalized for any obvious shifting to a quite different topic.
3) Information presented should be well-chosen, pertinent, and sufficient to support the central thought of the topic.
4) The speaker is permitted a personal opinion or interpretation of the subject. Speakers must not be penalized for expressing views with which the judge happens to disagree.
5) Material should be organized according to some logical plan to produce a complete speech within the time allowed. The speech must be extemporaneous and delivered without notes. If the speaker refers to prepared notes of any kind or a script during the presentation, the speaker will be disqualified. Positions other than standing should not be excessive in length or dominate the performance.
    a. JV Speakers may use a single index card with no more than 50 words - please take this as a guide. The student should not have so many words that they are reading their speech off of it.
6) Speakers shall be allowed to bring to the preparation room the following printed materials and only these: magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, thesaurus, reference indices, newspaper and/or magazine clippings - files organized under general headings, almanacs and appropriate reference books, books and/or pamphlets. Participants in Extemporaneous Speaking are given the option of using battery operated laptop computers when in the Preparation Room. Prepared speeches will not be allowed.
7) All material brought into the preparation room by speakers will be subject at any time to scrutiny of the Tournament Committee and staff responsible for this event.
8) Speakers may share reference materials; however, any collaboration on speech preparation is forbidden.
9) When the speaker's code number is called, s/he draws 3 questions from among those prepared for the specific round. After consideration, the speaker returns 2 and gives the Director of the event the number of the question s/he has chosen to answer. The Extemp Director notes the topic and time, and the contestant begins to prepare the speech. The speaker must remain in the preparation room until sent to the competition room by the Director of the event.
10) Speakers will have thirty (30) minutes of preparation time.
11) Time limits: Maximum - 7 minutes. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period, that contestant must not be awarded first place. No minimum time.

Original Oratory

(OO)

Overview

Speakers are delivering speeches that they have written themselves

Time Limit

10 minutes plus a 30-second grace period

Judge Notes

- The presentation must be memorized
- The speech may either persuade, inform, or entertain
- The speaker should clearly establish a central theme
- Content is at least as important as delivery
- The student is allowed their opinion, but it must be backed up by credible sources
- The speaker may be passionate or dramatic in their delivery, but they should be themselves and not a 'character'
- The speaker should not be penalized if their opinion or position differs from your own

Bottom Line Criteria

Which speaker best conveyed their intended message both through the text of their speech and the manner in which they delivered it

NCFL BYLAWS: ORIGINAL ORATORY

1. The speaker should be expected to discuss with a degree of originality, and in an interesting manner, the topic chosen.
2. The speakers should be given wide latitude in the ideas they express, but they should be held closely accountable for the manner in which they are expressed. Speakers must not be penalized for expressing views with which the judge happens to disagree. It is suggested, but not obligatory, that the topic be a subject of contemporary significance.
3. The speech must be one that has been composed by the student delivering it.
4. The speech must be memorized. If the speaker refers to prepared notes of any kind or a script during the presentation, the speaker will be disqualified.
5. The number of words quoted from authors other than the contestant must not exceed 150. Extensive paraphrasing of other sources is prohibited and constitutes grounds for disqualification.
6. Original orations should be composed from the standpoint of the present speaker. However, the use of a persona for a maximum length of 1 minute shall be permitted.
7. Visual and audio-visual aids are not permitted. No properties or costumes of any kind may be used. Using “properties” means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance. Speakers using properties and/or wearing costumes will be disqualified. While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges’ ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance. Positions other than standing should not be excessive in length or dominate the performance.
8. Time limits: Maximum - 10 minutes

Oral Interpretation of Literature

(OI - The NYCFL Offers Varsity and Junior Varsity Divisions)
Some tournaments early in the year will be PROSE or POETRY only - this will be documented in the tournament LIVE DOC

Overview
Speakers perform a selection or selections from literature (not from a play) of either prose or poetry in alternating rounds.

Time Limit
10 minutes plus a 30-second grace period

Judge Notes

- The speech must have an introduction that states the title and author. It does not have to come right at the beginning
- Each round will be either prose or poetry, as determined at the beginning of the contest, so please make sure that each speaker is performing the proper selection
- Poetry does not have to rhyme
- Use of a manuscript is required
- Gestures should be suggested rather than 'mimed', and movement should be kept to a minimum
- Speakers should make eye contact with the audience during narration, but when creating a character, they may choose to use specific 'focal points'
- The selection presented may be a narrative, a dialogue, a monologue, or may present multiple characters

Bottom Line Criteria
Which performer best used their delivery to transport you to the time and place required by the literature

NCFL BYLAWS: Oral Interpretation of Literature

1. The speaker shall prepare two programs of manuscript-based literature substantially different in content, author, and/or original source. Each program shall consist of a single piece, a cutting, or a series of short pieces united by author or theme. One program shall be published prose; the other, published poetry. The performer has the burden to be clear at all times which piece is being used. In the prepared script, the pieces should be clearly delineated via highlighting or font style and spacing to enable review in case of a protest.
2. The literature chosen may include any form of prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction. Drama, including theatrical monologues, is prohibited. Speeches written to be delivered in real-life are prohibited.
3. No properties except a manuscript or binder may be used. Using "properties" means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance. Speakers using properties and/or wearing costumes will be disqualified.
4. Speakers should keep eye contact between audience and manuscript in reasonable balance. Speakers who fail to maintain the illusion of reading from the manuscript must not be ranked first.
5. Speakers should keep gesture and bodily movement to a minimum. The selection should be delivered from center stage. Movement and gestures, if used, should be appropriate to the selection. Speakers should not walk during performances. They should emphasize vocal variety and facial expression to enhance the literary interpretation. While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance. Only the performers' feet may touch the ground.
6. Speakers may use a persona, and they may use character voices, but they are not necessary.
7. Important consideration should be given to the quality of the selection.
8. Time limits: Maximum - 10 minutes. This includes at most 1 minute of introductory and transition material other than the author's words. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period, that contestant must not be awarded first place. No minimum time.

Duo Interpretation of Literature

(Duo)

Overview

Two speakers perform a selection, with each portraying a single or multiple characters without touching or making direct eye contact with each other.

Time Limit

10 minutes plus a 30-second grace period

Judge Notes

- Unless otherwise indicated, the presentation must be memorized
- The speech must have an introduction that states the title and author. It does not have to come right at the beginning
- Each student may portray a single or multiple characters
- Movement is allowed, but the presentation must be delivered from 'center stage'
- Speakers are only allowed to touch and make eye contact with each other during the introduction
- Speakers may elect to use focal points to suggest when the characters are speaking to one another
- Presentation should be balanced, and each speaker should contribute to the overall performance
- Each person may portray a single or multiple characters

Bottom Line Criteria

Which team best portrayed their individual characters and showed the physical and emotional interactions between their characters

NCFL BYLAWS: DUO PERFORMANCE

1. The selection, delivered by two students each representing the same member school, must be from a single play, fictional or non-fictional work. A series of poems is permitted. The poetry may be taken from a variety of published sources united by a single poet.
2. The material may be humorous or dramatic, or may combine both tones, depending on the work selected. Important consideration should be given to the quality of the selection.
3. Any part of the literature that a student uses in a Duo Interpretation presentation must follow the rules of Duo Interpretation or the students shall be subject to disqualification.
4. The selection must be memorized. If the speaker refers to prepared notes of any kind or a script during the presentation, the speaker will be disqualified.
5. The introduction should name the work, the author, and set the theme or the mood. Teasers are permitted.
6. Except during introduction and transition, eye contact is aimed only in the audience's direction; focal points are to be employed during dialogue; eye contact with specific audience members during narration is permitted. Pantomime, if used, should be accurate and realistic.
7. The selection should begin from the center stage area.
8. No properties or costumes of any kind may be used. Using “properties” means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance. Speakers using properties and/or wearing costumes will be disqualified.
9. The two interpreters should effectively utilize pitch, volume, phrasing, vocal quality, tone, articulation, enunciation and fluency to create the characterizations desired. The dialogue between characters should reflect a genuine sense of interaction, not a mechanical exchange of lines. While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges’ ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance.
10. Performers are not allowed to make deliberate physical contact with each other during the performance, except during the introduction. Physical movement is restricted to performers moving around one another, switching position, pivoting from side to side or turning around completely. Positions other than standing should not be excessive in length or dominate the performance. Should the performers make deliberate physical contact with each other during the performance, except during the introduction, or make deliberate physical movements other than those permitted herein, the performers will be disqualified.
11. Physically, the characters should react to each other’s verbal and non-verbal expressions but they must not touch each other.
12. Time limits: Maximum - 10 minutes, including introductory and transitional material other than the author's words. Material thus used should be limited

to one minute. If the speakers go over a 30 second grace period, those contestants must not be awarded first place. No minimum time.

Oratorical Declamation

(Dec)

Overview

Speakers are delivering speeches that were written and delivered by another person. This event is strictly limited to Freshmen and Sophomores.

Time Limit

10 minutes plus a 30-second grace period

Judge Notes

- The selection must be memorized
- The introduction should come at the beginning and must give the author, date, and circumstances of the original delivery
- The speech may either persuade, inform, or entertain
- The quality of the delivery is what is important
- The speaker is not responsible for the content or quality of their speech
- The speaker may be passionate or persuasive in their delivery, but they should be themselves and not a "character"

Bottom Line Criteria

Which speaker best demonstrated an understanding of the author's message and delivered that message in a poised and engaging manner

NCFL BYLAWS: DUO PERFORMANCE

1. A selection used in Oratorical Declamation must have been originally delivered in the form a speech by its author, a person other than the present speaker. The speaker must have an introduction which is at most one minute and names the work, author, and describes the circumstances under which the speech was originally presented. The original speaker's words must not be altered for the presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted. Material being performed at the NCFL tournament must match the student's original script. Selections may include professional speeches, public orations, eulogies, and sermons. Stand-up comedy routines are prohibited. Any non-speaking expressions such as singing or dancing should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if non-speaking expressions have dominated the performance.
2. The selection must be memorized. If the speaker refers to prepared notes of any kind or a script during the presentation, the speaker will be disqualified.
3. The speaker should develop the ability to convey the message in a sincere, honest, and realistic style. The mechanics of speech must be observed faithfully: poise, quality of voice, effectiveness and ease of gesture, emphasis, variety, and enunciation. In addition, the speaker must be able to interpret the meaning of the speech and be able to carry the interpretation over to the minds of the listeners. The speaker must be able to interest the listeners and to hold their attention. Positions other than standing should not be excessive in length or dominate the performance.
4. No particular style should be demanded of the speaker; rather, the contestant should be free to select and to develop a personal style and be judged according to the degree of perfection attained and the effectiveness in influencing the listeners. While the specifics of the speech and any style of delivery which the speaker adopts should be judged in light of the purpose of the speech, artificiality is to be discredited. This event is an interpretation, not an impersonation.
5. This event is limited to freshman and sophomore students.
6. Time limits: Maximum - 10 minutes, including at most a 60 second introduction to the selection. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period, that contestant may not be awarded first place. No minimum time.
7. No properties or costumes of any kind may be used. Using "properties" means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance. Speakers using properties and/or wearing costumes will be disqualified.

Dramatic Performance

(DP)

Overview

Speakers perform selections from published literature or published plays and portray all characters without the use of props or costumes

Time Limit

10 minutes plus a 30-second grace period

Judge Notes

- The selection must be memorized
- The speech must have an introduction that states the title and author. It does not have to come right at the beginning
- The selection presented may be a narrative, a dialogue, a monologue, or may present multiple characters
- The performer should become the character or characters they are portraying
- The performer may make eye contact with the audience during narration, but when creating a character, he/she may choose to use specific 'focal points'

Bottom Line Criteria

Which performer best captured the essence, characteristics, and emotions of the character or characters that they were portraying

NCFL BYLAWS: DUO PERFORMANCE

1. The speaker must offer a memorized dramatic presentation. If the speaker refers to prepared notes of any kind or a script during the presentation, the speaker will be disqualified.
2. The presentation must be from a single published play, single published script, or single fictional or non-fictional work, not poetry.
3. The presentation may be either serious or humorous and should have some literary merit. Important consideration should be given to the quality of the selection.
4. While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance.
5. Single or multiple character cuttings will be allowed. When doing a multiple-characterization the performer should create effective interaction between the characters.
6. Although this is primarily a display of vocal ability, body language will play a part in the overall performance, and since it is a drama, more vocal and physical suggestion may be required in order to portray characters, conflict, and story. However, no physical action should be performed that will distract the listeners' attention from the drama being presented. The performance should display another world outside the performance setting. Positions other than standing should not be excessive in length or dominate the performance.
7. No properties or costumes of any kind may be used. Using "properties" means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance. Speakers using properties and/or wearing costumes will be disqualified.
8. Time limits: Maximum - 10 minutes, including introductory and transitional material other than the author's words. Material thus used should be limited to one minute. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period, that contestant may not be awarded first place. No minimum time.

Programmed Oral Interpretation

(POI)

Program Oral Interpretation is a 10-minute performance that can include some combination of prose, poetry, and drama. All students must have at least two out of the three genres included in their performance. The use of a manuscript is required. The focus of the event is development of a theme or argument through the use of narrative, story, and/or characterization.

Evaluating the Round
When judging all interpretation events, it is helpful to keep the Dramatic Structure in mind.

Exposition sets the scene and gives background information. Exposition occurs throughout the cutting and enhances the audience's understanding of what the characters in the program are experiencing. The Inciting Incident sets a conflict into motion and represents the beginning of the Rising Action, which complicates the plot. The Climax is the point of greatest intensity and the turning point of the plot. Falling Action resolves the conflict and Denouement gives a glimpse of life after the conflict.

There are three key areas of a POI that come together to create the performance the judge will evaluate.

- First, programming, or the process of piecing together different types of literature into one cohesive performance. The program should create a compelling performance centered around a theme, argument, or idea.
- Second, blocking, or the movements a performer makes to convey space, emotion, and action. Blocking should enhance the performance, not distract from the story. Movements should be motivated by either internal or external factors. Internal motivation stems from how the character is feeling, while external motivation comes from a physical reaction to external factors. In POI, the student is allowed to use the manuscript as a prop to enhance blocking as long as they maintain control of the manuscript at all times.
- Third, characterization: characterization reveals the personality of the character through line delivery, vocal, and facial expression, and varying levels of levity and intensity. Each piece of literature in a student's POI should have unique and engaging characters that can be distinguished from other pieces in the program. Additionally, each character should adequately represent the genre of literature from which they are drawn. The student should display command of poetic delivery when performing a selection of poetry, for example.

NSDA RULES - POI

Purpose: POI is a program of oral interpretation of thematically-linked selections chosen from two or three genres: prose, poetry, drama (plays). At least two pieces of literature that represent at least two separate genres must be used. Unlike the other interpretation events, Program Oral Interpretation may use multiple sources for the program. The title or author of all selections must be verbally identified in either the introduction and/or transitional phrases. The title may identify the primary source (e.g., book, anthology, journal, magazine, newspaper, approved website, etc.) or the specific title within the primary source (e.g., a poem, a play, a short story, a journal/magazine article, a newspaper article, etc.). If more than one author is attributed to the source, at a minimum, the primary author should be verbally cited. A Works Cited of all sources must be available to tournament officials upon request. Competitors are encouraged to devote approximately equal times to each of the genres used in the program. This distinction pertains to these two or three genres as a whole, not types of literature within a genre (such as fiction/nonfiction). Prose expresses thought through language recorded in sentences and paragraphs: fiction (short stories, novels) and non-fiction (articles, essays, journals, biographies). Poetry is writing which expresses ideas, experience, or emotion through the creative arrangement of words according to their sound, their rhythm, their meaning. Poetry may rely on verse and stanza form.

Contest: The use of a manuscript during the performance is required. Common practices include the use of a binder or folder. Reading from a book or magazine is not permitted. The intact manuscript may be used by the contestant as a prop, so long as it is in the contestant's control by remaining in contact with the body at all times. No costumes or props other than the manuscript are permitted. Pictures, graphics, and/or illustrations are considered a visual aid, even if included in the original manuscript, and may not be displayed. The contestant must address the script; however, introduction and transitional material may be memorized.

Length: The time limit is 10 minutes with a 30-second "grace period." If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.

Publication Rules: All literature performed must meet the publication rules of the Association. Adaptations to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink. Failure to clearly indicate the addition of words will be subject to disqualification. Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language. The voice of a script may not be changed. For example, changing "She moved to California when she was 13" to "I moved to California when I was 13" is not permitted. Combining small fractions of

sentences or singular words to create humorous or dramatic dialogue, scenes, moments, and/or plot lines not intended in the original literature is prohibited. For example, it is not permitted to take one word from page 13 (e.g. home), a phrase from page 211 (e.g. ran away from), and a name, (e.g. Tyler) from page 59 to create dialogue between characters or events that do not exist in the script. Example: adding "Tyler ran away from home." when this did not occur and was not said in the script is not permitted. Transitions only may be used to clarify the logical sequence of ideas. They are not to be used for the purpose of embellishing the humorous or dramatic effect of the literature.

Appendix B: Implicit Bias Reminders

We live in a world that is filled with bias. While it may be impossible to completely separate ourselves from our worldview and the many factors that influence us on a daily basis, we can make a concerted effort to minimize the way our personal biases impact the way that we interact with students within this activity. The vast majority of adults within this activity do a phenomenal job of this throughout the season, but we wanted to put out a few reminders for everyone to take note of:

- Accents do not reflect intelligence.
- Race does not indicate socioeconomic status.
- Gender is fluid.
- There is no uniform in Speech and Debate. Your personal opinions about what a student chooses to wear have no bearing on the proceedings and should not be indicated on your ballot.
- Pitch is not a personal choice.
- Positions that students take while competing don't necessarily equate to their personal beliefs.
- Your beliefs on a topic should have no bearing on how you judge a speech or performance.
- Recognize that words do not exist in a vacuum. Avoid using charged language on your ballots.
- You are the adult in the room, even if you are a student judge. As such, please be mindful of how students will interpret what they see and hear you do. Please demonstrate respect in every aspect of the word.

Appendix C: Equity and Community

Conduct by all students, coaches, and judges should be beyond reproach. The NYCFL is a league that promotes healthy competition and considers ALL of its members to be part of a larger community. Any individual or group that cannot uphold those values will be asked to leave the competition.

In a prelim round, any student has the absolute right to refuse an observer (not judging or participating in that round) in the round. Any student is within their right to ask any observer to leave and is not required to give a reason.

In an elimination/final round, observers are allowed at the discretion of the judges in the room. Any act by any student that is outside the spirit of competition or distracting will not be tolerated, and the student(s) will be removed from the round. The couch will be notified. If the situation is not resolved to everyone's satisfaction, then the misconduct will be reported to the school.

In addition, the use of any electronic device(s) by an observer in any round (for any reason) is strictly prohibited.

Appendix D – Quick Reference

Speech Categories

Category	Description	Time Limit	Memorized vs. Manuscript	Content vs. Delivery	Introductions	Comments
Extemp Speaking	Speakers have 30 minutes to prepare a speech to answer a prescribed current events question	7 minutes + 30-second grace period	50 Word Note Card is allowed in JV only, but not required	Both	No	The speakers are entitled to their opinions, but it must be supported by facts and sources
Original Oratory	Speakers are delivering speeches that they have written themselves	10 minutes + 30-second grace period	Memorized	Both	No	The speech may persuade, inform, or entertain
Oral Interpretation	Speakers perform a selection or selections from literature (not from a play) of either prose or poetry in alternating rounds	10 minutes + 30-second grace period	Manuscript	Delivery	Does not have to come at the beginning: Must give title and author	Poetry does not always rhyme
Duo Performance	Two speakers perform a selection, with each portraying a single character without touching or making direct eye contact with each other	10 minutes + 30-second grace period	Memorized	Delivery	Does not have to come at the beginning: Must give title and author	Some contests may allow manuscripts. Read the ballot carefully.
Declamation	Speakers are delivering speeches that were written and delivered by another person	10 minutes + 30-second grace period	Memorized	Delivery	Should come at the beginning: Must give author, date, and original circumstance for the speech	The speaker may be dramatic but may not take on a different persona
Dramatic Performance	Speakers perform selections from published literature or published plays Performance and portray all characters without the use of props or costumes	10 minutes + 30-second grace period	Memorized	Delivery	Does not have to come at the beginning: Must give title and author	The speech may be humorous or serious and may be a monologue or multi-character
Programmed Oral Interpretation	Speakers perform inter-spliced selections from a variety of sources around a central theme.	10 minutes + 30-second grace period	Manuscript	Delivery and Organization	Does not have to come at the beginning: Must give title and author of all sources	Delivery tends to be more energetic and less static than Oral Interpretation of Literature.

Points Rubric Guidelines

Point Value	Criteria
100 (A++)	Flawless performance that moved you to incredible depth of thought and/or emotion. IMPLIES TO COACH: This student cannot possibly improve his/her performance.
98-99 (A+)	Flawless performance that lacked that extra depth of thought or emotion. Perfect in all scored areas: EXTEMP: Topicality, Structure, Content, Language, Vocal and Physical Delivery OO: Topic, Structure, Development, Language, Vocal, and Physical Delivery OI: Intro, Projection of Literature, Narrator/Character Creation, Visualization, Vocal Variety, Audience and Script Interaction, Overall Effect DUO: Intro, Material, Interaction and Environment, Characterization, Physicality, Vocal Quality, Overall Effect DEC: Intro, Presentation Style, Vocal and Physical Delivery, Overall Effect DP: Intro, Material, Characterization, Multiple Characterization Transitions (if used), Environment, Overall Effect IMPLIES TO COACH: This student has very minor adjustments to make to obtain perfection.
94-97 (A)	Excellent performance, but with one or more of the above areas in need of more practice. Examples might include small stumbles, the need for more source material, more physicality for each character, cleaner transitions, or slightly more volume. IMPLIES TO COACH: This student still has a few areas requiring minor adjustments in order to approach perfection.
90-93 (A-)	Good performance, but needs minor improvement in most of the above areas. Examples might include transitions in need of work, more variety in pitch and volume, more interaction with the audience, better fluidity, and more overall confidence. IMPLIES TO COACH: This student has a solid performance but has multiple areas to improve in order to excel in the category.
85-89 (B to B+)	Performance is adequate, but only with minimal effort in the above areas. Examples might include diminished volume, use of monotone, slightly unorganized speech, lack of sources, minimal use of body language, lack of enthusiasm, and nominal acknowledgment of the environment. IMPLIES TO COACH: This student's performance has moments of weakness, and he/she still needs to put in a fair amount of effort in order to achieve excellence.
80-84 (B-)	Performance is lacking in many of the above areas. Examples might include vast amounts of stumbling, lack of eye contact, lack of structure, insecure body language, small blanks in memorization, and a serious lack of sources. However, the student does finish the entire speech/piece. IMPLIES TO COACH: This student's performance leaves a lot of room for improvement.
75-79 (C)	Performance is not (yet) satisfactory. Serious problems exist in memorization, fluidity, character creation, structure, volume, body language, or a complete lack of sources. The student may not have finished the entire speech/piece. IMPLIES TO COACH: This student needs to more seriously commit to this category and improve in most, if not all, areas.
Below 75 (F)	The student has intentionally offended the judge and/or audience with his/her performance in some way.