

SPEECH

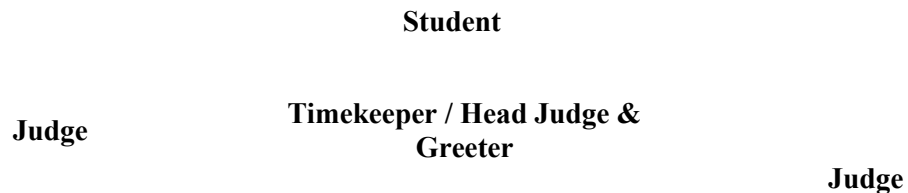
The speech event involves students in the delivery of both an individually **Prepared Speech** and an **Impromptu Speech**.

RULES AND PROCEDURES – State Competition

Fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled time for the speech event, each decathlete will report to a speech “holding area” where decathletes will receive further instructions. Each student will be escorted to a speech room in which the student will remain for approximately 8 minutes. The head judge will give a brief explanation of the procedures to be followed. “Instructions for Contestants” are given in the Prepared Speech and Impromptu Speech portions of this section.

ROOM ARRANGEMENT

In order for the timekeeper/judge to easily be seen by the student, the following room arrangement is suggested for local competition:



The Head Judge can also serve as the Timekeeper unless there is a separate Timekeeper. In which case the Timekeeper should be seated to the side but in full view of the student.

SCHEDULE

A sample of the *Speech Schedule* and *Speech Evaluation Form* for the prepared speech and impromptu speech are found at the end of this tabbed section.

Prepared Speech

PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION (3 ½ to 4 Minute Prepared Speech)

RULES:

1. There is no required speech topic. Speeches must be the **original work** of the student performing the speech. The speech must not have been used in a previous Academic Decathlon event or in any other competitive event other than the current Academic Decathlon season.
2. The **topic** of the prepared speech and the **vocabulary** must be appropriate for a public audience. **The use of profanity is not permitted.** The **coach must approve the topic of the prepared speech.** The **coach shall listen to each decathlete's speech and verify the appropriateness of the topic and content** by signing the Coach's Agreement page of the State Competition registration packet.
3. Note cards may be used; however, the speech **may not be read.** **Over reliance on note cards**, where the student actually reads some parts of the speech, represents a poorly prepared speech and may not be scored above the FAIR range (0 -4) in Speech Development.
4. The speech will be given from a standing position without a lectern. If the student is physically handicapped, special arrangements will be made.
5. **No props** may be used during the speech.
6. The speech must be no less than 3 ½ minutes and no more than 4 minutes long. If the speech is not within the proper time limits, the following adjustments in the Speech Development score will be made:
 - Under 3 minutes, no score above the POOR range.
 - Between 3:00 and 3:20, no score above the FAIR range.
 - Between 3:20 and 3:29, no score above the GOOD range.
 - Over 4:00, score as faulty "closing" as well as beyond "time limit," and do not score above GOOD range.

Points: *A maximum of 700 points can be earned for the prepared speech.*

Prepared Speech *(continued)*

INSTRUCTIONS (for Decathletes)

Fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled time for the Speech event at the state competition, students will report to a speech “holding area” where they will receive further instructions.

- Each student will be escorted to an assigned speech room where the speech event will take approximately 8 minutes.
- Upon arrival in the room, the judges and timekeeper will welcome the student, introduce themselves and ask the name and identification number of the student. The judges will then register this information on their evaluation forms.
- When ready, the timekeeper will say the following to the student:
 - Your speech is to be 3 ½ to 4 minutes in length.
 - At the 3-minute mark, I will hold up the “1 minute” card. This card indicates that there is one minute remaining for the prepared speech.
 - At the 3-½ minute mark, I will hold up the “30 seconds” card that means you have 30 seconds remaining.
 - At the 4-minute mark, I will hold up the “Stop” card.

Timing is an important factor in scoring the speech event. Penalties will be assessed if the speech is over or under the allotted time. Penalties are assessed for violations of the rules noted on the previous page.

Following the prepared speech, the student will receive instructions for the impromptu portion of the speech event that follows immediately.

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PREPARED SPEECH

Coaching Tips

THE PREPARED SPEECH

Quite often decathletes are more apprehensive about the speaking event than about other decathlon events. Students feel they have more control over mental recall than they do over the stage fright that so often accompanies the speech event.

To help students develop self-confidence:

- **Encourage** them to prepare the speech early; rehearse it thoroughly; and present it to a variety of audiences prior to the competition. Only by repetitive performance do students learn to control nervousness and to channel the energy into a vibrant delivery style. Practice! Practice! Practice!
- **Urge** students to seek feedback from audiences and to be flexible. Often students resist changes suggested by others because of an attachment to the original speech.
- **Advise** students to address any criticism that occurs more than once from different listeners. Several different audiences may have the same observations. Advise students that alterations in content are not bad; minor adjustments can help prevent the speech from becoming stale.

TOPIC SELECTION

In choosing a speech topic, the student should consider audience analysis. A panel of adult professionals will be judging the speech; therefore, the student is well advised to reject topics that appeal primarily to adolescents. This is not to suggest that the student avoid topics that concern a young person. Certainly, the best speech topics will spring from the student's strong feelings about subjects of interest. The student's ideas should be presented in a manner appropriate to an adult audience.

The topic should be original; or, if it is a universal topic, it should be unique in approach.

CONTENT

Because organization is an important criterion in the evaluation of the speeches, students are advised to build speeches around outlines.

Each speech should have:

- An **introduction** that captures the attention of the audience and identifies the **purpose** of the speech;

PREPARED SPEECH
Coaching Tips *(continued)*

- A **body** with identifiable **main ideas**, a logical progression of thought and good support material; and
- A **conclusion** that gives the speech a tone of finality.

Language used in the speech should be free of colloquialism and should be precise, interesting and appropriate to an adult audience. All words must be pronounced correctly, and the speech should be grammatically sound.

REHEARSAL

Verbal Effectiveness

Practice sessions should result in improvement in verbal effectiveness.

- **Rate** of speech – make certain the student is not speaking too rapidly and uses adequate pauses for effect and for listener understanding.
- **Volume** – make certain the speech is loud enough to be clearly heard in any size room.
- **Articulation** (*clarity of speech*) – make sure all words and phrases are understandable. Help the student develop variety in pitch, volume and rate — avoid monotone.

Nonverbal Effectiveness

- Train the student to move into the room with an air of confidence and directness. **First impressions** matter!
- Encourage the student to establish direct **eye contact** with judges and project facial expressions appropriate to the verbal message being sent.

Posture and gesturing should reflect energy, assurance and directness and should appear spontaneous rather than rehearsed.

DESCRIPTORS FOR PREPARED SPEECH EVALUATION FORM

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose and this structure must include an opening, body, and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience's attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion. This development of speech is supported by relevant examples and illustrations, facts, and figures delivered with such smoothness that they blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.

EFFECTIVENESS is measured in part by the audience's reception of the speech, but a large part is your subjective judgment of how the speech came across.

You should ask yourself such questions as:

- Was I able to determine the speaker's purpose?
- Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?
- Was the speaker able to hold the interest of the audience?
- Was the speech subject appropriate for this particular audience?

CORRECTNESS of language insures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct punctuation will show that the speaker is the master of words being used.

APPROPRIATENESS of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.

SPEECH VALUE justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. The listeners should feel the speaker has made a contribution to their thinking. The ideas should be important ones, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of them.

VOICE is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch to another for emphasis, and should have a variety of rate and volume. A good voice can be clearly heard and the words easily understood.

NON-VERBAL presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker's appearance should reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions, and body positioning. The speaker's manner should indicate an interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

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Speech

IMPROMPTU PREPARATION

Impromptu speaking develops the ability to “think on your feet.” Practice provides the students numerous opportunities to speak spontaneously on a wide variety of topics. Coaches should provide the student a list of topics for practice. Repeated practice will result in mastery of impromptu delivery.

PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION

Students will select 1 of 3 topics provided to them following the prepared speech. Upon receipt of these topics, each student will be given 1 minute to prepare their Impromptu speech. Students will be given paper to make brief notes. This will be collected by the head judge after the Impromptu speech and before the student leaves the room.

RULES:

1. The speech must be given while standing before the judges. If the student is physically handicapped, arrangements will be made.
2. The student may refer to notes made during the 1-minute preparation. Gestures are acceptable.
3. The student may not leave the room during the speech preparation time.
4. The speech must be no less than 1 ½ minutes and no more than 2 minutes in length. If the speech is not within the proper time limit, the following adjustments in the organization section of the content score are to be made:
 - Under 1 minute, do not score above the POOR range.
 - Between 1:00 and 1:20, do not score above the FAIR range.
 - Between 1:20 and 1:30, do not score above the GOOD range.
 - Over 2:00, score as faulty “organization,” and do not score above the GOOD range.

***Points:** A maximum of 300 points can be earned for the impromptu speech.*

PLEASE NOTE: Topics for impromptu speeches change each year.

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IMPROMPTU SPEECH CRITERIA

The students will be scored on their ability to do the following:

1. Organize ideas in a clear and logical pattern that is appropriate for the speaker's purpose and is convincing to the judges.
2. Express ideas using effective vocabulary, language and style.
3. Present an image through vocal variety, body language and gestures that aid the judges in acceptance of the spoken ideas.
4. Use vocal pitch, volume and flexibility to establish and maintain maximum attention.

The **speech will be judged** on ideas, originality of thought and development, as well as overall impression.

INSTRUCTIONS (for Decathletes)

Immediately after the prepared speech is completed, the judges will thank the student for his/her presentation.

The timekeeper will immediately review the procedure for the impromptu speech with the student as follows:

- You will have 1 minute to select 1 of the 3 impromptu topics and prepare your speech. You may use the paper and pencil provided to make notes if you wish.
- Your speech is to be 1 ½ to 2 minutes in length.
- At the 1-minute mark, I will hold up the "1 minute" card that indicates you have 1 minute remaining.
- At the 2-minute mark, I will hold up the "Stop" card.
- You may now begin your 1-minute preparation.

The judges will then present the student with a card that contains 3 topics for the impromptu speech and ask the student to read the topics and choose one.

Speech – IMPROMPTU (*continued*)

The students should carefully pace the delivery of the impromptu speech. If the speech is shorter than 1½ minutes or longer than 2 minutes, the student will receive a penalty in the “Timing Violation” section of the Scantron Evaluation Form.

At the conclusion of the impromptu speech, the student will leave the room and return to the team’s assigned meeting area.

Decathletes should be familiar with the Speech Rules and Guidelines as outlined in the USAD Study Guide.

SAMPLE TOPICS for IMPROMPTU SPEECH

- If you became ruler of the world, what would you do?
- When are you grown up?
- If you could go back in time, where or when would you go?
- If you could add one amendment to the constitution, what would it be?
- What is a winner?
- What is the highest political office you would like to hold and why?
- What do you believe is the single most important problem facing American teenagers today?
- What advice would you give to an upcoming freshman about surviving high school?
- What makes a person an individual, or is there such a thing as a true individual?
- Tell how too much pressure is put on teenagers to succeed.
- If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
- Describe the main quality you look for in a friend and tell why this quality is important.
- You have just been given two round-trip tickets to “Anywhere”; where would you go and who you would take with you?

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“How to Judge a Speech Contestant”

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CONTENT

Speech Development is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose and must include an opening, body and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience’s attention and then moves forward through the body toward a significant conclusion. This development of the speech structure is supported by relevant examples and illustrations, facts and figures. The speech should be delivered with a smoothness which blends the framework of the speech into a unified whole.

Effectiveness is measured by the audience’s reception of the speech. Speech judges should ask themselves questions such as: “Was I able to determine the speaker’s purpose?” “Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?” “Was my interest held by the speaker?” “Was this subject appropriate for the particular event?”

Speech Value justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. The listeners should feel the speaker has made a contribution to their thinking. The ideas should be important, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation.

DELIVERY

Physical presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker’s appearance should reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions and body positioning.

Voice is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch level to another for emphasis and should have a variety of rate and volume. A good voice can be clearly heard and the words easily understood.

Manner is the indirect revelation of the speaker’s real self as the speech is delivered. The speaker should speak with enthusiasm and assurance, showing interest in those judging and confidence in their reactions.

LANGUAGE

Appropriateness of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.

Correctness of language ensures attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation will show the speaker is the master of the words being used.

1min

30

seconds

O

Speech Up								
<i>Decathlete Check-in Time</i>	Speech Time		Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4	Room 5	Room 6
9:05	9:15		1001	1002	1004	1005	1007	1008
9:16	9:26		1003	1101	1006	1104	1009	1107
9:27	9:37		1102	1103	1105	1106	1108	1109
9:38	9:48		1502	1302	1203	1204	1207	1208
9:49	9:59		1503	1402	1205	1206	1209	1307
10:00	10:10		1201	1202	1304	1306	1308	1309
10:09	10:21		1301	1303	1305			
BREAK								
10:46	10:56		1401		1404	1405	1407	1408
10:57	11:07			1403	1406	1504	1409	1507
11:08	11:18		1501		1505	1506	1508	1509
11:19	11:29		1602	1601	1604	1605	1607	1608
11:30	11:40			1603	1606		1609	
Speech Down								
<i>Decathlete Check-in Time</i>	Speech Time		Room 7	Room 8	Room 9	Room 10	Room 11	Room 12
9:05	9:15		2001	2002	2004	2005	2007	2008
9:16	9:26		2003	2101	2006	2104	2009	2107
9:27	9:37		2102	2103	2105	2106	2108	2109
9:38	9:48		2202	2203	2204	2206	2207	2208
9:49	9:59		2302	2301	2305	2304	2209	2307
10:00	10:10			2303		2306	2308	2309
BREAK								
10:35	10:45		2401	2402	2404	2405	2407	2408
10:46	10:56		2403	2501	2406	2504	2409	2507
10:57	11:07		2502	2503	2505	2506	2508	
11:08	11:18		2601	2602	2604	2605	2607	2608
11:19	11:29		2603		2606			2609
11:30	11:40							