



Middle School Tournament Competition Event Rules

This manual is provided to give official rules for events offered at the National Middle School Speech & Debate Tournament. Please see our “Middle School Tournament Procedures” for information on how the competition is operated. Also see Judging Instructions for guidance for judges. Rules were mostly modeled after high school events, rules and standards, but have been modified in some cases to more appropriately suit middle school students.

2014 Updates

March 31: Initial 2014 Release. New debate evidence rules outlined (p. 2-4). Allowed online sources of interpretation material updated for 2013-14 (p. 14-15). Extemporaneous Debate added as an exhibition event (p. 16). Added disclaimer for mimicking video performances in interpretation events (p. 15). Clarified that Extemporaneous Speakers may stay and watch other speakers after they have spoken (p. 11).

Time Limits

Declamation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Congress: sponsor speech	3 min. + 2-min. questioning
Dramatic Interpretation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Congress: first negative	3 min. + 2-min. questioning
Duo Interpretation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Congress: other speeches	3 min. + 1-min. questioning
Extemporaneous Speaking	7 min. + 30-sec. grace		
Humorous Interpretation	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Lincoln-Douglas Debate	Varies – see LD page
Impromptu Speaking	8 min. + 30-sec. grace	Policy Debate	Varies – see Policy Debate page
Original Oratory	10 min. + 30-sec. grace	Public Forum	Varies – see PF page
Poetry Interpretation	7 min. + 30-sec. grace		
Prose Interpretation	7 min. + 30-sec. grace	Informative Speaking	5 min. + 30-sec. grace
Storytelling	5 min. + 30-sec. grace	Extemporaneous Debate	Varies – see ED page

Topics

See <http://www.speechanddebate.org/asp/Nav.aspx?navid=557> for this year's topics.

Policy Debate

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic engagement toward Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela.

National Tournament Topic Release Dates

- **May 1**, topic areas will be released for Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu, Storytelling, Lincoln-Douglas, and Public Forum.
- **May 14** Congressional Debate legislation will be posted.
- **June 17** Extemporaneous Debate resolution released in tournament program booklet.

Overarching Rules: Debate Events

- A. Oral prompting, except for time signals, by a speaker's debate partner is *not prohibited* but is *discouraged* and may be penalized by some judges. Oral prompting, except for time signals, by **any person other than the speaker's debate partner** is *strictly prohibited* and can result in the disqualification of the debater(s).
- B. **Debate Evidence Rules:** Applies to Congressional, Lincoln-Douglas, Policy, and Public Forum (revised for 2014)
1. **Responsibilities of Contestants Reading Evidence**
 - a. **Evidence defined.** Debaters are responsible for the validity of all evidence they introduce in the debate. Evidence includes, but is not limited to: facts, expert's opinion, statistics, or examples attributable to a specific, identifiable, authoritative source used to support a claim. Unattributed ideas are the opinion of the student competitor and are not evidence.
 - b. **Oral source citation.** In all debate events, debaters are expected to, at a minimum, orally deliver the following when introducing evidence in a debate round: author's name (last), source, and year of publication. Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author, the source, and the year must be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. Subsequently, only the author's name is required.
 - c. **Written source citation.** In all debate events, debaters are expected to have and be able to provide all information required by full MLA or APA citations, in addition to the qualifications of the author, for any evidence they introduce into the debate round. Internet -based sources must also include the title of the website, database, or access point; the date accessed; and the web address. The additional citation required for online sources must appear on all evidence, but need not be read.
 - d. **Paraphrasing, authoritative source versus general understanding.** Evidence attributed to an authoritative source, whether quoted or paraphrased, will be held to the same standard of citation and accuracy. For example, if a debater references a specific theory by a specific author, s/he must meet this standard. However, if a debater speaks about a general concept without attributing it to an authoritative source, that would not constitute evidence. [Example: If a debater were to reference "social contract theory" in general, a source citation is not required. However, if s/he references John Locke's social contract theory, evidence citation would need to be available.]
 - e. **Ellipses prohibited.** In all debate events, the use of internal ellipsis (...) is prohibited unless it is a replication of the original document. Debaters may omit the reading of certain words; however, the text that is verbally omitted must be present in the text of what was read for opposing debaters and/or judges to examine. The portions of the evidence read including where the debater begins and ends must be clearly marked as outlined in B.1(g)(2).
 - f. **Availability of original source.** The original source or copy of the relevant pages of evidence read in round must be available to the opponent during and/or after the round. Additionally, the original source and/or copy of the relevant pages must be available for the judge after the round, if requested. In all debate events, for reference, any evidence that is presented during the round must be made available to the opponent during the round if requested.
 - g. **Distinguishing between what parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round.** In all debate events, debaters must mark their evidence in two ways:
 - i. Oral delivery of each piece of evidence must be identified by a clear oral pause or by saying "quote/unquote." The use of "quote/unquote" is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. Clear oral pauses are left solely to the discretion of the judge.
 - ii. The written text must be marked to clearly indicate the portions read in the debate. In the written text, the standard practices of underlining or highlighting what is read, and/or minimizing what is unread, is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. The clarity of other means of marking evidence is left to the discretion of the judge.
 - h. **Private communication prohibited.** Private, personal correspondence or communication with an author is inadmissible as evidence.
 2. **Definitions of evidence violations**
 - a. "Distortion" exists when the evidence itself contains added and/or deleted word(s) which are not meant to clarify the author's intent, but alter the point the author is establishing (e.g., **deleting** the word '**may**'; **replacing 'may'** with '**will**'; **deleting 'not**'; **adding** the word '**not**'; and so - on). Additionally, failure to bracket added words would be considered serious distortion of evidence.

- b. “Non - existent evidence” means:
 - i. The debater(s) reading the evidence is unable to provide the original source or copy of the relevant pages within 20 minutes of a request by the judge or tournament official following the completion of the round.
 - ii. The evidence cited is not located in the original source cited.
 - c. “Misrepresentation” occurs when:
 - 1. Debaters claim the conclusion of the author is different than its original intent;
 - 2. Use of a “straw man” argument to indicate the argument is the actual conclusion of the author;
 - 3. Exaggeration of an author’s claim substantially changes the impact of conclusion;
 - 4. The debater claims to have read the complete text of highlighted evidence when, in fact, the debater skips or omits portions of evidence (e.g., clipping).
 - d. “Technical violations” occur when a debater fails to meet one or more of his/her responsibilities as outlined in B.1(b) (“oral source citation”), B.1(c) (“written source citation”), B.1(e) (“ellipses prohibited”), B.1(f) (“availability of original source”), B.1(g) (“distinguishing between what parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round”) and B.1(h) (“private communication prohibited”).
3. **Procedures for resolving evidence violations**
- a. Judges are responsible for resolving disputes between debaters regarding source citations and marking of evidence (technical violations as outlined in B.2(d)), exaggeration of evidence (as defined by 7.2(C)(iii)), and “clipping” in the round (as defined by B.2(c)(iv)).
 - b. The judges’ decision in all of the above violations **may not** be appealed, unless a rule has been ignored and/or misinterpreted. An appeal has to be presented in writing to the tournament ombudsman within 20 minutes of the conclusion of the tournament’s debate round by a coach or school - affiliated representative. The appeal needs to specify which rule was in question in the round, and how the judge ignored and/or misinterpreted the rule. The 20 - minute time period begins once the last ballot from all rounds (if flighted, both flights) has been collected by the tab room. The ruling of the ombudsman is final. If the ombudsman determines the judge has misinterpreted a rule and mistakenly awarded a debater a loss, the ombudsman shall award a double - win in that debate.
 - c. Evidence violations involving the misrepresentation (as outlined in B.2(c)), distortion (as outlined in B.2(a)), or claims on nonexistent evidence (as outlined in B.2(b)), except those specifically delegated to the judge in B.3(a) (violations of B.2(c)(iii) and B.2(c)(iv)), will be the responsibility of the ombudsman. A coach or school - affiliated adult representative must submit a protest to the tournament ombudsman within 20 minutes of the conclusion of the debate round. The 20 - minute time period begins once the last ballot from all rounds (if flighted, both flights) has been collected by the ombudsman. The protest must be substantive and written to establish the claim of the evidence violation. The challenged contestant and coach will then be notified. If the ombudsman finds the original protest to be substantive, the coach or school affiliated adult and contestant(s) will be given 20 minutes to provide evidence denying the claim. If such evidence cannot be offered, the challenged debater(s) will be given the loss in the round and may be subject to additional penalties. In these instances, the ombudsman will assume a double win and proceed with normal tournament procedures until a decision is made.
 - d. The ombudsman’s decision to disqualify a student can be appealed to the tournament director or designee (such as tabulation chair) in writing, within 20 minutes of the ombudsman’s decision to disqualify. Both sides will be able to provide written explanations and supporting evidence to defend their individual side, and a decision will be rendered in a timely manner. This decision shall be final and cannot be appealed. If the tournament director or designee has not made their decision by the end of the round following the round being protested, competition in that event must not continue until their decision has been rendered. (That is, no more than one round may occur between the round being protested and the decision of the tournament director.)
4. **After a debate round, responsibilities of debaters involved in evidentiary challenge**
- a. Debaters challenging evidence are required to:
 - i. Have substantive grounds to levy a protest based on the requirements in B.1 and B.2.
 - ii. Demonstrate the evidence was misrepresented, distorted, non - existent, or a reasonable search of no more than 20 minutes cannot prove the validity of the evidence presented in the round.
 - iii. A challenging debater’s coach or school - affiliated adult will provide the tab room with a written protest. The written protest must include the specific claim being made, the rule in question, and the support required for making the claim.
 - b. The following procedures will be followed if the challenge meets the criteria outlined in B.4(a):
 - i. The debater being challenged must demonstrate the validity of the evidence read in the debate if the protest levied by the challenger is substantive.

- ii. The tab room must notify the coach or school - affiliated adult of the debater being challenged and that adult will have the opportunity to assist his/her student in addressing the challenge.
 - iii. Debaters being protested have 20 minutes from the time the coach or school - affiliated adult is notified by a tournament official to establish the validity of the evidence presented in the debate round.
- 5. **Penalties for evidence violation**
 - a. Any technical violations pursuant to B.2(d) will result in any and all offending pieces of evidence being disregarded in the round by the judge.
 - b. If a debater(s) is found to be exaggerating evidence (as defined by B.2(c)(iii)), and/or “clipping” (as defined by B.2(c)(iv)) at any point in the debate, the judge will vote against the offending contestant, award zero speaker points (if applicable), and indicate the reason for decision on the ballot.
 - c. If an evidence violation is presented where a debater is found to have committed a distortion (as defined in B.2(a)), and/or have used “nonexistent evidence” (as defined by B.2(b)), and/or “misrepresented evidence” (as defined in B.2(c)(i - iii)), at the conclusion of due process, the offending debater(s) will lose the debate and be disqualified from the tournament.
 - d. Depending on the severity, an offense may result in notification of said offense to the debater's school administration and chapter sponsor, loss of all National Tournament merit points, including sweepstakes points for the offending student(s), and/or revocation of League membership.
- 6. **Tournament Adjustments**
 - a. Under no circumstance will a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
 - b. In the case of a disqualification of a debater(s), all ranks and decisions of other debater(s) made prior to the start of the protest stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place.
 - c. When a round has been held between the round being protested and a final decision regarding the protest, the result of that round will be recorded as follows:
 - i. If the protest is upheld, and a debater is disqualified, the opponent of the disqualified debater will receive a forfeit win.
 - ii. If the protest is overruled, and the protesting debater won the protested round, no revision of the result on the ballot will take place.
 - iii. If the protest is overruled, the protesting debater lost the protested round, and had no previous losses, no revision of the result on the ballot will take place.
 - iv. If the protest is overruled, the protesting debater lost the protested round, and had a previous loss, their opponent will receive a forfeit win regardless of the result on the ballot.
- C. **Judging Conflicts:** Contestants in any debate event who are scheduled to be judged by someone who has, at any point in time, coached or taught them or with whom they have a close personal relationship are responsible for reporting that fact to the ombudsperson immediately. Failure to comply may result in disqualification from the tournament.
- D. **Guidelines for Laptop Use in Debate Events**
 - 1. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
 - 2. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
 - 3. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
 - 4. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited. (This does not prohibit non-electronic communication between debate partners during prep time.)
 - 5. Penalty: Contestants found to have violated provisions 1 through 3 above will forfeit the round of competition. Contestants found to have violated provision 4 (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the tournament ombudsperson can be contacted for a ruling.
 - 6. Availability of Evidence: Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically, but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge.

7. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants.
8. Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, all debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking.
9. Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and related equipment accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.
10. By choosing to use laptop computers in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

Public Forum Debate Rules

Public Forum is a team debate event that advocates or rejects a position posed by the monthly resolution topic. The clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or “citizen judge”, i.e. a member of the American jury. The debate should:

- Display solid logic, lucid reasoning, and depth of analysis
- Utilize evidence without being driven by it
- Present a clash of ideas by countering/refuting arguments of the opposing team (rebuttal)
- Communicate ideas with clarity, organization, eloquence, and professional decorum

The round starts with a coin toss; the winning team selects either:

- ❖ The side (pro or con) they will argue
- ❖ The speaker order (begin the debate or give the last speech).

The team that loses the toss will then decide their preference from the option not selected by the winner (i.e., if the winning team decides to speak last, then the losing team may decide which side they will argue). The debate, therefore may begin with the con side, arguing against the topic.

During "**crossfire**," the two previous speakers stand, asking and answering questions in a polite, but argumentative exchange. Unlike traditional cross-examination, both speakers may question each other, however, the first question of the crossfire period is asked to the speaker who just finished.

Summary speeches are rebuttals that extend earlier arguments made or answer opposing refutations, and may incorporate new evidence, but not new arguments.

In the **grand crossfire**, all four debaters may remain seated, asking and answering questions. The first question is asked by the team that had the first summary to the team which had the last summary. After that, any debater may question or answer.

The **final focus** is a compelling restatement of why the judge should vote pro or con. Given the short period, the team must decide what arguments weigh most importantly on the decision. No new arguments are accepted in the final focus speeches.

The judge is the chairperson of the round (facilitating the coin flip and giving time signals if requested), and may halt any crossfire lacking civility. S/he may not interact in the crossfire.

Judges evaluate teams on the quality of the arguments actually made, not on their own personal beliefs, and not on issues they think a particular side should have covered. Judges should assess the bearing of each argument on the truth or falsehood of the assigned resolution. The pro should prove that the resolution is true, and the con should prove that the resolution is not true. When deciding the round, judges should ask, “If I had no prior beliefs about this resolution, would the round as a whole have made me more likely to believe the resolution was true or not true?” Teams should strive to provide a straightforward perspective on the resolution; judges should discount unfair, obscure interpretations that only serve to confuse the opposing team. Plans (formalized, comprehensive proposals for implementation), counterplans and kritiks (off-topic arguments) are not allowed. Generalized, practical solutions should support a position of advocacy.

Quality, well-explained arguments should trump a mere quantity thereof. Debaters should use quoted evidence to support their claims, and well-chosen, relevant evidence may strengthen – but not replace – arguments. Clear communication is a major consideration. Judges weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained, and they will discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a well-informed citizen. A team should not be penalized for failing to understand his or her opponent’s unclear arguments. In short, Public Forum Debate stresses that speakers must appeal to the widest possible audience through sound reasoning, succinct organization, credible evidence, and clear delivery. Team points provide a mechanism for evaluating the relative “quality of debating” by each side.

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.	
Speaker 1 (Team A, 1st speaker)	4 min.
Speaker 2 (Team B, 1st speaker)	4 min.
Crossfire (between speakers 1&2)	3 min.
Speaker 3 (Team A, 2nd speaker)	4 min.
Speaker 4 (Team B, 2nd speaker)	4 min.
Crossfire (between speakers 3&4)	3 min.
Speaker 1 Summary	2 min.
Speaker 2 Summary	2 min.
Grand Crossfire (all speakers)	3 min.
Speaker 3 Final Focus	2 min.
Speaker 4 Final Focus	2 min.
Prep time for each team	2 min.

Policy Debate Rules

Policy debate focuses on the advocacy of a plan or policy action. The affirmative team should outline the harms in the current system or some sort of need. Then they should present a policy that would satisfy the need they have outlined. In addition the affirmative may discuss additional advantages to the policy. The negative team may argue that the affirmative policy fails to meet the need they have outlined (i.e. the affirmative does not solve). The negative also has the option to present disadvantages to the policy (the policy may solve the problem, but it will create new problems). Other ways do exist for structuring an affirmative case or negative strategy, but in the end the debate should focus on whether or not a particular policy is an appropriate course of action.

Each entry (team) must submit a text of their affirmative plan when registering for the tournament online.

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.		Each individual debater must give one and only one constructive speech, one period of questioning, one period of answering, and one rebuttal.
Affirmative Constructive	8 min.	
Negative Cross-Examines Aff.	3 min.	
Negative Constructive	8 min.	
Affirmative Cross-Examines Neg.	3 min.	
Affirmative Constructive speech	8 min.	
Negative Cross-Examines Aff.	3 min.	
Negative Constructive speech	8 min.	
Affirmative Cross-Examines Neg.	3 min.	
Negative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Negative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 min.	
Prep time, per team	8 min.	

Stock Issues

Often, judges view the round in terms of stock issues, or major questions that both teams need to address. They are:

- ❖ Inherency: Does the plan exist in the status quo (the way things are now)?
- ❖ Harms: What's the problem with the status quo?
- ❖ Significance: How big is the problem in the status quo?
- ❖ Solvency: Does the affirmative plan solve the problem?
- ❖ Topicality: Does the affirmative plan meet the terms of the resolution? Is it an example of the resolution?

In the traditional view, the affirmative has to successfully defend the argument that their plan meets all five of the stock issues: it can't exist already (inherency), it has to address an important problem (harms and significance together), it has to fix that important problem (solvency), and it has to be an example of the resolution, to ensure a fair debate (topicality). If the negative can prove that the affirmative violates any one of the stock issues – for example, that the plan won't fix the problem (solvency) – then the negative wins the debate.

Disadvantages

Sometimes an affirmative plan can solve for all five of the stock issues and still be a bad idea. For example, an affirmative plan to dissolve the entire U.S. prison system would certainly remedy the problem of excessive detention, doesn't exist in the status quo, and very substantially decreases the government's ability to detain without charge. However, there are still extremely good reasons not to vote for such a plan: prisoners might run rampant on the streets; people would be less afraid to commit crimes since they would know that there were no prisons to punish them for breaking the law; lots of prison staff would be out of employment, and so forth.

A disadvantage is a somewhat more structured way of arguing that the negative consequences of a plan provide a reason not to vote for it. Disadvantages have several important parts:

- ❖ Uniqueness: is the disadvantage happening in the status quo? If a disadvantage argues that an affirmative plan will cause the economy to stagnate (stop growing), then it can be proved non-unique if an affirmative effectively argues that the economy is already stagnating and, hence, the plan wouldn't make the economy any worse than it already is.
- ❖ Link: does the plan cause the problem to happen? If a disadvantage argues that releasing detainees held at Guantanamo Bay would cause terrorism to increase, the negative has to prove that prisoners there are involved in terrorism and that their captivity is important to preventing terrorism.
- ❖ Impact: does the plan cause something bad to happen? If a disadvantage argues that limiting the government's ability to conduct sneak and peek searches under Section 213 of the USA PATRIOT Act would impair the government's law enforcement ability, the negative has to prove that law enforcement by the government is a good thing.

Cross-Examination

The questioner shall control the use of the time and may interrupt the respondent, but may not comment on the answers or make any statement of his/her own views.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate Rules

Lincoln-Douglas debate centers on a proposition of value, which concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is. Values are ideals held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. Neither side is permitted to offer a plan (a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation); rather, they should offer reasoning to support a general principle. Debaters may offer generalized, practical examples or solutions to illustrate how the general principle could guide decisions. Hallmarks include:

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.	
Affirmative Constructive	6 min.
Negative Cross-Examines Aff.	3 min.
Negative Constructive	7 min.
Affirmative Cross-Examines Neg.	3 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min.
Negative Rebuttal	6 min.
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 min.
Prep time for each debater	4 min.

1. **Parallel Burdens:** No question of values can be determined entirely true or false. This is why the resolution is debatable. Therefore neither debater should be held to a standard of absolute proof. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.
 - **Burden of proof:** Each debater has the equal burden to prove the validity of his/her side of the resolution as a general principle. As the resolution is a statement of value, there is no presumption for either side.
 - **Burden of clash:** After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his/her opponent.
 - **Resolitional burden:** The debaters are equally obligated to focus the debate on the central questions of the resolution, not whether the resolution itself is worthy of debate. Because the affirmative must uphold the resolution, the negative must also argue the resolution as presented.

2. **Value Structure:** The debater establishes a value structure (or framework) to serve two functions: a) to provide an interpretation of the central focus of the resolution, and b) to provide a method for the judge to evaluate the central questions of the resolution. The value structure often (but not always) consists of:
 - **Definitions:** The affirmative should offer definitions, be they dictionary or contextual, that provides a reasonable ground for debate. The negative has the option to challenge these definitions and to offer counter-definitions.
 - **Value Premise/Core Value:** A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. that serves as the highest goal to be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved. In general, the debater will establish a value which focuses the central questions of the resolution and will serve as a foundation for argumentation.
 - **Value Criterion/Standard:** Generally, each debater will presents a standard, used to:
 - ❖ explain how the value should be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved.
 - ❖ measure whether an argument protects, respects, maximizes, advances, or achieves the value.
 - ❖ evaluate the relevance and importance of an argument in the context of the round.

The relationship between the value premise and the criterion should be clearly articulated. During the debate, the debaters may argue the validity or priority of the two value structures. They may accept their opponent's value structure, prove the superiority of their own value structure, or synthesize the two.

3. **Argumentation:** Debaters are obligated to construct logical chains of reasoning which lead to the conclusion of the affirmative or negative position. The nature of proof may take a variety of forms (e.g., a student's original analysis, application of philosophy, examples, analogies, statistics, expert opinion, etc.). Arguments should be presented in a cohesive manner that shows a clear relationship to the value structure. Research should be conducted and presented ethically from academically sound and appropriately cited sources.

4. **Cross-Examination:** Questioning should clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments in the round.

5. **Delivery:** Effective oral communication requires clarity of thought and expression. Arguments should be worded and delivered in a manner accessible to an educated non-specialist audience. This communication encompasses:
 - **Written:** Cases and arguments should be constructed in a manner that is organized, accessible, and informative to the listener. The debater should employ clear logic and analysis supported by topical research.
 - **Verbal:** The debater has the obligation to be clear, audible and comprehensible, and to speak persuasively to the listeners. Additionally, debaters should strive for fluency, expressiveness, effective word choice, and eloquence.
 - **Non-verbal:** The debater should demonstrate an effective use of gestures, eye contact, and posture.

Throughout a round, debaters should demonstrate civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.

Congressional Debate Rules

Legislation must be posted with corresponding student entries on the registration site by May 1, 2014 (please note this is ahead of the deadline for entries).

1. **Recognizing Speakers:** the correct way to obtain the floor is to rise immediately at the conclusion of the preceding speaker's remarks and say "Mr./Madam President (or Mr./Madam Speaker)." If another legislator is recognized, take your seat until he/she relinquishes the floor
 - a. When more than one speaker seeks the floor, the presiding officer must follow the recency method:
 - i. First recognize students who have not spoken during the session
 - ii. Next recognize students who have spoken fewer times
 - iii. Then recognize the student who have spoken least recently (earliest)
 - iv. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should explain his/her recognition process and it must be fair, consistent and justifiable. S/he may not use "activity," "longest standing," or "standing time," or anything that ties recognition for speeches to questions or motions.
 - v. Precedence/recency resets for each session.
 - b. A student may be recognized to speak as often as possible and may speak more than once on the same issue.
 - c. A speaker may yield time on the floor during debate (for questions or clarifications) but that speaker will remain in control of his/her three minutes (see #4 below regarding questioning).
2. **Speeches introducing legislation and the first negative/opposition speech** are allotted up to three minutes, followed by two minutes of questioning by other delegates. A student from the school who wrote the legislation gets the privilege of recognition (called authorship), regardless of recency; otherwise the presiding officer may recognize a "sponsor" from the chamber, provided this recognition follows the recency guidelines above. Regardless, this speech of introduction must be followed by two minutes of questions. Should no student seek recognition for the authorship/sponsorship, the chamber should move to lay the legislation on the table until such time that a student is prepared to introduce it.
3. **Following the first two speeches on legislation**, the presiding officer will alternately recognize affirmative and negative speakers, who will address the chamber for up to three minutes followed by one minute of questioning by other delegates. If no one wishes to oppose the preceding speaker, the presiding officer may recognize a speaker upholding the same side. When no one seeks the floor for debate, the presiding officer may ask the chamber if they are "ready for the question," at which point, if there is no objection, voting may commence on the legislation itself. There is no "minimum cycle" rule, however, if debate gets "one-sided," the chamber may decide to move the previous question.
 - a. In the event a student speaks on the wrong side called for by the presiding officer and the error is not caught, the speaker shall be scored and the speech shall count in recency, but the speaker must be penalized at least three points for not paying close attention to the flow of debate.
 - b. In the event a student speaks on an item of legislation not currently being debated, said speech shall count in recency, but zero points shall be awarded.
4. **The presiding officer fairly and equitably recognizes** members to ask questions following each speech. It is unnecessary for speakers to state they yield to questions, because the rules specify the period for questioning. The presiding officer – who has a seating chart – controls calling on questioners. S/he starts timing questioning periods when s/he has recognized the first questioner, and keeps the clock running continuously until the time has lapsed. Speakers are encouraged to ask brief questions, and may only ask one question at a time (two-part/multiple-part questions are not allowed, since they monopolize time and disallow others to ask their questions). There is no formal "permission to preface," however, presiding officers should discourage students from making statements as part of questioning, since that is an abusive use of the limited time available.
5. **The presiding officer will pause** briefly between speeches to recognize any motions from the floor, however, he/she should not call for motions (at the beginning of a session, the presiding officer should remind members to seek his/her attention between speeches).
6. **Amendments** must be presented to the presiding officer in writing, with specific references to lines and clauses that change. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.
 - a. The presiding officer will recommend whether the amendment is "germane" – that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation – otherwise, it is considered "dilatatory."
 - b. A legislator can only move to amend between speeches. Once that motion is made, the presiding officer will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless he/she rules it dilatatory.

- c. Should students wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the presiding officer will recognize them as per recency, and the speech will be counted toward their total, accordingly.
 - d. Simply proposing an amendment does not guarantee an “author/sponsor” speech, and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal one minute of questioning.
 - e. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.
 - f. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debating it.
7. The PO determines the **method of voting** on each question that comes before the chamber. ALL simple majority votes are based upon the number of legislators PRESENT and VOTING in the chamber; therefore, the PO does not need to call for or count abstentions. For all votes requiring a fraction of the chamber to agree to a motion or question (2/3, 1/3, 1/5, etc.), the chair determines whether the chamber agrees with the motion/question using the number of legislators PRESENT in the chamber at the time of the vote. Because of this system, the PO must track the number of legislators in the chamber at all times. Notes on voting:
- a. Final votes on legislation, amendments, and motions to appeal the chair require a recorded vote.
 - b. Voice voting is acceptable for all other votes, but a recorded vote must be taken if any one legislator calls for a division of the chamber.
 - c. A roll call vote is permitted if such a request is agreed to by 1/5 of the chamber.
8. Ask permission to leave and enter the chamber when it is in session (move a personal privilege). However, do not interrupt a speaker who is addressing the chamber.
9. Since the rules above ensure fairness for competition, they may not be suspended; the presiding officer should rule such motions out of order.

10. Ethics and Evidence

a. Conduct

- i. A congressperson’s conduct shall be above reproach and he/she should never be guilty of intentional harassment. Impeaching and censuring other participants is not allowed.
- ii. Participation in this event demands the seriousness of purpose and maturity possessed by real world policymakers. All adult officials, including scorers, will hold each participant to this standard.
- iii. Congresspersons should have a cooperative nature and if there is a problem, then the student should take any concerns to an adult official.
- iv. Participation in the legislative debate is essential. Extended absence from the chamber during a session will affect a contestant’s overall impression and performance. The practice of “open chambers” interferes with the parliamentarian’s ability to monitor student participation.

b. Evidence and Use of Electronic Devices

- i. Visual aids are permitted in Congressional Debate, provided they do not require electronic retrieval devices in the chamber.
- ii. All evidence used is subject to verification as per the Evidence Use Guidelines in Debate Events. Honesty and integrity are of utmost importance in legislative debate. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the legislator being suspended by tournament officials.
- iii. Please see guidelines for use of laptops/electronic retrieval devices in debate events. Cell phones, music players and games are not to be used in the chamber during a session. Traditional timing devices are permitted.

See the Congressional Debate Guide (www.congressionaldebate.org) for more information.

Extemporaneous Speaking Rules

1. **Topics** will cover United States domestic policy, United States foreign policy, and the foreign policies of foreign nations. The tournament will draft questions aimed for middle level ages and phrased for contest use, based on subjects discussed in standard periodicals during the current school year.
2. **Drawing:** Thirty minutes before the round is to begin, the first speaker shall draw three questions, choose one, and return the other two. Other contestants shall draw in like manner, in the order of speaking, at intervals of seven minutes.
3. **Preparation:** As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant shall withdraw and prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers, and journals or articles, provided:
 - They are originals or Xeroxed copies of originals.
 - Original articles or copies must be intact & uncut.
 - There is no written material on original or copies.
 - Topical index without annotation is allowed.No other material shall be allowed in the extemp prep room other than stated above. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs, and outlines shall be barred from the extemp prep room. Underlining or highlighting on materials will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. Source citations of such materials must meet MLA standards.
4. **Recusal:** A contestant may not leave the prep area without first checking out with the proctor. A student leaving without permission will be ranked last in that round.
5. **The Speech** .
 - a. **Time:** Contestants shall speak not more than seven minutes. No minimum time is mandated. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank.
 - b. Speakers may use **one index card** per round, up to 4-inches by 6-inches. These cards may only be written on in the preparation area.
6. **Observation:** Students are encouraged, but not required, to stay and watch remaining speakers after they deliver their speeches.

Extemporaneous Speaking: Computer Use

- A. Extemporaneous Speaking contestants may make use of electronic retrieval devices to store and to retrieve their subject files. Students can retrieve extemporaneous files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. This rule in no way prevents students from still utilizing traditional paper copy files to enable the competitor to successfully compete in Extemporaneous Speaking. The NJFL takes no position on which form of file storage is preferable for use.
- B. The use of electronic retrieval devices at the district competition will be the autonomous decision of each individual district committee.
- C. Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop computers, netbooks, iPads, or other portable electronic retrieval equipment. Secondary devices such as flash drives or external hard drives are allowed as well. Cell phones or smart phones are prohibited from being used while preparing or before speaking.
- D. Source Materials: Students may consult published books, periodical articles, newspaper articles, think tank articles, government reports or journal articles saved on their electronic retrieval device or present in hard copy form provided:
 - a. There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.
 - b. Any highlighting or underlining of the articles is done in only one color within each article. Bolding, italicizing, or any other manipulation of the original text of sources (other than highlighting or underlining as previously stipulated) is prohibited.
- E. No other source materials will be allowed in the Extemporaneous prep room other than stated above. Pre-written Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.
- F. Power Source: Power plugs or outlets may not be used in the prep room at any time. All computers used in the prep room must be battery operated at all times.
- G. Competitors are responsible for making certain their electronic retrieval devices are fully charged at the start of each competition day and for proper power management ensuring that their device remains functional throughout the competition day. Contestants may not use external power sources in the prep room, such as wall outlets and/or extension cords.
- H. Internet: Extemporaneous Speaking contestants shall not access the Internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep room. All computers must comply with the following provisions:
 - a. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
 - b. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
 - c. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
 - d. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited.
 - e. Penalty: Contestants found to have violated provisions i through iii above will be ranked last in the round. Contestants found to have violated provision iv (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all round credits. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the acting tournament ombudsperson may be contacted for a ruling.
- I. Liability: Extemporaneous Speaking competitors accept full responsibility for the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entire course of the tournament. The NJFL may put stickers and/or tape on computers to ensure they are not opened or used, or to ensure appropriate owners take their own machines. The NFL/NJFL does not assume any liability for computers, including if they are lost, stolen, or broken. Students are welcome to use Kensington locks or other such devices to secure their computers in the prep room. Students, parents, and coaches should be aware that the students are bringing and using the computers at their own risk.
- J. File Monitoring: The NFL retains the right to view and search any electronic retrieval devices to ensure compliance with any and all rules.
- K. Devices should be muted in the prep room. Contestants should not play games or engage in other distracting activities on their electronic devices in the prep room. Tournament officials may ask a student to power-off the device if it becomes distracting.
- L. Students from the same school may share computers during preparation. However, communication among contestants during preparation time is strictly prohibited.

Original Oratory Rules

1. This contest shall comprise only memorized orations actually composed by the contestants and not used in any previous contest year. No visual aids are permitted.
2. **Subject** – Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified. A student may not reuse the same speech topic from any competition in a previous academic year.
3. **Length** – Delivery shall require not more than 10 minutes. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank.
4. **Quotation** – Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing and such quotations shall be identified in a printed copy of the oration supplied prior to registration. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited.
5. **Script** – Orations must be posted with corresponding student entries on the registration site by May 20, 2014; each oration should identify quoted material, state the number of quoted words, and by virtue of submitting the script, the orator and the coach attest that the oration is the original work of the contestant.

Impromptu Speaking Rules

1. **Topics** – Impromptu topics will include proverbs, abstract words, events, quotations, and famous people.
2. **Drawing** – Each section/room shall be provided with an envelope containing topics. Once the first speaker is called, the other speakers shall leave the room, and wait outside the door. Each speaker will draw three topics, choose one, and return the other two. The speaker then has eight minutes in which to prepare a response and speak. The same list of topics shall be used for the drawing by each section. A different subject area will be used for each round.
3. **Preparation:** As soon as a topic is chosen, the contestant shall withdraw and prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may not consult outside materials during their preparation or speaking time. However, prior to each round, they may consult any material that may inspire them during the round.
4. **Notes** – Speakers may use one index card per round, up to 4-inches by 6-inches. These cards may only be written on in the preparation area.
5. **Time** – There is no minimum qualifying time, but the contestant must cover the subject adequately. Maximum time for preparation and speaking is 8 minutes. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank. (Please note: this is one minute longer than the high school level).

Interpretive Performance of Literature Rules

Dramatic, Duo, Humorous, Poetry, Prose, Declamation, and Storytelling

This includes categories of individual (solo) performance of dramatic (serious) and humorous literature, as well as duo performance of either emotive appeal, with selections drawn from published, printed: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, or other printed, published works as well as limited online works as provided for in the rules below.

1. Contests are conducted in Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, Poetry, and Prose Interpretation, Declamation and Storytelling.
2. **Length:** The time limit in Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, and Declamation is 10 minutes; in Poetry and Prose, 7 minutes; in Storytelling, 5 minutes. All these events carry a 30-second “grace period”. If the judges in the round agree that the student has gone beyond the “grace period”, the student may not be ranked 1st, but need not be ranked last based on time. 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.
3. **Material:** Selections used in these contests must be cuttings from a single work of literature – from one short story* or one play, or one novel*, one speech (Declamation) – or one or more poems as described in the following subsections:
 - a. **Print Publications:** includes novels, short stories, plays or poetry, published in print (see requirements pertaining to source verification in section 4.a. below)
NOTE: In addition to print sources, certain online materials are allowed as per 3.b. Also, if a treatment of a movie script is ordered from a company that provides printed movie scripts, keep the original treatment, receipt, and proof of mailing (envelope). Please note that text of the treatment may differ from the actual film, so students are advised against transcribing directly from the film.
 - b. **Digital (Online) Publications:** [New in 2012-13] when using an online source rather than a printed source, material is allowed only from pre-approved online publishing sources listed for the current school year (subsection ii), which meet web page standards enumerated in subsection 3.b.i (see also verification requirements in section 4.b. below):
 - i. The website offers online material published directly on its web page(s). Even if the site has multiple formats, such as PDFs, only material that can be printed directly from the web page is allowed. Downloaded files will NOT be accepted. The League defines a web page as a document coded with hypertext markup language (HTML), displayed in a web browser. The League defines a downloaded file as a specific non-hypertext format, such as PDF or word processing document.
 - ii. Sources approved for the 2012-2013 school year are (it is illegal to use sites not on this list, and material from this list must comply with 3.b.i. above) – see this webpage: www.speechanddebate.org/ApprovedWebsites.
 - iii. These guidelines determined digital (online) publication sources selected:
 - 1) The literary material is from a website with strict editorial submission standards that include editorial review and acceptance. Unacceptable sites include:
 - a) Personal sites (social network profiles, blogs)
 - b) Personal professional sites (those where a writer who has his/her own site and can place his/her works for sale or view)
 - c) Publish it sites (those with one click upload or that accept submissions without a selection process)
 - 2) Texts must come from a verifiable website that can be accessed universally by any user. The site and literary text needs to be verifiable on the web if challenged.
 - a) Unmarked or casual sites where individuals can easily post work either for performance or criticism will not be accepted.
 - b) The website has been in existence for a minimum of two years prior to submission for consideration by the National Forensic League for the upcoming school year (several online tools allow for verification of the existence of a website).
→ For more information, please see:
<http://www.nationalforensicleague.org/asp/content.aspx?id=243>
 - c) Prohibited material: not published in print or allowable online material as per above, including:
 - i. Transcription from video or audio, including broadcasts, online, or recorded material (videotape, DVDs, audio tape, CDs, MP3s, or phonograph recordings).

- ii. Original material published in a middle or high school publication such as a newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.
 - c. **Declamation:** The speech must have been delivered in public and either available in print, or on ANY website that follows the guidelines in 3.b.i. above, but not limited to the specific list of websites in 3.b.ii.
 - d. * Middle School-level Prose may use several selections by various authors, arranged in a thematic program.
- 4. **Source Verification:** It is the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered in Interpretation contests to determine absolutely that the cutting being performed meets all rules for material. Coaches must enter script/publication information online for each entry, and for digital publications, including the website in the ISBN field.
 - a. **Print Publications:** The original published source of any selection used must be immediately available at the tournament as well as a complete script of the cutting used. A complete script of the cutting includes:
 - i. A photocopy of every page from which any line of the cutting is taken; pages are to be in the order in which they are performed.
 - ii. All words used from the script should be highlighted (any words/lines not used should be left unmarked).
 - iii. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink.
 - b. **Digital (Online) Publications:** The material the competitor performs must presently appear on the website if questions arise in competition, additionally, a printed manuscript must be available:
 - i. Manuscript items to be printed directly from the screen:
 - 1) The first page in the website (the home page)
 - 2) All other linked pages needed to navigate to the literary text selected for competition shall be printed out and the link must be highlighted in the manuscript
 - 3) All web pages upon which the cutting appears
 - ii. Each page must have printed in the header and/or footer:
 - 1) Date the page was printed
 - 2) Web address
 - iii. Only the printed manuscript shall be considered adequate proof of authenticity. In other words, the student or coach must provide printed pages or an identical copy for examination.
 - iv. The highlighted manuscript submitted for material verification will follow the same rules designated for printed publications (see section “a” immediately above).
 - v. The website and online version of the digital publication need to be available for comparison if challenged. Online access is the fundamental responsibility of tournament officials and/or individual filing the protest. NOTE: If tournament officials cannot gain online access and the above requirements have been met, the piece is considered legal for use.
- 5. **Performance:** The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. During the presentation the contestant/team must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made. A formal introduction may follow a “teaser,” or brief excerpt of performance. Additionally:
 - a. Adaptations to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. The gender stated by the author must be honored. However, a female contestant may play a male role, and a male contestant may play a female role.
 - b. Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation selections must be presented from memory.
 - c. In Poetry, and Prose Interpretation selections must be presented from a manuscript, which may be in a binder/portfolio. Reading from a book or magazine is not permitted.
 - d. In Duo Interpretation each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible.
 - e. Monologues or dialogues are acceptable in Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation. If the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.
 - f. Videos of previous middle and high school final round performances are intended to provide educational examples for coaches and students. They are not intended to serve as a model to directly imitate or duplicate in performance. The wholesale impersonation of final round performances is strongly discouraged.
- 6. **Focus:** In Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation, use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction [the performers may look at each other] but must be indirect [off-stage] during the performance itself.
- 7. **The cutting used** in the first round must be used throughout the entirety of the tournament in that event.
- 8. **Re-Use:** A student may not use a cutting from a work of literature the student used in NJFL national competition in any previous contest year. A student entered in two events may not use the same selection of literature in both events.

Exhibition Events: Overview

Coaches must pre-register students as part of the tournament entry process. Students must re-register to confirm their participation, once they know they are not competing in an elimination round of an event that conflicts with when the exhibition event is happening.

Informative Speaking Rules

1. This contest shall comprise brief informative speeches actually composed by the contestants. No visual aids are permitted.
2. **Subject** –Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified. A student may not reuse the same speech topic from any competition in a previous academic year, or in Original Oratory.
3. **Length** – Delivery shall require not more than 5 minutes. A contestant who exceeds this time limit by more than :30 seconds is not eligible for a first place rank.
4. **Quotation** – Not more than 75 words of the speech may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing and such quotations shall be identified in a printed copy of the oration supplied prior to registration. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited.
5. **Script** – The coach of record at the tournament should have a complete copy of the student’s manuscript speech, should a question arise. The manuscript should identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, and by virtue of submitting the script, the contestant and the coach attest that the speech is the original work of the contestant.

Extemporaneous Debate Rules

1. The tournament will release a specific resolution in the tournament program booklet, available at registration.
2. Contestants will be assigned sides by the tab room. Both contestants must use mandatory prep time at the same time.
3. The topic is to be debated literally. Debaters are prohibited from using published or digital materials (dictionaries, magazines, books, etc.), prepared arguments, or other similar resources in the debate. Notes and/or an outline may be used but the debater but should speak extemporaneously rather than read prewritten speeches. Debaters should signpost, explain/warrant, and impact their arguments, referencing current fact and opinion where appropriate.
4. All speeches are two minutes in length and all speech times are protected; a speaker may not be interrupted. The proposition debater must affirm the resolution by presenting and defending a sufficient case for that resolution. The opposition debater must oppose the resolution and/or the proposition debater’s case. Debaters need not restrict themselves to the most obvious arguments for or against the resolution but should focus on the main reason(s) to affirm or reject it.
5. Judges will record a win or a loss for each entry, and write brief comments.

Timing - Timekeeping is required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time.	
Proposition Constructive	2 min.
Cross-Examination of Proposition	1 min.
Opposition Constructive	2 min.
Cross-Examination of Opposition	1 min.
Mandatory Prep Time	1 min.
Proposition Rebuttal	2 min.
Opposition Rebuttal	2 min.
Mandatory Prep Time	1 min.
Proposition Rebuttal	2 min.
Opposition Rebuttal	2 min.