

Impromptu Rules

Round 1 Topic – Virtues (Words)

Round 2 Topic – Inspirational Quotations

Round 3 Topic – Song Lyrics

Finals – Grab Bag (Random Item)

Overview

Impromptu is a public speaking event where students have seven minutes to select a topic, brainstorm their ideas, outline the speech, and finally, deliver the speech. The speech is given without notes and uses an introduction, body, and conclusion. The speech can be light-hearted or serious. The speech can be based upon prompts that range from nursery rhymes, current events, celebrities, organizations, and more. (Description from the NSDA website.)

Middle school students are allowed 7 minutes total and elementary school students may take 8 minutes. Students will be allowed a note card.

Judging Instructions

Judges, please sit in the middle of the room and make sure no one is blocking your view of the performance area. It is acceptable to ask students or parents to move so that you may be able to see the speaker. Designate a chair in the front of the room to be the preparation chair.

Before starting the round, judges should call roll to see which students are present. Please remember, some students may be double entered (meaning they are competing in 2 events in one round/pattern) and may not be in the room. Once you have determined which students are present, you may begin the round. If you have a student in your round who is doubled-entered and needs to get to another event, you may allow them to go first then leave directly after presenting in order for them to get to their next event. Only students who are doubled-entered should be allowed to leave the room before the round has ended.

Call a student up to grab a topic and start preparation. Once they have selected a topic and have sat down in the preparation chair, start the time. Use a stopwatch or the stopwatch feature on your phone to time students. Let the student know that you have started the time by saying aloud “Time starts now.”

For middle school competitors, please let the student know how much time has passed in 30 second intervals, by saying “30 seconds used,” “1 minute used,” “a minute and 30 seconds used.” We want to encourage students to speak for 5 minutes, so at a minute and 30 seconds



please also state “We encourage you to be speaking in 30 seconds.” Elementary school competitors should follow the same format, but allow 2 minutes and 30 seconds to pass before encouraging students to speak.

Both middle and elementary students are not obligated to use their entire prep time. A middle school student can choose to prepare for 1 minute and speak for 6 minutes, or an elementary school student could prepare for 2 minutes and speak for 6 minutes. A student could also choose to use more prep time. Once a competitor has started speaking, verbal time signals should no longer be used by the judge.

At this tournament we will use a running clock meaning the student will get 7 or 8 minutes total and the stop watch should run continuously from prep time through speaking time. Please note when the student starts speaking so you can indicate on the ballot how long the student spoke for.

Once the student starts speaking, judges must use hand signals to indicate how much time is left. The judge should hold up their hand to let the speaker know that they have 5 minutes left. This should be done when the stopwatch hits 2 minutes for middle school students and 5 minutes for elementary school students. 4 fingers should be held up to indicate four minutes left, 3 fingers to indicate 3 minutes left and so on. To indicate 30 seconds left, judges should hold up one hand and form a “C” with their fingers. A ten-second countdown should be done at the end of the speech for the final 10 seconds of the round.

After each speech, please allow a short amount of time for incoming students to get settled before calling up the next competitor. Students should never walk into the room in the middle of a competitor’s speech.

Students should be judged on how well they analyze the topic and prove their thesis. Competitors will be ranked from 1 to 5 and receive rates from 1-25.