

Arkansas State Communication Association

Coaching Information

Appropriate Coaching Behavior at Tournaments

1. Make sure your teams are aware of their responsibility to adhere to proper professional behavior at tournaments.
2. When a concern (errors, etc) arises, write down the concern/ rule violation and submit it to the appropriate person (director or advisory committee of the event) as soon as possible.
3. Remember that when we accept invitations, we are bound by the decisions of the host. Efforts by individual coaches or groups to affect changes in the decisions made by the director of an invitational event are inappropriate.
4. Discourage students from engaging in inappropriate discussion about judges, coaches or other teams. Behaviors which belittle, degrade, demean, or otherwise dehumanize others are not in the best interest of the activity because they interfere with the goals of education and personal growth.
5. Read the rules and regulations thoroughly for every tournament. Changes are always occurring.
6. Prepare your students for the different judging perspectives they might encounter.
7. Remind students that competitive events are used as tools to increase the skills and concepts covered in the classroom.
8. Applaud the efforts of all competitors.
9. Discourage assumptions that winning is a result of cheating. This comment robs us all of the best lesson competitive communication events have to offer.

Coaching Tips

1. Read the rules and regulations for every tournament. Time limits change along with specific rules.
2. Experience will show you that not all judges interpret rules and regulations the same way. Prepare your students for the fact that a judge's ballot is just one person's opinion.
3. When you help a student select material, it is helpful if you give them three or four choices and try and narrow the field for them. Literary merit is important and is something that must be taught to students. They will many times select something that is very trite and lacks depth and substance. With your help they will see the beauty of good literature. Beginning students will need much more help selecting material than advanced students. When a student feels strongly about performing a certain selection, unless it is inappropriate for the age group, you should consider letting that student use the material.
4. It is important that students understand the material they are performing. If there is no understanding, all the talent in the world will be lost in the performance.
5. You will get some ballots back that will criticize the use of well known pieces of literature. Remember that this material is new to the student and good material always merits consideration for performance. Just be prepared for some judges' lack of understanding and tolerance.
6. Advanced students can always help coach. Some students respond better to their peers than to their coach. It also helps the advanced students reach a higher level of understanding and performance.
7. There is no reason that tournament participants cannot perform for their speech or drama class. When the students in class help critique, they have an opportunity to feel some tie to the performance, and it provides an audience for the speech competitor.
8. Scheduling students to coach is sometimes very difficult. One of the best suggestions is to provide a consistent time when you are available, block off your time in 20 to 30 minute segments and have students sign up. It is important that they show up when they sign up! Coaching sessions usually

consist of: selecting the material, cutting and adapting the material, writing introductions, polishing the performance.

9. All students will not be the same type of performers. Some do better with subtle delivery and should not be forced to use stilted gestures. Others are more animated and should not be constrained. Natural is always better. Don't let students fall into the trap that overly dramatic delivery is best! An examination of good acting teaches to just expose the tip of the iceberg. Hold screaming and wailing to a minimum! The trap is that many lay judges think if it is loud, it is good. You know better!

Value of Tournament Participation: Students

1. Speech competition provides an extension of classroom experiences.
2. Speech competition exposes students to varied types of literature.
3. Speech competition exposes students to other types of performance styles.
4. Competition can provide the students experience in how to win and how to lose gracefully.
5. Competition raises the level of performance for students.
6. Traveling with a group provides students with a feeling of belonging.
7. Speech Competition is the only extra-curricular activity in which some students participate.
8. Individual students can experience and share the success of the entire squad.

Value of Tournament Participation:

1. Speech competition exposes coaches to new material.
2. Speech competition exposes coaches to different ways to present material.
3. Judging provides coaches with insight in areas where they feel inadequate.
4. Exposure to other coaches provides a wonderful pool of resources on which you can call.
5. Exposure to other coaches provides an arena to share ideas and teaching techniques.
6. Traveling with students provides a much more rewarding and deeper relationship with those students.

Tips for Attending a Tournament

1. When you receive the invitation, be sure to look at the **deadline for entries**. Remember that you do not have to send names for all entries. It is fine to write Entry A and Entry B, instead. You may also fax your entry or call your entry in on the day it is due if the tournament director will not receive it in time.
2. Sectioning preparation for tournaments is usually done by novice students. That means that there may be mistakes. When you arrive at the tournament site, check the program to make sure that all your students are listed in the correct event.
3. Also check to be sure that you do not have two students listed in the same section. If you do find mistakes, report them to the tournament director immediately so that corrections may be made before the competition begins.
4. Be sure to provide a correct, easy-to-read entry form to the tournament director at registration if you have changes, corrections, or you called your entry in. This is used to type certificates for students so names should be correctly spelled.
5. Judging assignments are only provided for the preliminary rounds. All judges are on call for one round past their school's elimination. Check the postings for judging assignments for semi final and final rounds.
6. If your student does not advance, someone from their section should have. If that is not the case, an error may have been made and one of your students may lose the chance to advance. It is too late

- when you find out on the bus going home that you had a student who should have been in semi finals. Report the error to the tournament director immediately.
7. When judging in elimination rounds, be sure you know how many judges should be present before the round begins. There should always be an odd number. (Usually one or three)
 8. When judging with other judges, do not compare your rankings or try to agree. The tab room has a procedure for determining who the winner will be. Just because you don't agree does not mean that you are wrong! Your opinion is just as valuable as the next persons! Winners are determined by the lowest number of totaled rankings.
 9. There is usually a table labeled where ballots should be picked up and returned. As soon as the round is over, the ballots should be returned to the appropriate table. Take them yourself! Do not leave with them! You can slow down the entire tournament by taking too long to fill them out or not returning them immediately.
 10. **Do not drop entries** at registration. This is unfair and creates all kinds of problems for the tournament director. Students need to learn from the very beginning what it means to make a commitment.
 11. Don't be afraid to go to the coaches lounge. These people are basically friendly. It may seem that everyone knows each other, but they are always glad to welcome a newcomer. This is a wonderful source of information for you and a great place for the tournament director to find you if he/she needs you.
 12. It is usually not appropriate to ask to see ballots until they are passed out after the awards assembly.
 13. Always look for the positive results in the tournament. It takes lots of time and energy to host one. Thank the tournament director before you leave! They are worn out and want to hear reasons why they should ever go through this again! If they don't, it will be one less place for your kids to participate in the future.

Tips for Performers in Speech Tournaments

The Schedule: Upon arrival, check the schedule immediately. Your school will be given a code number. Find your name and school number in each round in the program; check the room where you perform and the times of the rounds along with the section to which you have been assigned. If there are any errors or omissions in the program, tell your coach immediately.

Timing: Know the time limit before you arrive at the tournament. Be sure your cutting with introduction is within time. Most time keepers will come with time cards and a stop watch but some will not. Good time keepers will keep time from top to bottom or vice versa. You may request what is most comfortable for you but be prepared to go either way. Keep in mind that many timekeepers have never seen a speech contest before and may get confused. (They are here to get extra credit in a beginning speech class!) If the time keeper's time is drastically different from yours, you should report it to the judge. You can be lowered one rank and one rating for going over or under time.

Judging: Judges are usually asked to rank and rate each contestant. This means that they will rank each contestant from first to last in a given section. At least one person from each section will advance to the next round. Many times two or three will advance depending on the number of sections of an event and the number of elimination rounds in the schedule. Certificates in most speech tournaments are based on the rating given in the preliminary round. A judge is not limited to the number of superiors, excellents, etc. he/she assigns in a given round, but he/she may only have one first, second, etc. It is inappropriate to ask a judge how you have ranked or rated. You should wait until you get the ballot at the end of the tournament. Many times a judge will provide an oral critique at the end of the round. You should listen positively, ask questions about what you do not

understand, but do not argue with the judge's opinion. It is courteous and good manners to thank the judge for judging.

Audience: Generally, the audience will be a small group consisting of the judge, the timer, and other contestants in your section. The audience may be larger in elimination rounds.

Simple Rules for Writing Introductions

Include the following information--though not necessarily in the following order nor all of it in the same introduction:

1. Be brief. Most introductions should not be more than one minute in length.
2. Provide the title of the selection.
3. The author of selection should be stated.
4. Provide background information about the material that will help audience understanding.
 - A. Define a key word.
 - B. Tell why the author wrote the selection.
 - C. Explain how it relates to life today--set the mood.
5. Tell the audience the time, action, place and theme. Explain who the characters are and how they relate to each other.
6. Relate the selection to the universal experiences of the audience.
7. Give the historical background of the selection.
8. Indicate the kind (or style) of literature being performed.
9. Use teasers.

Special Tips in Introductions

1. Be conversational when delivering the introduction. The introduction should not be memorized nor should it be read. (At least it should not sound like it!)
2. The main focus of attention should be the literature itself not the introduction.
3. Tell as much of the story or plot as is necessary to lead the audience into your reading. Do not tell them more than is absolutely essential to the understanding of your reading.
4. Be sure your introduction sets the proper mood for the selection. It would be misleading to use humor in introducing heavy, serious material and vice versa.
5. Do not make your introduction too long. Your purpose is to insure that your audience will understand and enjoy the piece. You need not give a lecture on either the author or the selection.
6. Be as creative as your talents allow in the preparation and delivery of the introduction.
7. Do not attempt to write the introduction until a thorough analysis of your selection has been completed.
8. Remember that the purpose of an introduction is to gain the attention of the audience and prepare them for what they are about to hear.

The Performance

Drawing Slips: In the drawing divisions (Extemp and Improvised Duet), keep your slip so that you may give it to the judge just before you perform.

Manuscripts: Check the rules to be sure whether you are required to have a manuscript or your selection should be memorized. In the interpretive reading divisions, type your script on half sheets and place them in a light-weight book--this looks professional. Manuscripts in the oratory division can

be on plain typing paper, mounted on construction paper, or placed in slicks. Do not staple the pages together. Extemp speeches are usually confined to 5 x 8 cards. Sometimes the number of cards is limited for a given tournament. You need to check the rules to be sure.

Introductions: Avoid reading the introduction. Learn the introduction and deliver it in a conversational style.

Approach: Remain seated until your name is called. Give the judge a chance to finish writing his/her evaluation of the previous contestant. Make a poised approach to the performing area, preferably centering yourself whenever this is possible. Do not make faces or do anything distracting with your hands, feet, or body. It is usually preferable not to use a speakers' stand.

Stance: Check the way you are standing; place your feet flat on the floor; do not twist, turn, shift around, or cross one foot over the other.

Focal Pause: When you are in performing position, pause for a moment so that you may focus on your audience and they may focus on you. Do the same again at the end. Do not rush away!

Vocal and Bodily Involvement: Be sure you use adequate volume for the size of the room. Allow your whole self to perform. Often times there may be no great conscious movement on your part, but your inner attitude and vocal responsiveness can be revealed. Let your inner intentions show in body tone and tension. Smile when appropriate.

Pace: Watch your pace! The beginning contestant can often be identified because she/he rushes, races, doesn't make good use of pause. Control your pace--you can do this with concentration. This kind of control is the mark of a polished performer.

Use of Script: Check the individual rules and regulations for each tournament concerning the use of scripts for each event.

Prose Interpretation Selections

Black Christmas

An April in the Convent

The Celebrated Sausage Factory - Charles Dickens (from Pickwick Papers)

To Kill A Mockingbird - Harper Lee

Journalism in Tennessee - Mark Twain

Mr. Know-it-all - Somerset Maugham

A Little Dark Brown Dog - Stephen Crane

Roads of Destiny - O'Henry

A Weekend with the Angels - E.B. White

Freedom's a Hard Bought Thing - Stephen Vincent Benet

A Dog's Tale - Mark Twain

The Selfish Giant - Oscar Wilde

MacBeth Murder Mystery - James Thurber

The Little Black Boys - Clara Laidlow

The Little One - Guy de Maupassant

Letter to Charlie - Will Rogers

Old Man Adam and His Children - Bradford
Auntie Mame - Lawrence and Lee
A Tale of Two Cities - Charles Dickens
Gone With The Wind - Margaret Mitchell
Down in the Dinky - J.D. Salinger
Lord Jim - Joseph Conrad
The Little Match Girl - Hans Christian Anderson
The Old Dog - Donald Vining
The Death of Little Nell - Charles Dickens (The Old Curiosity Shop)
A Legacy from Mr. Ditto - Doris Cheeey Whitehouse
Lost Face - Jack London
The Story of Dr. Dolittle - Hugh Lofting
The Plumber Appreciated - Ralph Bergman (from An Omnibus of Modern American Humor)
The Mother - Italo Svevo
The First Day - James Reid Parker
The Rocking Horse Winner - D.H. Lawrence
The Lottery - Shirley Jackson
Three Players of a Summer Game - Tennessee Williams
The Funeral - William March
A Rose for Emily - William Faulkner
The Yellow Bird - Tennessee Williams
Children on their Birthdays - Truman Capote
The Bet - Anton Checkov
Old Man on the Bridge - Ernest Hemingway
A Tear and A Smile - Kehlil Gibran
Innocence Abroad - Mark Twain
The Behavior of Married People - Lamb
The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner - Sellitore
The Scarlet Ibis
The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County - Mark Twain
Uncle Remus - Joel Chandler Harris
A and P - John Updike
Bill's Little Girl - Zona Gale
Arabesque: The Morse
Oscar Wilde Fairy Tales
The Turning Point of My Life - A. J. Cronin
The Oval Portrait - Edgar Alen Poe
Guy de Maupassant Short Stories
Diary of Adam and Eve - Mark Twain
Dissertation on a Roasted Pig - Lamb
The Happy Prince - Oscar Wilde
The Lady and the Tiger - Frank R. Stockton
The Hare that Ran Away - Jataka Kiplying
Vital Equation - Paul Harvey
The Cask of Amontillade - Edgar Allen Poe
The Death of the Dauphine - Alphonse Daulet
Pelle's New Suit - Elas Beskow
The Star - Arthur C. Clark
The Guest - Lord Dunsary

The Flower - Sheely Thrasher
The Shepard's Daughter - William Saroyan
The Thief and His Daughter - Paul Brandov
Why I Live At the P.O - Eudora Welty
O'Henry Short Stories
The Last Lesson
The Prophet - Gibran
Grapes of Wrath - John Steinbeck
J. Frank Dobie Short Stories
Who Am I This Time - Kurt Vonnegut
Miss Brill - Kathryn Mansfield
The Rope - Kathryn Ann Porter
The Last Wrung on the Ladder - Stephen King
Lafcadio - Shel Silverstein
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Silent Snow, Secret Snow - Conrad Aiken
Some of the Lesser Ballets - Woody Allen
Working - Studs Terkel
Tell Me a Riddle - Tillie Olsen
The Yellow Wallpaper - Charlotte Perkin Gilmon
Martyr - Martha Foley
Black Boy - Richard Wright

Poetry Interpretation Selections

The Forsaken - Amy Lowell
The Wasteland (A Game of Chess) - T.S. Elliot
Falling - James Dickey
The Bishop and the Busman - Gilbert
American Music Program - Sandburg
Jazz Affair - Sandburg
Mammy Hums - Sandburg
Jazz Fantasia - Sandburg
The Single Woman - Lois Wise
Married Woman - Lois Wise
Divorced Woman - Lois Wise
The Widow - Lois Wise
God's Trombones - James Weldon Johnson
Silence - Edgar Lee Masters
Invictus - William Ernest Henley
Sea-Fever - John Mansfield
Two Tramps in Mud Time - Robert Frost
Birches - Robert Frost
Portrait of a Southern Lady - Stephen Vincent Benet
Song of the Open Road - Walt Whitman
Four Little Foxes - Lew Sarrett
Miniver Cheevy - E.A. Robinson
Man with a Hoe - Edwin Markham
I Have a Rendezvous With Death - Alan Seegar

Runaways - Elizabeth Swados
Transformations - Anne Sexton
Daddy - Sylvia Plath
Flee On Your Donkey - Anne Sexton
For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide... - Ntozake Shange
The Party - Paul Lawrence Dunbar
Poetry by Langston Hughes, James Dickey, Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath, Gwendolyn Brooks, Lawrence
Ferlinghetti

Drama Selections

Our Town - Thornton Wilder (G)
The Bad Seed - Maxwell Anderson (G)
The Hasty Heart - John Patrick
The Emperor Jones - Eugene O'Neill (B)
Skin Of Our Teeth - Thornton Wilder (G)
The American Dream - Edward Albee (G)
Dark at the Top of the Stairs - William Inge
The Little Black Boys - Clara Laidlow (G)
Luther - John Osborne (B)
The Death of Bessie Smith - Edward Albee (G)
Come Back Little Sheba - William Inge
This Property Is Condemned - Tennessee Williams (G)
David and Lisa - (G or B)
MacBeth Murder Mystery - James Thurber (G)
Exodus - Leon Uris
Diary of A Madman - Guy De Maupassant (B)
All My Sons - Arthur Miller (G)
Green Pastures - Mark Conally (G or B)
All The Way Home - Ted Mosel (G)
Auntie Mame - Lawrence and Lee (G)
The Entertainer - John Osborne
Lord Jim - Joseph Conrad (B)
The Birthday Party - Harold Pinter
On the Waterfront - (B)
The Three Faces of Eve - (G)
Greater Tuna (B)