

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from combined grade levels 7 and 8, OR ages 12 and 13 by Sept. 1 of the current school year, if in an ungraded school, may be entered in the IMPROMPTU SPEAKING District Contest from each school. Districts may elect to allow up to 3 students per grade level from each district, but speech sections must contain a mix of 7th and 8th graders, and ONLY the top 2 from the final round advance to State.

• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** 4 students must compete in this combined grade contest for the top 2 students to advance to State (See page 8 for complete rules. [See page 107 for an abbreviated chart for contest administration.](#))

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** The Impromptu Speaking Contest provides opportunities for students in grades 7 and 8 to evaluate speeches given by others; to explore the use of the voice and body in speaking situations; to examine the different purposes for speaking; to organize ideas; to prepare and deliver various speeches; and to develop self-confidence in speaking before a live audience. (Audiences are required for this contest.) The roster of contestants provides the speaking order for the contest, which **shall not be changed** without directive from the Meet Director only. Contestants will draw three topics and have three minutes to prepare a speech, which must be presented without any notes **and without any props (anything held in hand or touched as an example)**. The contest gives participants experience in thinking, organizing, formulating clear thoughts, and delivering those thoughts to an audience effectively.

The maximum time limit for each speech is **five** minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the allotted five minutes shall be disqualified. Better speeches are at least three minutes in length, however.

Appropriate Gestures: The Impromptu Speaking contest rules include the following instructions: Responsive use of the body (i.e., spontaneous changes in posture, gesture, and place-to-place movement) are permissible. This active use of the body should:

- (A) be appropriate to the demands of the selection;
- (B) be a NATURAL outgrowth from the literature to be performed;
- (C) not call attention to itself;
- (D) be limited in scope;

One or two steps are acceptable during presentation.

The judge's opinion in this matter is final.

Sample Impromptu Speaking Topics from 2021 District Meets

- The most interesting potato chip I have ever eaten . . .
- The last gift with great purpose I received . . .
- American history is important / not important to preserve .
- Singing is something I enjoy / do not enjoy doing because .
- Some strategies for dealing with a jerk . . .
- The gentlest person I have ever met . . .



• WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.

1) The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for evaluation pick-up and/or awards presentation. 2) As roll is called and substitutes OR alternates are checked in, each contestant will be given a card on which the letter of his/her speaking order is written, in accordance to the Contestant Roster; 3) The contest director will call speaker **A**, **without stating the student's name or school**, to draw three topics from an envelope or other container. 4) Contestants **select one of the three topics within a 60-second period.** 5) Contestants **place other 2 topics back in container.** 6) Contestant **has up to 3 minutes to plan speech either with or without paper.** 7) Contestant **hands the topic slip back to the Director who will then read aloud to the audience, including judges, the title of the contestant's topic.** 8) Contestants **deliver their speeches without notes or props within a 5-minute period.** **Because the PSIA events are meant to be educational, the contestants will remain in the contest room and audiences should be welcomed, but no one may enter or exit the room once the contest has started without prior written permission from the meet Director.** The contestant will speak before a panel of three judges, or a single judge. All speech events are judged by an odd number of judges who rank contestants **without collaboration** with one another or the contest director. When the presentation reaches 4 1/2 minutes in length, the "30 seconds left" should be held up by the contest director, who also serves as the timekeeper, in order to assist the contestant in stopping the speech prior to the end of the 5-minute time limit. **For the preferred panel judging, the Speech Ranking Procedure (pages 33-37) must be used.** The TWO Assistant Directors/Hall Monitors will assist in placing judges' ranks on the Ranking Sheet.

• **ADVANCING TO THE FINAL ROUND.** If there are more than 9 students in the competition, two or more sections of the contest (preliminary round) will be held. The top ranked contestants from each section (top 3 if 2 section/ top 2 if 3 sections) will advance to the final round. A different set of topics will be used in the final round, but all rules are the same for both rounds.

• POSTING THE PRELIMINARY ROUND.

After judges have made their decisions in the preliminary rounds, contestants pick up their evaluations at the time and place designated on the schedule. At this time the names of the contestants advancing to the final round will be announced in random order and posted on a designated bulletin board in a random speaking order for the final round.

• **MATERIALS.** Additional practice topics are available in the PSIA Study Materials Packets (order from the Study Materials Order Form).



PRIVATE SCHOOLS INTERSCHOLASTIC ASSOCIATION

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING



Individual Evaluation Sheet

SPEAKER ID: _____

_____ (Contestant ID Label to be placed here AFTER judging)

SECTION # or FINAL ROUND #: _____

RULES: Contestant "A" will draw three topics from an envelope or other receptacle. Contestant will be given ONE minute to select a topic and three minutes more to consider the topic and organize thoughts on paper or note cards brought by contestants. The two other topics will be returned to the drawing receptacle within the first minute, but the chosen topic will be returned to a separate place and will not be used again. The maximum time limit for speaking is five minutes. There is no minimum time limit for the speech. Topics may be serious or humorous in nature. Notes **must not be used** during the presentation. Memorized speeches are not permitted, although interesting formats are acceptable. When Contestant "A" has completed his/her presentation, the Contestant "B" will draw three topics, etc. The judge should use the following criteria in evaluating and ranking the contestant:
Place a checkmark (✓) in the appropriate box indicating your judgment of the contestant's speech performance. Comments should be constructive and supportive, but constructive criticism will be most helpful for the contestants.

Criteria for ranking the contestant:

- A) Effectiveness of delivery
- B) Organization of ideas
- C) Overall impression of the speech

COMMENTS

	Needs Work	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	Superior
Was presentation organized clearly and effectively? Comment:					
Was speaker's delivery smooth and articulate? Comment:					
Did speaker have adequate eye contact? Comment:					
Did speaker have a creative approach to the topic? Comment:					
Was speaker poised and confident? Comment:					
Did speaker have vocal variety? Comment:					
Was speaker interested and enthusiastic? Comment:					
Did speaker communicate with the audience? Comment:					
Did speaker use permissible body gestures as a natural outgrowth of the work? Comment:					

Make copies for each judge for the number of contestants in each section.

Judge's Signature _____

Judge's Printed Name _____



PRIVATE SCHOOLS INTERSCHOLASTIC ASSOCIATION
IMPROMPTU SPEAKING



Judge's Ballot

SECTION # or FINAL ROUND #: _____

RULES: A contestant will draw three topics. He/She will be given ONE minute to select a topic and three minutes more to consider the topic and organize thoughts on paper or note cards. The two other topics will be returned to the drawing envelope, but the chosen topic will be ANNOUNCED by the contest director and will not be used again. The maximum time limit for speaking is five minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Topics may be serious or humorous in nature. Notes **must not be** used during the presentation. When the first contestant has completed his/her presentation, the second contestant will draw three topics, etc.

The judge should use the following criteria in evaluating and ranking the contestant:

Criteria for ranking the contestant:

- A) Effectiveness of delivery
- B) Organization of ideas
- C) Overall impression of the speech

(Do not change speaker order without authorization from the Meet Director)

SPEAKER ORDER & Contestant ID	RANK Given by Judge	TOPIC (Abbreviate as necessary)	DIRECTOR USE ONLY: CITY / SCHOOL / CONTESTANT NAME
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			
I			

Make copies for each judge in each section.

Judge's Signature _____

Judge's Printed Name _____