



# The Speech and Drama College, SA

(inc. SA Guild of Speech and Drama Teachers)

presents

## THE PASSPORT TO POLISHED PUBLIC SPEAKING



This document contains important information which will ensure that readers have the following knowledge for the forth-coming High Schools' Public Speaking Festival:

- they will know all the rules
- they will know exactly what is expected of the speakers
- the master of ceremonies and host schools will have clear instructions
- they will receive tips on what adjudicators are looking for

In short, they will have AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE!!

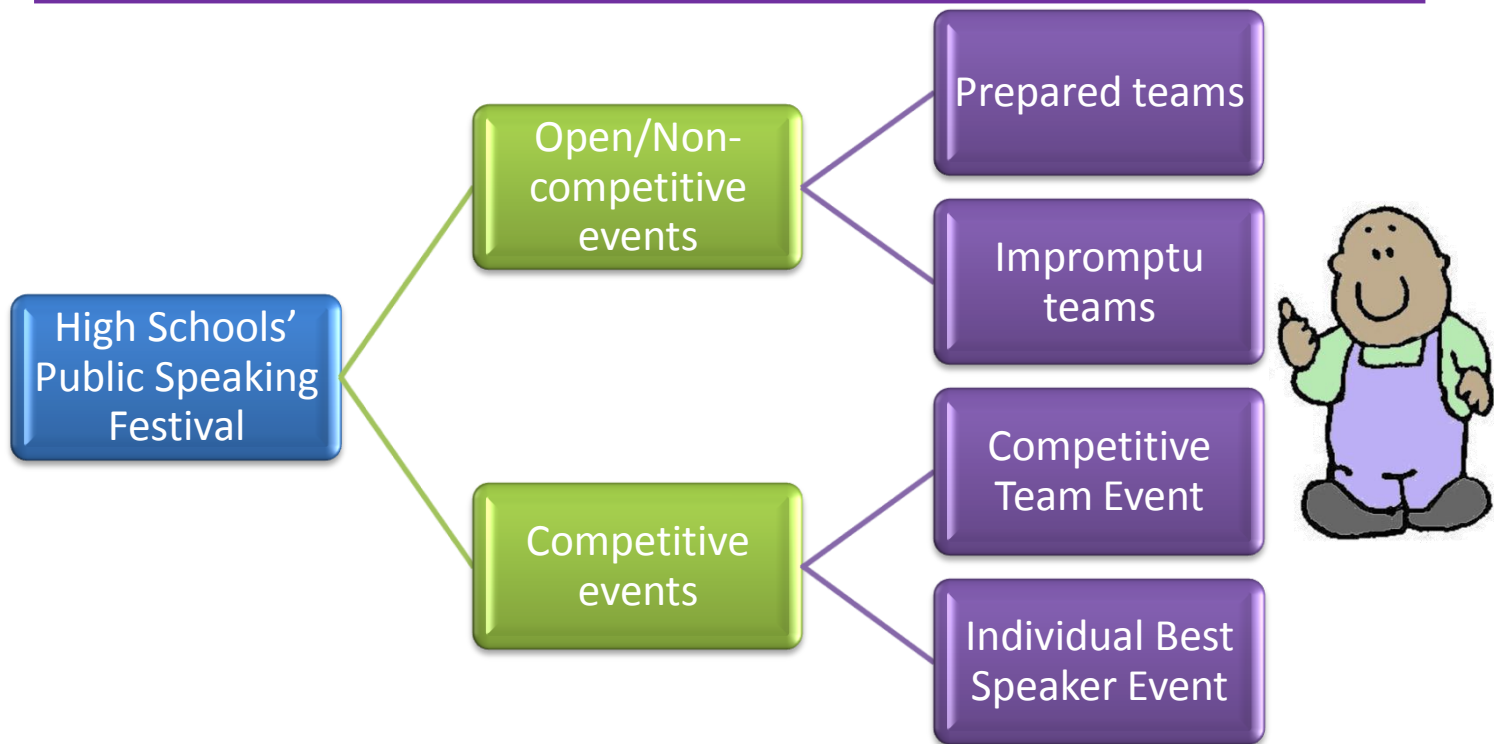
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# STRUCTURE OF HIGH SCHOOLS' PUBLIC SPEAKING EVENTS

Note that these categories shown below are all the possible events that take place nationally in different regions. Some regions do not offer all the events. Please consult the Johannesburg office for details of the events offered in your region.



There are two main sections to the FESTIVAL:  
the OPEN EVENTS and the COMPETITIVE EVENTS.

- **The Open Section**

- is non-competitive;
- is meant to be a cumulative learning experience for speakers in teams from grade 8 to grade 12;
- has both prepared and impromptu team events.

- **The Competitive Section**

- Competitive Team Event – the team is made up of grade 11 and/or 12 speakers; teams compete against each other for a place in the Finals.
- In the Individual Best Speaker Event, one of the best grade 11 or 12 speakers from each school competes against other individual speakers for a place in the Finals.



# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOST SCHOOL

The teacher-in-charge may organise the venue, but you need to know what is expected so that you can rectify any problems, or organise the venue yourself if a teacher is not available.

**1.** A hall or another large room (e.g. media centre) may be used. Classrooms and raked lecture theatres are not suitable.

**2.** Arrange chairs in rows, leaving a central aisle clear. The adjudicator's table and chair is to be placed in this aisle. Please ensure that the table is of an adequate size and that the chair is of a suitable height.



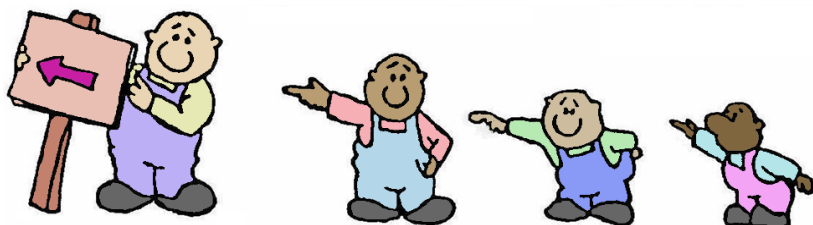
Adjudicators dislike having members of the audience peep at their scribblings while they work - it's all top secret until the end, you see! So don't antagonise the adjudicator by placing audience chairs too close to the table. (They tend to snarl and bite if you do!!)

**3.** Place four chairs at the front of the hall for the four speakers if you are hosting a Team event. No chair is necessary for an Individual event. The adjudicator's table should be a little way down the aisle, not right in front of the speakers' chairs. No lecterns are to be used.

**4.** Organise that refreshments are served outside the venue, to avoid preparation noises interfering with speakers, and to allow the adjudicator a period of quiet during tea-time for report preparation. If refreshments must be served in the room where the speaking will take place, ask the people responsible for preparing the tea not to make a noise whilst speakers are speaking. Ideally, all tea preparation should have taken place before the speaking starts. If people are going to mill around near the adjudicator's table during tea, make sure that you can offer the adjudicator some other quiet area to sit and write reports. Please place water and a glass on the adjudicator's table. At tea-time, please make sure that the adjudicator is given some refreshments too!



- 5.** Please reserve a parking space for the adjudicator. A person should wait for the adjudicator and escort him/her to the venue and back after the event. If your venue is hidden at the back of the school, or away from the main entrance, please mark the way to the venue with bright arrows and notices - or with willing pupils, with torches if necessary.



Grade Eights make excellent signposts!

- 6.** Make sure that the venue is opened in time and is well lit. Remember, if you are hosting an Impromptu event or an Individual event, you will need to have other venues open (e.g. classrooms nearby) available for speakers to prepare their impromptu talks.

- 7.**
- All evening sessions begin at 7 pm.
  - Impromptu events begin at 6.30 pm (to allow the first team 30 minutes preparation time).
  - Afternoon sessions begin at 2.30pm.

Please be prompt and arrive 15 minutes earlier so that you can relax before speaking. (If you should arrive late, have the courtesy to wait until the team/person speaking has finished, before you enter the venue.)

Here's a good idea to pass on to your teacher in charge – if he/she has never been to the host school before, ask him/her to phone that school and ask for directions.



Should a school withdraw from an evening, that school should be courteous and inform the host school and the organiser of their withdrawal.

# THE ROLE OF THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES



**A senior learner or an experienced competent speaker should act as Master of Ceremonies.**

**This learner has various responsibilities throughout the session. Let's look at these.**

- 1.** Meet the speakers as they arrive, and collect the necessary information from each team/speaker. The information you need to collect should have been prepared for you by the visiting schools. Have some spare paper available so that you can provide speakers with paper should they not have their information ready for you.
- 2.** Meet the adjudicator as he/she arrives. Show the adjudicator to his/her seat and give him/her any information you may have collected from the speakers already. Find out the order in which the speakers will speak. (It is usual for the host school to speak first, followed by the others schools in alphabetical order. If there are two teams present from schools, let every school speak once, followed by the second teams in the same order.) Consult with the adjudicator a few minutes before the event is about to begin. Let him/her know of any schools that have not yet arrived.
- 3.** Place a learner at the door of the venue to prevent any late-comers from entering while a speaker is speaking.
- 4.** Once the adjudicator has indicated that he/she is ready to begin, you need to address the audience.  
Make the following opening statements:  
Greet the audience.  
Introduce the adjudicator.  
Announce the event that will take place as being under the auspices of the College of Speech and Drama.  
Ask the audience to switch off cellular phones.  
Also inform them that they may not video or record proceedings. No cameras may be used while speakers are speaking. The teams may NOT be filmed at all, even by parents or friends of the speakers.  
Call on the first team/speaker and introduce their topic.  
When the adjudicator indicates, you can introduce the next team/speaker.





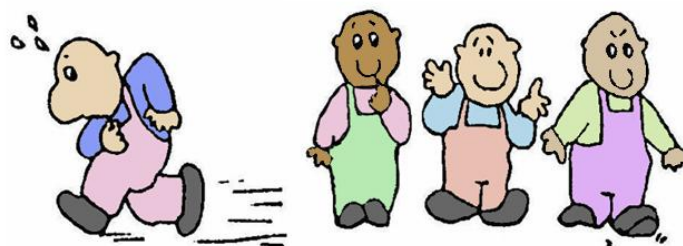
5. If the adjudicator requires it, you should time the speakers for him/her. Record the times on a piece of paper and give it to the adjudicator at the start of the tea break.
6. Make sure that you are sitting in a seat at the front and on the aisle, so that you are able to see the adjudicator. Once a team/speakers completes their speeches, make eye contact with the adjudicator, and wait. The adjudicator will signal to you when to introduce the next team. Lengthy commentaries or value judgements on the team/speaker which has just spoken are not necessary. One or two sentences thanking the previous team and introducing the next team is all that is required.
7. Once all the teams/speakers have spoken, you should invite the audience to tea. Ask the adjudicator if he/she is ready after about ten minutes. Call the audience back to their seats, and call on the adjudicator to deliver his/her adjudication.
8. After the adjudication, thank the adjudicator and close the session.

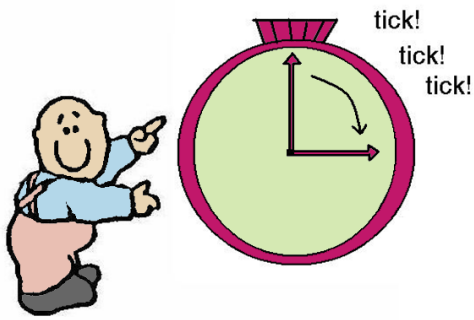
Your job is done! You can relax, knowing that you have successfully organised the proceedings!  
Well done!



## THE STRUCTURE & FORMAT OF TEAMS

1. In the non-competitive event, teams should consist of four speakers. If a member of your team becomes ill at the last minute...or something else mysteriously happens...a team of three members is allowed. Also, if you can only find three brave and willing speakers, and not four, in your grade, ask your teacher to enter you!  
If the three member team is a last minute improvisation, let the chairman (or one of the other speakers) try and include some of the missing speaker's ideas. Do let the adjudicator know of your problem - he/she will be sympathetic!!



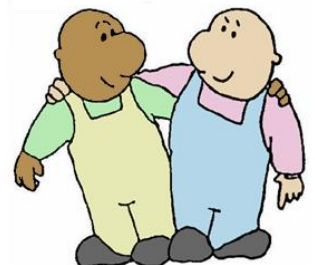


If you have prepared the team with only three members, remember that the chairman must take on a whole speech as well as his/her usual role. You should also use the full fifteen minutes, despite the fact that you are one member short. Let the adjudicator know that you prepared a three-member team.

**2.** What is the role of the chairman in the team?  
The chairman introduces the topic and the team. The chairman will elaborate briefly on how the team will address the topic. The chairman will link each of the speakers in the team and should integrate the team's speeches. The chairman is responsible for showing the audience the logical connections between the viewpoints or aspects that each member presents. The chairman synthesises the team's message and unites the various separate speeches into one coherent message. Finally, the chairman will conclude the team's message.

**3.** What is the responsibility of each speaker?  
Each speaker will present a different aspect of the topic, or will elaborate on another part of the topic. The speakers should develop the problem or issue in some way. They should add to the depth and interest of the message.

**4.** Remember, this is a team effort. You will all be speaking on different aspects of ONE topic. Three totally independent or insular speeches, no matter how excellent they are, will not convey a united or cohesive message to your audience.



**5.** The chairman should sit in the first chair, to the right of the team, and the speakers sit in order of speaking.



When team members stand up to deliver their speeches, they should stand in front of their own chair, or take one or two steps forward only.

Be careful of 'masking' your fellow team members by standing directly in front of one of them. The adjudicator is monitoring their reactions too!

**6.** BEFORE the session at which your team will speak, you should complete a card with the following information on it. (You can photocopy and use the example below.)

NAME OF SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF SPEAKERS: \_\_\_\_\_

(in order of speaking, \_\_\_\_\_

first name only needed) \_\_\_\_\_

NB: Any references/proof of topic **MUST** be attached to this card.

Hand the card to the Master of Ceremonies at the host school as soon as you arrive.

**7.** Remember that this is public speaking – you are required to speak, NOT perform dramatically. No songs, choral verse or any other gimmicks!



**8.** Over-rehearsed speeches are not encouraged. Aim to be spontaneous and sincere in delivery style.

Choose your content carefully, remembering that you are speaking in a public forum to a very diverse audience. Make sure that your topic choice and language are suitably respectful and appropriate. Avoid slang and language that may be insulting or offensive. Whilst you most certainly have the right to freedom of thought and expression, do show some consideration and respect for audience members who may not share your views. When in doubt, emphasise that you are expressing your own opinion, and then do so tastefully and courteously. Don't be dogmatic, especially concerning opinion and belief.

**9.** Please remember that parents and friends may NOT film or record your speeches. You can always pose for photos at tea-time!

**10.** If you are struggling to prepare your speeches, the Speech and Drama College can come to your school and help train you. Ask your teacher to contact the College.



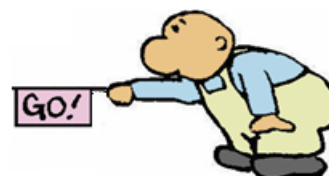
# IMPROMPTU TEAMS

1. This is a four-member team event. The structure and format of the team is identical to that described for the prepared event.
2. The team must arrive half an hour before the scheduled start of the event, in order to do their preparation.
3. Teams have 30 minutes to prepare. Teams should speak for ten minutes only.
4. Reference books are permitted in the preparation room, but no laptops, ipads/tablets or cell phones.

## COMPETITIVE EVENTS:

### COMPETITIVE TEAM EVENT:

1. This is a three-member team event.
2. The chairman has a dual role in this team event - to introduce, link the speakers and conclude, AND also to deliver part of the team's message in the form of a complete speech. The chairman contributes far more to the discussion in this event than in other non-competitive teams. The chairman may choose to deliver the speech at any point - straight after the introduction, between the other two speakers, or before delivering the conclusion. It will depend on the nature of the content of the chairman's speech and the logical progression of the message.
3. The three or four teams receiving the highest marks will be invited to participate in the finals.



### THE INDIVIDUAL BEST SPEAKER EVENT:

This event is open to speakers in grades 11 and 12 only.

1. The format is as follows:  
The speaker delivers his/her prepared talk.

After delivery of the prepared talk, the speaker remains in front of the audience. The adjudicator will ask the speaker a couple of questions, based on the issues raised in the prepared talk. The speaker must respond spontaneously to these questions.

**2.** After all the speakers have delivered their prepared talks and answered their questions, a tea break will be called by the Master of Ceremonies. Five minutes into the tea-break, the Master of Ceremonies will call together all the speakers. They will be taken to a venue for the preparation of their impromptu talks. The first speaker will be given the impromptu topic and may begin preparation. Three minutes later, the next speaker gets the topic. And so on, until ten minutes have passed. The speaker then reports to the main venue where the audience must be seated and the speaker then delivers the impromptu talk. (Impromptu topics are selected by the adjudicator and all speakers on the one evening receive the same topic.)

**3.** No dictionaries, books of quotation or any other references may be used in the preparation of the impromptu talks.

**4.** The top speakers are selected to speak in the Finals. Should a speaker become one of the finalists, the same prepared speech must be used at the Finals. Minor changes may be made to the speech, once cognisance has been taken of the adjudication.

## TIME LIMITS

Please take careful note of time limits.

You will be penalised for speaking overtime.

- Team events: 15 minutes per team.
- Impromptu team event: 10 minutes per team - speaking time; 30 minutes per team preparation time.
- Individual event: 5 minutes prepared speech  
3 minutes impromptu speech; 10 minutes preparation time



# PENALTIES

**A team/individual speaker may be disqualified for the following reasons:**

- 1.** Participating in more than one event. No speaker may participate in more than one event in **either** the Non-competitive or the Competitive events.
- 2.** Ignoring the timetable. Teams/speakers should not decide to arrive at a different host school or on the incorrect night/day, when they are not scheduled to speak. The programme is a fixed document. There are hundreds of speakers involved and turning up at a venue or at a time other than those specified on the timetable is inconsiderate and negligent. An adjudicator could refuse to allow you to speak, thus effectively disqualifying you if you have missed your scheduled date.
- 3.** Arriving late. Teams/Individuals arriving more than fifteen minutes late may be disqualified. Make sure that you know where the venue is before leaving your school, especially if you are going to be travelling at night. Phone host schools before the event and get directions. If some disaster occurs and you are late, do not enter the hall whilst a speaker is speaking. This is distracting and unfair. Wait until the speaker/entire team has completed their presentation, then enter.



**An adjudicator will drop half a symbol for the following reasons:  
(Half a symbol = A+ to A; A to B+; B+ to B; B to C+; C+ to C etc)**

- 1.** The team or an individual speaks overtime. If a team speaks for more than 16 minutes they will lose half a symbol, and if they speak for over 17 minutes the adjudicator will stop the team.
- 2.** Incorrect topic (juniors choosing the senior topic and vice versa).
- 3.** No proof of topic presented at the beginning of the event, if this is required.

**The adjudicator's decision is final. Speakers, teachers and parents may not approach the adjudicator in order to attempt to change symbols awarded.**

# INSIDE AN ADJUDICATOR'S HEAD

This document will now attempt to probe where no other expedition has searched before - inside the head of the adjudicator! What are the adjudicator's expectations?



Remember, public speaking is not a science - it is an art. Certain techniques have to be correctly employed for a speech to be successful. These techniques can be assessed fairly objectively. However, the appeal of the speech and the overall impact that both content and delivery have on the listener is going to be assessed in a far more subjective manner. You may not always agree with the adjudicator's comments and decisions. The adjudicator is not marking your maths homework - he/she is evaluating ideas, problem solving skills, attitudes and ability to communicate successfully.

**Get the idea? Adjudication is a complex business. Rest assured that only experienced and highly trained experts will be evaluating your work.**

**So what does the Adjudicator look for when evaluating your work?**

- 1.** Did the speaker say something important? Did he/she isolate ideas, clarify them and justify them? Was there a point to all those words? Did the talk have focus?
- 2.** Were the ideas worth hearing? Did they mean something to the speaker? Were they of value and thought-provoking to the audience? Did the speaker persuade the audience to accept the ideas?
- 3.** Was there a logical flow of ideas throughout each speech and throughout the team as a whole/throughout the individual's speech? Did the argument develop lucidly, with each step justified and supported with anecdote/illustration/data/evidence?
- 4.** Was there depth and insight? Did the content go beyond the superficial and explore further?
- 5.** Was humour employed **if** appropriate? If humour was not fitting, were there at least 'shades' of intensity in the talk?

6.

Was the style of delivery natural and spontaneous? Did the speaker make real audience contact? Did he/she speak with authority, eloquence, sincerity and commitment or did the speaker read/lecture/recite? Reading a talk is not going to be successful as all connection with the audience is lost. Reading is also an indication of lack of preparation.



7.

Were all the techniques of public speaking correctly employed? (e.g. pause, pace, modulation, eye contact, etc.)

8.

Was the overall approach original and creative? Plagiarised talks will be disqualified.

9.

Was the talk/team balanced? Was there a balance between content and delivery - were these of a similar standard? Was there a balance in content between depth of research, anecdote, personal thought and humour? Were the speakers themselves balanced in terms of time and ability?

10.

Did the speaker address the audience with an attitude of decorum and respect? Were personal viewpoints delivered in such a way as not to offend/alienate the audience?



Each team, or speaker in the individual event, is allocated a mark, although all that appears on your written evaluation is a symbol. You can see from the table on the next page that the symbols cover a range of marks, so two teams could achieve the same symbol, but different marks.

The marks are used to determine overall results where schools are awarded trophies and/or prizes for their school's performance at the Finals Evening.



**Please remember that the adjudicator's decision is final.**

**Accept your symbol and written evaluation as a guide to assist you in becoming a far more competent public speaker in the future.**



## So what do all those symbols mean?

SYMBOL	MARKS	COMMENT
A+	90 - 100%	Exceptional
A	80 - 89%	Excellent
B+	75 - 79%	Very good
B	70 - 74%	Good
C+	65 - 69%	Fairly average
C	60 - 64%	Average
D	59% and below	Below average



**The skills you acquire as a public speaker will be required again and again throughout your school career and beyond - they are life skills. This is the reason that the College is committed to your development and achievement as a communicator.**

**The Speech and Drama College wishes you success as you prepare your speeches. We look forward to listening to your work at the High Schools' Public Speaking Festival. Any queries concerning the competition or workshops on offer can be made to your regional office.**

