

KO Speaking Tournament Event Guidelines 2010

Interpretive Reading

1. Each speaker must read a passage of literary merit (prose or poetry) not originally intended for performance (i.e. no play or speech excerpts). What constitutes "literary merit" is, of course, a judgment call for coaches and speakers; however, overly simplistic or offensive selections will likely lose points in the "appeal to audience" category (see sample ballot).
2. Readings must be **three to six minutes in length**, *including* an introduction (which is generally 30-60 seconds but is NOT timed separately). A time penalty of ten points will be assessed for a speech under three minutes or over six minutes.
3. Introductions should provide a "hook" helping to orient listeners as to the content, appeal and/or tone of the ensuing selection. Introductions may be read but are most effective when memorized.
4. No props may be used during a reading. Gesticulation and facial expressions are not discouraged, although speakers should be conscious not to allow such displays to distract from the content. The piece is to be read, not acted or memorized.

After-Dinner Speaking

1. Each speaker must deliver an original, memorized address to a group (real or imaginary) at its annual dinner (e.g. a male nurse may speak at a convention of men in traditionally female jobs, the Bowdlerizers of America may have a lecture on cleaning up Shakespeare, or an anger management expert may address parents of Little Leaguers).
2. The intent of the speech is to entertain *as well as* to inform. Wit and satire are desirable; stand-up comedy acts will not suffice.
3. The speech should be four to six minutes long. A time penalty of ten points will be assessed for a speech under four minutes or over six minutes.
4. Notes must be limited to one 3x5 index card, and should be used as little as possible.

Persuasive Speaking

1. This speech is designed to persuade and must be on a serious topic.
2. A problem/solution approach must be taken. However, equal time need not be given to the problem and the solution. For example, the speaker may choose to spend the lion's share of the speech convincing the audience that a problem exists (or that a seemingly trivial issue is actually a serious problem). Alternatively, he or she may outline an acknowledged weighty problem more briefly and then delve into a longer solution.
3. Speeches should be prepared beforehand and should be from **seven to ten minutes in length**. There will be a time penalty of ten points for speeches under 7 minutes or over ten minutes.
4. Props may not be used. If notes are used, only a single 3X5 index card is allowed.

Impromptu Speaking

1. Each speaker will draw a card three topics, which may be a words, quotations or phrases— anything not related to current events. The speaker then has two minutes to select one of the three topics and prepare his or her speech.
2. Competitors may sit or stand when preparing but must remain in the room. Competitors may take notes while they are preparing but may **not** use any notes when speaking.
3. Competitors may speak in favor of the topic, against it, or about it. They may interpret within reason. They must, however, deal with the topic that they have been given and may not use a previously prepared speech or barely related theme. Wit, humor, philosophy, sentiment and absurdity are all equally welcome. Judges will be looking for agility of thought, for "meat on the bones," for organizational ability, and, above all, for the ability of each speaker to communicate with style and originality.
4. Speeches must be three to five minutes in length (with fifteen seconds grace on either side). A time penalty of ten points will be assessed for going under two minutes forty-five seconds or over five minutes fifteen seconds.
5. At the end of the speech the topic must be handed back to the moderator who will announce the topic to the room.

Ethical Dilemmas

1. Each contestant will draw a card with a brief description of an ethical problem or situation that invites resolution.
2. The contestant will have ten minutes of preparation time to analyze the problem and make notes on an index card that will be provided.
3. Responses should be three to five minutes in length. Time violations will result in a ten point deduction.
4. Each speech must:
 - Briefly outline the situation.
 - Clearly delineate the conflict of interests and values that must be taken into consideration before reaching a solution.
 - Present a solution along with the reason(s) that would make that particular solution preferable to other solutions.
5. Judges will be looking for a serious examination of the central ethical issue(s) in each situation regardless of how plausible or preposterous the situation given may be.

Sample Ethical Dilemma

Sam, a strong swimmer trained in Red Cross life saving, is the sole remaining passenger on a rapidly sinking ship bound for Stratford on Avon. As he prepares to leap into his handy lifeboat, he realizes that just within his grasp are an old woman (of no relation to him) and the only existing copies of two Shakespearean plays that have just been discovered. The old woman is struggling mightily to stay afloat, and the plays are about to sink to the murky depths forever. If Sam does not save the old woman, she will certainly drown. If Sam does not save the plays, they will be lost to humanity forever.

Sam only has time to save one, alas. Which should he save?