



2022 -2023 Speech Judge Orientation Script

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Welcome to Stoa Speech Judge Orientation. Our goals today are to introduce ourselves and to better equip you as a Stoa Speech Judge.

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Stoa trains Christian, home schooled youth in speech and debate, in order to better communicate a biblical worldview.

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The greatest objection we hear from our judges is that they feel unqualified. Our response:

- **You can do this!** This training, along with our ballots, is designed to give you the tools you need to be better prepared to judge.
- Please be responsive! As the audience for each of these competitors you are a source of encouragement. You do not need to be expressionless. Feel free to nod, smile, and laugh. The more you respond, the better they will perform!
- We do ask our judges to set aside any personal bias and expertise. While you may be an expert in a given field, please don't judge a competitor's speech on your knowledge but on the research they present.
- While we encourage you to be friendly and greet each competitor, there should be no discussion with speakers about their presentations.
- Multiple judges are likely to be in each room; however judges should not consult with one another. We want the opinion of each individual, not a collaborative decision.

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- Please sit at the assigned judge table and remember to turn off your cell phone. If you require anything, tournament staff will assist with missing ballots, room issues, or any other needs.
- When you receive your ballot, you will be notified if we need you to be the "Head Judge". The Head Judge will supervise the digital timepiece.
- Since the competitors need to monitor their speaking time, please turn the room *timepiece toward the competitor*. Be sure the competitor can see it well. Further instructions for timing are in the rules for each event.
- Be sure to wait for **all** judges before starting the round. If you are not sure how many judges are slated for that round, just ask the tournament staff to verify.

- Stay in your room until every competitor has presented. Please take care of phone calls, visit the restrooms, or grab some water **before** getting to your room.
- Competitors may speak out of the order listed on your ranking sheet as they sometimes compete in multiple events. If you wait for more than 15 minutes for a competitor to arrive, please contact a tournament staff member for assistance.
- Audience members may come and go between speakers.

And finally, trust your natural communication instincts. It's worth repeating, **you really can do this!**

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Here are the Speech events that may be offered at a Stoa tournament to give you a better understanding of what you will be asked to judge. We will give you a brief overview of each of these categories, but please remember to read the Goal, Description, and the Presentation Rules on the back of your Tabulation Ballot for more details.

- All events have a maximum time limit but there is no minimum time requirement.

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First, we have the Platform events. These events are probably what most people think of as public speaking.

- All of these events are prepared speeches, written by the competitor.
- Each speech must be memorized.
- The purpose of the Platform speeches are to inform, entertain, persuade, expose, or inspire. Expository Speaking allows the use of visual aids.

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Next we have the Interpretive Events.

In these events, competitors bring the story to life through creative use of voice and movement without the use of costumes or props.

For Interpretation events, competitors should portray a realistic, emotional journey of one or more characters. The selection should have a diversity of emotion while having an overall feeling of being either a serious or humorous story.

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- Using literary sources, all Interpretations create an original rendition of a relatable story. In Dramatic Interpretation, competitors focus on plot and character development.
- Dramatic, Humorous, and Duo interpretations must be plot-based literature.
- In Humorous, competitors focus on conveying a story humorously, but the presentation should not be stand-up comedy.
- An Open Interpretation can be a monologue, a story, or an original work written by the student, and may reflect a wide range of topics and/or emotions.

- A Duo interpretation will showcase two students delivering one story which may reflect a wide range of topics and/or emotions. It can also be created using multiple literary sources.

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You may judge a Limited Preparation event. In these events, competitors get a limited time to prepare a speech on a topic that is given to them at the beginning of each round.

- These speeches must not be prepared during the prep time.
- The judges will be provided a copy of the topics or questions.
- Prep time and speaking time varies for each event. Please see the event rules.
- The Limited Prep Events will include Apologetics, Extemporaneous Speaking, and Mars Hill.

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In Extemporaneous Speaking

- The competitor gives a speech answering a current event question.
- The speakers have assigned speaking times and speaking order from which they may not deviate.
- Please adhere to the assigned speaking schedule even if there is little time to write on ballots between speakers. You will have time at the end of the round to make additional comments on each student ballot.

In Mars Hill:

- The speakers identify human experiences from books, movies, etc
- Then, examine those experiences in light of Biblical truth.

In Apologetics:

- Speakers give a reasonable defense of Biblical truth.
- Speeches may or may not be evangelistic in nature.

In Impromptu:

- Speakers have two minutes to create a speech on a wide variety of topics.
- They can take notes on a blank piece of paper but may only hold their topic slip while they speak.

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Apologetics is a reasonable defense of the truthfulness of Christianity.

- The goal of Apologetics is to communicate a thoughtful and intellectual analysis of a question of faith or theological truth to others.
- In Apologetics, content is key. Please give more weight to the content of these speeches than the presentation style.
- Speeches are targeted to an audience that may be Christian and/or non-Christian.

- Before considering a ballot for Apologetics, please read through our Stoa Statement of Faith. If you are able to affirm these statements then please feel free to request an Apologetics ballot from our ballot administration. If you are unable to affirm these statements, we request that you consider judging one of our other speech event categories. A copy will be available at the end of the slides.

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Stoa offers Wildcard events that run for two year terms.

Our Wildcard event is Interp in a Box.

- This interpretative piece will bring to life a piece of literature through props, voice, movement, and facial expression.
- All props must fit inside lidded box.

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(slide to pause and ask for questions) Any questions regarding the events or where to find the event rules?

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- Judges will be given two types of ballots.
- Please check all names on your Tabulation ballot for possible conflicts.
- At each tournament, you may judge a speech event only once unless otherwise instructed by tournament leadership. You may judge a competitor in multiple events.
- Each of the two ballots has a different purpose.
- The Student Ballot is to evaluate and to educate each individual. The speaker receives this ballot at the end of the tournament.
- The Tabulation Ballot simply shows how you ranked the speakers in the room from first to last. The speakers do not see this ballot.

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- When filling out the Student Ballot, please use black or blue ink.
- Copy the speaker name, room number, and tournament round from the Tabulation Ballot. And, of course, fill in your own name as the Judge.
- There is a line here to jot down the topic.
- Duration is the length of speech. This time will be shared from the official timepiece at the end of each presentation.
- Each event will note the maximum time limit, and there are no minimum time limits.

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- Once you have seen a presentation, please rate the student's performance on each ballot based on each criterion in the "Evaluate scale" column.
- This is a basic scale indicating how the competitor measured up to your expectations. The numbers are not used by the tournament to determine points or rank.
- Please note any penalties in this section and see staff at Ballot Return for help with penalties.

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- Use the "Comments section"
- to report what you saw in each presentation.
- This is where you can educate the student on
 - what worked and
 - what didn't work well for you.
- To give time for notes, judges may set 2 minutes between speakers for platforms and interpretive events. Limited preparation events must use next students prep time for comments. In Extemporaneous Speaking, the competitors have assigned speaking times and a pre-established order from which they may not deviate. Judges may use any available time between speakers to fill out ballots. Jot down initial feedback. You have plenty of time in the judge's room later to finish your ballot comments and evaluation.

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The ranking can often be a challenge for judges. It can be so hard to decide first place when everyone seems so good!

- To make this job relatively easy, we suggest stacking ballots to order speakers.
- Please stack assuming there are no penalties, even if there are penalties.
- Here is how it is done: Mark Twain is going to come into your room, and he gives a stellar presentation! He's got to be first! Actually, he really is, since he is the only competitor you have seen. So Mark's ballot gets placed first in your stack.
- The second speaker is Ben Franklin. Wow, he's excellent, too! But he's not quite as exceptional as Mark, so he slides into second place. I'm sure you see where this is going.
- Third, Marie Curie comes into the room. She's also not quite as compelling as Mark, but she did communicate a little better than Ben, so she slides into second place, moving Ben down to third position. This method is helpful in establishing your speaker rankings. Just be sure not to drop your papers!!

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- Review all of the criteria, making sure you are satisfied with how you have stacked your ballots. Now you are ready to complete your Tabulation Ballot.

- Remember, there can be no ties.

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- If there are no penalties,
 - just carry the numbers forward to Final Rank column.
- If there is a penalty

Notate and See Ballot Return to complete

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Now that you have completed the ranking of the room, it is time to further educate the individual speakers.

- Complete any comments on your student ballots. Just share your observations.
- Tell them at least one thing they did well
- and one thing needing improvement.

Please don't underestimate the impact this will have on each competitor. They really do crave constructive criticism to improve their skills.

- At the bottom of the Student Ballot, circle the individual rank for each student.
- While the Tabulation Ballot must have unique numbers for first through eighth place, each Student Ballot will be marked first through fourth, and for students ranking fifth through last place, you will circle the complete phrase, "5th and Below".
- Finally, give the students a reason for their ranking compared to others in the round. The students are looking for what they could do to move up a rank in your evaluation. Your comments truly are valuable to them.

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- After you have heard all the speakers,
- Please return immediately to the Judge Hospitality area to complete your ballots.
- If you have questions see one of the judge orientation staff who will be located close to the Ballot Return area.
- Once your ballots are complete, check in with Ballot Return staff and wait as they review them.

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Here are a few final reminders to help you feel prepared:

- Read the rules on the back of your tabulation ballot before you begin judging.
- The numbers 1-5 are never added up or used by the tournament staff. They are for your evaluation purposes only.
- The Head Judge will manage the timepiece in your room. All judges record the official time. Please confirm required penalties with the Head Judge. A penalty must be applied if the competitor goes 15 seconds or more overtime.
- Please do not confer with the other judges or ask questions of anyone besides the assigned staff. Orientation staff will be available to assist you and answer any questions when you return to the judge hospitality area.
- Have fun and know that you are serving in a vital education role for each student! Thank you for serving!

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Thank you for reading the Stoa Statement of Faith before considering an Apologetics ballot. Remember, if you agree with these statements please feel free to request an Apologetics ballot. If not, consider judging one of our other speech events.