

Apologetics Rules

Description: *The competitor is given four (4) minutes to prepare a persuasive, reasoned, and original speech that defends a tenet of the Christian faith.*

Goal: *Competitors will be motivated to study, articulate, and defend the core issues of their faith in a knowledgeable, sincere, and respectful manner. The focus may or may not be evangelistic. Content is key: greater weight should be given to the speech content, rather than the presentation style.*

Apologetics Preparation Rules:

1. All questions/topics must come from the Apologetics Questions list on the Stoa website.
2. Competitors prepare for Apologetics through Bible study, research, analysis, and organization.
3. Each competitor may create a file of note cards (no larger than 4" x 6") with Scripture, definitions, quotations, and any other helpful material.
4. Competitors may not share card files during competition.

Apologetics Administration Rules:

1. Apologetics judges should be in agreement with Stoa's Statement of Faith.
2. One judge in each room will be given room administration instructions, including topic distribution.
3. A list of possible topics will be given to each of the judges in the room.
4. In the room, the competitor will draw three (3) single topics provided by the tournament, select one (1), and return the other two (2) topics before leaving the room. The selected topic should not be returned.
5. Preparation time begins as soon as the competitor draws the first topic.
6. During preparation time, the timepiece must be **facing toward the competitor** and **counting down**.
7. During preparation time, the competitor may only use a Bible, access card files, and/or prepare additional note cards. No electronic media is allowed.
8. Unused preparation time may not be added to the speaking time.

Apologetics Presentation Rules:

1. The competitor must answer the selected topic and defend his/her position.
2. During the speech, the competitor may only hold note cards (no quantity limit) and the chosen topic slip.
3. Competitors may not receive or access any verbal, non-verbal, electronic, and/or written communication, nor any form of visual assistance during preparation time and/or delivery of the speech, other than specifically allowed preparation materials.
4. The speech must be the original work of the competitor and should be supported by Scripture, quotations, personal narratives, and/or analysis from outside sources (e.g., commentaries, literature, news articles, testimonials etc.).
5. When quoting information from an outside source, the source must be verbally cited during the speech. Use of another person's words or ideas without crediting them is plagiarism and is strictly forbidden. See the **Stoa Plagiarism Policy**.
6. The competitor must state the selected topic early in the speech and adhere to it.
7. The question or topic should be approached from an apologetic perspective. It may or may not be an evangelistic opportunity.
8. The audience's acceptance of the truth of the Bible should not be assumed.
9. No electronic media may be used during the preparation time or the presentation of the speech itself.
10. No props, audio, or visual aids may be used.
11. Gratuitous vulgarity is strictly prohibited.
12. Competitors must not listen to other Apologetics competitors speaking before them in the round.
13. During the presentation, the timepiece must be **facing toward the competitor** and **counting up**.
14. The maximum speaking time is six (6) minutes. There is no minimum time requirement.
15. Competitors will receive a one (1) rank penalty for going overtime by fifteen (15) seconds or more.

Preparation Time – Four (4) Minutes. Speaking time – Six (6) Minutes.