



General Speech Rules

1. **Script Rules** and **Event Rules** must be followed in addition to these General Speech Rules.
2. **Speeches** must be prepared by the student and, with the exception of Apologetics, must be delivered during the current competitive season only.

NOTE: For the 2021 season only, a student may use his or her own platform or interpretation speech that was prepared and/or delivered during the 2020 season. The speech must comply with the 2021 General and Event rules and must qualify during the 2021 season to any higher level of competition.

3. **Plagiarism** is prohibited. In both content and delivery, the speaker(s) must either present original work or present the source(s) for all non-original work, per the Event Rules.
4. **Content** for all speeches must be in alignment with the NCFCA mission and the Competition Material Policy.
 - **Humor** is permitted as long as it is in good taste.
 - **Dark material** is permitted only if it includes a redemptive element.
 - **Potentially intense or sensitive speeches** must always be preceded by the verbal disclaimer, "This speech contains potentially intense or sensitive material."
 - **Vulgarity** is never acceptable. Vulgarity includes explicit or implied language or gestures which are inappropriate, obscene, or profane.
 - **Opinions contrary to those of the judge** may be expressed.
5. **Gymnastics** are not permitted. Gymnastics include acrobatic-type blocking such as flips, cartwheels, leapfrogging, etc.
6. **Only feet** are permitted to intentionally touch the floor at any time in all speech events except Biblical Thematic.
7. **Costumes** are not permitted. Costumes include any item(s) worn in addition to the speaker's tournament attire.
8. **Lecterns** may not be used.

9. **Audience members, including judges, may not prompt** the speaker.
10. **Requesting participation from audience members, including judges,** is not permitted.
11. **A pre-show** is not permitted. A pre-show refers to rehearsed blocking, synchronized movement, or additional performance prior to the beginning of the submitted, scripted speech.
12. **All speeches should take place center stage,** and speakers should not infringe on the judges' table or personal space during the speech.
13. **A timepiece must be provided by each speaker for all speech events.**
 - a. **The timepiece must** display minutes and seconds and have an audible alarm.
 - i. For platform and interpretation events, the timepiece must have functionality to count up.
 - ii. For limited preparation events, the timepiece must have functionality to both count up and count down.
 - b. **The speaker is responsible** for timing both the speech and preparation time, as applicable.
 - c. **For preparation time** in Apologetics and Impromptu, the speaker will set the timepiece to count down for the designated time, show it to the Head Judge for confirmation, and then start it immediately upon drawing the topic card.
 - d. **For speech time,** the timepiece must be set to count up. The speaker will start the timepiece and place it on the judge table in front of the Head Judge with the timepiece facing the speaker. At the conclusion of the speech, the speaker will stop the timepiece and show it to the judges to record the exact time displayed on the timepiece.
 - e. **Exceeding the maximum speech time** by more than 15 seconds for any speech category will result in a four-rank penalty at all levels of competition.
 - i. **Speech time** begins when the speaker starts the timepiece and ends when the speaker stops the timepiece.
 - ii. **The prescribed penalty** will be applied by tournament administration and should not be reflected in the judge's original rank.

14. **Scripts** for all platform and interpretation events must be submitted electronically prior to competition for each tournament per the Script Rules.

- **The submitted script** must be followed during all competition rounds.
- **Script or note use**, with the exception of Biblical Thematic, will result in a four-rank penalty at any tournament other than a Regional or National Championship.
 - i. **The prescribed penalty** will be applied by tournament administration and should not be reflected in the judge's original rank.
 - ii. **Script or note use** at a Regional or National Championship will result in disqualification from the event.

15. **All other questions regarding potential rule violations** should be submitted to the Compliance Staff immediately following the speech round.