



W.G. Enloe High School  
Speech & Debate Team

## Standard Debate Tournament Events

### Lincoln-Douglas Debate:

Lincoln-Douglas debate involves two people debating with each other over basic values such as justice, morality, or equality to affirm or negate a bi-monthly assigned resolution. Debaters prepare opening speeches of 6-7 minutes, question their opponent during cross-examination, and then quickly prepare and present a rebuttal. The round takes 45 minutes and it is intense, but immensely gratifying. This activity appeals to a wide range of students and the successful ones are good at independent research and at accepting criticism as they learn how to focus their arguments. Novices need a lot of help at first. It's easiest to attend Debate Meetings at 2:30 PM on Tuesdays.

### Extemporaneous Speaking:

In Extemporaneous speaking, students draw three slips of paper out of an envelope. On these pieces of paper are questions pertaining to current events. Each speaker chooses the question of the three that he or she feels most comfortable speaking about. The questions will deal with current events. Most tournaments offer a mixture of foreign and domestic topics. At some, foreign and domestic are separated. On the Enloe Speech and Debate team, all students use the same set of files, known as the Extemp "boxes," and thus all Extempers are expected to help maintain the files, adding new articles and weeding out old ones, and to make sure that our books and materials make it safely to and from all tournaments.

Sample questions:

- How effective has been Bush's war on terrorism?
- Who will be the next US President?
- Will democracy last in Russia?
- Will there ever be peace in the Middle East?

After reading the options, the extemper chooses one question, and then has a half and hour to write and memorize a speech (5-7 minutes). This speech is then delivered in front of a judge who assesses the speech based on content, analysis of the question, and delivery. Better speeches include quoted facts, statistics, and comments from articles, citing the source, as in "January's Newsweek reported that..." or "According to economist Milton Freeman..."

## **Student Congress:**

The format of Congress is simple. Participants write legislation in the form of Bills or Resolutions receive a copy of the issues to be debated, which will be in the form of single-page bills and resolutions, about two weeks before the tournament. Participants are divided into chambers with about 20 competitors in each one. They elect a Presiding Officer, and in some cases decide on the legislation to be debated.

The Presiding Officer, or P.O. will call on students to give speeches or ask questions. Different P.O.s will have different "priority systems" for dealing with who speaks first. Speeches are timed, and are supposed to stop after three minutes. After a speech, the speaker takes questions from the other speakers, and the judges decide who is the best speaker based on quality of speeches, quality and quantity of questions asked, and quality of responses to other people's questions. Participants should prepare a file for each topic on which s/he intends to speak. Files may be consulted while others are speaking.

## **Original Oratory:**

All original speeches are 10 minutes long, at max. There is no minimum length, but speakers are encouraged to shoot for about 9:30 or so. Orators write and memorize a speech before the tournament, and usually use the same speech for the whole year. Because each participant writes his/her own speeches, creativity and good writing ability are a must. Also valued are a natural speaking manner, persuasiveness, and compelling topics.

Original Oratory is a speech to inspire. The speaker tries to convince the audience to do or think something different, like work harder, be more honest, get more involved in community issues or in the family, etc.

Orators are very charismatic people with pleasing voices. They know how to make people feel good about themselves, and they know how to make others feel good about them. They are good writers who write moving speeches without being preachy.

## **Interpretation of Literature:**

Interpretive events, or 'interps', are the most delivery-intensive of all the public speaking events. They are 10-minute pre-memorized speeches, just like original events, but the resemblance ends there. Here, speakers do not write their own speeches, but rather, choose a published work (usually a play, poem, story, or famous speech), edit it down to ten minutes, and deliver it to an audience. This is the best event for non-political "actor" types, and Drama students.

Dramatic Interp uses tragic, heart-rending material. Most speakers in D.I. say they feel spiritually exhausted after any performance, because they put their whole selves into it.

Materials can come from a play, a novel, or other narrative prose (or poetry), usually with only 2 or 3 characters. Note that the speaker plays all the characters, which distinguishes D.I. from straight drama, and makes it a speech event. Humorous pieces are also allowable; these compete as Humorous Interpretation. Pairs of speakers compete in Duo Interpretation.