

# Guide to Judging

## Times and Duties of Speakers

### First Proposition Speaker

Makes a case for the motion for debate. Provides assertions, reasoning, and evidence (ARE) in support of the motion. May offer a specific interpretation of the motion.

6 minutes

### First Opposition Speaker

Presents arguments against the case presented by the other team. Uses direct and indirect refutation to undermine the case and show why the other side's position is wrong and dangerous.

6 minutes

### Second Proposition Speaker

Supports the case presented by the first proposition speaker. Should answer all arguments made by the previous speaker. Should bring in new ideas to bolster their side's position.

6 minutes

### Second Opposition Speaker

Extends upon partner's arguments against the case. Continues to refute proposition's arguments. Should bring in new ideas to bolster their side's position.

6 minutes

### Opposition Rebuttal

Continues to refute proposition's major points. Should explain how, given the arguments advanced in the debate, the opposition wins the debate.

5 minutes

### Proposition Rebuttal

Refutes the arguments advanced and extended by the opposition side. Extends partners' arguments. Shows how, given the arguments advanced in the debate, the proposition wins the debate.

5 minutes

## Responsibilities of the Judge

# How to Judge a Debate

Judging is hard work. This sheet is meant to refresh your memory and serve as a brief guide for judging. For more information, there are longer judging guides available on our website: [www.highschooldebate.org](http://www.highschooldebate.org).

### Things to remember when judging

- You're responsible for timing the debate.** The debaters rely on you for time signals. Remember that in the 6-minute speeches, you must signal the beginning and end of **protected time**, or time in which the speaker is protected from points of information offered by the other side. Signal by slapping a table or desk **after 1 minute has passed and when 1 minute remains**.
- Take notes on a flowsheet.** Because debates are about the interaction between arguments, students must respond to the arguments made by the other side. To track this, you must use a flowsheet.
- Leave your opinions at the door.** The only facts known in the debate are what the teams bring forth. It is not the job of a student to change a judge's life-long belief.
- Don't fill in for speakers.** Judges should not "fill in" what they believe a speaker was going to say, should have said, or probably meant. **ALL THEY SAID IS ALL THERE IS.**



### About Points of Information

**A point of information is a request to the speaker that holds the floor to yield some of her time (up to 15 seconds, give or take) to a question or comment from the other side. The speaker decides to accept or reject points, as they come from her time.**

**Points of information are only allowed during the 6-minute speeches. There is no rule about how many should be offered, or how many must be taken. Proficient debaters display control of the floor. It is bad practice for a speaker to reject all points. It is also bad practice for the speaker to accept all points, if that means she loses control of her speech.**

**Because points of information are considered to be part of the debate, the judge should take notes about them.**

5. **Proposition teams may reasonably interpret, or "shrink" the topic.** Remember that a debate is like a trial: the prosecution does not offer every possible way that the defendant might be guilty ("He did it with a gun, and a knife, and a bazooka, in the car, and the yacht, and the ballroom..."); similarly, the proposition team does not offer every possible proof of the motion, just **a proof** of the motion. This means that (for example) "child" may be defined as being between the ages of 8 and 16, but probably not as a juvenile cactus in the the Arabian Peninsula.

6. **Reveal your decision.** You are required to reveal your decision and give constructive feedback to the students. You should also share "speaker points" with the students. Full disclosure is required. Encourage students to ask questions during the day.

7. **About speaker points.** In addition to assigning a win and a loss in a given debate, you must give each student an individual score. **Use the HSPDP rubric**, the 100-point scale, to assign points. Remember that speaker points are **not** the same as points of information, and that the team that gets the highest speaker points does not have to be the team that wins the debate.

8. **No new arguments in the rebuttals.** Students should not make new arguments in the rebuttals. A new argument is defined as an argument with no foundation in the previous debate. New examples to support existing assertions are fine. Judges should simply ignore new rebuttal arguments.

**ARE- The components of an argument: Assertion, Reasoning, Evidence.**

**4-Step Refutation- A thinking method for refuting arguments: "They say..." "But..." "Because..." "Therefore..."**