

WELCOME!

Tri-County Forensic League extends a hearty THANK YOU to all of you for taking the time to participate in today's competition. These students cannot compete without you!

Just a few basics and you're on your way. Judging is largely intuitive: you will know great speeches when you see them. But please carefully review the rules sheet attached to each packet of ballots before the event begins. These students have worked extremely hard on the presentations you are about to judge, and they expect you to know the rules as well as they do! (Even you veterans out there: there are always rules changes from year to year; make sure you review the rules!)

Please, please, please make many precise, constructive comments on your ballots. Nothing discourages a speaker more than to get back a blank ballot, or one that merely reads, "Good" or "Needs work." Feel free to flip the ballot over and write on the back. The students pore over each and every word you write, so please give careful thought to your written remarks.

Save all comments and rankings for the written ballot; NEVER verbally disclose your opinions or your results to the speakers, even if they ask. If asked, state that the League has a "No Disclosure" rule. And do not ask speakers which school they attend. Be friendly, but maintain professional distance.

Double-check your ballots for accuracy. We waste time if we have to track you down because you neglected to sign, rank or rate. Make sure the speakers' codes are written legibly. And return your completed ballots promptly to the Judges' room.

Ranking should not be done until you have heard every speaker. Number one is best. Please rank speakers 1, 2, 3 etc. on both the individual ballot and the cover sheet. Everyone else ties for 4th (or 5th at the State Qualifier). Make sure you also rate the speaker points; we use these ratings in case of ties -- they can become extremely important! *At the State Qualifier, you must rank from 1-7 on the cover sheet only.*

If you need to leave early, please alert the coaches running the Judges' table. Otherwise, please do not leave campus; we often need to verify a ballot and if you have left, we are STUCK! Leave your cell phone # at the Judges' table (but make sure to turn it off while you are judging!)

By the way, stopwatches, note-paper and pens/pencils are useful items to take to your rounds! Accurate time signals are required in Impromptu and Extemporaneous.

BIAS: You are considered to be "biased" in events in which you have a child or students you know. Although we have utmost faith in your objectivity, appearances are everything, and so to avoid any appearance of impropriety, we will keep you out of those events if at all possible. And until you are two years out of high school, you are considered "biased" in events in which your alma mater is competing.

Finally, please be patient. We do our best to run things smoothly, but there are always glitches. Always ask the coaches running the judges table when you have the slightest question about anything -- there is no such thing as a dumb question! And most importantly, HAVE FUN! ☺