

How to Develop and Judge a Speech – Henry Greve Speech Contest

CONTENT (50%)

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT is the way a speaker puts ideas together so that the audience can understand them. A speech should be structured around a purpose; this structure should include an opening, a body, and a conclusion. A good speech immediately engages audience attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion. The speech structure should be supported by relevant examples, illustrations, facts, and figures. The speech should be smooth; all parts should blend into the framework so as to present the speech to the audience as a unified whole.

EFFECTIVENESS is measured in part by audience reception of the speech.

Ask yourself such questions as:

“Was I able to determine the speaker’s purpose?”

“Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?”

“Was audience interest held by the speaker?”

“Was this speech appropriate for this particular audience?”

SPEECH VALUE justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. The listeners should feel that the speaker has made a contribution to their thinking. The ideas should be important ones, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation.

DELIVERY (30%)

PHYSICAL presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker’s appearance should reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, and/or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures and expressions.

VOICE is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch to another for emphasis; the rate of speech and volume should vary. A good voice can be clearly heard, the words easily understood.

MANNER is the indirect revelation of the speaker’s real self as the speech is delivered. The speaker should speak with enthusiasm and assurance, and show interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

LANGUAGE (20%)

APPROPRIATENESS of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thought and should fit the occasion precisely.

CORRECTNESS of language insures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says. Proper use of grammar and correct pronunciation will show that the speaker is the master of the words being used.

JUDGE’S CODE OF ETHICS

1. Judges will consciously avoid bias of any kind in selecting first, second and third-place contestants. They will not consider any contestant’s club, area, division or district affiliation. Nor will they consider any contestant’s age, sex, race, creed, national origin, profession or political beliefs. They will demonstrate the utmost objectivity.
2. Judges will not time the speeches and will not consider the possibility of under-time or overtime when judging a contestant’s speech.
3. Judges will support by word and deed the contest rules and judging standards, refraining from public criticism of the contest and revealing scores and ranking only in accordance with official policy.