

2020 SPEECH POINTERS

The following tips are provided as advice and are meant to complement, not replace, Oratory Contest Rules. Contact the State Contest Director with questions. (See also 'Oratory Ballot and CARS Criteria.)

CONTENT: The rules state that your speech should address one of these topics directly: 'abortion, euthanasia, infanticide, embryonic or adult stem cell research.'

Organization is fundamental to writing a winning speech. Decide what type of speech you are presenting. Is it an informative or persuasive speech, or one that is a mixture of both? For each type of speech, you need to have a thesis. If you are presenting an informative speech, your thesis can be the objective conclusion of what scientific data has supported or proven, but tell the audience how this information is relevant to your main topic to help them understand why it is important. If you are presenting a persuasive speech, or one that is both persuasive and informative, what argument (thesis) does your speech prove?

An organized speech uses the **introduction** to state your thesis and then lay out the main points that you intend to cover, to show your listeners the information that you intend to give them or the main points of the argument that you will use to prove your thesis. The fewer main points there are, the easier it is for your listeners to remember what they are when you cover them in the body and then again in the conclusion of your speech.

You need to make your speech unique to catch the judges' attention. You can do this by beginning it with a 'hook'; for instance an anecdote that will grab your audience's attention and make them interested in hearing more of what you have to say.

The **body of your speech** should expand on the main points which were laid out in your introduction. Provide evidence using up-to-date, factual information. Make it clear to the listeners where the information came from, including very general or subjective information, for example social attitudes or your personal feeling about a problem or solution. Providing objective information to support or prove things like attitudes or a solution to a problem strengthens your argument. Your speech should also use evidence that is convincing to a broad audience, i.e. including listeners who are pro-abortion and/or non-Christian.

Your **conclusion** should summarize the main points in order to show that they support your thesis. It should end on a memorable note. Finding a way to refer to the 'hook' again in your conclusion, helps make your speech memorable and underscores your thesis or general message.

It is very important to keep the length of your speech within the ideal time limit of 5-7 minutes.

PRESENTATION:

It is recommended that you memorize your entire speech in order to concentrate on your delivery, (i.e. body movement, eye contact, audibility, rate of delivery) while you are speaking. You may use notes or a copy of the speech while you are speaking, however, if you rely on them too much, it may detract from your delivery and cause you to lose points. Memorizing your speech will also give you the appearance of being more prepared and confident than someone who has not. Your rate of delivery should be slow, loud, and you should enunciate your words. The use of some emotion and body movement (such as: hand gestures, head movement, eye contact, changing your stance or even moving to a different place in the front of the room) are necessary in order to keep you from appearing stiff, but moderation is best; too little or too much of any of the above can be distracting.

Audibility-Remember to make your voice loud enough so that the judges do not have to strain to hear you. It's easy for a speaker to hear their own voice, but it may not be easy for their listeners to hear them. Ladies, this is particularly important advice for you, as most gentlemen have a natural advantage in this area.

Good Luck!