Speech Committee FAQs

2025-2026 Season

We will update this document during the season with any common questions that the Speech Committee has received.

Impromptu

Can I bring books (or other prep material) to the prep time table in an impromptu round? (added 11/24/25)

The [General Speech Rule A.4](#) limits competitors' prep time in this way: "Electronic Devices. Competitors may not use electronic devices to prepare or conduct research during the round. Requesting, sending, or receiving information is also prohibited." No other restrictions are listed in the Impromptu Event Rules for what a competitor may use. This is different from last season, and it does allow competitors to bring various amounts and sizes of paper, prepared notes, and even books, as you have described.

Please note that during the delivery of the speech, the materials are still restricted to the topic card at an in-person tournament, as in previous years. See [Rule c.2](#).

Oratorical Thematic

How can I know if the speech I found is compliant? *(added 11/24/25)*

We define our Oratorical Thematic event as "an interpretation speech in which the speaker creatively explores, develops, and analyzes one or more **published**

speeches, developing a theme through analysis and/or expression," and Rule C.1 describes the kind of speech we are requiring: "[o]ne (1) or more published, non-fictional oration selections must be presented." Our definition of "published, nonfictional oration" is this: "**Published, nonfictional orations** are available to the public and were spoken by a real speaker to a real audience." Additionally, we are requiring a minimum word count, stated in Rule C.1.a: "Word count. A selection must include at least 50 words."

Some good questions to ask are these:
1. **Published:** Is this oration available to the public? Is it at a library or easily accessible to the general public?
2. **Nonfictional:**
   a. **Who:** Was this oration spoken by a real person to a real audience? Was this a nonfiction event? Was it a verbal delivery prepared for an audience?
   b. **When:** It is also helpful to think about when the oration was spoken; if it was spoken by a real person to a real audience, then when exactly was that? In fact, Rule C.3.b requires a verbal mention of the original orator and date before the oration selection. Ask: Do I have a source that confirms a date?
3. **Oration/Speech:** Is the selection an oration? Did the orator address an audience? Was it formal, prepared, or with purpose? In other words, is it a speech? Was it one person speaking?

Can I use a speech that was recorded on a platform like YouTube if I found the transcript? *(added 11/24/25)*

If you were to find a speech that was recorded on a platform like YouTube, a transcript of that speech could be presented in this event. In fact, transcribed videos (given that they are speeches of a real person to a real audience) are considered published as long as they're easily publicly available. It does not have to be a "published" work in a book.

While we have a narrowed-down definition of published for our duo and open interpretation events (e.g. not allowing transcriptions of productions), we have removed those barriers for the sake of our oratorical thematic event. The oratorical thematic event is not exploring literature originally meant for reading or analyzing, but real-life speeches that were spoken (like a TED-talk or podcast) and likely not previously published as written works before they were given. Thus, while some orations will be found in a traditionally published format (such as a book), we are allowing the occurrences of more recently published recordings that may have only a recording and transcription available to the public. Since

the speech does require a Format 1 and 2 script, a transcription must be provided for tournaments.