



MIDDLE SCHOOL IMPROMPTU SPEAKING MIDDLE SCHOOL IMPROMPTU SPEAKING  
(Last rule change 2012)

A speaker will draw three topics immediately before the presentation. The contestant will speak on one of the three topics. The MIFA State Office develops topics for the middle level impromptu speaking contest. There are at least eight topics per round written with a central theme, such as general news or community and school issues, as a reference. **The topic for one round will be a quotation.**

The topics are phrased as questions, which the contestant will answer in his or her presentation. Each judge is given a sealed envelope, usually as a part of the judge packet, which contains a master list of the topics and several separate slips of paper. Each slip of paper contains one question with a number, which is also found on the master list.

The judge opens the envelope in the presence of the contestants. The master list of topics is removed and the judge checks the envelope to make certain each topic is on an independent slip of paper. The topics are then returned to the envelope.

Contestants will speak in the order listed on the schematic. Following that sequence a contestant will select three topics from the envelope. One topic will be retained, while two of the three topics will be returned to the envelope for other contestants to select. The contestant will speak on the single topic that he or she retains. No two contestants can speak on the same subject, so it is important that the contestant keep the slip of paper with his or her topic.

A contestant may devise an outline on a note card(s) or a sheet(s) of paper prior to his or her presentation. The only materials a contestant is allowed to use in the preparation time are writing implements, blank note cards, and/or blank paper. The contestant is unable to use or make reference to prepared notes, documents, publications, or printed material of any nature.

No more than one minute should expire between the time a contestant draws the three topics and the beginning of the presentation. The timing of the actual speech begins when the presentation or performance (any spoken word, humming, singing, sound effect, physical movement, or pantomime initiated by the contestant) of the contestant begins.

The suggested time limit for Junior High/Middle School impromptu speaking is two minutes to four minutes. Presentations, which do not conform to the suggested time parameters, may be penalized at the discretion of the judge. Penalties are not mandatory.

### **BASIS OF DECISION**

**Concept of Impromptu Speech:** The purpose of this event is to allow the verbalization of individual opinions on topics of common knowledge. The emphasis is on the establishment of a personal position on the topic. Organization is important.

**Adherence to the Topic:** The speaker should endeavor to answer the question. Examples and illustrations from any area of knowledge may be used to highlight the theme of the presentation.



**Action and Platform Conduct:** The contestant words the speech as it is delivered. A brief outline of the presentation may be made in the time period between the selection of the topic and the presentation. An outline is not mandatory. If a contestant wishes to speak without the use of notes, it may be done. The speaker should give the impression of genuineness without affectation in attitude, manner or appearance. There should be communicative audience contact.

**OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL  
IMPROMPTU SPEAKING**

**Timing:** The suggested time limit for impromptu speaking at the middle level is two to four minutes. Each presentation must be timed. Timing starts when the presentation of the contestant begins. Either the judge or an alternate timekeeper, under the supervision of the judge, is responsible for using a stopwatch and for displaying time cards that are clearly visible to the contestant unless the contestant prefers not to have cards. The number showing on the card should indicate the amount of time remaining. Judges should give an oral report of the actual time at the completion of each performance. Timing must be indicated on the ballot as well as on the contestant's critique sheet.

**Contestant Evaluation:** The ballot must be completely filled out and needs to include the contestant's name and code, the author, the rank, the percentage score, and the time of the presentation. Judges are to sign their ballots.

Each judge shall rank the participants as 1,2,3, according to the relative merits of the contestants. All other contestants will receive a rank of 4. The judge shall also assign a percentage score ranging from 100 to 75. No two contestants can be given the same percentage.

All point scores must be assigned in whole integers. One hundred percent must be assigned to the best contestant with the points for all other contestants in the range of 99-75. The assignment of a score between 75-79 should be reserved for special circumstances; such as when a contestant fails to complete his or her presentation, exhibits inappropriate behavior, or performs highly inappropriate material.

Critique sheets and ballots must be given to the tournament director or returned to the tabulation room at the conclusion of each round.

**Note: As of August 2015 Contestants do NOT draw for order. Use the order as listed on the schematic.**

Order	Contestant	Code	Time	Rank	%
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Round \_\_\_ Section \_\_\_ Judge \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

**See Reverse Side**