

PHSSL Parliamentary Debate - Judge Instruction Sheet

Thanks for agreeing to judge this round of PHSSL's newest event, Parliamentary Debate. Please be assured that the event is evolving with every round and you are an important part of developing this new event. Please address any comments on the event to the State League Office.

Beginning a Round

You may be asked to judge a Prepared Debate or an Impromptu Debate.

- If you are judging a Prepared round, students knew the resolution well before this day of competition. You will need to conduct a coin flip to see which team will be the proponents (in favor of the motion) and which team will be opponents (against the motion.) Teams are allowed to bring any materials and computers, if they wish, into these Prepared Rounds.
- If you are judging an Impromptu round, students found out what motion they will be debating for you only 30 minutes ago. They have already flipped a coin to determine their sides. Teams may bring only their notes into an Impromptu round. Computers are prohibited.

Hand the ballot each team and ask them to fill in their team code and the speaker names.

Format of a Round

First speaker for the motion	6 minutes
First speaker against the motion	6 minutes
Second speaker for the motion	6 minutes
Second speaker against the motion	6 minutes
Third speaker for the motion	6 minutes
Third speaker against the motion	6 minutes
Reply speech against the motion (must be first or second speaker)	3 minutes
Reply speech for the motion (must be first or second speaker)	3 minutes

There is no extra preparation time provided.

There is no grace period for the speeches. After time expires, speakers ought to be allowed to finish their sentence.

Unique Feature of Parliamentary Debate -- Points of Information

- The most unusual feature of this debate is the ability of any member of the opposing team (the interrupter) to question the speaker. In fact, that's where most clash comes from.
- The speaker who has the floor is in total control of the time and may either accept the Point from the interrupter or decline it.
- If the Point is accepted, the interrupter may make a short point or ask a short question (15 seconds or less) that deals with some issue in the debate.
- A Point of Information is offered by standing and saying "Point of Information" or similar.
- The speaker on the floor is not obliged to accept every point. He may ask the interrupter to sit down, may finish the sentence and then accept the point, or may accept the point immediately.
- Debaters must sometimes tread a fine line between the offering legitimate Points and overwhelming the speaker. Points should advance the debate, not merely interrupt it.
- The **first** and **last** minute of each main speech and the **entire reply speech** is "**protected time**" – Points of Information are not allowed during these times.

Timing the Debate

Agree with the speakers before the round begins what signals you will use. Many judges find it useful to "knock" on the table at the one-minute point and the five-minute point of the main speeches to signal that protected time has ended and has begun.