

St. Luke Speech Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Club!

The St. Luke Speech Team has a long history of developing public speaking skills in a fun, supportive environment where individual effort is celebrated and everyone plays an important part in the team. Families who embrace the opportunity to engage in the process will gain the most and see the best results.

The Speech Team Coordinators are there to coach, guide and support your student (s). But the payback in effort comes only for those students who invest time outside the Speech Meets.

SPEECH TEAM REQUIREMENTS

REGISTRATION:

The registration form and fee must be complete by the third Meet to qualify for the Team. Registration forms are available on the Speech Team's website found on St. Luke's home page. Your student can hand in the form and check at the Front Office or hand them to a Team Coordinator at a Meet. The fee covers all registration expenses for team members' participation at the speech tournaments.

ATTENDANCE:

Speech Team meets typically once a week after school, and attendance is mandatory for all members. If the student is hindered by illness or other reasons and cannot come, please inform the Team Coordinator in a short message so that any important news discussed at the Meet can be relayed back to the student and parent. Attendance is not typically taken at Meets.

COACHES:

Students will be required to be coached from the time they have their speeches. Apart from receiving coaching at the Meets, students will have to seek out actively other persons willing to act as an audience and give feedback. Coaches can be parents, family friends and St. Luke faculty. The Team Coordinators can assist with Coach selections as needed and will provide lists of faculty members who have volunteered to coach.

Coaching sessions take place at the students' and coaches' convenience: at home with a parent, for example, or during lunch break or after school. Please consult the Team's online tools for coaching, which includes the Coaching Feedback Form.

FINDING A SPEECH

One of the biggest challenges of Speech is finding and/or writing the actual speech! The goal is to decide on one or more categories and work on the speech (-es) which suits the character and interest of the student. Speaking about a passion or reading from a favorite piece of literature that resonates with the student makes writing and performing all the more easier and fun.

The Team Coordinators take time during Meets to facilitate - but the ultimate decision will be in the hands of the students. Team members should take time outside of Meets to consider possible sources for a great speech. The Team's website has great resources, and parents and faculty can certainly help. Technology has cut down the trip to the local library, while the internet has widened the scope of potential speech material. Students will be encouraged to talk about their needs to parents and faculty coaches, so that their searching efforts can be guided.

SPEECH CATEGORIES

Typically, the following are the types of speeches that students are able to prepare for the upcoming Speech Tournaments. Each tournament is different, and while all tournaments include at least the first five categories (also called 'events'), each tournament varies slightly insofar as to the number of categories it will offer.

- Dramatic Interpretive Reading (DI)
- Humorous Interpretive Reading (HI)
- Dual Interpretive Reading (DUO)
- Expository (Expos)
- Editorial Commentary (EdCOM)
- Storytelling (ST)
- Oratory (OR)
- Impromptu (IMP)
- Spar (SP)

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

The following is a synopsis of the generally accepted rules. Team Coordinators will inform students and parents of any changes as and when the speech tournaments share their tournament-specific rules. The following is to give a GENERAL overview and flavor, if you will, to what each speech category entails.

DRAMATIC INTERPRETIVE READING

One or more selections of prose, poetry and/or drama from a published source. (selections from Youtube, Saturday Night Live, etc. are prohibited unless the speaker presents a copyright printed copy of the material). Material should be serious in nature. If more than one selection is read, they should be connected by a central theme. The presentation must be from a manuscript. The speaker is required to have short introduction (usually memorized) and 'transitions' should connect selections as needed. The illusion of reading must be maintained. Movement and gestures are limited, but important nonetheless. Movement limited to within a one-step radius. Over-dramatization may be penalized. Costumes and/or props are prohibited.

These speeches are best when dealing with difficult or challenging or poignantly beautiful circumstances, and when they offer the student several voices to perform. The selection made from a piece of literature, play, or poetry should be truly dramatic when read. The best ones build tensions in the audience, or tears to the eyes, or transports the listener to another 'world,' bringing out deep emotions.

Time limit: 8 minutes with a 30 second grace period (average 5-7 minutes)

HUMOROUS INTERPRETIVE READING

One or more humorous selections from a published source. If more than one selection is read, they should be connected by a central theme. The presentation must be from a manuscript. The speaker is required to have a short introduction (usually memorized) and 'transitions' should connect selections as needed. The illusion of reading must be maintained. Movement and gestures are limited, but important nonetheless. Over-dramatization may be penalized. Costumes and/or props are prohibited.

These speeches should be really funny. If the student is capable of creating great voices for characters and he/she has a lot of charisma, then humorous is a fantastic category. Bringing your own personality into the speech, along with voices, can make the reading material into something truly hilarious. Here, too, movement is limited to within a one-step radius.

Time Limit: 8 minutes with a 30 second grace period (average 5-7 minutes)

DUAL INTERPRETIVE READING

A selection from prose or drama involving the portrayal of two or more characters is presented by two students competing together as a team. The same Interpretive reading rules apply.

These speeches can be dramatic or humorous and are best when there is interesting banter between two characters. Think carefully about whether Duo is the right category

for since the student will need to schedule all practices with a partner. The speech is begun with a short, memorized introduction, including the title and author, usually split between the partners.

Time Limit: 8 minutes with a 30 second grace period (average 5-7 minutes)

EXPOSITORY

An explanatory speech that describes, clarifies, explains and/or defines an idea, object, concept or process. This informative speech must be the original work of the student. It may be delivered with or without notes. Visual aids are allowed (recommended but not required). Students can be very creative with this category and it can be fun!

Students should think about their own class curriculum in Language Arts or Science, as they might be able to adapt a written assignment into a speech, thus cutting down on time spent working on the expository. The best expositories are on topics that the students are passionate about, and/or have experience with.

The speech is typically performed with the aid of index cards.

Time Limit: 8 minutes, with a 30 second grace period (average 5-7 minutes)

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

The commentary takes a position on an issue of public concern as if the speaker were an editorialist attempting to influence the audience toward his/her point of view. The speech must be the original work of the speaker and is delivered with or without notes. The speaker is seated during the speech, as if in front of a television camera, and speaks with authority but not too passionately.

At a competition, NO hand signs to signal time are given by the judge.

Time Limit: 1:45-2:00 minutes EXACTLY (no grace period)

ORATORY

This original work of the student is a persuasive piece that requires research and personal opinion to convince the audience. The speech alerts the audience to a threatening danger, strengthens devotion to a cause, or eulogizes a person. The oratory is memorized and must be the original work of the speaker; he/she must have a written copy of the speech present. The oratory is delivered without a script. However, a copy of the script must be available during the competition for judges to look at, should they choose.

This is considered the 'Rolls Royce' of speech categories, and placing in this is highly prestigious. Typically, the competing pool of students is one of the smallest of all categories, so chances of winning an award is much higher.

Time limit: Senior, 8 minutes with a 30 second grace period. Junior, 5 minutes with a 30 second grace period.

IMPROMPTU

Without specific advance preparation, the speaker is challenged to 'think on his/her feet' in delivering an organized presentation about one of three topic choices: a word, a quotation, or a social concern. Use of notes or other materials is not allowed. Time hand signals are given by the judge while the student is performing.

Students in this category prepare by keeping abreast of current topics, discussing possible topics with parents, teachers, older siblings and friends, and practicing their ad hoc speeches on a variety of topics. Keys to success include being able to think quickly and clearly, organize thoughts and ideas well, and draw on beliefs and opinions to support a position. This category generally has fewer contestants and offers your student a fantastic experience in public speaking.

Time limit: 2 minute prep time; 1-5 minutes speaking time

STORYBOOK

Choice of children's storybook. The student reads to the audience sitting down and out of the book. It is considered a good stepping stone into Speech for young beginners, but experienced speakers sometimes opt for this category. The challenges include: reading as if to a young audience, using facial and voice expression, being able to handle the book professionally and with confidence, and alternating between looking at the text in the book and establishing eye contact with the audience.

Time limit: 5 minutes with a 30 minute grace period

SPAR

Stands for Spontaneous Argumentation, and is a structured debate between two competing contestants who are given each the opportunity to argue an opposing side of the same controversial current event or topic. Students have to frame an argument in a one minute opening statement and then react quickly to their opponents' ideas in the ensuing sparring session. Competing in this category is fun and highly educational. Hand signals for time are given by the judge at competitions.

Time limit: 1-2 minutes to write down arguments and evidence for or against the proposition. 1 minute opening statement to make their case. Then, another one minute to quietly listen to the opponent while taking notes. 5 minutes to spar, which is an open debate forum. Concluding states for each contestant limited to one minute each.

RECOGNITION AND SCHOLARSHIPS*

The opportunities to speak in public and the sense of pride that comes from several months of commitment and practice are priceless. Winning a tournament is a bonus, but not necessary, to come out a winner! The awards ceremony at each tournament recognizes both individuals and give out team awards. The school awards are our ultimate goal as a team.

Individual awards include:

Bishop Blanchet (300 plus students from 25 schools competing)

- cash scholarship to Blanchet for each 1st place winner in each Senior category (8th grade). Seven categories total.
- trophies for first through third place Junior and Senior winners in all categories

Seattle Prep (200 plus students from 25 schools competing)

- cash scholarship to Seattle Prep for Best Overall Boy and the Best Overall Girl of the tournament (must do three non-conflicting speeches to qualify)
- trophies for first through third place Junior and Senior winners in all categories

Archbishop Murphy (relatively new tournament, first tournament had about 60 students and is expected to grow larger over time)

- cash scholarships to Archbishop Murphy in all Senior Events (8th grade contestants)
- trophies for first through third place Junior and Senior winners in all categories

Guests are invited to hear the speeches during the tournament - but they must remain neutral, sit quietly, and give no special hand or eye contact to the contestants. This rule applies also to the students waiting their turn to speak. Points can be taken off scores of a disruptive contestant.

** Please note that all scholarships and prizes mentioned are based on past tournaments. Current awards will be published online and announced at the Speech Meetings as soon as they are available and confirmed. The Team Coordinators will keep abreast of any new tournaments and inform accordingly.*

TOURNAMENT CHECKLIST

- Bring plenty of water and healthy food (no soda pop, milk, or spicy foods, please, as they tend to compromise the vocal chords)
- Have copies of speeches ready in stiff folders, as well as electronic copies in devices
- If you have your student - or you - carry a device, make sure it has enough battery but is turned on mute during the judging. Absolutely no checking the device during the speeches. All eyes on the speaker. He/she deserves our respect!
- Think about wearing sensible clothes and shoes that are weather appropriate
- Young ladies: wear your hair pulled back out of your face, so that there is no hair distraction during your presentation. Attire should be neat and not too 'over-the-top'.
- Young gentlemen: likewise have your hair neatly combed and clothes neutral in that the shirts have no glaring insignia or distracting picture. Best is a polo shirt or button-down oxford shirt or the like, worn with slacks or very nicely pressed, dark denim.

EXTERNAL COACHES SHORT GUIDELINES

When dedicating time to coach a student, plan on meeting either with the student at least TWO times a week. Half hour to an hour each time is recommended.

Coaching can be in person or using technology such as FaceTime. When coaching in person, plan on working in a closed room or space that is comfortable. The student should practice walking up to the front of the room, facing you, and proceeding AS IF he/she is in competition.

Use notes. Consult the Club's website for tools such as the Coaching Feedback Form. The student will value BOTH your oral and written comments.

'Faculty Coaches' has been incorporated into the program formally, and provides the students encouragement and direct feedback, coupled with practice time commitments outside the weekly meetings. From our experience, there's no better way to practice, than if you have 'appointments' for which to work towards. It gives the students an opportunity to practice REGULARLY, and BUILDS EXCITEMENT, while providing lots of real-life practice time, which really is the key to success.

We highly encourage the students to make use of the Faculty Coaches to practice their speeches.

Any question, feel free to contact any Speech Team Coordinator.

Thank you!