# Contestants’ Briefing Guide

The text below is meant as a guide for running the Contestants’ Briefing. It is not a script and is not a replacement or amendment to the Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171). This guide is applicable for the July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 time period and may no longer be applicable after June 30, 2017. Always refer to the Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171) when conducting speech contests.

Introduce yourself and congratulate all the contestants on making it this far.

Distribute the following to each contestant:

Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183)

Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171)

Speech Contestant Profile (Item 1189)

Verify the presence of all contestants and pronunciation of their names.

Review the speech contest rules and procedures

General Procedure, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 9

Protests and Disqualifications, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 14

Use of Props, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), Page 14

Contest Specific Rules (review only those that apply)

International Speech Contest Rules, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 15

Evaluation Contest Rules, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 15

Humorous Speech Contest Rules, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 16

Table Topics Contest Rules, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 16

Tall Tales Contest Rules, Speech Contest Rulebook (Item 1171), page 17

Review the Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183)

Completing and submitting the form means that the contestant has been eligible for the duration of the speech contest cycle and has not plagiarized their speech.

Review timing protocol for the appropriate contest

“6. Timing of the Speeches

A. Two timers are appointed by the chief judge. One is provided with a stopwatch, and the other with a signaling device that displays green, yellow, and red colors.

B. The signaling device must be in full view of each contestant.

C. The timer with the stopwatch maintains and delivers to the chief judge the written record of elapsed time of each speech on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers (Item 1175).

D. The timer managing the timing device ensures that contestants are able to view an accurate green, yellow, or red signal at appropriate times during the speech.

E. All speeches delivered by contestants must conform to the timing guidelines for the contest.

1. International and Humorous speeches shall be from five to seven minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than four minutes 30 seconds or more than seven minutes 30 seconds.

2. Table Topics contest speeches shall be from one minute to two minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than one minute or more than two minutes 30 seconds.

3. Evaluation contest speeches shall be from two to three minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than one minute 30 seconds or more than three minutes 30 seconds.

4. Tall Tales speeches shall be from three to five minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than two minutes 30 seconds or more than five minutes 30 seconds.

F. Upon being introduced, the contestant shall proceed immediately to the speaking position.

1. Timing will begin with the contestant’s first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.

2. The speaker should begin speaking within a short time after arriving at the speaking area, and is not permitted to delay the contest unnecessarily.

G. Timers shall provide warning signals to the contestants, which shall be clearly visible to the speakers but not obvious to the audience.

1. For International and Humorous contests:

a) A green signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed for one minute.

b) A yellow signal will be displayed at six minutes and remain displayed for one minute.

c) A red signal will be displayed at seven minutes and will remain on until the conclusion of the speech.

2. For Evaluation contests:

a) The green signal will be displayed at two minutes and remain displayed for 30 seconds.

b) The yellow signal will be displayed at two minutes and thirty seconds and remain displayed for 30 seconds.

c) The red signal will be displayed at three minutes and remain displayed until the evaluation is concluded.

3. For Table Topics contests:

a) The green signal will be displayed at one minute and remain displayed for 30 seconds.

b) The yellow signal will be displayed at one minute 30 seconds and remain displayed for 30 seconds.

c) The red signal will be displayed at two minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded.

4. For Tall Tales contests:

a) The green signal will be displayed at three minutes and remain displayed for one minute.

b) The yellow signal will be displayed at four minutes and remain displayed for one minute.

c) The red signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded.

5. In all speech contests, no signal shall be given for the overtime period.

6. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing.

a) Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at five, six, and seven minutes.

b) If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.

7. In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.”

*Speech Contest Rulebook* (Item 1171), pages 12-14

Acquaint contestants with venue-specific information (the list below is an example)

Speaking area

Lectern

Tables

Lighting

Microphone (if used, provide contestants an opportunity to practice before the contest)

Draw for speaking position