

# Tips for Judges

***Middle School Public Debate Program***  
Sponsored by Claremont McKenna College

## Don't forget!

- You're responsible for timing the debate.
- Signal the beginning and end of protected time.
- Reveal your decision after the debate with comments for debaters.

## Order of Speeches

First Proposition	
Constructive --	5
First Opposition	
Constructive --	5
Second Proposition	
Constructive --	5
Second Opposition	
Constructive --	5
Opposition	
Rebuttal --	3
Proposition	
Rebuttal --	3

## Things to Remember When Judging

**LEAVE YOUR OPINIONS AT THE DOOR!** The only facts known in the debate are what the teams bring forth. It is not the job of a 13 year old to change a judge's lifelong belief.

**DON'T FILL IN FOR SPEAKERS.** Judges should not "fill in" what they believe a speaker was going to say, should have said, or probably meant. What speakers say is what the speakers said, and that's all there is.

**PROPOSITION TEAMS MAY REASONABLY "SHRINK" A TOPIC.** But defining a topic is restricted to defining words in the topic within reasonable limits, such as a "child" being defined as between the ages of 8 and 16, rather than a "child" being defined as a juvenile cactus clinging to the nether regions of the Arabian peninsula.

**TAKE THOROUGH NOTES ON YOUR FLOWSHEET.** This will help you decide the debate and set a good example for the students.

## Assigning Speaker Points

You will have to assign points to all students in the debate. These points are a measure of individual performance in the debate. We suggest you use the following scale:

- 30: Almost no one should get a 30. A perfect score should happen every few years with a really brilliant speech.
- 28-29: Brilliant.
- 26-27: Strong, well above average.
- 25: Above average
- 23-24: Modest success as a debater
- Points below 23 should be reserved for people who are both unsuccessful as debaters and are also obnoxious and mean-spirited.
- Points should never drop below a 20, even if a debater was particularly bad. Lower points frequently exclude a debate team from elimination rounds, so if you give points below 20, you are saying that a debater has no chance of rehabilitation in any other debates.

**You may assign half-points (27.5, 25.5, etc.)**