CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC DECATHLON

A Contest of Academic Strength

Providing academic competition to encourage, acknowledge and reward academic excellence through teamwork among students of all achievement levels.

SPEECH

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For More Information
Phone: (707) 646-7603
ken@academicdecathlon.org
www.academicdecathlon.org

Since 1968, the Academic Decathlon has grown into the premier scholastic competition in America. The Academic Decathlon was created to provide opportunities for high school students to experience the challenges of rigorous team and individual competition. Designed to provide a forum for celebrating and acknowledging scholastic achievement and academic excellence in the context of a team environment, the Academic Decathlon provides high school students the opportunity to participate in an educational forum that fosters a deep respect for knowledge, cooperation, and self-esteem.

http://www.academicdecathlon.org/round3teamreg.htm
SPEECH INFORMATION

GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING SPEECH

Welcome to Academic Decathlon, and thank you for serving as a Speech Judge or Room Manager in this year’s competition. Each decathlete will be giving a prepared speech and an impromptu speech. Please read the following carefully and adhere to all procedural and timing guidelines. Enjoy the event!

Teams of Judges

Each team will consist of 2 – 3 speech judges and a room manager. Each team will be assigned to a specific classroom and will be evaluating one decathlete at a time using the Academic Decathlon Speech Evaluation Form - Scantron (see sample). Each judge will evaluate the decathlete individually, and only speech judges will evaluate the speeches. The scores will be averaged together to form one score for each decathlete.

Schedule

Time accurately for a fair competition and release decathletes ON TIME. Stopwatches or timers will be provided to time the two speeches (prepared and impromptu). All decathletes must receive the same amount of time for each speech.

Time Rules

1. Time speeches precisely
2. Admit and dismiss decathletes according to established schedule
3. Each decathlete is allotted approximately 10 minutes in the speech room
   a. 40 seconds for introductions/instructions
   b. 3 ½ - 4 minutes for prepared speech
   c. 10 seconds to set up for impromptu speech
   d. One-minute impromptu speech preparation
   e. 1 ½ - 2 minutes for the impromptu speech
   f. 10 seconds to thank and dismiss the decathlete
   g. 2 minutes to score the two speeches and prepare for the next decathlete

General Rules:

1. NOTE CARDS may be used, but speech should not be read.
2. GESTURES are acceptable, but PROPS are not allowed.
3. Speech must be given STANDING unless a handicapping condition prevents this.
4. Speech must be researched, written and delivered by the contestant.
5. Under no circumstances may a judge ask a decathlete what school or area he/she is from. There is no penalty if a decathlete reveals where they live or what school they attend.
6. There are specific guidelines regarding the length of the two speeches. If either the prepared or impromptu speech is not within the proper time limit, a time violation is assessed.
7. Judges may discuss a decathlete’s performance after they have completed their Scantron and the decathlete has left the room, but each judge must take responsibility for making his/her own mind. No one judge should be responsible for the other judges’ scoring decisions. Teams of speech judges are not to reach consensus regarding a decathlete’s performance. Each speech judge must score the decathlete’s performance independently of the other judges’ feedback.

8. Volunteers are not to applaud or provide any written or verbal praise or recommendations to a decathlete’s speech.

9. Speeches are not to be rank ordered with other speeches. That is, each prepared and/or impromptu speech is to be evaluated independently based on its own merits using the rubric located on the Scantron.

10. Pencils provided in the Speech Box must be used on the Scantrons. Do not use any type of ink pen.

Specific Procedure To Be Followed In Each Speech Room

1. Room Manager welcomes decathlete and checks that the decathlete’s information coincides with roster/schedule. (If a Room Manager is not available, judges may share the responsibilities of the Room Manager.)

2. Judges take new score sheet and write their name in the designated location. The decathlete’s name and ID number will be preprinted on the Scantron form. Make sure that you are using the Scantron for the correct decathlete. Each speech judge will have a number (either 1, 2, or 3) preslugged on the Scantrons. Be sure to use the same numbered Scantron throughout the day.

3. Judges introduce themselves to decathlete.

4. Room Manager explains procedure to decathlete.

5. Room Manager explains timing procedure and timing cards. Room Manager will signal decathlete to START prepared speech (“You may begin”). Room Manager starts stopwatch or timer, uses timing cards at appropriate times, and signals decathlete to END prepared speech.

6. Room Manager instructs the decathlete to go to the Impromptu Table to prepare his/her impromptu speech. Once the decathlete turns over the Impromptu Card, he/she will have one minute to prepare an impromptu speech. Impromptu cards/topics are rotated for each decathlete.

7. Room Manager starts timing impromptu preparation time (1 minute) once the decathlete turns the impromptu sheet over. Room Manager will end the one minute preparation time by announcing “time.”

8. Room Manager collects impromptu card from decathlete and explains the timing procedure for their impromptu speech.

9. Room Manager will signal decathlete to START impromptu speech (“You may begin”). Room Manager starts timing when the decathlete begins his/her speech, uses timing cards at appropriate times, and signals decathlete to END prepared speech.

10. Judges thank the Decathlete and dismiss them from the room.

11. Room Manager will announce both speech times (Prepared and Impromptu) to the judges after the decathlete leaves the room. Room Manager will also notify judges of any timing penalties.
12. Room Manager will then reset the Impromptu table and place a new Impromptu Card face down on the Impromptu table for the next decathlete. Impromptu speech topics will be changed after each decathlete.

13. **BE SURE CONTESTANT LEAVES ON SCHEDULE.**

14. Judges should not leave the room at any time except during scheduled breaks.

15. **JUDGES:** Enter proper information at the top of each form. Preprinted decathlete name and ID number are critical; check them carefully! Turn in the Scantron sheets to Room Manager immediately after finishing and before the next decathlete enters.

16. Use a new Scantron for each decathlete. **For decathletes who do not appear, write “No Show” or “Absent” at the top of the form and give to Room Manager to return with scored Scantrons.**

17. **ROOM MANAGERS:** Collect all score sheets from the judges. Collate so that the three score sheets for each decathlete are together. Include sheets for “No Shows.” Insert in envelope provided and place in folder on door for pick up at designated times.

18. Also include a speech roster that includes the time for each decathlete’s prepared and impromptu speech. Also include any important points such as a decathlete arriving late or leaving early.

**FINAL REMINDERS:**

1. **BE AN OBJECTIVE JUDGE**—you may discuss scoring with one another after independent completion of Scantron. **Your score should be your individual decision not a consensus.**

2. **BE SURE** to treat each decathlete in the same manner. Maintain your objectivity throughout the day and HAVE FUN!
1. "Welcome to the speech room. My name is [INSERT NAME] and I am the Room Manager for the panel of judges."

2. "I would like to introduce the judges. They are: [INSERT NAMES]"

3. "Please tell us your first name and your identification number."

4. "You'll be speaking from the front of the room. You will give two speeches: a 3 ½ to 4-minute prepared speech and a 1 ½ to 2-minute impromptu speech. I'll give you a list of topics to select from for the impromptu speech after you have finished your prepared speech."

5. "During your speeches, I will hold up a blue 1 minute card (show card to decathlete) when you have 1 minute remaining and a pink 30 seconds card (show card to decathlete) when you have 30 seconds remaining and a white “time” card when time has expired (show card to decathlete)."

6. "Ready, please begin." (Start stopwatch when the decathlete begins speaking. If decathlete doesn’t begin promptly, ask him/her to start. Raise the 1-minute card at 3 minutes, the 30 seconds card at 3 ½ minutes, and the TIME card at 4 minutes. Stop the decathlete if he/she continues past 4 minutes and 10 seconds by saying, “Stop.” Log the decathletes speech time to be reported to the judges after decathlete leaves the room.)

7. "There is a sheet with several impromptu topics located on the table/desk (point to the table/desk). You are to turn over the sheet and select one of the topics. After turning the impromptu sheet over, you will have one minute to select and prepare your impromptu speech. When you begin your speech, please be prepared to let the judges verbally know which topic you have chosen. Your time will begin once you have informed us of your speech topic and you begin your speech ... (after decathlete has let the judges know which topic they have chosen.)"

8. (After the decathlete turns over the impromptu sheet) “You now have one minute to select and prepare your speech. There is paper and a pencil on the desk, (which you have placed there) which you may use to write down some quick thoughts." (Call time after one minute and Reset the stopwatch.)

9. "Before you begin your speech and time begins, please let the judges know which topic you have chosen before you begin you speech. Your time will begin once you begin your speech.”

10. "Ready, begin." (Start the stopwatch when the decathlete begins his/her speech. Raise the 1-minute card 1 minute into the speech. Raise the 30 seconds card at 1 ½ minutes and the TIME card at 2 minutes. Stop the decathlete if he/she continues past 2 minutes and 10 seconds.)

11. "Thank you. You may now leave the room and go to your next assignment." (After the decathlete leaves the room, Inform the judges of the amount of time used by the decathlete for his/her speeches and assess penalty(ies) if necessary. Give judges the remaining time to complete their scoring before admitting a new decathlete to the room. Keep strict adherence to the time schedule.)

Important: Do not report speech times and penalties to the judges until “after” the decathlete leaves the room.
TIME FORMAT AND ROOM SETUP

TIME FORMAT
Time allotted each student

- Time for introductions and review of procedures (script) ......................... 40 seconds
- Prepared Speech ........................................ 4 minutes
- Transition to and from Impromptu table ......................... 10 seconds
- Select & Prepare Impromptu ..................................... 1 minute
- Impromptu Speech ...................................... 2 minutes
- Thank you & dismissal .................................. 10 seconds
- Complete Scoring of Scantron ................................. 2 minutes

Total Time ........................................ 10 minutes

SAMPLE SCANTRON PICK-UP SCHEDULE

Session I - Pick-Up .......................... 11:05 – 11:10
A volunteer will pick up completed Scantrons and roster from the judge’s room.

Session II – Deliver* .................... 12:00 – 12:05
Judges will deliver the completed Scantrons and roster to the test center before going to lunch.

Session III - Pick-Up ..................... 2:00 – 2:05
A volunteer will pick up completed Scantrons and roster from the judge’s room.

Session IV – Deliver* ............ 3:05 – 3:10
Judges will deliver the completed Scantrons and roster to the test center as part of checking out.

* Judges will be notified at the time of training if the location for delivering completed Scantrons changes.

ROOM SETUP

- Desks may be used in place of tables.
- Look to make sure that decathletes are not facing a window/door that could distract them during their presentation.
SPEECH COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the decathlete’s ability to present a speech prepared in advance in accordance with specific written criteria.
- To assess the decathlete’s ability to make an impromptu speech.

CRITERIA and RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PREPARED SPEECH

Content

1. There is no required speech topic.
2. Speeches must be the original work of the decathlete and must not have been used in any previous competition other than the Academic Decathlon for this year.

Time

1. Length is three and one-half (3.5) to four (4) minutes. The room manager (timekeeper) gives signals when one (1) minute remains (signified by blue sheet); again, when thirty (30) seconds remains (signified by pink sheet); and when no (0) time remains (signified by white sheet).
2. A courtesy time of 10 seconds will be extended past the four minutes to allow the decathlete to wrap-up the speech, but he/she will be assessed a penalty if 4:00 minutes is exceeded. If the speech is not within the proper time limit (i.e. 3:30 to 4:00), a time violation penalty is assessed. Penalty for the prepared speech is “–7.”

Delivery

1. Over reliance on note cards, where decathlete read some parts of the speech, represents a poorly prepared speech and may not be scored above the Fair range in Speech Development category.
2. Glancing at note cards as an occasional guide, especially if it does not detract from the presentation, should not be penalized in any way.
3. Gestures are acceptable, but props (including uniforms and costumes) are not permitted.
4. The decathlete must stand while delivering his/her speech; a disability which prevents standing will be taken into consideration.

CRITERIA FOR IMPROMPTU SPEECH

Content

1. The decathlete is given a card with three speech topics written on it. The decathlete picks one of the three topics and speaks on that topic.
Time

1. The impromptu speech is delivered immediately following the prepared speech.

2. The decathlete has one minute to select and prepare the topic selection once the Impromptu Card has been turned over by the decathlete. The decathlete must remain at the Impromptu Table while preparing the impromptu speech. Note cards and pencils will be provided on the Impromptu Table. The decathlete may not leave the room during the speech preparation time.

3. The length of the speech is one and one-half (1.5) to two (2) minutes. The timekeeper gives signals when one (1) minute remains (signified by blue sheet); again, when thirty (30) seconds remains (signified by pink sheet); and when no (0) time (signified by white sheet).

4. A courtesy time of 10 seconds will be extended past the two minutes to allow the decathlete to wrap-up the speech, but he/she will be assessed a penalty if 2:00 minutes is exceeded. **If the speech is not within the proper time limit (i.e. 1:30 to 2:00), a time violation penalty is assessed. Penalty for the impromptu speech is “–3.”**

Delivery

1. Same guidelines as the prepared speech.

Evaluation

1. The Speech Evaluation Scantron shows specific items for the decathlete’s evaluation.

SPEECH PENALTIES

There is no penalty for disclosing a decathlete’s school name or location.

After the decathlete has completed both the prepared and the impromptu speeches and left the room, the room manager will announce to the judges the decathlete’s prepared and impromptu speech times and declare if a penalty time must be assessed. The Homeroom Manager is the final arbiter in the case of time violations. All Scantrons must reflect the same penalty for all judges.

Decathletes should be familiar with the Speech Rules and Guidelines as outlined in the USAD Study Guide.

DESCRIPTORS FOR PREPARED SPEECH

**EVALUATION FORM RATING SCALE**

**SPEECH DEVELOPMENT** is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose and this structure must include an opening, body, and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience’s attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion. This development of speech is supported by relevant examples and illustrations, facts, and figures delivered with such smoothness that they blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.
EFFECTIVENESS is measured in part by the audience’s reception of the speech, but a large part is your subjective judgment of how the speech came across. You should ask yourself such questions as “Was I able to determine the speaker’s purpose?” “Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?” “Was the speaker able to hold the interest of the audience?” “Was the speech subject appropriate for this particular audience?”

CORRECTNESS of language insures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct punctuation will show that the speaker is the master of words being used.

APPROPRIATENESS of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.

SPEECH VALUE justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. The listeners should feel the speaker has contributed to their thinking. The ideas should be important ones, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of them.

VOICE is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch to another for emphasis, and should have a variety of rate and volume. A good voice can be clearly heard and the words easily understood.

NON-VERBAL presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker’s appearance should reinforce the speech whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions, and body positioning. The speaker’s manner should indicate an interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

USAD, February 2004
# SPEECH RATING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech Development</th>
<th>Excellent (10 - 9)</th>
<th>Very Good (8 - 7)</th>
<th>Good (6 - 5)</th>
<th>Fair (4 - 3)</th>
<th>Poor (2 - 0)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Organization</td>
<td>Excellent structure with an intro that captures your attention and moves forward toward a significant conclusion. Includes excellent examples, illustrations, facts and figures that are delivered with such smoothness that blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.</td>
<td>Very good structure with an intro that captures your attention and moves forward toward a good conclusion. Includes very good examples, illustrations, facts and figures that are delivered so that they generally blend into the framework of the speech.</td>
<td>Good structure with an introduction and generally moves forward toward a conclusion. Includes some good examples, illustrations, facts, and figures.</td>
<td>Some structure but hard to follow at times. Includes some examples, illustrations, facts, and figures but they may have difficulty relating them to the topic being presented. Speaker read a portion of their speech.</td>
<td>Poor or no structure and is hard to follow. The speech includes poor or no examples, illustrations, facts, and figures. Speaker relied on notecards for a major portion or all of their speech.</td>
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<td>• Body</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Opening &amp; Closing</td>
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| Effectiveness      | Excellent job communicating a clear and easy to identify purpose. Elements of the speech related directly to the purpose. Excellent job holding the attention of the audience throughout the entire speech. | Very good job of communicating a purpose that was clear. Elements of the speech related directly to the purpose. Very good job holding the attention of the audience. | Good job of communicating a purpose. Elements of the speech generally related to the purpose. Good job holding the attention of the audience for most of the speech. | Attempts to communicate a purpose but may not be clear. Not all elements of the speech relate to an overall purpose. Fair job of holding the attention of the audience for only some of the speech. | Poor job of holding the attention of the audience. |
|                    |                   |                  |             |              |             |

| Correctness        | Excellent use of language and word selection which ensures that attention is directed towards what the speaker says, not how it is said. Excellent use of grammar and correct pronunciation. | Very good use of language and word selection which ensures that attention is directed towards what the speaker says, not how it is said. Very good use of grammar and correct pronunciation. | Good use of language and word selection. The speaker in general has a good use of grammar and correct pronunciation but may make a few mistakes. | Fair use of language and makes some mistakes in word selection. The speaker makes quite a few mistakes in grammar and pronunciation. | Poor use of language and makes frequent mistakes in word selection. The speaker makes frequent mistakes in grammar and pronunciation. |
|                    |                   |                  |             |              |             |

<p>| Appropriateness    | Excellent topic choice for the audience and the speaker uses words and a style that fits the nature of the speech. | Very good topic choice for the audience and the speaker uses words and a style that fits the nature of the speech. | Good topic choice for the audience. Speaker generally uses words and a style that fits the nature of the speech; however, some content may not be appropriate. | Fair topic choice and may not be totally appropriate. Words and style may be inappropriate or speaker breaks one of the USAD rules (the speech is sung, etc.). | Poor topic choice and may be offensive or not be totally appropriate. Words and style are very inappropriate or speaker breaks one of the USAD rules (the speech is sung, etc.). |
|                    |                   |                  |             |              |             |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech Value</th>
<th>Excellent (10 - 9)</th>
<th>Very Good (8 - 7)</th>
<th>Good (6 - 5)</th>
<th>Fair (4 - 3)</th>
<th>Poor (2 - 0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Excellent job presenting meaningful and original ideas. Excellent logical ideas that contribute to the thinking of the audience. (Although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of theme.)</td>
<td>Very good job presenting meaningful and original ideas. Good logical ideas that make a contribution to the thinking of the audience.</td>
<td>Good job presenting generally meaningful and original ideas. Generally, have good logical ideas that make some contribution to the thinking of the audience.</td>
<td>Fair job presenting some meaningful ideas but may not be very unique. Has some logical ideas that make a contribution to the thinking of the audience.</td>
<td>Poor job of presenting meaningful ideas. Poor job presenting logical ideas that make any contribution to the thinking of the audience.</td>
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<td>Logic</td>
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<td>Originality</td>
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<td>Voice</td>
<td>Excellent use of voice...flexible moving from one pitch to another for excellent emphasis of ideas and information being presented. Voice could be clearly heard and words easily understood.</td>
<td>Very good use of voice...flexible moving from one pitch to another for emphasis. Voice could be clearly heard and words easily understood.</td>
<td>Good use of voice...some flexibility moving from one pitch to another for emphasis. Voice could generally be heard and words were mostly understood.</td>
<td>Fair use of voice that showed little flexibility only occasionally moving from one pitch to another. Voice might not always be heard and words may not be understood.</td>
<td>Poor use of voice that showed no flexibility and was generally monotone. Voice might not always be heard and words may not be understood.</td>
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<td>Flexibility</td>
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<td>Volume</td>
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<td>Variety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Verbal</td>
<td>Excellent job using appearance to reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language and movement supported points through use of gestures, expressions, and body positioning.</td>
<td>Very good job using appearance to reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language and movement supported points through use of gestures, expressions, and body positioning.</td>
<td>Good job using appearance to reinforce the speech. Some body language used to support points through use of gestures, expressions, and body positioning.</td>
<td>Fair job using appearance to reinforce the speech. Little body language used and when used may have been occasionally distracting to what the speaker was saying.</td>
<td>Poor job using appearance to reinforce the speech. Little or no body language used and when used may have been very distracting to what the speaker was saying.</td>
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<td>Appearance</td>
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<td>Movement</td>
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<td>Assurance</td>
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# U.S. Academic Decathlon

## Speech Evaluation Form

### Directions
- Use No. 2 Pencil Only
- Enter Student's Name
- Judge's Name
- Your Name and Number
- Room Number
- Mark 1 Student Per Form

### Prepared Speech

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Speech Development</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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<td>Body</td>
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<td>Opening/Closing</td>
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<td>Effectiveness</td>
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<td>Achievement of Purpose</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Reception</td>
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<td>Pronunciation</td>
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<td>Word Selection</td>
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<td>Word Selection and Style Appropriate to the Audience</td>
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### Impromptu Speech

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### Speech Penalties

- Timing Violation: 
  - Both Speeches: -10
  - Prepared Only: -7
  - Impromptu Only: -3
  - No Penalty: 0

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CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC DECATHLON