

WISCONSIN LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

SPEAKING CONTEST JUDGING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to answer questions about conducting and judging a speaking contest. They will be used for judging the state level contest and should be used to standardize other contest levels.

It is recommended that three judges, having different backgrounds and experience, be used. Ideally, two will have some technical knowledge of the subject matter, and one judge will have specific knowledge of speech delivery and forensics. An interested layperson may be substituted for one of the technical persons. The WLWCA stresses the importance of speech accuracy and authenticity in judging.

A timekeeper and/or monitor other than a judge should be designated.

Judges should be primarily concerned with the speeches. Contestants should be allowed 30-second leeway on the time limitations.

Drawing numbers prior to the speeches should determine the sequence of speakers. A master of ceremony or chair should present the speaker. Only the speaker's name and title of speech should be given in the introduction. There may be questions following each speech. Applause by the audience should not affect judging decisions.

The glossary of items listed on the judging sheet shall guide the judges in their selection of top speakers.

The subject matter of speeches must conform to the rules. Subject matter relating to the conservation of Wisconsin natural resources is encouraged.

A 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winner shall be named in each division. The judges shall give the names of the winners to the contest coordinator.

The return of judging sheets to contestants or the contest coordinator is optional, however, a local decision should be made prior to the contest. Judges must offer constructive criticism and comments to contestants following the contest.

Points shown in parentheses under each rating are suggested as guidance for the judges.

Judges are encouraged to ask speakers appropriate questions, however, care should be taken to subject each speaker to a similar degree of questioning.