

How To Cut Material for HI, DI, DUO, and PP

1. Read anything and everything (novels, short stories, plays for HI, DI, and DUO; include nonfiction, such as newspapers or essays, as well as the others for PP). Watch the level of material (is it appropriate for high school?). Is the physical action appropriate for the category? Look at the number of characters in relationship to the ability of the students.
2. While reading, underline sentences and mark paragraphs or pages. Look for character descriptions, lines of dialogue, transitions, plot elements – anything that will help build a cutting. The coach will then try to connect these elements into a cohesive unit.
3. Judge the material. What is the best way to understand the characters and the events in the story line?
4. In working out the cutting, a coach must consider the suitability to the actor/student; the level of difficulty; the vocal skills of the student; the physicality of the student and requirements of the material; the clarity of the selection being cut from the larger material; the structure of the piece (does it build to a climax? Have a plot?); the appeal to the audience and judges.
5. One method of cutting material is to find the “climax” scene and then build backwards to get there, omitting the material that does not lead to the climax scene.
6. Catalogs describe material, but a coach needs some experience in separating the wonderful from the awful. Ask other coaches for suggestions. Look at titles of selections used in previous years. (See “Chapter 13: Resources and Titles,” page 44)

By Category

Dramatic and Humorous Interpretation

1. Many coaches cut the material and have files of cuttings used in previous years. Many coaches have students cut their own material. Many coaches have beginners use cuttings from the files, but experienced students cut their own material. As a beginning coach, there may not be files of cuttings; ask for help from coaches in the district. Work with a student to cut his material; keep it on file.
2. One of the crucial skills in this category is the ability to change character voices quickly. Some practices should be devoted to just that skill. Have the student read from a textbook, and every time the coach snaps his fingers, the student changes the characters’ voices. Have the student speak in the characters’ voices outside of practice – in the hallway, at home, in other classes (make sure the teachers don’t object, however!). The student’s cutting may contain as many characters as he can handle vocally and physically.
3. Another crucial skill is the ability to change character postures and gestures very quickly. Some practices should be devoted to just that skill. Have the student move around the classroom, but when the coach snaps his fingers, the character changes. Again, have the student move like those characters at home, in the hallways, in other classes (be conscious, however, that some of this may not be appropriate depending on the specific character).

Duo Interpretation

1. See #1, #2, and #3 above.
2. Be careful about pairing a boyfriend/girlfriend; if they have “couple” problems, they will not do well in competition.
3. Partners should have similar obligations or schedules so that the coach can establish a practice time for them.
4. Since Duo involves synchronized movement (in many cases), exercises in this area should be conducted. The easiest way to achieve such movement is to have the pair face each other so that each member knows what the other is doing. From there, both can decide upon which movements work and which ones are appropriate. The team then can set up “signals” that allow the movements to be precise as well as identical. Once the movement becomes routine, the “signals” are no longer needed.

Extemporaneous Speaking:

1. The coach and team members should develop a list of all the countries in the world, the names of the leaders, and the names of other citizens making news in those countries. Include pronunciation guides. Keep it updated. Even U.S. topics often refer to other countries.
2. The coach and team members should develop the use of introductions to speeches; utilize quotations, analogies, anecdotes, jokes (be very careful here!), facts and statistics, and other material. This doesn't mean have a “canned” intro to every speech on economics, for example. It does mean that the student should develop his ability to vary his introductions and make them applicable to the questions he's answering and interesting for his audience (the judges).
3. Be sure that all team members follow the guidelines established in the OHSSL Constitution regarding how to file material and mark articles for ideas.
4. The coach needs to teach the student the structure and organization of an extemp speech: introduction, transition to question, state the question, provide an answer (yes, no, or “let's look at the evidence before we answer that”), a summary of the body (or “areas of analysis”), first main point/area of analysis, supporting evidence, second main point/area of analysis, supporting evidence, maybe a third main point and evidence (maybe not), a summary of the body, transition to stating and answering the question, and a conclusion (or some other structure preferred by the coach).
5. A coach and the team members should decide whether there will be one communal extemp box for each category or whether each student will have his individual box. There are arguments for each method, but remember that the students could all select the same topic, which would make it difficult to utilize material in a communal box unless there are several copies of the same articles.
6. A coach and the team members should decide on the method of evidence collecting. Will each member be assigned a specific newspaper or magazine title and have the responsibility to copy and file articles from those issues? This works for both types of boxes (#5 above) as long as the students are diligent to do the

reading, copying and filing. Or will each member be responsible for his own material? Again, there are arguments for each method.

Impromptu Speaking:

1. Make sure the student uses a good almanac, quotation collection, a world/American history book, and any other reference book he may want.
2. Good speech organization is critical in Impromptu. Teach the students any good speech outline that contains an introduction, body and conclusion. Make sure he uses it. Make sure he knows to state accurately the wording of the prompt he drew. It needs to be repeated somehow in the conclusion of his speech.
3. Encourage the student to be creative in his opening statement. Encourage him to “think outside the box” – don’t go for the obvious thoughts suggested by the prompt. For example, if he draws a prompt to speak on a particular inventor, encourage him to talk about more than the inventions; obviously, he’d talk about how those inventions impacted life in the 20th century or continue to impact life in the 21st century. Maybe he should include what “archeologists” of the 30th century would think about this invention if it were found in a mound of dirt. What would someone coming from Shakespeare’s time think about the inventions? How did the inventions impact the inventor’s life? What was happening in the inventor’s life to make him create such an object? Did he become wealthy from it? How did he use the wealth? And so forth.

Original Oratory:

1. Many orations actually begin in the spring or summer. Coaches will ask students to begin making a file of anything they read that catches their interest – newspaper or magazine articles, billboards or other ads, comic strips, short stories or poetry or cuttings from novels or plays – and writing down anything they hear on the radio or television and book marking interesting web sites (make sure the student keeps record of the sources). Once school begins, the coach and the student will go through this file, separating material into various subject matters. Usually, they will see a recurring theme: cruelty to animals, the stupid things people do, etc. This theme can then be developed into a speech; one of the benefits is that the student already has a core of material to use as supporting evidence and the beginnings of a bibliography/works cited page. This method of developing an oration is suggested and utilized by Joe Wycoff (coach at Chesterton HS in Indiana and Apple Valley HS in Minnesota) whose students have won many state and national titles and who was honored as the National Coach of the Year.
2. The following sources might be good for generating ideas or useful support material in an oration: an American literature textbook; an American history book; a good “Who’s Who” book; various quotation books; a one-volume, concise encyclopedia; a timeline of history; a good almanac; a dictionary and/or reference of popular culture.
3. Some coaches have brain-storming sessions with all orators throwing out ideas for each other’s speeches.
4. Whatever the subject of the oration, the student should be passionate about it and keep in mind that the audience should have some reaction to it as well. It’s all

well and good for a student to be passionate about whales, but why should the audience care? The speech has to make them care.

5. The coach needs to teach the student the correct organization and structure of an oration: introduction, thesis statement, first main point in the body of the speech, supporting evidence, second main point, supporting evidence, third main point, supporting evidence, summary, restatement of thesis, and conclusion (or some other structure preferred by the coach).

Oratorical Interpretation:

1. Because the student is memorizing someone else's speech, it is extremely important that the speech suit the student in tone, in physical and vocal skills, in theme, and in other ways.
2. Many times, students use speeches that were presented in the semi-final and final rounds of Original Oratory at State Tournaments in previous years. These speeches are readily accessible and suit the teenage "spirit" because they were written by students. However, there is a wealth of speeches made by adults in various settings (Congress, graduation ceremonies, Nobel Peace Prize winners, etc.) that are also appropriate. Don't overlook these.
3. Because the student didn't write the speech he's giving, the judge focuses only on his physical and vocal performance. Hence, in practice sessions, the coach and student concentrate on these aspects. The student should know the speech flawlessly, however, so that the words sound natural for him.

Prose Poetry:

1. Make sure the student adheres to the requirements specified in the OHSSL Constitution for the number of words and the printed manuscript.
2. The student writes the transitional material to link the program together; make sure it's more than just title and author, that it includes an element of the theme.
3. Make sure the student keeps a bibliography as he selects his literature for this program.
4. Begin with a piece of literature that the student likes. Examine the elements in that literature – themes, characters, use of imagery, the rhythm, and so forth. Select a theme to build the rest of the program. Then the student begins to look for more material that has the same theme. He should find more than he thinks he needs so there is a variety with which to work.
5. Encourage the student to find literature that hasn't been used before (no more "The Road Not Taken" by Frost or "Many Moons" by Thurber) – unless the old "standbys" can be used in new and unique ways.
6. Be sure the material fits the student in voice quality, appearance, and maturity. Strive for the unexpected so the student will stand out. Use humor; don't be afraid to mix dramatic and humorous elements in the same program. Remember that all material must have been published.

7. Try different selections in early tournaments; using judges' feedback, gradually hone and set the program.
8. The program may be set up in one of three ways – 1. The student gives the transition which includes title, author, and theme element and then reads the literary selection; or 2. The student presents all the titles and authors and theme elements in the introduction; then the literary selections are woven together seamlessly; or 3. Another method chosen by the coach and student. Whichever method is used should fit the student and delineate to the judges the different literature selections.
9. The student holds the manuscript and gives the appearance of reading, even though by the end of the season it's probably memorized. The notebook should not be so big as to cover the student's face or make gestures difficult or so small as to make it difficult for the student to read the font. There is no rule that says the introduction and transitions must be done with the notebook closed; however, many judges expect it.
10. The student doesn't move around at the front of the room. Minimal gestures are acceptable; the judge determines what is "minimal."
11. Many times the students fail to hold dramatic moments. Work on this with them...especially at the end of the program. Let the moment happen before the student breaks the mood.

Policy Debate:

1. Preference in team pairings will be taken into consideration, but the coach reserves the right to make changes and adjustments that best serve the interest and strength of the total team. Be careful about pairing a boyfriend/girlfriend; if they have "couple" problems, they will not do well in competition. Cooperation between team members is crucial for a debate team to be successful. Also, the team members should have similar obligations or activities so that the coach can schedule practice time.
2. Debaters must share research and contribute to the team's total preparation. Each debater should be constantly alert to newspaper and magazine articles relating to the year's topic. Each debater will be asked to research specific questions as needed during the season.
3. There should be a combination of team practices and individual practices.
4. Debate constructive cases should be written out to make sure everything that needs to be said is in the case; however, a speaker should try to avoid simply reading the case when in a debate. He must maintain good eye contact with the judge and utilize good vocal skills; if a debater never looks at the judge, he won't know if his case is making any sense to the judge.
5. Some practice time should be spent on teaching the debater to flow the debate effectively.
6. Some practice time should be spent on teaching the debater to ask and answer questions in the cross examination time period.
7. The OHSSL permits debaters to store their evidence on a laptop computer rather than on file cards in "ox boxes." They are also permitted to flow the debate on the computer rather than on a pad of paper. However, they may not log on to the

Internet or any other source and do actual research during the debate; they may not call up flow sheets or notes from other debate rounds; they may not communicate with a coach or fellow debater or anyone else during the debate round. Any illegal use of electronic devices during a round is grounds for disqualification. Note: NFL rules do not permit the use of a laptop by debaters during debates.



Lincoln Douglas Debate:

1. All LD Debaters must share research and contribute to the team's total preparation. Each debater should be constantly alert to newspaper and magazine articles relating to the current topic.
2. There should be a combination of team practices and individual practices.
3. Debate constructive cases should be written out to make sure everything that needs to be said is in the case; however, a speaker should try to avoid simply reading the case when in a debate. He must maintain good eye contact with the judge and utilize good vocal skills; if a debater never looks at the judge, he won't know if his case is making any sense to the judge.
4. The debater needs to have a good understanding of different schools of philosophy: John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, etc.
5. Some practice time should be spent on teaching the debater to ask and answer questions in the cross examination time period.
6. Time must be spent in developing the debater's speaking style. This kind of debate is much more persuasive than policy debate, and good oratory skills can save a weak case.
7. Remember, the key to success in LD Debate is understanding philosophy and how it relates to practical living. Investing in analyses of philosophers from the "Briefs" companies might be a wise move.

Public Forum Debate:

1. The same 1-6 as in Policy above.
2. The winner of the Coin Toss determines whether that team speaks first or last or Affirmative or Negative. A coach should work out a strategy with the team members to make this decision.
3. The Final Focus of one minute is challenging in the areas of organization, analysis, and word economy, so coaches should spend time with team members in this area.
4. Debaters should stand for the individual Crossfire and sit for the Grand Crossfire. This will be printed in the NFL rules.
5. Quoting from the NFL guidelines: "Unlike Policy Debate, the resolution debate may be a proposition of fact, value, or policy. To that end, neither the pro or con side is permitted to offer a plan or counterplan; rather, they should offer reasoning to support a position of advocacy."