

Impromptu Topics for Speech Event

DIRECTIONS:

1. Select one topic.
2. You have one minute to prepare a 2-minute speech.
3. Return this sheet to the judge.

IMPROMPTU TOPICS

Group A

1. “The more elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate.”

— Joseph Priestly

Explain what this statement means to you.

Do you agree or disagree with Priestly?

2. Describe one activity that makes you lose track of time? Explain why.

3. A September 2008 article from the *Washington Post* states that “Abstract math is not known for its stirring effect on U.S. teenagers. But algebra is viewed as increasingly essential for college or careers in a technology-based economy. Some advocates call it the new literacy.”

Describe how you think algebra would be considered the new literacy in the 21st century.

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Group B

1. “The strength of the United States is not the gold at Fort Knox or the weapons of mass destruction that we have, but the sum total of the education and character of our people.”

—Claiborne Pell

Where do you believe the strength of the United States lies? Explain your opinion.

2. How would you define “integrity”? Does integrity matter to you? Give an example of someone you know that has shown integrity.
3. If you could get a message across to a large group of people, who would those people be? What would your message be?

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IMPROMPTU TOPICS

Group C

1. *Synergistic* is defined as working together and cooperating for an enhanced effect.

With whom do you have a *synergistic* relationship? Explain.

2. “Today’s teens should think of every job opportunity as an important building block in life, no matter how menial it seems. A successful career is built incrementally, one step at a time.”

—Chris Kearney, 52 and CEO of industrial products giant SPX

Describe how you are using an opportunity today as a building block to your future.

3. Research recently released by MTV and Microsoft reveals that young people in the U.K. spend 34 hours online each week, almost the equivalent of an average working week, with 80% of 16-24 year olds logging on to the internet daily and claiming that they can’t live without their computer, over and above their mobile phone .

How do you personally compare to these statistics? Give an example.

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IMPROMPTU TOPICS

Group D

1. “The greatest gift is a passion for reading. It is cheap, it consoles, it distracts, it excites, it gives you knowledge of the world and experience of a wide kind. It is a moral illumination.”

— Elizabeth Hardwick

Give a specific example of something you read that you would describe as a “moral illumination”.

2. National Punctuation Day®, the holiday that reminds America of the importance of proper punctuations, celebrated its fifth anniversary September 24, 2008.

If you were an elementary school principal, how would you help school children celebrate this holiday at your school?

3. Countdown to President Obama being inaugurated in January 2009. What CHANGE do you want most?