



Extemp and Impromptu: Glossary and 10-Week Practice Plan.

Learn the vocabulary, then follow a simple weekly plan that builds a beginner into a confident limited-prep speaker in ten weeks. About 3 to 4 sessions per week, 20 to 45 minutes each.

Beginner glossary

Extemp

Short for extemporaneous: a speech on a current-events question prepared in a limited time

Draw

The moment a speaker selects a question or prompt

Files

Collected articles organized by topic

Preview

A quick list of your main points in the introduction

Point (or contention)

A main reason supporting your answer

Analysis

Your explanation of why a fact matters

Transition

A bridge between points

Resolution

The statement debated in Extemp Debate

Grace period

Extra seconds after the time limit before a penalty applies; varies by league

Opposition

The debater who argues against the resolution

Mandatory prep

One minute both debaters get before the rebuttals in Extemp Debate

Evergreen file

A background article that stays useful for months

Impromptu

A speech given with very little prep, usually on a quote, word, or object

Prep room

The area where speakers prepare before their round

Thesis

Your one-sentence answer to the question

Attention-getter

The opening hook

Cite

To name the source of a fact aloud

Signpost

A phrase that tells the audience where you are ("My second point")

Ballot

The judge's written feedback and rank

Crystallize

To narrow a debate to the key reasons to vote

Proposition

The debater in Extemp Debate who supports the resolution

Cross-examination

A one-minute question period between constructive speeches in Extemp Debate

Flow

Notes that track every argument in a debate

Rank

A judge's ordering of speakers in a round; scoring methods vary

10-week plan

NSDA suggests beginning with a first speech that has unlimited prep time, then trimming the prep a little each time until you reach 30 minutes. Weeks 6 and 7 below follow that idea. The plan is a coach's suggestion and not a rule.

WEEK	FOCUS	MAIN DRILL
1	Learn the event	Read the format guide; do a 3-minute impromptu daily
2	Start your files	Build 8 folders; file 2 articles a day
3	Structure	Write 3 introductions with the template
4	Evidence and citations	Do 5 spoken citations per session
5	Analysis	Use 20 sentence starters on 5 stories
6	Full prep, relaxed	Do a 45-minute prep and a 5-minute speech
7	Full prep, real timing	Do a full 30-minute prep and 7-minute speech
8	Delivery	Record, watch, and fix pace, gestures, fillers
9	Impromptu and debate	Do 4 impromptus and 2 mini-debates
10	Mock tournament	Do 3 rounds with a parent or coach as judge

Mock round score sheet

Rate each speech from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong). Aim for steady growth, not a perfect score.

CATEGORY	ASK YOURSELF	SCORE
Answer	Did I answer the exact question or prompt?	
Structure	Could a listener repeat my main points?	
Support	Did I cite a source or give a concrete example?	
Analysis	Did I explain why, not only what?	
Delivery	Pace, volume, eye contact, fillers	
Time	Did I finish inside the limit?	

How parents can help each week

- ♦ Serve as timekeeper: show cards for 2 minutes left, 1 minute left, and stop.
- ♦ Ask one follow-up question after each speech, the way a curious listener would.
- ♦ Give one praise and one fix, using the score sheet above.
- ♦ Help print and file articles, and check the weekly refresh.
- ♦ Protect practice time on the calendar; short, regular sessions beat long, rare ones.

Weekly rhythm

- ♦ **Daily (15 to 20 min):** read, file, and explain one story aloud.
- ♦ **Twice a week:** a timed speech, impromptu or extemp.
- ♦ **Weekly:** record one speech and review it.
- ♦ **Weekly:** update one folder and remove outdated articles.

- ☐ Week 1 to 3: can explain the event and the structure.
- ☐ Week 4 to 5: cites sources aloud smoothly.
- ☐ Week 6 to 7: completes a full 30-minute prep on time.
- ☐ Week 8 to 9: fewer fillers and a natural pace.
- ☐ Week 10: finishes a mock round with a clear ballot to learn from.

Tracking progress

Record the date, question, time used, and one thing to improve after each speech.

PRACTICE LOG

Next step

Want a plan built around your speaker? Book a free consultation with Scholar Coach at the link below.

Built from public guidance: NSDA Competition Events Guide: Extemporaneous Speaking and Impromptu · NSDA Impromptu Starter Kit · NSDA Extemporaneous Debate event page. Rules change by league and tournament, so always confirm against your tournament invitation and current league rules.

NOTES

Want a plan built around **your** debater?

Book a free consultation. The short intake takes about a minute and opens right away.

BOOK NOW →