



Final Focus Script and Ballot-Writing Words.

The final focus is a two-minute closing argument. Use this script and phrase bank to turn a messy round into two or three clear reasons the judge can write on their ballot.

What final focus is

Final focus is the last speech from each team, 2 minutes in the NSDA schedule (check your league). It should sound like the judge's notes. The best ones tell the judge what to write down.

- ♦ **Do:** repeat the arguments you went for in the summary, explain why you win them, and compare them to the other side.
- ♦ **Do not:** bring up new arguments or new evidence. Stay consistent with the summary.
- ♦ **Do not:** try to cover everything. Two voting issues is enough.

The 2-minute script

TIME	PART	SAMPLE WORDING
0:00	Opening	Judge, there are two reasons to vote Pro today.
0:10	Voting issue one	First, [tagline]. They never answered our evidence from [author, year] that says [point].
0:50	Defense	Their best response was [response]. That fails because [reason].
1:10	Voting issue two	Second, [tagline]. This is the bigger issue because [weighing].
1:40	Weigh and finish	Even if you think they win a small point, our impacts are larger and more likely. Please vote Pro.

WRITE YOUR OWN FINAL FOCUS HERE

Ballot-writing words

A ballot, or reason for decision (RFD), is the judge's note on why one team won. Giving them these phrases helps them write it your way.

Voting issue

The main reason a judge should vote for you.

Extend

Bring an earlier argument forward into this speech.

Drop

Outweigh

Turn

Show their argument actually helps your side.

Link

The connection between steps in an argument.

Clash

Where both sides argue about the same point.

Uncontested

Not answered by the other side.

Even if

A phrase for winning in more than one way.

Ballot

The judge's written decision form.

Phrase bank

- ♦ 'The key question in this round is...'
- ♦ 'Their argument fails for two reasons.'
- ♦ 'This was never answered.'
- ♦ 'Even if you buy their point, we still win because...'
- ♦ 'Compare the impacts: ours is bigger because...'
- ♦ 'For these reasons, please vote Pro/Con.'
- ☐ Practice with a timer until the speech lands at 1:50 to 2:00.
- ☐ Say each voting issue in a single sentence.
- ☐ Make eye contact with the judge for the first and last sentence.
- ☐ Match your voting issues to your partner's summary.

Want a plan built around your debater? Book a free consultation at the link below.

Built from public guidance: NSDA Public Forum Debate event page (speechanddebate.org) · NSDA Public Forum Pilot Rules 2019-2020 · Wikipedia: Public forum debate. 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 →