



Points of Information: Offering, Accepting and Drills.

Points of Information are what make World Schools feel like a live conversation. Use this guide to learn the rules, practise the skills, and run six short drills at home or in a club.

The rules in brief

- ♦ A **POI** is a short comment or question from the opposing team to the person speaking. It can be a question or a statement, and it should stay near **15 seconds**.
- ♦ POIs may be offered only between the **1st and 7th minute** of an 8-minute speech. The first and last full minute are protected.
- ♦ There are **no POIs during reply speeches**.
- ♦ The speaker holding the floor may accept or decline, with a hand gesture or a short comment. The NSDA norm is that a speaker takes about **two** POIs: taking none looks like avoiding the debate, and taking many gives away too much time.
- ♦ Offering a POI more often than about every **20 seconds** is discouraged and can be seen as harassing the speaker.
- ♦ If you accept a POI, let the other person finish their point, then answer it clearly and return to your speech.

Rules come from the NSDA World Schools manual and norms. Other leagues may vary slightly, so confirm with your tournament.

How to offer a good POI

- 1 Stand quietly.** Rise with one hand on your notes and say "point of information" or "on that point" in a voice the speaker can hear but that does not disrupt the room.
- 2 Wait.** If declined, sit and wait before trying again. Standing constantly is discouraged. Wait about 20 seconds before trying again.
- 3 Be brief and pointed.** One idea. Question form works well: "If the law applies only to large cities, what happens to rural students?"
- 4 Target a weak spot.** Aim at a gap in their logic or an example that does not fit.
- 5 Sit down promptly.** Stop at 15 seconds even if you have more to say.

How to accept and answer

MOMENT	WHAT TO DO
Choosing when	Accept at a natural pause, not mid-sentence of a key point
Accepting	Say "yes, go ahead" or nod and gesture
Answering	Short, direct, 10 to 20 seconds: answer, then link back to your argument
Declining	Say "no thank you" or "not at this time" politely

Why accept?

NSDA guidance counts answers to POIs as part of Strategy. Taking none looks like avoiding the debate; taking too many can eat your time. Aim for about two good ones.

Six drills

- 1 **The 15-second drill.** Write five POIs on any topic and say each aloud in 15 seconds or less.
- 2 **Rapid response.** A partner reads a POI; answer in 15 seconds ending with a link to your main point.
- 3 **Stand-up spacing.** One person gives a 3-minute speech; the partner offers three POIs, waiting at least 20 seconds between attempts.
- 4 **Weak spot hunt.** Listen to a sample speech and list the three most vulnerable claims, then turn them into POIs.
- 5 **Polite no.** Practise declining five times in different tones. Aim for calm and friendly.
- 6 **Full mini-round.** Two-minute speeches with one POI offered and accepted, then swap.

Self-check

- ☐ My POIs are one idea each.
- ☐ I wait before re-offering after being declined.
- ☐ I accept about two POIs in my speeches.
- ☐ My answers return to my argument.
- ☐ I stay respectful even when the other side is not.

POIS I WANT TO TRY THIS WEEK

Built from public guidance: NSDA USWSDI Manual (2023) · NSDA World Schools Norms (2023) · NSDA World Schools Adjudicator Guide. 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.

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