

# Writing a Critique a Student Can Use:

Comments that can be used in most if not all events:

- Was the speaker's appearance neat and appropriate?
- Was the energy level appropriate for the event?
- Did the performance adhere to the time allowed?
- Was the piece cut/organized in a way that is easily understood?
- When a speaker impresses, ask yourself "Why was that impressive?"
- When a speaker isn't, ask yourself "Why didn't that hit the mark?"

## Quality Points Tips

- A score of 25 means that there is nothing more the student can do to improve.
- Try to stay away from scores in the 1-8 range. If you think you must, please consult the Tab Room first. Most performances will be above this range.
- If a student does not present, they do not get a score
- Make sure your comments are helpful
- Remember, students and coaches can use your score sheet to improve. The more you write, the more you can help.

## Purpose

Always keep in mind your purpose in critiquing is to improve the student's ability in this event. No matter how much you liked or didn't like the piece, you are there to help them become better.

## Objectivity

Strive for maximum objectivity. If you think something is wrong but you can't put your finger on the exact problem, don't bluff. Try always to be honest, fair, and unbiased.

## Style

Don't arbitrarily impose your own personal style or preference on the student. The comment, "I like it better this way," is not adequate justification for downgrading a speech. If you can follow your comment with "because" or a reference, you are on a much firmer ground.

## Merit

Judge the writing by its merit alone. You can't measure the amount of effort or amount of improvement.

## Constructive Criticism

Remember that effective speaking is hard work. Students have a justifiable pride in their efforts. Don't nitpick, or find fault just to be finding fault. Your criticism must be constructive to be acceptable.