



MESA DAY CONTEST RULES

2025-2026

(FINAL)

Environmental Science ~ Impromptu Speech

- LEVEL:** High School (HS)
- DIVISION(S):** Grades 9/10 and Grades 11/12
- COMPOSITION OF TEAM:** 2-3 students per team
- NUMBER OF TEAMS:** Preliminary – Determined by your local MESA center
Regional – # of teams per division at the discretion of each region (Northern, Central, LA/Central Coast, and Southern)
- SPONSORS:** University of California Irvine MESA College Prep
San Jose State University MESA College Prep
- OVERVIEW:** **Changes, if any, from “DRAFT” rules are highlighted in “yellow.”**
Teams shall research and prepare to deliver a short impromptu speech based on one of the 3 official environmental science topics below.
- Participation logistics and limits may vary by host site. Advisors and students are responsible for verifying this information with their local MESA center.**
- RESOURCES:** [Impromptu Speech Resources](#)
- MATERIALS:** The host MESA Center will provide the following:
- Competition questions
 - One index card and pencil per team member
- GENERAL RULES:**
- 1) Teams must consist of 2 to 3 students. Teams consisting of 1 (one) student will not be allowed to compete.
 - 2) Prior to MESA Day, teams must research EACH of the three topics listed below.
 - a. The Carbon Footprint of Battery Production
 - b. Environmental Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Mining
 - c. Environmental Pollution and E-Waste Management
 - 3) On MESA Day, teams will receive 6 questions, 2 from each of the topic areas listed above. Teams will randomly draw 2 of the questions and may select which **one** of the two on which they wish to present. The team **must** present on the question drawn/chosen.

- 4) Once the team receives the question they will have two (2) minutes to organize and prepare as a team to present.
- 5) Each team member will receive one index card and one pencil which may be used during both the preparation period and presentation.
- 6) No additional reference materials, presentations, props, judge handouts, or visual aids are allowed.
- 7) Teams will have up to five (5) minutes to present their topic. All team members should actively participate in the presentation.

JUDGING:

- 1) Judges will determine team order by random selection and will post the team order prior to the start of competition.
- 2) The team must be ready to present when called or forfeit the competition.
- 3) Only judges, MESA staff, and competing teams will be allowed in the competition room.
- 4) Presentation may not exceed 5 minutes. Once 5 minutes has elapsed, teams will be stopped and prevented from speaking beyond the 5 minute mark.
- 5) Judges will provide time signals at the following intervals: one (1) minute, thirty (30) seconds, and five (5) seconds remaining.
- 6) At the conclusion of each presentation the panel of judges shall evaluate each team according to the Scoring Sheet. Judges' scores will be averaged to determine final scores.
- 7) **In the event of a tie**, the team with the highest "Content" score shall be the winner. If teams are still tied, duplicate awards shall be given.

AWARDS:

- Awards will be given per division: Grades 9/10 and Grades 11/12.
- Medals will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
- Please check with your MESA center to determine the number of teams that advance to Regional MESA Day.

ATTACHMENTS/APPENDIX:

- Score Sheet

SCORE SHEET FOR IMPROMPTU SPEECH

High School – Grades 9/10 and Grades 11/12

Copies of this inspection and score sheet will be provided by the MESA Day Host Center.

Student Names: _____ MESA Center: _____

School: _____ Grade 9/10 or 11/12(circle one)

Topic/Question: _____

Required Elements	YES		NO		
Team consist of 2-3 students			Unable to compete		
Presentation addresses chosen question			Unable to place		
Content	Excellent (10 points)	Very Good (8 points)	Good (6 points)	Satisfactory (2 points)	Needs Improvement (2 points)
Knowledge/Understanding of Topic: Comprehensive understanding and explanation of the topic.	10	8	6	4	2
Organization/Structure: Clearly organized with distinct and relevant introduction, body, & conclusion.	10	8	6	4	2
Logical Flow/Reasoning: On topic, deliberate progression of information, smooth transitions.	10	8	6	4	2
Evidence/Examples: Provides relevant supporting materials and real world examples directly linked to the topic.	10	8	6	4	2
Presentation	Excellent (5 points)	Very Good (4 points)	Good (3 points)	Satisfactory (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Team Introduction: Creative introduction of team members that includes names, grades, MESA center and topic presented.	5	4	3	2	1
Body Language: Confident, relaxed personable demeanor; fluid movements enhance presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
Pace/Flow/Vocal Control: Appropriate timing moves the audience smoothly from point-point. Voice clear & projects; clear pronunciation & enunciation.	5	4	3	2	1
Effective Use of Language: Clever, concise, and appropriate word choice; use of meaningful antidotes, statistics, or quotes.	5	4	3	2	1
Audience Engagement: Direct eye contact; effective use of gestures & facial expressions.	5	4	3	2	1
Team Participation: All team members participate meaningfully in the presentation.	5	4	3	2	1
Overall Presentation & Impact: Broad appeal and stimulates audience interest.	5	4	3	2	1
COLUMN TOTALS:					
FINAL SCORE:	/75				