

An Introduction to United States Extemporaneous Speaking (USX)



Event Description

In United States Extemporaneous Speaking, students are presented with a choice of three questions related to current events in the U.S. and, in 30 minutes, prepare a seven-minute speech answering the selected question. Students may consult articles and evidence they gather prior to the contest, but may not use the Internet during preparation. Topics range from political matters to economic concerns to U.S. foreign policy. The speech is delivered from memory.

Considerations for United States Extemp

Students who do USX are typically very curious about matters of domestic interest. Students should be well read and understand current events within the U.S. To learn more about domestic issues, students should spend significant time reading from a variety of news sources. Recommended reading lists include, but are not limited to: *New York Times*, *Brookings Institute*, *Economist*, *Bloomberg Business Weekly*, *The Guardian*, *Congressional Research Committee*, *The Financial Times*, and more.

Traits of Successful USX Speakers

When considering what event you should choose, or in which direction to point a student when selecting an event, below are some general traits of successful Extempers to keep in mind:

- Enjoys reading
- Naturally curious or inquisitive
- Passionate about domestic issues
- Determined
- Reflective
- Quick thinker

List of Past USX Questions

- Will the 113th Congress pass comprehensive immigration reform?
- Does the U.S. economy's contraction in the first quarter signal a new downturn?
- Did President Obama accomplish what he set out to during his foreign policy address at West Point?
- Will the Supreme Court legalize gay marriage nationwide?
- Can Rick Perry win the GOP nomination for President in 2016?
- What steps must Sylvia Burwell take to ensure the ACA's successful implementation?
- What role should the U.S. Army play in a post-Afghanistan military?
- Should President Obama decide on Keystone XL before the 2014 midterms?
- What has been the most important national news story of 2014?

Learn More! The National Speech & Debate Association is the leading provider of competitive and educational resources to aid students and coaches as they explore our competitive events. For United States Extemporaneous Speaking, we provide a number of helpful resources—including live and recorded webinars designed to introduce foundational and advanced concepts in Extemp; access to Extemp final round videos; an Extemp textbook for Resource Package subscribers; practice questions; topic analysis; and much more! Take advantage of the amazing benefits of being a member by using our resources to help advance yourself in competitive speech and debate activities. Visit www.speechanddebate.org for more information.

Find Your Voice

Extemp made me the poised, organized, and strong woman I am today. It taught me how to be myself in front of a room full of strangers, to break down complex theories so they are easily accessible, to quickly problem solve, and, most importantly, that I never need to apologize for being a girl who wants to talk about labor market policies more than celebrity drama."

— Talan Tyminski, Association Alum