

Speaker Scale

With thanks to Alex Worsnip and Jonathan Leader Maynard, authors of this Speaker Scale.

The mark bands below are rough and general descriptions; **speeches needn't have every feature described to fit in a particular band**: our job as judges is to find the best fit. Throughout this scale, 'arguments' refers both to constructive material and responses.

Please use the **full range** of the scale, and do not revel in being a **'harsh'** marker. There is no metaphysical truth about what an '82' consists of, the best practice is to mark in line with these guidelines and the rest of the judging pool or it's unfair on the teams you judge. Speaker marks determine many of the breaking teams, and tab finishes can be big achievements for lots of people, so please give them the brief moment's thought they require. If we receive reports of suspiciously low (or high) marks it may impact upon your judging ranking.

95-100	Plausibly one of the best debating speeches ever given, flawless and astonishingly compelling in every regard. It is incredibly difficult to think up satisfactory responses to any of the arguments made.
90-94	Brilliant arguments successfully engage with the main issues in the round. Arguments are very well-explained, always central to the case being advocated, and demand extremely sophisticated responses. The speech is very clear and incredibly compelling. Structure and role fulfillment are executed flawlessly.
85-89	Very good, central arguments engage well with the most important issues on the table and are highly compelling; sophisticated responses would be required to refute them. Delivery is clear and very persuasive. Role fulfillment and structure probably flawless.
80-84	Relevant and pertinent arguments address key issues in the round with sufficient explanation. The speech is clear in almost its entirety, and holds one's attention persuasively. Role is well-fulfilled and structure is unlikely to be problematic.
75-79	Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, and frequently persuasive. Occasionally, but not often, the speaker may slip into: i) deficits in explanation, ii) simplistic argumentation vulnerable to competent responses or iii) peripheral or irrelevant arguments. The speaker holds one's attention, provides clear structure, and successfully fulfills their basic role on the table.
70-74	Arguments are generally relevant, and some explanation of them given, but there may be obvious gaps in logic, multiple points of peripheral or irrelevant material and simplistic argumentation. The speaker mostly holds the audience's attention and is usually clear, but rarely compelling, and may sometimes be difficult to follow. There is a decent but incomplete attempt to fulfill one's role on the table, and structure may be imperfectly delivered.
65-69	Relevant arguments are frequently made, but with very rudimentary explanation. The speaker is clear enough to be understood the vast majority of the time, but this may be difficult and/or unrewarding. Structure poor; poor attempt to fulfill role.
60-64	The speaker is often relevant, but rarely makes full arguments. Frequently unclear and confusing; really problematic structure/lack thereof; some awareness of role.
55-59	The speech rarely makes relevant claims, only occasionally formulated as arguments. Hard to follow, little/no structure; no evident awareness of role.
50-54	Content is almost never relevant, and is both confusing and confused. No structure or fulfillment of role in any meaningful sense is provided.