CHALLENGING TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

OVERVIEW

Applying leadership and 21st century skills, participants collaborate to prepare and deliver a debate-style presentation with participants explaining opposing views of a current technology issue. The annual topics will be posted on the TSA website under *Themes & Problems*.

ELIGIBILITY

Three (3) teams of two (2) individuals per state may participate.

TIME LIMITS

A. Fifteen (15) minutes is allowed to prepare.

B. A minimum of two (2) minutes and a maximum of four (4) minutes is allowed to present.

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire is required.

PROCEDURE

PRE-CONFERENCE

A. Participants review the TSA Honor Statement for Competitive Events found in the General Rules and listed in the individual competitive event rules.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

A. Both members of the team must report at the time and place stated in the conference program to receive an assigned presentation time.

B. Both members must report with their materials to the preparation room at the assigned time.

C. Topic selection for each round::
   1. A member from each team will randomly select one of the annual topics.
   2. After each selection, the topic will be returned to the pile and shuffled for the next team.

D. At the end of the fifteen (15)-minute preparation time, each team is escorted to the presentation room where the team presents opposing views of the selected issue.

E. A list of twelve (12) semifinalist teams (in random order) is posted.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

A. A representative from each semifinalist team reports at the time and place stated in the conference program to sign up for a presentation time.

B. Semifinalist teams report to the preparation room at their assigned time for the same procedure used in the preliminary round.

C. Ten (10) finalists are announced during the conference awards ceremony.

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Students will work to develop their leadership and 21st century skills in the process of preparing for and participating in this TSA competitive event. The development and application of those skills must be evident in their submission, demonstration, and/or communication pertaining to the entry.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

A. Participants report to the preparation room at the assigned presentation time.

B. Materials:
   1. Team members may bring non-electronic reference materials for use while in the preparation room.
   2. No other form of assistance is allowed.
   3. Participants must provide their own pencils or pens for this event.
   4. Participants may provide note cards, if desired.

C. Note cards:
   1. Note cards may be used during the presentation.
   2. The use of note cards may result in score deductions if they detract from the effectiveness of the presentation.

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D. Event debate:

1. Using leadership and/or 21st century skills, the team presents on one (1) topic from the topics posted on the TSA website under *Themes & Problems*

2. Team may use first names ONLY and no other identifying information during their presentation.

3. One team member states the topic prior to the first speaker speaking in the presentation.

4. After stating the selected topic, the presentation time begins once a team member begins to speak.

5. Teams present opposing views of the selected issue in debate style.

6. Teams may use the following suggested format to present opposing views:

   - Introduction (pro)   Introduction (con)
   - Position (pro)   Position (con)
   - Conclusion (pro)   Conclusion (con)

7. A timekeeper notifies a presenting team thirty (30) seconds before the end of the four (4)-minute time limit by holding up a "30-seconds remaining" card.

8. Time is called at four (4) minutes, at which time the presentation must stop. No overtime speaking is allowed.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

A. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program to receive an assigned debate time.

B. Participants report to the preparation room at the assigned time.

C. Preliminary round procedures are used for the semifinal round.

EVALUATION

A. The debate

Note: Scores are reset for the semifinal round and are not added to the preliminary scores.

Refer to the official rating form for more information.

TSA HONOR STATEMENT

All work must be created and completed by individual competitors or teams. Plagiarism, the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) software, copyright violation, cheating, and falsification of information are prohibited. Participants may NOT use any generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Gemini, GitHub Copilot, etc.). Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Competitors at any level of TSA competition understand and agree to abide by the TSA Honor Statement.

If it is determined that a student violated the TSA Honor Statement, a rules violation of twenty percent (20%) will be incurred.

STEM INTEGRATION

This event has connections to the STEM areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

LEADERSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

This event provides opportunity for students to build and develop leadership and 21st century skills including but not limited to – Communication, Collaboration/Social Skills, Initiative, Problem Solving/Risk Taking, Critical Thinking, Perseverance/Grit, Creativity, Relationship Building/Teamwork, Dependability/Integrity, and Flexibility/Adaptability

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

This competition has connections to one (1) or more of the careers below:

- Lobbyist
- Management executive
- Motivational speaker
- Politician
- Public policy specialist

CHALLENGING TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

2026 & 2027 OFFICIAL RATING FORM

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Judges: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline in the rating form, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an "adequate" score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an "adequate" score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) A score of zero (0) is acceptable if the minimal performance for any criterion is not met.

Go/No Go Specifications

- Before judging the entry, ensure that the items below are present; indicate presence with a check mark in the box.
- If an item is missing, leave the box next to the item blank and place a check mark in the box labeled ENTRY NOT EVALUATED.
- If a check mark is placed in the ENTRY NOT EVALUATED box, the entry is not to be judged.

☐ A team of two (2) individuals is present
☐ ENTRY NOT EVALUATED

PRO SIDE (70 points)

Record scores in the column spaces below.

CRITERIA	Minimal performance 1-4 points	Adequate performance 5-8 points	Exemplary performance 9-10 points	
Introduction (X1)	Introduction does not show an attempt to get the attention of the audience, and/or it does not outline points clearly and distinctly.	Introduction shows an effort to grab the attention of the audience; previewing points are somewhat organized in a logical manner.	Introduction employs an attention-getter, clearly states the thesis, and previews main points of the issue.	
Organization (X1)	Ideas may not be focused or developed; the main purpose is not clear; there are no transitions.	The main idea is evident, and the organizational structure is generally strong; ideas are relevant and flow smoothly.	Ideas are clearly organized, developed, and supported, with smooth transitions.	
Topic Knowledge (X1)	Team does not have a grasp of the topic; inaccurate, generalized, or inappropriate support material is used; over dependence on notes is evident.	Team demonstrates a simple grasp of the topic; support material is stated; the team is at ease when it elaborates on the topic.	Team exhibits full knowledge and a clear grasp of the topic; support material is introduced and referenced accurately.	
Conclusion (X1)	Conclusion ends abruptly (no logical and/or organized conclusion is presented); it does not restate main points of the position.	Conclusion is somewhat engaging; it restates main points and wraps up the position on the topic.	Conclusion is engaging and restates main points of the topic in a comprehensive, competent, and articulate way, reinforcing the team's understanding of the subject; the position is well stated and closes with a connection to the introduction.	
Voice and Language (X1)	Vocabulary choice may be limited; speech is peppered with slang or jargon; voice is dull; language is questionable or inappropriate for the setting.	Presentation is respectful; language is appropriate for the setting and word choices are generally precise; voice is appropriate.	Language is appropriate for the setting and voice tone and pitch energize the presentation; vocabulary choices are vivid and precise.	
Delivery (X2)	Delivery detracts from the message; eye contact may be limited; presenters may tend to look at the floor, mumble, speak inaudibly, fidget, or read from cards; gestures and movements may be excessive.	Delivery is appealing, though some hesitancy may be observed; posture, eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, etc., do not detract from the message.	Delivery is natural, confident, and enhances the message; posture, eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, etc., indicate confidence.	
PRO SIDE SUBTOTAL (70 points)				

CHALLENGING TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

CON SIDE (70 points)				
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Introduction (X1)	Introduction does not show an attempt to get the attention of the audience and/or does not outline points clearly and distinctly.	Introduction shows the effort to grab the attention of the audience; previewing points are somewhat organized in a logical manner.	Introduction employs an attention-getter, clearly states the thesis, and previews main points of the issue.	
Organization (X1)	Ideas may not be focused or developed; the main purpose is not clear; main points are difficult to identify; there are no transitions.	The main idea is evident, and the organizational structure is generally strong; ideas are relevant and flow smoothly.	Ideas are clearly organized, developed, and supported, with smooth transitions.	
Topic Knowledge (X1)	Team does not have a grasp of the topic; inaccurate, generalized, or inappropriate support material is used; over dependence on notes is evident.	Team has a simple grasp of the topic; support material is stated; the team is at ease when it elaborates on the topic.	Team exhibits full knowledge and a clear grasp of the topic; support material is introduced and referenced accurately.	
Conclusion (X1)	Conclusion ends abruptly (no logical and/or organized conclusion is presented); it does not restate main points of the position.	Conclusion is somewhat engaging; it restates main points and wraps up the position on the topic.	Conclusion is engaging and restates main points of the topic in a comprehensive, competent, and articulate way, reinforcing the team's understanding of the subject; the position is well stated and closes with a connection to the introduction.	
Voice and Language (X1)	Vocabulary choice may be limited; speech is peppered with slang or jargon; voice is dull; language is questionable or inappropriate for the setting.	Presentation is respectful; language is appropriate for the setting and word choices are generally precise; voice is appropriate.	Language is appropriate for the setting and voice tone and pitch energize the presentation; vocabulary choices are vivid and precise.	
Delivery (X2)	Delivery detracts from the message; eye contact may be limited; presenters may tend to look at the floor, mumble, speak inaudibly, fidget, or read from note cards; gestures and movements may be excessive.	Delivery is appealing, though some hesitancy may be observed; posture, eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, etc. do not detract from the message.	Delivery is natural, confident, and enhances the message; posture, eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, etc. indicate confidence.	
			CON SIDE SUBTOTAL (70 points)	

PARTICIPATION (10 points)				
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Team Member Participation (X1)	One team member does the majority of the speaking and/or debating on the topic; the other member seems disengaged from the presentation; leadership and/or 21st century skills are not evident.	Both team members are engaged in the debate, but one clearly takes the lead; the other member only replies to or refutes statements; leadership and/or 21st century skills are somewhat evident.	Both team members are actively involved in the presentation, debate, and rebuttals of the topic; shared responsibility is evident throughout; leadership and/or 21st century skills are clearly evident.	
			PARTICIPATION SUBTOTAL (10 points)	

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____

To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.	TOTAL (150 points)	

Comments:

_____

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

JUDGE

Printed name: _____   Signature: _____

CHALLENGING TECHNOLOGY ISSUES EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

A. Event coordinator

B. Judges:

1. Preliminary round, two (2) or more per heat

2. Semifinal round, two (2) or more per heat

C. Assistants, two (2) per preparation room

D. Timekeeper, one (1) per presentation room

MATERIALS

A. Coordinator's packet, containing:

1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each judge

2. TSA Event Coordinator Report

B. A time sign-up sheet

C. Lined paper and 3" x 5" note cards

D. Stopwatch, one (1) per preparation room and one (1) for the presentation room per heat; one (1) set for the semifinal round

E. Note cards with each topic

F. A card with "30 seconds remaining" printed clearly, one (1) per presentation room

G. Tables and chairs for event coordinator, judges, and participants

RESPONSIBILITIES

AT THE CONFERENCE

A. Attend the mandatory event coordinator's meeting at the designated time and location.

B. Report to the CRC room and check the contents of the coordinator's packet.

C. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough personnel have been scheduled.

D. Inspect the area(s) in which the event is to be held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.

E. One (1) hour before the event is scheduled to begin, meet with judges and assistants to review time limits, procedures, regulations, evaluation, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.

F. Ensure the judges have access to the online judging system.

PRESENTATION TIME SIGN-UP

A. Check in the teams at the time stated in the conference program.

B. Late entries are considered on a case-by-case basis and only when the lateness is caused by events beyond the participant's control.

C. In order to compete, participants must be on the entry list or must have approval of the CRC.

D. Requirements for attire do NOT apply during check-in, only on the first day of the conference.

E. When the teams report to the event area:

1. Assign times for their presentations. Times should be scheduled at ten (10)-minute intervals.

2. Depending upon the number of entries, heats may be necessary to determine semifinalists.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

A. Preparation:

1. After each team reports to the preparation room at the assigned time and participants have been seated, review the time limits and distribute paper and note cards.

2. Allow each team to randomly select one of the annual topics from the shuffled pile of note cards.

3. Start the time and inform participants of the end of the preparation time.

4. Seven (7) minutes after the first team enters the preparation room, the second team enters the preparation room, goes to a different section of the room, and begins its presentation preparation, again with fifteen (15) minutes allowed for preparation; and so on for all the teams.

5. Each team in turn is allowed to enter the presentation room at six (6)-minute intervals, thus enabling a constant flow of participants to speak before the evaluators in a timely fashion. (This allows for one [1] minute to enter the presentation room and announce the entry number, up to five [4] minutes for the presentation, and one [1] minute to exit the room.)

6. Monitor students during the preparation time and supply extra paper if needed.

7. At the end of the fifteen (15)-minute preparation time, collect the topic and escort the team to the presentation room.

B. Presentation:

1. After the team is in position, introduce the team by entry number only. Please note that team members may use first names only and no other identifying information during their presentation.

2. Judges tell the team to start, and timing the event begins.

3. The timekeeper notifies the team thirty (30) seconds before the end of the four (4)-minute time limit by holding up a "30 seconds remaining" card.

4. Time is called at four (4) minutes, at which point the speakers must stop.

C. Judges independently assess the entries.

D. Decisions about rules violations must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and the CRC manager to determine either:

1. To deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points in this round

2. To disqualify the entry

The event coordinator, judges, and CRC manager must initial either of these actions on the rating form.

E. Judges determine the twelve (12) semifinalists.

F. Create a semifinalist sign-up sheet for final presentations.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

A. At least one (1) hour before the event begins, meet with judges/assistants to review time limits, procedures, regulations, evaluation, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.

B. Semifinalist teams report at the time and place stated in the conference program to sign up for a presentation time.

C. Oversee semifinalist presentations, following the same procedure used in the preliminary round.

D. Use the same official rating form for both the preliminary and semifinal rounds of evaluation.

E. Semifinalist scores are used independently and are not aggregated with the preliminary scores

F. Decisions about rules violations must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and CRC manager to determine either:

1. To deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points in this round or

2. To disqualify the entry

The event coordinator, judges, and CRC manager must initial either of these actions on the rating form.

G. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the area.