



Judges' Comments, Middle School Competitive Events 2009 National TSA Conference, Denver, CO

Agriculture and Biotechnology Challenge

Students should structure the contents of the notebook and displays to follow the scoring rubric. Students should make sure the work indicates a true problem/solution relationship. Work should not be a copy of internet content but, rather, the student's own work. Use the display to highlight, not duplicate, the work of the work of the notebook. Avoid the influence of personal opinion in the work – key in on facts in the content.

Career Challenge

Students should turn in the cover letter, resume, and the applications in a folder (and perhaps bring a set of copies for distribution to each judge).

Challenging Technology Issues

Students should hold only their note cards during the event. Additional items are distracting. The use of creativity in “entries” made them interesting. Students should engage with each other and with the judges. Not many participants presented a solution; those who did showed a thoughtfulness of having interpreted information. Some violations occurred for exceeding the time limit.

Chapter Team

Written test scores were lower this year than in past years. *Robert's Rules of Order* (newly revised) should be studied; this will help students advance past the written phase of the competition and into the oral finals.

For the on-site problem:

- 1) teams need to address the three given parliamentary actions provided - this is the source of 30 of the total points
- 2) teams should look carefully at the minutes from the previous meeting, where *referred to a committee* or *postponed to the current meeting* are found – both of which should occur in the meeting that teams demonstrate
- 3) teams should debate more; many points were lost by teams that didn't adequately debate the main motions and any debatable secondary motions
- 4) students should spend more time practicing how to properly make and handle secondary motions (errors here are the source of large deductions)

The fifteen minutes allotted for team demonstrations should be viewed as the law. Teams that go over that time limit are almost guaranteed not to place.

Communications Challenge

Students should obtain photo releases for all individuals pictured, including adults. Quotes, jokes, schedules, etc. added to a presentation increased its overall quality. Students should use professional email addresses for contact information. Sponsor letters should include a good description of what TSA is and an easily understood explanation of what the group is requesting.

Construction Challenge

Students should make sure their entries are complete. Photos and/or news article should be included. Proof reading is beneficial. Entries without models tend to fall into lower scoring areas, i.e. make a model that is innovative and creative.

Cyberspace Pursuit

Students should check spelling and grammar. Sources of information and quotes should be cited. Organization of content helps, and graphics are a plus. Teams must include all information needed according the design brief. Equal team member participation during the interview is a must.

Digital Photography Challenge

Students should include specific details on the cover of the binder.

Dragster Design Challenge

There was wide variety in entries regarding documentation preparation – from excellent work to last minute plans to no plans at all. Follow the guidelines for documentation! Cars and scores were some of the best ever. Very few dragsters were disqualified from racing.

Electronic Game Challenge

Students should cite resources clearly. Organization of pages is important. Go for originality when creating a game. Game testing prior to submission is a must (to ensure that the game will run for the judges). Students should practice interviewing, and know the game well enough to answer any questions that might arise in an interview. Rules violations occurred for incorrect cover pages, entries not being submitted on a DVD, and not following the storyboard presentation requirements.

Environmental Challenge

In general, the entries were good. Rules violations occurred for not following notebook page requirements.

Flight Challenge

Students should be sure to include a contents page. Also, students must include measurements in metrics. Drawings should be labeled.

Graphic Design Challenge

Rules violations occurred for D4 (incorrect theme), F (copyrighted art permission not included), and E (used color).

Inventions and Innovations

Students need to pay attention to grammar and the use of standard English. Presentation files on flash drives should be the only file on the drives. The models were well thought out and appropriate. TSA Professional attire is the required dress.

Leadership Challenge

Students should pay attention to spelling and grammar, follow outline format, and be concise. Solutions to problems should be realistic and focus on the use of leadership qualities.

Manufacturing Challenge

Students must include all measurements and labels on drawings. Be sure to include quality checks in flow charts. Students should read the rule book carefully to avoid violations. Craftsmanship is important. The design intent of the product should match its practical use. Rules violations occurred for no display boards and only one prototype (two are required).

Medical Technology Challenge

Students should use 12 font for easier reading. Avoid cute or creative use of font type and sizes. Be sure to include required notebook pages, copyright citations, photo releases, and reference lists, etc...

Students should speak clearly and loudly, use good posture, and make eye contact. Equal presentation time for the team representatives is a must.

Prepared Speech

Students should incorporate information into speeches, and make sure that a connection is made between any visual aid and the speech. Students should work on voice control, speed of verbal delivery, eye contact, natural posture, and topic focus.

System Control Technology

Rules violations occurred because of a lack of the required number of team members.

Technical Writing Challenge

Students should focus and be prepared for the style expected of technical writing.

Technology Bowl

Students should study TSA history and facts, and emerging technologies.

Technology Transfer Challenge

The team projects were effective and of good quality.

Transportation Challenge

Students must incorporate the interior elements of the hovercraft as part of construction. The propeller must be enclosed in order to pass the safety inspection.

TSA Cup: Marine Design Challenge

Students must follow requirements for the display, the model and the notebook (especially the order and number of pages). Be creative and strive for quality. Rules violations occurred for oversized displays, incorrect country colors, missing components, and oversized boats.

TSA Talk Multimedia

Students should follow guidelines closely. Reviewing is a good idea to ensure completeness of submissions. Pay attention to punctuation, grammar and the format of the entry. Students should clarify themes and include authorship and consent forms. Creativity is important, but be sure to focus on the content. Some time violations occurred.

Video Challenge

Students should be sure that the storyboard shows planning in advance of production. Violations occurred for the omission of release forms and lack of citation for copyrighted material.