

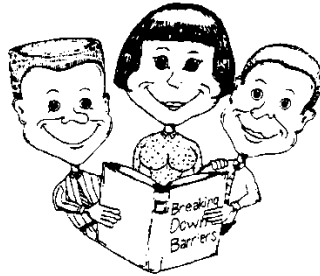
**BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS:
HOW TO DO INDIVIDUAL EVENTS
PUBLIC SPEAKING
SAMPLE**



**WRITTEN BY
JIM HANSON**

**with the assistance of Bridget Kustin, Diana Liska,
Katie Imbeau, Nicholas Thomas and Rachel Hastings**

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Photos by Jim Hanson**

Include Table of Contents and Chapter 1

Welcome to a flexible, step by step approach to the world of individual events. *Breaking Down Barriers* covers virtually every aspect of contemporary individual events.

This book is dedicated to the individual events competitors at Kennedy High School, Western Washington, Interlake High School, University of Southern California, and Whitman College, and to the students in my public speaking, argument, and rhetoric courses at the University of Washington, Western Washington University, University of Southern California, and Whitman College.

BDB: How to do Individual Events is

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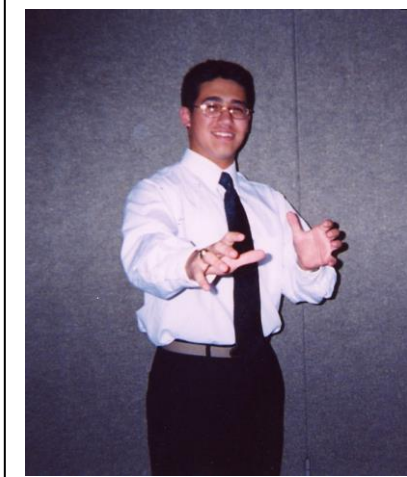
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

What does the phrase "Individual Events" mean to you? Is it like a boat ready to sail--with an unknown destination? When you think of public speakers, do you think of George Bush speaking to the nation? Do you think of Jay Leno or Oprah Winfrey on talk shows? Do you think of a speech that you had to give in a previous class? How well did it go? You're probably already thinking, "I am going to need to give speeches." That can be unnerving for people who haven't had much experience speaking and for that matter, people who have. I know I still get



This speaker is energetic and ready to do individual events successfully!

nervous. In this book, you will learn to become a better speaker. We'll work on delivery, on using solid supporting arguments, on being persuasive, on many things. But it has to start somewhere and there's no better time than the present. So, let's begin the process of becoming a better speaker.

WHAT ARE INDIVIDUAL EVENTS?

I'm sure that you have spoken with other people. You have probably given a class presentation, spoken at a church meeting, or talked in front of a group. Individual events are just like these. The only difference is that you speak in front of a judge who compares your speaking against others. IN INDIVIDUAL EVENTS ROUNDS, TWO OR MORE PEOPLE SPEAK IN COMPETITION TO SEE WHO IS BEST. For example, one person might speak on

apple crops, another on new medicines for allergies, and a third speaker on new forms of rapid transit. A judge watches the round and ranks the best speakers as "first," the next best speaker as "second," and the third best speaker, "third," etc. The judge ranks the speakers based on their delivery and content.

WHY DO INDIVIDUAL EVENTS?

Individual events are a fantastic opportunity that will prepare you for a life of success in many ways. I know that speaking has helped me to think more systematically, to speak better, and to have a deeper appreciation of the issues that confront our world. Individual events can benefit you as well. You will become a better speaker. You will organize and present ideas in a more credible manner.

What will I learn in this book?

You'll learn, step-by-step, how to give a wide variety of speeches. You'll learn the basics of preparing and presenting a speech. You'll learn how to give speeches with a limited amount of preparation; prepared "Platform" speeches and interpretation where you do literature.



This speaker demonstrates her compassion for her topic.

Individual events are fun and educational. You get the opportunity to engage in an intellectually challenging discussion of ideas you and other smart people have. You develop skills that will make you a more effective advocate. And, perhaps most important, you develop a lasting group of friends who share your interests.

THE ISSUES YOU CAN ADDRESS

I hope I have made a convincing case for doing individual events because they offer you such a great opportunity. Individual events provide a chance for you to speak on issues that you believe are important. You might want to talk about bloodless surgery, personal lie detector devices, or perform a piece on someone who is HIV positive. Go for it. If you choose to do speaking where you get a topic shortly before you speak, you'll discuss all kinds of issues. If you do a prepared speech, you can use it for up to the entire speech season (a season is usually September to June). When a new speech season starts, you must use a different speech as you cannot use the same speech during two seasons.

THE KINDS OF SPEECHES THAT YOU CAN DO

You can compete in many different types of speeches, Individual Events. Consider the following:

In impromptu speaking you will be given two to three topics, and you'll have six to seven minutes to both prepare and present your speech. The topics are usually quotations from famous people, words, questions, and/or pictures.

In extemporaneous speaking, you will be given three questions and you'll have thirty minutes to prepare a seven speech answering one of the questions. The questions are usually on recent, important political and social issues.

In oratory and persuasive speaking, you will present an eight or ten minute speech trying to change the beliefs or values of your judges. You prepare for the speech well in advance and you usually deliver from memory. Topics are usually on problems that individuals and society confront today.

In expository and informative speaking, you will give an eight or ten minute speech trying to explain, teach, or discuss a concept, idea, or process. You prepare the speech well in advance and you usually deliver from memory or limited notes. Topics are usually on new and useful inventions, hard to understand things people often wonder about, or entertaining subjects.

In editorial commentary speaking, you will give a short (2 to 5 minutes depending on the rules) speech commenting on recent news events much like a T.V., newspaper, or radio editorial. You prepare the speech well in advance and you need to adhere to the allotted speaking time carefully (usually a 15 to 30 second grace period). Topics are mostly on very recent political and social news.

Be Nice in your Rounds

While you are competing against other speakers in your round, you want to be respectful of other speakers. Listen carefully and show you respect the time and effort that others put into their speeches.

In after dinner speaking or speech to entertain,

you will give an eight or ten minute speech on a topic or theme with a strong emphasis on entertaining your audience usually through liberal use of humor.

In interpretation events, you will give an eight or ten minute presentation of a cutting from poetry, prose, and/or plays. You prepare and practice the presentation well in advance. You usually deliver from memory or virtually from memory although you might have a "black book" with the piece in your hand as you present. Pieces are usually contemporary literature that touch on themes that resonate with who you are as a person and with your audience's interests.

WHAT HAPPENS IN AN INDIVIDUAL EVENTS ROUND?

In an individual events round, you and the other competitors will each give your speeches. During the round you present your speech. Your goal is to convince the judge because the judge decides which speech is best. That means that at all times, you need to focus on your judge. Your speech is only as good as your judge thinks it is. So, even if you think your speech is presented well, addresses a hot issue, has interesting and strong material, your judge may disagree. As a result, you need to present appealing speeches. APPEALING SPEECHES are SPEECHES THAT JUDGES PERCEIVE

How do judges choose the best speaker in a round?

Good question. Typically, they will pick the speakers with the best content and who deliver it best. They're looking for someone who stands out from the other speakers as providing unique information and original presentation.

TO BE WELL SUPPORTED AND INTERESTING.

When you speak, you attempt to convince the judge in front of you, not yourself, not a different group of experts, and not a perfect judge who knows which speaker "truly" is the best. You have the right to expect that your judges will listen to your points, that they will not be biased in favor of one speaker, and that they will try to make the best decision that they can. However, that does not mean that your judge will make the decision you want, nor does it mean that your judge will be convinced by your speech, especially when your opponents are giving their own strong speeches.



When you present your speeches, always be thinking of how your judge will react. Focus on making your speech interesting with your delivery and your content.

When you present speeches, consider

how your judge will respond to your speeches. Adjust your speeches so that they will be appealing. This is a difficult task because there are so many different judges. But, most judges are reasonable people just like you, and you can appeal to them

What about tournaments?

If you participate on your school's team, you'll go to tournaments at other schools. Most High School tournaments are held on Friday and Saturday, or Saturday and Sunday. Most College tournaments are held on Friday through Sunday or Saturday through Monday. At the tournament, you'll usually compete in two to three rounds plus elimination rounds if you qualify based on the rankings and ratings that judges give your speeches.

with supporting material that is interesting and soundly developed. If judges do not find your speech appealing, then change it!

As you learn the many, many skills on how to give speeches, keep "appealing speeches" in mind. In the coming chapters, you will learn how to prepare and present strong speeches. As you learn these skills, your goal should be to consider how to make your arguments consistently appealing to judges. If you do this, you will be the kind of speaker that can convince judges.

Conclusion

If you have decided to learn how to do individual events, I congratulate you. You will discuss interesting issues. You will improve your ability to speak, think, organize, research, and write. And I think you will enjoy speaking. I know I have ever since I first joined my high school team, competed in college, and now coach speakers.