

Current Issue Judging Guidelines

Mass Envirothon 2024

Thank you for volunteering to be a judge for the Mass Envirothon! This is important and challenging work. These high school students have been researching and preparing for many months. With your assistance, their presentation will be a positive learning experience that will allow them to grow their civic engagement and public speaking skills.

On the morning of the event, please plan to arrive by 7:45. Pick up your folder and name tag at the Registration Tent, then join us at 8:00 for a judges briefing. The briefing will give you an important overview of your role and objectives for the day.

TIPS FOR JUDGING

1. Be encouraging and respectful.

- Be attentive and friendly. Treat each presentation as the brand new experience that it is.
- Remember that these young people will take praise and criticisms to heart, whether they show it or not. Be supportive in their learning experience.
- Try to ask at least one question of each team. Each judge should have an opportunity to ask a question.
- Consider providing positive feedback before asking your question. This makes for a good atmosphere.
- Treat each student's opinion with respect. Feel free to ask what they value and why, but do not judge them on this basis!
- The way students dress may be different from what you expect. Please remember you are scoring the content and quality of their presentation.
- Some team members may choose to wear face masks. Please respect their decision and don't hesitate to ask them to speak up if you can't hear them clearly.
- Some team members are English language learners. Please speak and listen carefully and ask them to repeat if necessary.

2. Use the formal question period to promote the students' understanding of the issues.

- When asking a question, introduce yourself to the team and briefly tell them what you do.
- Help to create an atmosphere where it is okay to say "I don't know" rather than trying to bluff an answer.
- Do not hesitate to correct errors of fact, but do it gently. Start with "It's my understanding that . . ."
- Ask them how they know what they know. They should be prepared to cite their sources.
- Ask them how they came to their conclusions. They should be prepared to explain their logic.
- Give them the benefit of your experience and judgment, but do it with a light touch and few words. No lectures please!

3. Offer your best judgment in point scoring and review comments

- Judge the research and critical thinking they used to come up with their answers, not the values they applied. Teams may come to a different conclusion than you on a controversial issue. This does not make their conclusion wrong.
- Comments on the score and review sheets are welcome! Be constructive.

4. Take advantage of the informal discussion time

- Use this time to get to know the team and impart any wisdom you have about how to succeed in a career that helps the environment. Remember this interaction does not affect a team's score.

Quick Introduction for Envirothon Judges

Mass Envirothon 2024

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PRESENTATION JUDGING:

Over the course of the morning you will judge in two different ways. It is important that each judge does both kinds of judging:

Scoring. When you are a scoring judge, you assign a number value to several aspects of the team's presentation. See the rubric for an idea of point value categories. This is necessary to determine a winner for the competition. You can include review comments if you have time.

Review. When you are a review judge, you focus only on making written comments. This kind of judging adds a real life feedback component and is a critical part of the team learning experience.

- There should be **six and only six** scoring judges for each presentation.
- Please serve as a review judge if you are not scoring, unless you feel you need a break.

Your tent has a Presentation Host, who acts as a facilitator for the presentations. Your tent also has an experienced Coordinating Judge who scores and reviews AND ALSO tracks which judges are scoring or reviewing each presentation.

EACH PRESENTATION FOLLOWS THIS PATTERN:

1. The Presentation Host opens the session, asking teams to introduce themselves to the judges.
2. The team members then have 15 minutes to make their presentation. The Presentation Host keeps the time.
3. There are 10 minutes for questions from the judges. The team calls on questioners. The Presentation Host moderates.
4. Then there are approximately 10 minutes for informal discussion with the teams. The Host will help divide the group into small conversations and will provide discussion prompts for you to interact with the students. These informal interactions should NOT be taken into account in scoring.
5. After the team leaves the tent, there are about 10 minutes for you to finish scoring, grab a snack, take a short break, and get ready for the next presentation.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALL ENVIROTHON JUDGES

- Turn off your cell phone during each presentation and question period.
- Give each team your full attention. Be encouraging and respectful.
- Trust your own best judgment.
- Share the role of asking questions during the question period (Ideally, every scoring and review judge asks a question of every team). Before asking questions, please introduce yourself to the team.
- Recuse yourself from scoring for a presentation where you know or have had a relationship with a team. You are encouraged to serve as a review judge for such teams!
- Relay any concerns through the Presentation Host.
- **Hold onto your scoring and review sheets until the end of the morning.** Adjustments are acceptable.
- To avoid falling behind, use the time in between presentations to finish scoring/reviewing.
- If there is a free period in your schedule, you may
 - take a break and join a park tour
 - observe a presentation in another tent (Be sure to give coaches priority in seeing/hearing presentations. Please, no questions)

BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE TENT AT THE END OF THE COMPETITION:

- Be sure the team name and your initials are on all your judging sheets.
- **CHECK AND RECHECK** your score addition before submitting your judging sheets.
- Stay until your Presentation Host and Coordinating Judge indicate that all score sheets are accounted for.

PLEASE COMPLETE & RETURN YOUR SURVEY. *Thank you!*