

LD, PF, and Policy Debate Evidence Rules — Guide for Judges

This document provides potential scenarios and basic expectations for Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, and Public Forum Debate judges. This is a guide and is not a replacement for the actual rules.

Scenario	Expectation
A debater or judge asks to see something read and/or the original source of something read.	The opposing debater should provide this information promptly.
A debater questions the oral source citation of the opponent	When debaters read evidence, they are required to provide the author's last name and the year of publication. If duplicating the same source, only the author's name is needed subsequent times. It is up to the judge to determine what to do with evidence lacking proper oral citations.
A debater questions the written source citation of the opponent.	When debaters read evidence, they are required to provide a full written citation, <i>to the extent provided by the original source</i> . Requirements include: full name of primary author and/or editor, publication date, source, title of article, date accessed for digital evidence, full URL, author qualifications, and page numbers. It is up to the judge to determine what to do with evidence lacking proper written citations.
A debater questions paraphrased evidence.	If a debater summarizes what an authoritative source says about a topic, s/he is required to have the original source of the information available, if questioned by the opponent and/or judge. If no specific source is referenced, but a general theory is summarized, no original source is required.
A debater questions the use of ellipses in evidence read.	The use of internal ellipses (...) is prohibited <u>unless it is a replication of the original document</u> . Vote against the debater and award zero points. Note this on the ballot.
A debater reads part of the quotation but not the entirety of the quotation.	A debater can select which parts of a quote are read and not read; however, the entire text must be present so a debater and/or judge can examine the quotation in full context.
A debater claims the opponent doesn't make it clear when s/he is delivering a piece of evidence orally.	Debaters can use phrases such as "quote/unquote" or "mark the card" to make it clear when they are quoting an author. It is up to the judge to determine whether or not the distinction between a debater's own analysis and a direct quotation is clear. It is up to the judge to determine what to do with this violation.
A debater claims that the opponent did not indicate in the written text what was read or not read.	Debaters must clearly indicate what was read in the debate. It is up to the judge to determine whether or not the marking is clear. It is up to the judge to determine what to do with this violation.
A debater questions the use of private communication.	Private, personal communication between an author and a debater is inadmissible as evidence. It is up to the judge to determine what to do with this violation.
A debater claims a straw argument violation.	A "straw argument" is a position of argumentative claim introduced by an author for the purpose of refuting, discrediting, or characterizing it. If an author is setting out to disprove a point, s/he may outline or establish that point before going into their refutation and conclusion. If a debater presents the idea as the conclusion of the author, they are violating the rules. A straw argument violation occurs when a debater does not verbally indicate s/he is citing a straw argument or citing that the evidence they are presenting is not the conclusion of the author. Therefore, debaters can use straw arguments, but when they do not verbally acknowledge it when first reading the evidence in the round, then it's a problem. The judge should vote against the debater who uses a straw argument and award zero speaker points. Note this on the ballot.

Scenario	Expectation
<p>A debater formally alleges during the round:</p> <p>A) The opponent distorted evidence. B) The opponent read non-existent evidence. C) The opponent clipped evidence.</p>	<p>If a debater makes a formal allegation DURING the round, the following general procedures should be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team/individual alleging the violation must clearly indicate a formal protest of distortion, non-existent evidence, or clipping. • The judge should <u>STOP THE ROUND at the time of a FORMAL PROTEST IN-ROUND to examine the evidence from both teams/individuals and render a decision as to whether or not a violation occurred.</u> • If the alleged violation is legitimate (see below for specific definitions and explanations), the judge should vote against the debater who violated the rules. If the alleged violation is not legitimate, the judge should vote against the team/individual who alleged the violation. TAB MUST BE NOTIFIED.
<p>A) Distortion</p>	<p>A judge should look at the evidence in question. When reviewing the evidence, the judge would determine it was distorted if it contains added and/or deleted word(s), which significantly alter the conclusion of the author. A failure to bracket added words also would be considered distortion. If a debater distorts evidence, s/he should lose the round. The judge should notify the tab room.</p>
<p>B) Non-Existent Evidence</p>	<p>If a debater is unable to provide the original source or copy of the relevant pages when requested by the opponent or judge, the evidence is considered non-existent. If the original source does not provide the evidence cited, it is considered non-existent. If the evidence is paraphrased but lacks an original source to verify, it is considered non-existent. If the debater has the original source but declines to provide it to their opponent, upon request, it's considered non-existent. If a debater is found to have non-existent evidence s/he should lose the round. The judge should notify the tab room.</p>
<p>C) Clipping</p>	<p>Clipping occurs when the debater claims to have read the complete text of highlighted and/or underlined evidence, when in fact s/he skips or omits parts of the evidence. The judge should vote against the debater who clips and award zero speaker points. Note this on the ballot.</p>