

# COUNCIL *on* FOREIGN RELATIONS

Council on Foreign Relations Resources  
2026 National Speech and Debate Association International Extemporaneous Topics

## High School International Extemporaneous Topic Areas

- Central Asia and Eastern Asia
  - [Saeed Parulekar, “China in the Indo-Pacific: January 2026,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 16, 2026.](#)
  - [“U.S.-China Relations, From 1949 to 2025,” Timeline, Council on Foreign Relations, April 15, 2025.](#)
  - [“Regional Politics: Asia,” Reading, CFR Education, March 15, 2025.](#)
- Environmental Issues
  - [Daniel B. Poneman, “Energy Security: Back to the Future,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 10, 2026.](#)
  - [“The Global Water Crisis: Stress, Scarcity, and Conflict,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, March 20, 2026.](#)
  - [Global Energy Tracker, Council on Foreign Relations, February 23, 2026.](#)
  - [David M. Hart, “Climate Diplomacy: Watch What Countries Do, Not What They Say,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, November 18, 2024.](#)
- Europe (including Russia)
  - [Liana Fix and Benjamin Harris, “Orbán’s Fall in Hungary Opens a Door for Europe—and Closes One for Russia,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 13, 2026.](#)
  - [“NATO Is Marking Its Seventy-Seventh Anniversary. Will It Be Its Last?,” James M. Lindsay, Council on Foreign Relations, April 4, 2026.](#)
  - [Matthias Matthijs, “Europe’s Disjointed Response to the U.S.-Israeli War With Iran,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 6, 2026.](#)
  - [“Ukraine’s Struggle for Independence in Russia’s Shadow, from 1991 to 2026,” Timeline, Council on Foreign Relations, February 24, 2026.](#)

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# COUNCIL *on* FOREIGN RELATIONS

- Global Human Rights
  - [Linda Robinson and Noël James, “Women’s Power Index: CFR Gender Parity Score Stalls, in Warning Sign for Women’s Political Participation,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 19, 2026.](#)
  - [David J. Scheffer, “What Are the Global Options for Defending Iranians’ Rights?,” Council on Foreign Relations, February 2, 2026.](#)
  - [Diana Roy and Sabine Baumgartner, “Major Moments in UN History, from 1945 to 2025,” Timeline, Council on Foreign Relations, September 17, 2025.](#)
  - [“What Are Human Rights?,” Reading, CFR Education, September 10, 2025.](#)
- International Diplomacy
  - [Rebecca Lissner, “Americans Actually Support U.S. Global Leadership,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 16, 2026.](#)
  - [“Middle East Diplomacy Continues Amid U.S. Blockade,” \*Daily News Brief\*, Council on Foreign Relations, April 15, 2026.](#)
  - [Ashley Ray and Alexander Sarchet, “Global Summits to Watch in 2026: Bracing for a New Global \(Dis\)order?,” Council on Foreign Relations, December 17, 2025.](#)
  - [Liana Fix, “For Ukraine, Europeans Need to Play Checkbook Diplomacy With Trump,” Council on Foreign Relations, August 4, 2025.](#)
- International Economics
  - [Edward Alden, Thomas J. Bollyky, Inu Manak, and Chris McGuire, “Trade Trends to Watch in 2026,” Council on Foreign Relations, January 12, 2026.](#)
  - [Diana Roy, “How Does Immigration Affect the U.S. Economy?,” Council on Foreign Relations, December 4, 2025.](#)
  - [“What Gets in the Way of Free Trade?,” Learning Journey, CFR Education, February 6, 2025.](#)

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- Militaries and Armed Conflicts
  - [“Trump Weighs Iran Military Options Amid a Weekend of Clashes and Diplomacy,” \*Daily News Brief\*, Council on Foreign Relations, March 30, 2026.](#)
  - [Natalie Caloca, Molly Carlough, and Abi McGowan, “A Guide to Trump’s Second-Term Military Strikes and Actions,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 3, 2026.](#)
  - [Michael C. Horowitz and Lauren Kahn, “Military AI Adoption Is Outpacing Global Cooperation,” \*Expert Take\*, Council on Foreign Relations, February 11, 2026.](#)
- Northern Africa and Western Asia
  - [“Violent Extremism in the Sahel,” Global Conflict Tracker, Council on Foreign Relations, February 28, 2026.](#)
  - [“The UAE Announces Exit From OPEC,” \*Daily News Brief\*, Council on Foreign Relations, April 29, 2026.](#)
  - [Marriel Ferragamo and Diana Roy, “Trump’s Iran Ceasefire Has Been Extended. So Has the Hormuz Standoff.,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 22, 2026.](#)
  - [“War Spreads Across Middle East,” \*Daily News Brief\*, Council on Foreign Relations, March 2, 2026.](#)
- Northern America and Central America
  - [Marriel Ferragamo, “ICE and Deportations: How Trump Is Reshaping Immigration Enforcement,” Council on Foreign Relations, February 27, 2026.](#)
  - [“Regional Politics: The Americas,” Learning Journey, CFR Education, May 8, 2025.](#)
  - [Shannon K. O’Neil, “Trump and the Future of the USMCA,” \*Expert Take\*, Council on Foreign Relations, January 17, 2025.](#)

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- South America and the Caribbean
  - [Diana Roy, “Trump’s ‘Maximum Pressure’ Campaign on Cuba, Explained,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 31, 2026.](#)
  - [“Mercosur: South America’s Fractious Trade Bloc,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, January 29, 2026.](#)
  - [“China’s Growing Influence in Latin America,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, June 6, 2025.](#)
  - [“Economics: The Americas,” Learning Journey, CFR Education, May 7, 2025.](#)
- Southeastern Asia, Southern Asia, and Oceania
  - [Joshua Kurlantzick, “The U.S. Is Pushing Southeast Asia Toward China. The Iran War Made It Worse.,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 9, 2026.](#)
  - [Saee Parulekar, “China in the Indo-Pacific: November 2025,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 26, 2026.](#)
  - [Joshua Kurlantzick and Annabel Richter, “China is Becoming a Military Power in Southeast Asia in More Ways than People Think,” \*Asia Unbound\*, Council on Foreign Relations, September 15, 2025.](#)
- Sub-Saharan Africa (Eastern, Middle, Southern, Western Africa)
  - [Michelle Gavin, “‘America First’ in Africa Is Still Undefined,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 26, 2026.](#)
  - [David J. Scheffer, “The Specter of Genocide Returns to Darfur,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 13, 2026.](#)
  - [Ebenezer Obadare, “Religion and the Nigerian Crisis,” Council on Foreign Relations, November 24, 2025.](#)
  - [Heidi E. Crebo-Rediker, “The Road From Africa’s G20 Summit to Trump’s ‘America First’ Priorities,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, November 24, 2025.](#)

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- The World Next Week
  - [Michael Mandelbaum, “How to Build an American Foreign Policy,” Interview with James M. Lindsay, \*The President’s Inbox\*, Podcast, April 29, 2026.](#)
  - [Sebastian Mallaby and Rebecca Patterson, “The AI Bubble + The Productivity Paradox + India’s AI Summit,” \*The Spillover\*, Podcast, Council on Foreign Relations, February 26, 2026.](#)
  - [Erin D. Dumbacher and Michael C. Horowitz, “Autonomous Ukraine: We Are in a New Era of Warfare,” Interview With Gabrielle Sierra, \*Why It Matters\*, Podcast, Council on Foreign Relations, February 23, 2026.](#)
  - [Paul B. Stares, “The Risk Report for 2026,” Interview with Gabrielle Sierra, \*Why It Matters\*, Podcast, Council on Foreign Relations, December 18, 2025.](#)

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## High School United States Extemporaneous Topic Areas

- Civil Liberties and Expression
  - [Kaleah Haddock and Diana Roy, “ICE and Deportations: How Trump Is Reshaping Immigration Enforcement,” Council on Foreign Relations, February 27, 2026.](#)
  - [Kori Schake, “Civil-Military Relations Under Trump,” Interview with James M. Lindsay, \*The President’s Inbox\*, Podcast, Council on Foreign Relations, October 14, 2025.](#)
  - [Mariel Ferragamo, “World Press Freedom Continues Decline at a Time of Upheaval,” Council on Foreign Relations, May 2, 2025.](#)
- Climate, Environment, and Energy Policy
  - [Roxanna Vigil, “Trump Gambled by Easing Oil Sanctions on Iran and Russia. Will It Pay Off?,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 3, 2026.](#)
  - [“Who Releases the Most Greenhouse Gases?,” Reading, CFR Education, March 12, 2026.](#)
  - [“How Can AI Combat Climate Change?,” Reading, CFR Education, December 2, 2025.](#)
- Congress
  - [James M. Lindsay, “Congress Declines to Demand a Say in the Iran War,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 6, 2026.](#)
  - [David M. Hart, “Federal Energy Innovation Investment: Congress Reasserts Itself,” Council on Foreign Relations, January 12, 2026.](#)
  - [“What Roles Do Congress and the President Play in U.S. Foreign Policy?,” Reading, CFR Education, May 19, 2023.](#)
- Courts and the Law
  - [Diana Roy, “What Is Birthright Citizenship and Could the Supreme Court End It?,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 28, 2026.](#)
  - [“What Does the U.S. National Guard Do?,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, January 29, 2026.](#)
  - [“How Does the U.S. Refugee System Work?,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, November 3, 2025.](#)

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- Education
  - [Rachel Nuwer, “Public Health Backlash Hurts Master’s Program Enrollment,” Think Global Health, February 23, 2026.](#)
  - [“Is Rising Student Debt Harming the U.S. Economy?,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, April 16, 2024.](#)
- Health Care and Social Programs
  - [Gunilla Carlsson and Anders Nordström, “No One Wins If Multilateralism for Health Loses,” Think Global Health, April 22, 2026.](#)
  - [“Fentanyl and the U.S. Opioid Epidemic,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, October 30, 2025.](#)
  - [“What Does the CDC Do?,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, September 16, 2025.](#)
  - [Stephanie Psaki, “U.S. Soft Power: Next Steps After the Foreign Aid Withdrawal,” Think Global Health, June 9, 2025.](#)
- Innovation and Emerging Technologies
  - [Matthew Ferren, “Trump’s Cyber Strategy Falls Short on China, Iran, and the Threats That Matter Most,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 16, 2026.](#)
  - [Kat Duffy, “America’s Digital Empire Has a Trust Problem,” Council on Foreign Relations, February 24, 2026.](#)
  - [Vinh Nguyen, “Assuring Intelligence: Why Trust Infrastructure Is the United States’ AI Advantage,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, February 9, 2026.](#)
  - [“How Does AI Influence Government?,” Reading, CFR Education, May 2, 2023.](#)
- Pop Culture
  - [Marriel Ferragamo, “The U.S. Is Co-Hosting the FIFA World Cup. But Much of the World Can’t Attend.,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 15, 2026.](#)
  - [Sam Vigersky and Anthony Vinci, “Autonomous Ukraine: Honey, I Tracked the War,” Interview with Gabrielle Sierra, \*Why It Matters\*, Podcast, Council on Foreign Relations, April 10, 2026.](#)

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- Presidency and Executive Power
  - [Kat Duffy, “Anthropic’s Standoff With the Pentagon Is a Test of U.S. Credibility,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 5, 2026.](#)
  - [Natalie Caloca, Molly Carlough, and Abi McGowan, “A Guide to Trump’s Second-Term Military Strikes and Actions,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 3, 2026.](#)
  - [“What Does the U.S. National Guard Do?,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, January 29, 2026.](#)
  - [“What Is the National Security Council?,” Reading, CFR Education, September 15, 2025.](#)
- Social and Cultural Issues
  - [Noël James and Emma Ulvin, “Justice for Women and Girls: An Assessment of the 70th UN Commission on the Status of Women,” Council on Foreign Relations, March 27, 2026.](#)
  - [Joshua Kurlantzick, “As Democracy Falters Worldwide, Authoritarians Are Winning,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 19, 2026.](#)
  - [“U.S. Gun Policy: Global Comparisons,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, October 13, 2025.](#)
- U.S. Economics and Business
  - [Roger W. Ferguson Jr. and Maximilian Hippold, “The U.S. Economy Was Shaky Before the Iran War. Now It’s in Real Trouble.,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 28, 2026.](#)
  - [Edward Alden, Inu Manak, Benn Steil, and Michael Werz, “A Year After ‘Liberation Day,’ Experts Review the Costs of Trump’s Tariffs,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 2, 2026.](#)
  - [“The Economics of Hosting the Olympic Games,” Backgrounder, Council on Foreign Relations, February 5, 2026.](#)

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  - [Michael Mandelbaum, “How to Build an American Foreign Policy,” Interview with James M. Lindsay, \*The President’s Inbox\*, Podcast, Council on Foreign Relations, April 29, 2026.](#)
  - [Rebecca Lissner, “Americans Actually Support U.S. Global Leadership,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 16, 2026.](#)
  - [Shannon K. O’Neil, “The Donroe Doctrine Leans on Sticks But Needs Carrots,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 27, 2026.](#)
  - [James M. Lindsay, “The Best and Worst Foreign Policy Decisions in U.S. History,” Council on Foreign Relations, January 13, 2026.](#)
- The U.S. Next Week
  - [Michael Froman, “Trump Extended the Iran War Ceasefire. Now What?,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, April 24, 2026.](#)
  - [Jonathan E. Hillman, “Washington’s Growing Portfolio: Tracking U.S. Government Investments,” Tracker, Council on Foreign Relations, April 22, 2026.](#)
  - [James M. Lindsay, “Midterm Elections Are Eight Months Away,” Expert Take, Council on Foreign Relations, March 3, 2026.](#)
  - [Robert D. Blackwill, \*America Revived: A Grand Strategy of Resolute Global Leadership\*, Council Special Report No. 100, Council on Foreign Relations, January 2026.](#)