The following topics are provided for use/distribution within your state. This suggested list is provided as a service. Feel free to add, delete, or alter items to suit your purposes – especially in light of day-to-day events. Please keep in mind that other states may closely regulate the distribution of these topics. Please refrain from any distribution of the topics outside your state or by means which may be accessed outside your state, including the Internet, during the month of February.

**NFHS EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING TOPICS**

# February 2012

***Domestic***

*Easier Topics*

1. Is the Republican presidential nomination Mitt Romney’s to lose?
2. Would John Hunstman be a good option for Republicans as a Vice Presidential candidate?
3. Have Super PACs become too influential in the political process?
4. Was it a mistake for the Obama administration to delay construction of the Keystone Pipeline?
5. Are blogs good or bad for American politics?
6. Should the payroll tax cut be extended for a full year when it expires in late February?
7. Should the United States expand its use of “sin taxes” on alcohol and tobacco?
8. Which will be more important to Republican voters in 2012: social issues or economic issues?
9. How is Ron Paul shaping the message of the Republican Party?
10. Should the federal government regulate cursing and nudity on television?
11. Should the United States fear the declining European economy?
12. How will the drop in natural gas prices impact the American economy?
13. Is consumer debt delaying America’s economic recovery?
14. Are planned cuts in military spending excessive?
15. With an increase in accidental shootings by police, should toy makers stop producing realistic toy guns?

**More Difficult**

1. Is Rick Santorum the new standard bearer of the religious right?
2. If the election were held today, which Republican presidential candidate would be in the best position to defeat President Obama?
3. One year after the shooting of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, have American attitudes toward firearms changed?
4. Should U.S. universities limit the growth of Chinese Confucius Institutes on their campuses?
5. Should Congress make it illegal for its members to benefit from insider business information when making stock trades?
6. How can Republicans and Democrats resolve the deadlock over the membership of the National Labor Relations Board?
7. What is the source of Ron Paul’s significant appeal among younger voters?
8. Who is most at fault for America’s slow economic recovery?
9. Will infighting among Republican presidential candidates harm the party’s eventual nominee?
10. How might Republicans make inroads among minority voters in 2012?
11. As America seeks to create new jobs, which should be our priority: manufacturing jobs, or high tech jobs?
12. Will GOP attacks against Mitt Romney give President Obama an edge in the general election?
13. Should states tighten restrictions on the ownership of exotic pets?
14. Will Mitt Romney’s past role at Bain Capital be harmful to his electoral prospects?
15. Will Bill Dailey’s departure as White House Chief of Staff be helpful or hurtful to President Obama?

## **International**

*Easier Topics*

1. Are protesters on the Russian street a significant threat to Putin’s return to the presidency?
2. Should the West be worried about Islamic political parties in newly democratized nations?
3. Is the Eurozone crisis under control?
4. Will contested elections in Congo result in civil conflict?
5. Will Britain stand in the way of a more integrated Europe?
6. Should Iraq adopt a federal system?
7. Is Pakistani President Zardari in danger of being removed from power?
8. Has the departure of US troops from Iraq doomed the country to renewed civil war?
9. Can the Palestinian Hamas and Fatah movements come to a lasting peace?
10. What is the significance of Canada’s withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol?
11. Can China continue to meet its goals for economic growth?
12. Can Syrian opposition groups unite against the Assad government?
13. Should Iran’s threat to close the Strait of Hormuz be taken seriously?
14. Can moderates in Egypt’s new government keep more extreme elements in check?
15. Should Bosnia be allowed to join the European Union?

*More Difficult*

1. Is “The Protester” an appropriate choice for *Time*’s “Person of the Year”?
2. Is the United States prepared to deal with the consequences of the leadership succession in North Korea?
3. What steps should Russia’s leadership take to modernize their nation’s economy?
4. Ten years after being admitted to the WTO, has China lived up to its fair trade obligations?
5. How is the rise of ultra-religious Jewish parties impacting Israeli politics?
6. Does the succession of Kim Jong-Un hold any hope for moderation of the North Korean regime?
7. Will France’s new law outlawing genocide denial undermine the country’s relationship with Turkey?
8. Can Argentina’s President Fernandez revive the lagging economy in her country?
9. What nation or organization is in the best position to help curtail the violence in Syria?
10. Can Fiji get back on the path toward democracy?
11. Should Thailand’s former Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, be permitted to return from exile?
12. What lessons has Japan learned in the year since its tsunami and nuclear disaster?
13. Are Arab League sanctions a credible threat against Middle East dictators, such as Syria’s Bashar Assad?
14. Can a combined threat of Kenyan, Ethiopian and Somali government troops succeed in ending the Shabab militia?
15. Does Kazakhstan possess the resources to continue its successful rise?