

Rules for Extemporaneous Reading

Purpose of the Category

To develop skill in conveying an understanding of prose and poetry through the use of body and voice in a limited preparation environment.

Definition of the Category

Pre-selected cuttings of prose and poetry are to be interpreted with limited preparation time.

Rules

1. The tournament director shall provide selections of prose and poetry of approximately four hundred to six hundred words in length. The director shall prepare three poetry selections for each poetry round and three prose selections for each prose round.
2. Rounds will alternate back and forth between poetry rounds and prose rounds, with the first round designation determined randomly.
3. No student may enter the contest room until his/her designated speaking time as determined by the speaking order scheduled for that room. The student will wait outside the room until the previous speaker leaves. Then, the student will enter and announce his/her code to the judge. The judge will give the students copies of the three literary selections designated for that round. The student will then be given 8 minutes to select, prepare, and deliver one of those selections to the judge. Use of time is at the student's discretion, but subject to critique by the judge.
4. Contestants must read their chosen selection from the copy provided by the judge and may not edit or otherwise alter the text.
5. Platform movement should be minimal and non-intrusive. Costumes and props may not be used.
6. Vocal music, if used, should be incidental and not overwhelm the presentation.
7. Maximum time limit: 8 minutes, with an allowable 15-second grace period. There is no minimum time requirement, but judges may critique students who fail to convey the themes of emotions due to inadequate use of prep time. Any entry exceeding the grace period may not be ranked first in the round. If all entries in a round exceed the grace period, no first rank shall be given in that round.

Criteria for Evaluation

1. The extent to which the student demonstrated an understanding of and connection to the theme of the piece in the limited prep time frame.
2. The extent to which the intended intellectual content (what is happening) was created. Individual judges may lower the rank due to use of profanity or vulgarity.
3. The extent to which the vocal quality, inflection, force and emotional comprehension (how it feels) of the selection was revealed through control of vocal quality, inflection, force and timing.
4. The extent to which the vocal interpretation projected the visual imagery of the selection, including such items as articulation and pronunciation, use of emphasis, effective pauses and proper volume, rate and pitch.
5. The extent to which the physical presence was appropriate to the selection, including such items as eye contact, facial expression, gestures and bodily movement.