Persuasive/Dramatics

General Guidelines

Students appearing in any platform competition should observe the following important points, as they will enter into judging. Carelessness on these points could detract from an otherwise excellent presentation:

- **Appearance-** Dignity and good grooming should be apparent. Uniformity of dress is recommended for groups.

- **Props/Costumes-** All dummies, puppets, marionettes, and characters in plays should conform to WCA STUDENT CONVENTION dress and hair codes. (Obvious Exceptions: George Washington in powdered wig; Apostle Paul in robe, etc.)

- **Poise/Self-Confidence-**
  Approach- The approach is one of the most important elements in speaking, public reading, or singing. The contestant should walk confidently and briskly to the podium or front of the room and establish eye contact, pause for 5-10 seconds, and begin his presentation.

  Eye Contact- The contestant should establish rapport with the audience by good eye contact. He should avoid looking down often at his notes or Bible, at the ceiling, or out of the window. His eyes should move up and down, back and forth over the entire audience, slowly and naturally.

  Posture and Gestures- The rule for posture is DO NOT SLOUCH! The contestant should stand straight, but not lock his/her knees. Gestures should be free and flow naturally from enthusiasm. Natural movements are more effective than forced gestures.

  Delivery- The speaker should project his voice, using the diaphragm. Recreate the mood, experience, emotion, and feelings of the author. Employ voice variations and tempo.

- **Preparation-** Preparation and study are prerequisites for all speaking, reading, or musical performances. Research, organization, outline, and familiarity are the elements of preparation.

- **Platform Presentation-** Introduction of entry before the judges: Contestants in platform presentations are to give their first and last name and title of presentation distinctly ("My name is John Doe and the title of my oratory is...."). For entries involving more than one person a spokesman should be selected. NOTE TO JUDGES: This introduction is NOT to be counted as time against their presentation.

- **Memorization-** All selections and scripts must be memorized. *EXCEPTIONS:* Oral Arguments, Preaching, and Oratory contestants may use outline note cards.

HINTS FROM PUBLIC SPEAKING JUDGES

In public speaking, the key word is CONVINCING! Whether you present a dramatic monologue, a famous speech, or a recitation, your task is to convince the listener that these are your words, your thoughts, and your feelings. If you are portraying a specific character, you should make the audience believe you really are that person. Many factors contribute to a convincing performance: costuming (if allowed), gestures, posture, voice inflection, and emotion. Match each carefully to your script and character. Perhaps the most frequent comments from the judges deal with "emotion." Emotion should be carefully balanced. If you portray too little emotion, your performance will appear bland and colorless. If you portray too much emotion, you will appear harsh, phony, and overbearing. Also be careful that your emotion does not detract from clear, crisp, easily understood diction. The key: preparation and practice! Practice in front of a mirror and use every opportunity to perform before others.

(621) STAND-UP COMEDY

Description: This is a **one-person** act. The category is not intended to be "White Face," but rather the traditional "Circus Clown" appearance.

RULES

1. Costumes: A costume is required and may be commercial or homemade. It must be loose-fitting and meet the WCA Student Convention modesty standards. Males must wear male garments. Females must wear female garments.

2. Makeup: Facial makeup must be pleasant – no satanic/demonic/horror/white face images permitted. Special attention should be given to the eyes, eyebrows, nose, cheeks, and mouth.

3. Presentation: A written description of the act must be provided for judges. It must be positive, teach a Biblical principle/moral, and be void of sexual implications or ethnic ridicule. Focus should be on concepts such as strengthening traditional family values, love of God, exercise of faith, wisdom, defense of freedom, getting along with others, service, and /or commitment to virtuous living. The script must address a children's audience. The script may be the original work of the student or may be the work of another person. Note: Clown Act is **not** stand-up comedy. It is an act with a lesson. It may be mute or vocal. Electronic sound effects are permitted. The student must provide all necessary equipment. No off-stage assistance is permitted.

4. Props: At least four hand-held props are required (e.g., balls, books, balloons, bats, hats, mirrors, puppets, stuffed animals, mops, etc.) and must be included in the act.

5. Setup time: Two (2) minutes.

6. Time limit: Four (4) minutes minimum, six (6) minutes maximum.

HINTS FROM THE CLOWN ACT JUDGES
Judges will be looking for evidence that the student has carefully woven the entire presentation into a clear message in which costume, props, gestures, facial expression, characterizations, makeup, and "the lesson" are integral: transition, flow, relevance, timing, dexterity, agility, motions. Does the act draw and maintain audience attention? Is the lesson clear? Does the student use props well? Is there "dead" time (awkward periods of inactivity)? The costumes and makeup are vital for impression; if these are week, the entire presentation is weakened. They do not have to be elaborate, but they do need to be appropriately selected and applied to reveal and sustain the character of the clown. Careful attention should be given hair (wig), hat, bows, shoes, gloves, eye and mouth makeup, and costume adornments: badges, buttons, suspenders, etc.

JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION	POSSIBLE POINTS
I. Stagecraft	
A. Costuming and makeup	10
B. Scenery and props	10
C. Lighting	5
D. Sound effects	5
II. Cast Performance	
A. Lines (memorized and delivered)	10
B. Voice quality (inflection and projection)	10
C. Movement (body language, facial expression)	10
D. Blocking (direction of actors on stage)	10
III. Production Quality	
A. Selection of material (worthwhile message)	10
B. Characterization (believable characters)	10
C. Dramatic impact (message comes across effectively)	10
Total Points	**100**

Time limits: Setup: Five minutes   Presentation: Between six and ten minutes