

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.

(604) PREACHING

Description: A contestant must prepare and deliver an original sermon not to exceed eight (8) minutes in length.

Contestants would do well to keep the following scriptural guidelines in mind:

- preach the word (II Timothy 4:2)
- preach the gospel of Christ (I Corinthians 2:17)
- preach with authority and anointing (I Peter 4:11)
- preach sound doctrine (II Timothy 2:15)
- speak with sincerity (II Corinthians 2:17)
- speak in love (I Corinthians 13)
- seek to edify the church (I John 21:17)

An excellent book on the subject of preaching, *How to Prepare Sermons*, is available from the Pentecostal Publishing House. Each sermon will be judged on the biblical content, outline, and effective delivery, as well as the general guidelines given under “Platform Competition.” Grammar is very important.

HINTS FROM THE PREACHING JUDGES

The amount of prayer and preparation behind your sermon will be evident to your audience. Begin by spending time in prayer asking God specifically to direct your preparation. Prayerfully search the Scriptures for a subject. After settling on a subject, study other areas of the Bible that relate to your topic. Next, search Bible dictionaries and other reference materials to gain a deeper understanding of these verses. At this point, seek to begin organizing the material into an outline that will allow you to convey to your audience the points you feel most strongly on your heart. Follow with further study to find supplemental material for illustration and support. Your outline will be the heart of your sermon. Your outline should flow naturally from the scripture text and should be detailed and clearly organized with an introduction and conclusion. Be sure to include fitting illustrations and supporting Scriptures that lead logically to your conclusion. While notes are permissible, it should not be obvious that you are using them. Have someone evaluate your delivery to be sure it includes variety in gesture, voice inflection, and volume. Variety is important as it attracts your listeners’ attention more than sheer volume or speed can. Loud and fast are not always best! Above all, be sure your message is Scriptural, theologically correct, and leads the listener to an appropriate decision about his Christian life. The entire process of preparation and practice should be accompanied by prayer that your message would bless and benefit your audience.

JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION	POSSIBLE POINTS
Does the preacher capture the attention of the audience?	10
Is the subject matter (text) appropriate, not a trivial or whimsical topic?	10
Does the message seem to be supported by study and research?	10
Are appropriate illustrations used to hold interest and support claims?	10
Does the message seem to issue forth from personal consecration?	10
Does the preacher maintain good control of his posture and bearing and does his non-verbal communication enhance his message?	10
Does the message outline flow together to a logical and climatic conclusion?	20
Does the conclusion call for a commitment or response?	10
Taken as a whole, did the message edify the listeners?	10
Total Points	100

Time limits: Maximum, eight minutes