

Number	Entry	Category	Dress Code	Registration Requirements
641-642	Dramatic Signing	Performance	Dress Attire or Costume	Sign up on student registration form. Submit project info and script/lyrics online. Dates on website.

OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF ACCEPTABLE PERSUASIVE/DRAMATIC MATERIAL FOR EXCEL CONVENTION

Material should be carefully chosen or written to ensure that evil characters would not be glorified and that the student rehearsing (or the listener) would not be forced to dwell on negative or harmful thoughts or ideas.

PERSUASIVE/DRAMATIC DIVISION 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 EXCEL 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.

(641-642) Dramatic Song Interpretation-Signing Solo, Small (2 – 5), and Large (6 or more)

Description: A musical interpretation in which the message of a song is vividly portrayed in interpretive form through the use of sign-language by a single interpreter or by a team of interpreters. The interpreters may assume the roles depicted in the song through enhanced signs, actions, and gestures. No dowel rods are allowed.

1. The song picked must comply with the EXCEL Convention Guidelines statement of acceptable music.
2. Your team may be all male, all female, or mixed. It may be all Junior, all Senior, or mixed.
3. Time limit is 4-8 minutes.

HINTS FROM SIGN LANGUAGE/DRAMATICAL INTERPRETATION JUDGES

Performance should be an outreach to the Deaf. As an extension of Deaf Ministry. Performers should try to adapt ASL Concepts in their signs. NOTE: Statistics show that approximately 30% of ASL is the hands signing—the other 70% is in the body language and facial expression. Because of this reason, dark lights, use of only black lights with white gloves that only show the hands, is not really acceptable to the Deaf and therefore should not be used as an outreach in Deaf Ministry.

Choose songs that are easy to interpret and have a simple message.

Make sure your signs are conceptually accurate and correctly conveying the message. (TIP-videotape yourself or your group and watch yourself. If possible, have a Deaf person review your performance or tape and see if it makes sense to them. Ask them what they thought the song conveys.)

Wear appropriate clothing for contrast. Light-skinned people wear dark clothes, solid colors; dark-skinned people wear light-colored, solid colors.

The attention needs to be glorifying God, not the signer(s). People listening and/or watching should feel the anointing of the Spirit.

Get ideas from other sources, but adapt the signs and make it an original work. (Example: Get together with your group and decide how best to sign the song—or if one person is good at doing this let them do it and teach it to the group.) You can get ideas from other groups, but should not copy. We want originality.

Good use of ASL sign, concepts, body movement, facial expression, etc. is used to get the message across to the Deaf. Remember you are ministering to the Deaf, not to the Hearing audience.

Judges will include at least one Deaf person or CODA (Children of Deaf Adults), if at all possible. The remaining judges will be people who are proficient in ASL, actively involved in Deaf Ministry, or carry Interpreter certification on either the state or national level, or equivalent.

In interpretation, the key word is MESSAGE! Whether you are interpreting or acting, your task is to deliver to the audience the message, emotion, and feeling of the song. It is a form of communication. Through sign-language and/or acting, you are communicating a message. If you are portraying a character, make the audience believe you are that person. Many factors contribute to a moving and convincing performance: costuming, gestures, posture, mime, sign-language, facial expression, and emotion. Match each carefully to the message of the song and/or the characters portrayed in the song. Emotion should be balanced. If you show too little emotion, your performance will appear bland and will not move the audience. On the other hand, do not use so much emotion that you distract the audience from the message of the song. The key is preparation and practice! Use every opportunity to perform before others and receive feedback on how you might improve.

JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION

POSSIBLE POINTS

I. Interpreting

- | | |
|--|----|
| A. Knowledge of signs/choice of motions | 20 |
| B. Ability to portray subject vocabulary | 10 |

C. Makes complete thoughts	10
D. Expression (facial, body)	10
II. Communication/Script	
A. Choice of material (worthwhile message)	10
B. Dramatic impact	10
C. Smoothness	5
III. Platform Performance	
A. Approach/Departure	5
B. Appearance/Dress	5
C. Confidence	5
D. Uniformity/Self-control	5
E. Shows Enthusiasm	5
Total Points	100

Time limit: between four and eight minutes