

# 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.

## (625) ONE-ACT PLAY/SKIT

**Description:** Contestants must present an *ORIGINAL* play (written by students and/or sponsor) *OR* an adaptation of a play (having given proper credit to the original author).

1. The play must include two scenes.
2. No more than five players may be involved.
  - a. Each player may be used to portray more than one character.
  - b. Technicians, musicians, and all personnel needed for production will be counted in the five-contestant limit.
  - c. The writer is NOT required to be a part of the cast.
  - d. Girls must play female roles; boys must play male roles.
3. The play should depict or illustrate:
  - a. Soul winning
  - b. Scriptural truths
  - c. Our Christian heritage
  - d. Defense of the Christian faith
4. The play may NOT be a Musical, Reader's Theatre, or Choral Speaking.
5. Props and equipment must be provided by the contestants' school (i.e., extension cords, spots, furniture, sound effect equipment).
  - a. NO firearms may be used unless they are rendered inoperative and this has been verified by security officers employed by the institution where competition is conducted.
  - b. Discharge of blanks, caps, or any explosive in connection with a contest play is NOT permitted.
6. No recorded speaking or singing will be permitted in play production.
7. Recorded sound effects WILL be accepted (background music, storms, animals, guns, etc.)
8. Scripts are to be memorized.
9. A five-minute limit is permitted for stage setting UNLESS other arrangements are made with the Chief Judge.
10. The time limit for the presentation is six (6) minutes minimum to ten (10) minutes maximum.
11. Backdrops and equipment should be able to fit in an area 10 feet deep by 16 feet wide.

### **HINTS FROM THE DRAMA JUDGES**

Drama is the way characters relate to one another. Therefore, the most important thing in your one act play will be the convincing portrayal of characters. This is the essence of acting. All the elements of other speaking events apply to the actors in your one act play: movement, gesture, voice inflection, diction, and variety. Perhaps the hardest thing to master in acting is that appearance of spontaneity that makes the audience believe the scene is happening for the first time. To create spontaneity, study the way people react to things they hear, and try to build those natural reactions in your characters.

# JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION	POSSIBLE POINTS
<b>I. Stagecraft</b>	
A. Costuming and makeup	10
B. Scenery and props	10
C. Lighting	5
D. Sound effects	5
<b>II. Cast Performance</b>	
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
<b>III. Production Quality</b>	
A. Selection of material (worthwhile message)	10
B. Characterization (believable characters)	10
C. Dramatic impact (message comes across effectively)	10
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>

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