

Number	Entry	Category	Registration Requirements
623	Ventriloquism	Performance	Sign up on student registration form. Submit project info and script 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.

(623) VENTRILOQUISM

Description: Ventriloquism is the art of speaking so that the voice seems to come from some source other than the speaker. The object is to animate a dummy in such a manner as to present a lifelike act and convince the audience that the dummy is actually talking.

1. Dummy: The dummy's mouth may be controlled by button, lever, string, rod, or by hand. The only part of the dummy required to be movable is its mouth; extra effects may add polish to the performance. The dummy may be a professionally made model or a homemade model.
2. The dummy's hair style and clothing must be consistent with EXCEL CONVENTION GUIDELINES.
3. Judging WILL be based largely on the SKILL OF THE PERFORMING ARTIST.
4. Do NOT use puppets in this category.
5. There will be only one contestant in this category.
7. Script must be memorized.
8. The script must have a Scriptural application or principle. It should avoid use of ridicule, criticism, or reference to romance as a form of humor.
9. Time limit is six (6) minutes maximum.

HINTS FROM VENTRILOQUISM JUDGES

Ventriloquist: Make your dummy come alive! Do not treat the dummy as a doll, but as a real person. The ventriloquist needs to act as if he does not know what the dummy will be saying next. Be spontaneous and react to the dummy. Ventriloquist: be yourself. Practice in front of a mirror. Also, practice looking at the audience as well as the dummy. PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE.

JUDGING CRITERIA

AREAS OF EVALUATION	POSSIBLE POINTS
I. Spoken Material	
A. Suitable to occasion	10
B. Shows preparation and planning, not wholly extemporaneous, not just a collection of jokes	10
C. Basic theme and unity, builds to a message of Christian or patriotic worth	10
II. Dummy	
A. Suitable, personable, well-made	10
III. Skill of Ventriloquist	
A. Use of variety; singing, laughing, sighing, etc.	5
B. Variation of voice between performer and dummy	10
C. Absence of lip movement	10
D. Articulation	10
IV. Effective Presentation	
A. Timing	5
B. Poise of performer	10
C. Arouses audience response	10
Total Points	100

Time limits: Six minutes