

# MIDDLE LEVEL SPEECH

# HANDBOOK



2023-24

[www.whsfa.org](http://www.whsfa.org)

Released September 26, 2023

Revised January 2, 2024

### 2023-24 handbook changes (in-text changes noted as highlighted):

1. Demonstration Speech renamed to "**Informative/Demonstration Speech**" with a broadened allowance for the 1-2 student(s) to explore and develop an informative speech to offer new information and/or fresh perspectives; aligns with other states' category of Informative.
2. Informative Speech renamed to "**Expository Speech**," remains 4 minutes, but removes the allowance for visual aid to better reflect a narrow, simpler focus to simplify for less-experienced students; aligns with other states' category of Expository.
3. **Pro/Con** (pilot): inspired by the high school category Public Address "Pro-Con" option being offered this year, a student can develop two speeches of about 4 minutes apiece that present contrasting viewpoints/positions on one of the listed topics. Since many popular debate categories utilize opening/constructive speeches that are about 4 minutes, this is a perfect place for students to get a taste of debate!
4. Instructions for registration and contest management have been moved online: <https://www.wisdaa.org/docs/speech/>
5. (11/11/23) Updated topics on rules pages for Moments in History and Special Occasion for 2023-24 season.  
(12/19/23) Minor updates to evaluation sheets for Expository, Informative/Demonstration, and Pro-Con.  
(12/20/23) Minor updates to Adjudicator Guidelines (p. 13-14) for consistency with high school Speech.  
(1/2/2024) Addition of rule §5.5 on Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI; p. 4).

**Coach note:** Middle level advisors who also coach high school use the same email address in SpeechWire when registering for contests (denote middle level students on roster with projected **high school** graduation years).

## 2023-24 category topics:

**Extemporaneous Speech:** topics focus on technology and society.

1. How has artificial intelligence changed assistive technology for people with disabilities?
2. In what ways does artificial intelligence endanger our society?
3. How should students responsibly use generative artificial intelligence in the classroom?
4. What are the biggest problems with social media, and what should be done to fix them?
5. Who gains the most from generative artificial intelligence?
6. What should the U.S. government do to protect against cyber threats?
7. How has access to technology increased during and after the COVID-19 pandemic?
8. What should be done to counter "deepfake" disinformation?
9. What can be done to better promote rural access to the Internet?
10. How can the U.S. improve upon the skills gap in technology?
11. Are U.S. privacy laws strong enough to protect technology users?
12. What are the advantages and disadvantages of augmented reality?

The **Middle Level Advisory Committee** meets annually, is comprised of teachers/coaches from different geographic areas, and is chaired by the Middle Level Advisor. Suggestions for change or revision of festivals or rules is discussed; recommendations are then presented to the Board of Control.

**Moments in History:** 1900-1919  
and/or 1970-1979 (choose one  
or both time periods)

#### Special Occasion:

1. A public apology
2. Address to Board of Education
3. Speech delivered to a school assembly of current students
4. Wedding toast

#### Pro-Con:

1. To what degree, if any, should generative artificial intelligence be regulated and by whom?
2. To what extent, if any, should schools require community service as a graduation requirement?
3. What actions, if any, should be taken by the government to ensure an individual's right to privacy?
4. What standards and processes, if any, should be used in determining appropriate content/books/texts in classrooms and school libraries?
5. What, if anything, should the government do to address economic inequality (e.g., minimum wage, jobs programs, food/housing security)?

# Middle Level Speech Rules & Policies

1. **Categories** offered: Expository Speech, Extemporaneous Speech, Informative/Demonstration Speech, Moments in History Speech, News Reporting, Non-Original Oratory, Persuasive Speech, Play Acting, Poetry Reading, Prose Reading, Readers Theatre, Solo Acting, Special Occasion Speech, Storytelling, and Pro-Con Speeches (pilot).



2. **Contest participation regulations**
  - 2.1. Submitting registration obligates a school to pay WISDAA dues and contest registration fees whether or not the school actually participates.
  - 2.2. All schools are subject to [WISDAA Interscholastic Participation Rules](https://www.wisdAA.org/docs/wisdAA/association-policies/eligibility-participation-rules/) ([wisdAA.org/docs/wisdAA/association-policies/eligibility-participation-rules/](https://www.wisdAA.org/docs/wisdAA/association-policies/eligibility-participation-rules/)), pertaining to supervision at contests.
  - 2.3. In all festivals participants' school identity shall not be made known to adjudicators until results are announced. Wearing emblems identifying and representing schools is prohibited. For virtual participation, coaches should avoid identifying their school in submitted videos/video channels.
  - 2.4. Member schools may participate with nonmember schools in contests other than those sponsored by the Association, but such participation will not qualify contestants for WISDAA participation certificates.
  - 2.5. **Electronic/digital recording is prohibited at any WISDAA event.** This does not apply to videos of entry presentations submitted by coaches for adjudication in virtual contests.
  - 2.6. Festivals are open to the public, but subject to individual host school/institution visitor policies; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.
  - 2.7. Any entry may be changed from in-person to virtual or vice versa at any point during the season, but may perform at each contest level (Level 1, Level 2) only once.
  - 2.8. For any **virtual entries**, the coach must attest that they have followed their school's policies regarding video recording students (i.e., obtained parental permission/release forms). Coaches are responsible for checking each video link; incorrect links, wrong sharing settings, or inaudible videos will be considered "no shows" and will not advance to the next contest level.
3. **Contest levels:** The progressive levels of festivals shall be Level 1 and Level 2.
  - 3.1. Festivals shall consist of three rounds of participation. All students must participate in three rounds unless permission has been granted by the State Office in an emergency situation.
  - 3.2. Festival sites are determined by coaches who volunteer to host, and who complete the official form on the WISDAA website.
  - 3.3. Festival managers determine registration fees and adjudicator honoraria.
  - 3.4. Coaches may designate individual entries or an entire middle level team to participate in the State Office-run virtual contest at any level.
4. **Registration:** Entries must be registered online via SpeechWire beginning with Level 1 to be eligible to advance; festival managers have the right to require entering schools to honor reasonable entry deadlines.
  - 4.1. The State Office will dispatch entries to the contests selected by the registering coach. Coaches may request any of their entries to participate virtually, as long as they provide a ratio of adjudicators to students entering each contest independent of the other (e.g., if a school has 2 entries participating at an in-person festival and 2 entries participating virtually, it must provide an adjudicator for each).
  - 4.2. An entry is defined as an individual student, except for two-person Demonstration Speech entries, 1- 3 students in News Reporting, or groups of 2-7 students in Play Acting and Readers Theatre.
  - 4.3. In the event member(s) of a group entry as defined in §4.2 are unable to appear at a Festival, any other eligible student(s) may be substituted.
  - 4.4. In the WISDAA Level 1 and Level 2 festivals, a student may not "double enter," or represent their school in more than one category during the same year, with the exception of substitution as part of §4.3.
  - 4.5. **Accessibility requests:** when registering entries, the coach should note accommodations and other requests required by any contestants as per their school's protocols for doing so. Those will be reviewed by the state office, with specific instructions shared with each contest level. It is the coach's affirmative responsibility to specify this information when registering entries; contest officials will ensure information is kept confidential.
5. **Material:**
  - 5.1. **Changing or revision of material** is permitted for the next level and *required* in News Reporting.
  - 5.2. **Copyright, permission, and royalty:** Each member school whose participants use copyrighted material is responsible for obtaining permission from the publisher to use that material. When a royalty play or cutting from a royalty play is used, the school using such material is responsible for permission to cut, and payment or obtaining a waiver of royalty.
  - 5.3. **School and community standards:** coaches are responsible for ensuring their students represent their school and community standards in use of subject matter, language, and use of gesture.
  - 5.4. **Reuse of material in different seasons:** A student or group may not use the same selection or original speech

more than one year in any WISDAA event, whether it be in the same or another category. High school students or groups may not reuse material they performed in Middle Level events.

## 5.5. Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

5.5.1. **Speech categories:** contestants are prohibited from quoting or paraphrasing text directly from generative AI sources. Generative AI should not be cited as a source. The exception is that a student delivering a speech about the topic of AI may quote AI to illustrate their points about AI, and cite that source, accordingly. Overall, while generative AI may be used to guide students to articles – including for Extemporaneous Speech – ideas, and sources, the original source of any quoted or paraphrased evidence must be available if requested.

5.5.2. **Performance of literature categories:** where published material is required, students are prohibited from performing material created by generative AI sources. Overall, generative AI should not be used as a source of material; while generative AI may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and material, the original source of any material that is performed must be available if requested. Students in all categories are prohibited from using generative AI to write introductions and transitions.

## 6. Presentation:

6.1. **Manner of delivery:** The traditional modes of delivery in oral presentations are: impromptu (wholly spontaneous), extemporaneous (limited preparation and notes), memorized or manuscript. In certain categories manner in which a presentation – or portion of a presentation – is to be delivered is required by rule. If the manner of presentation is not required, the choice is up to the student. In any case, manner of delivery may enter into evaluation. If manner of delivery is required, the student may be evaluated on how well s/he executes the required manner. If delivery mode is student's choice, the choice itself as well as quality of its execution may enter into evaluation.

6.2. **Notes/speaking/reading stand:** For some categories, usage of notes is permitted; in those cases contestants may provide and utilize their own speaker/reading stand. The manner in which notes are used may enter into the overall evaluation.

6.3. **Use of staging and audio/visual material:** the use of costumes, props, makeup, music, lighting and mechanical sound effects is prohibited in WISDAA categories. Obvious exceptions are those categories in which the use of chair(s), stools, desk, table, reading or speaker's stand is expressly permitted, or for a speech where a visual aid may be an object. In no category is a host school responsible for providing any equipment for participants. See allowance for vocal music in §6.4.3.

6.4. **Time Limits:** Each category has a maximum time. Although there are no minimum time limits, presentations that are unduly short may be regarded as insufficient responses to the burden of the category and may affect the overall evaluation.

6.4.1. Adjudicators shall time the entirety of each presentation (including introductions in performance of literature categories), except for a statement of which prescribed topic has been selected for Special Occasion.

6.5. **Prompters:** While prompters may distract from overall effectiveness of presentations, they are not prohibited by rule at the middle level.

### 6.6. Virtual provisions

6.6.1. **Videos of group/pair entries:** video files uploaded for adjudication may be: (i). Recording of videoconference, with students in different locations, no post-production editing other than to piece together separate video files, or to correct audio/video sync or bandwidth issues. *Simultaneous speaking does not work well in video conferences;* or (ii). Captured in-person video capture, single-take, no post-production editing.

6.6.2. **Extemporaneous:** Using the list of Extemporaneous questions, the coach will arrange three (3) times (one for each round) to meet with each contestant (in-person, via videoconference, or via message), will share five questions, of which the contestant will select one – and may not duplicate any question for any given contest. Each contestant presentation should be recorded and finalized with the coach within 45 minutes of receiving material (to allow time for technical considerations).

## 7. Adjudicators, ratings, and advancement

7.1. SpeechWire is provided *free of charge* for all Level 1 and 2 festivals to use for scheduling and tabulation; the State Office will communicate to hosts on how to access their contests. At minimum, all Level 1 and 2 festivals are required to *report results* via SpeechWire.

- 7.2. One adjudicator for each section (room) is to be used for all levels of participation.
- 7.3. At WISDAA middle level Speech contests, adjudicators are *encouraged* to obtain and hold WISDAA certification.
- 7.4. Level 1 and 2 festivals require participating schools to supply a ratio of adjudicators based on number of entries. When entering multiple contests, such as for individual student scheduling conflicts (including in-person plus virtual), **the school must supply adjudicators for each separate contest in which it has entries** (e.g., a school has 2 entries at an in-person Level 1 and 2 entries in the Virtual Level 1 festival – it must supply an adjudicator for each of those contests).
- 7.5. Adjudicators will select ratings for each evaluation criterion as a frame of reference for contestants and their coaches, where 1=minimal, 2=emerging, 3=developing, 4=proficient, and 5=mastery. These will not be totaled/added.
- 7.6. Adjudicators will award each entry an overall rating of “Merit” or “Excellence” for their performance.
- 7.7. The master ballot is considered the adjudicator’s official record; once it has been submitted, no rating on that ballot may be changed except to correct a recording error.
- 7.8. All contestants participating in a Level 1 contest are eligible to participate in a Level 2 contest. There is no rating requirement to advance.
8. **Awards:** Students earn the following awards, with each student in a group entry earning a ribbon:
  - 8.1.1. Level 1: at least two ratings of Excellence – Yellow ribbon; otherwise, a Green ribbon
  - 8.1.2. Level 2: at least two ratings of Excellence – Blue ribbon; otherwise, a Red ribbon
9. **Concerns/protests**
  - 9.1. The state office shall appoint a referee committee to review complaints or appeals submitted after contests.
  - 9.2. Each contest held should assemble a referee committee consisting of at least three people, with another as alternate. Any possible disqualifications or adjudication concerns shall be referred to this group for resolution.
  - 9.3. During a contest, individuals may register protests pertaining to violation of rules, which will be investigated by the referee committee for potential action.
  - 9.4. Adjudicator concerns
    - 9.4.1. **Protesting adjudicator scores/comments:** coaches, on behalf of themselves and/or their students, may protest an adjudicator’s application of a rule or criterion. The referee committee will review the complaint, but will not interpret adjudicators’ written comments, nor reconsider point deductions.
      - 9.4.1.1. At the contest, the referee committee will review the complaint and render a decision.
      - 9.4.1.2. **After Level 1 or 2 festivals:** coaches may complete the “Adjudicator Concern Form” on the website *Middle Level > Speech Contests* page, including scan(s) of evaluation sheet(s) in question; this will be reviewed by the State Office, and if valid, referred to the committee enumerated in §7.1.
      - 9.4.1.3. Complaints must be received within five calendar days of the last round/time slot of any contest.
    - 9.4.2. **Remediating ineffective adjudication:** coaches may complete the form referenced in §7.4.1.2., selecting “remediation of poor adjudication” as their requested action.
    - 9.4.3. In all cases where a referee committee and/or State Office find adjudication has been ineffective, the office will send written feedback to the adjudicator explaining the concern, and the concern will be documented in the adjudicator’s certification record. Each contest shall be considered as one incident. Once a third incident is received for a particular adjudicator, certification will be revoked until such time the adjudicator completes the **Initial** certification training process. Serious infractions involving discrimination and/or violation of law will result in permanent suspension of all WISDAA adjudicator certifications.
    - 9.4.4. For concerns determined to be invalid, the state office will share written feedback with the complainant, explaining why it is not a valid concern.
10. **Harassment & Discrimination:** The Wisconsin Interscholastic Speech & Dramatic Arts Association is committed to fostering safe and supportive learning environments for all student participants and adults at our interscholastic events. This requires mutual respect on the part of all people present. Accordingly, WISDAA prohibits all forms of harassment and discrimination by and to any person, whether written or oral, based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by any applicable federal, state, or local law. Individuals found to have violated this policy will be subject to a full range of sanctions, up to and including removal from the festival premises.

# Training Adjudicators



After a festival ends, and students head home, the only meaningful way contestants and their coaches will know they did well or why they did poorly is the evaluation sheet you completed. What you say - and how you say it - can help that student learn; otherwise it will leave the student with nothing to learn from; or worse, it can shatter the student's desire to try to learn to become a more skillful communicator. Before giving evaluation, either in written or oral form, ask yourself:

1. Do I understand the guidelines to be used for evaluating this performance?
2. Have I made the students in the room feel comfortable so they will be able to perform to the best of their abilities and be accepting of my evaluation?
3. Am I making comments about things the person can do something about? (Why comment on how braces make it hard to speak clearly?)
4. Am I sure I am not being critical because of prejudices or problems of my own? ("I never did like Edgar Allen Poe" or "I think girls should wear dresses when performing", etc.)
5. Am I giving support by commenting on what was good as well as what needs improvement?

How to write and speak for effective evaluation:

1. Make your statements descriptive rather than evaluative.
2. Be specific rather than general.
3. Be tentative rather than absolute.
4. Offer suggesting comments rather than directing comments.
5. Direct your comments to behavior the student can control.
6. Write only comments you can explain. It is very frustrating to read statements that aren't explained fully and to have no way of finding out afterward "what you meant."

A model for giving effective evaluation would have statements that begin with such phrases as:

- "When you ....." (followed by a description of the behavior)
- "I feel (think, see)....." describe how that behavior affects self and others
- "I'd like....." (describe how you think that behavior could change)
- "Because ....." (tell why you think that behavior should change)

A statement in response to the evaluation item that asks, "*Did the participant choose a delivery style that was appropriate to the speaker, subject, audience and occasion?*" might be:

When you speak so softly I can hardly hear you, I feel that perhaps you don't believe what you are saying. I'd like you to try and sound as if you care about the ideas of your speech because that will help us to believe in them, too.

or:

Your dynamic delivery style made me feel that I wanted to do something about your ideas right now! I'd like you to continue to show how much you care by working on including everyone in the room in your eye contact and not just me, because they should feel the same way I do.

## Sample Evaluation Sheets

The following evaluations are samples for both speaking and performance of literature categories. They are provided as materials to read, to stimulate discussion and to learn from. The first example is poorly completed, while the others may serve as models, although they may be deserving of improvement as well. Finally, a sample **official ballot** is included, to illustrate how adjudicators should complete that form. *All names have been replaced with common names from different cultures.*

Notice when adjudicators use specific examples of what contestants did or said – it helps students and their coaches contextualize what they need to improve, or to reinforce exactly what they should keep doing.

Note how points circled for each standard related to the comments, which indicate how well the contestant has met those standards. The overall rating at the top (Merit or Excellence) indicates the student's overall performance.

There is no magic number of points

The second example, from a Readers Theatre evaluation, could use more descriptive words (see p. 10).



# Poorly Completed Evaluation

The accompanying paragraph below was adapted from a letter by a concerned coach to the festival manager.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time: <b>7:16</b>	<b>MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION</b> <b>Solo Acting</b>  
Level: L1 <b>L2</b>	Round: 1 2 <b>3</b>	
Rating: <b>Merit</b> <del>Excellence</del>		
Name/Code: <b>D200</b>	Topic/Title: <b>Back at Four</b>	

For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

<b>Introduction</b>	Mastery	Provided title and author, and set the tone and theme of the presentation. Transitions (if used) helped connect material. <b>Nice explanation of your piece</b>
	Proficient	
	<b>Developing</b>	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Selection</b>	<b>Mastery</b>	Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story (beginning, middle, end). <b>Yes! Yes!</b>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Meaning</b>	Mastery	Performed believable, consistent, and well-defined character(s); and conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection. <b>Challenging piece with all your characters.</b>
	Proficient	
	<b>Developing</b>	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Voice</b>	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation. <b>Yes.</b>
	<b>Proficient</b>	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Body Movement</b>	<b>Mastery</b>	Movement/blocking was done with purpose/intention, with actor employing facial expression, eye contact, and appropriate gestures. <b>Strong job with all your character movements.</b>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature: <b>E. Valuator</b>		Print Name/Code: <b>E. Valuator / CO1</b>

This evaluation was disappointing. My student and I did not object to the rating of "Merit." Had weaknesses been pointed out and addressed, we feel this rating would have been justified; however, as written, there appears to be no justification for the proficiency levels circled in each area or the overall rating. It was difficult to rationalize the adjudicator's rating because on other critiques the adjudicator completed for our students, "Excellence" ratings were given while weaknesses were addressed. Finally, it was difficult for the student to understand the rating because at the same festival she earned two other "Excellence" ratings with similar positive comments. Again, we have no problem with "Merit," but consistency and justification are an important part of the learning process.

Max. Time: 10 Min.	Time: 10:10
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/Code: Ananya Patel/C18	

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Readers Theatre

Topic/Title: Spoon River Anthology



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction	Mastery	<p>Provided title(s) and author(s), and set the tone and theme of the presentation, explaining how each selection related to the overall program of performance. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.</p> <p>Develop further. Tell us more about Edgar Lee Masters and his purpose. Relax, smile, and warm up to audience at outset.</p>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Material	Mastery	<p>Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story or thematic concept.</p> <p>Great choice of material. Cutting incorporates scenes of character interaction, which makes selection read like a story. Good feeling for the material.</p>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Meaning	Mastery	<p>Employed effective group oral reading techniques to cohesively present the selection with appropriate pacing. Conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.</p> <p>Character differentiations clearly suggested. Voices helped create moods. Choral speaking and sound effects enhanced the performance. You clearly had fun!</p>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	<p>Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.</p> <p>Clearly audible. Pleasant voice qualities and pitch. Occasionally rushed, especially in dramatic passages - there you lose sincerity. Vocal variety helps to suggest age differences of characters.</p>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	<p>Movement emphasized the message by employing facial expression, eye contact, appropriate gestures, and handling of manuscripts.</p> <p>Readers handled scripts well, allowing them to use appropriate gestures. Good sense of timing. Movement was efficiently executed, had specific meaning, and was not distracting. Good coordination of voice, face and body, making the reading sensitive and believable.</p>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature: I.M. Fan		Print Name/Code: I.M. Fan / L4



Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time: <b>6:25</b>
Level: <b>L1</b> L2	Round: 1 <b>2</b> 3
Rating: <b>Merit</b> Excellence	
Name/Code: <b>Xao Chen/G4</b>	

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Persuasive Speech



**SAMPLE**

For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a suitable topic, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.
	Proficient	<i>You clearly and cleverly let us know that you were going to convince us that the abominable snowman does exist.</i>
	Developing	<i>You grabbed my attention from the very start, when you painted such a vivid picture of the cold, dark days of the arctic winter.</i>
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate and up-to-date information and quoting from a variety of factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	<i>Your best source was the Mountain County Sheriff's ledger. Be sure to cite where your other information comes from – this would add to your credibility. Your use of proven sightings and testimony was helpful.</i>
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. The speech was persuasive by urging action or change in attitude. If visual aids were used, the speaker actively used them to illustrate concepts.
	Proficient	<i>It seems that your use of slang terms such as "guys," "like," and "kid" detracts from the serious purpose of your speech. Use more mature, descriptive words.</i>
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	<i>You could slow down the rate of your speech, because some ideas are lost when you rush-through. Since you used only six minutes, you have time. Pause occasionally, to allow us to reflect on what you're saying.</i>
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	<i>Your eyes sparkled as if you experienced a sighting, which helped me believe you more. Use more natural gestures so they work with you. Using the podium creates a barrier between you and the audience, but when you moved away, your delivery was more relaxed!</i>
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	

Adjudicator Signature: <b>Ima Critic</b>	Print Name/Code: <b>Ima Critic / C05</b>
--	--

Max. Time: 4 Min.	Time: 3:49
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/Code: Ahmed Hassan/D7	
Topic/Title: Save the Seals	

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Expository Speech



**SAMPLE**

For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a suitable topic, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.  The Save the Seals campaign was a meaningful topic choice, and you drew me in, immediately, by explaining your personal connection. Perhaps you should expand your research and do a Persuasive Speech because you seem to be so involved in the topic.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate and up-to-date information and quoting from a variety of factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.  You organized your speech well. The opening statement was clearly explained by your three main points. Your own experiences showed you understood the campaign. Include more facts about the "whip" of the group. Give sources for your statistics, so we know they're valid.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate.  For an informative speech, avoid "loaded" words, such as "slaughter," "ruthless," and "greed," because they are emotional rather than factual and might be more appropriate for persuasion.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.  Say word endings more clearly: "ed," "ing," because this makes a speech sound more formal than just a conversation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.  You allowed your face to tell us what you were feeling, and helped us feel more involved. You looked at everyone, making the entire room feel included because you didn't read much from your note card, which helped the audience respond better to your ideas.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature: Emily Prove		Print Name/Code: Em Prove

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time: <b>3:49</b>
Level: L1 <b>L2</b>	Round: 1 <b>2</b> 3
Rating: <b>Merit</b> Excellence	

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Poetry Reading



**SAMPLE**

Name/Code: **Lupe Sanchez/E3**

Topic/Title: **Perry the Winkler**

For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	<p>Provided title(s) and author(s), and set the tone and theme of the presentation, explaining how each selection related to the overall program of performance. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.</p> <p><b>Your story about how important magic is to small children really set the mood for this poem. Tell me more about the author, too, and why he wrote this type of poem.</b></p>
	Proficient	
	<b>Developing</b>	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	<p>Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a cohesive and connected program of performance.</p> <p><b>You might wish to find another poem to go with this one, since it is quite short, or expand your introduction. This will give evaluators more to consider. You had fun with this performance, so I did, too! 😊 Thank you!</b></p>
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	<b>Emerging</b>	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	<p>Performance highlighted the artistry of language with such tactics as rhythm and pause; and conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.</p> <p><b>Built intensity to climax "Be off!" showed you understood poem. Voices of characters were done as the author described, "gently said," "laughed," and that made me relate to how the characters were feeling. Avoid sing-songy rhythm, especially at the end.</b></p>
	<b>Proficient</b>	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	<p>Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.</p> <p><b>You varied loudness and softness -and rate changes that created an understanding of the poetry. Be careful with articulation of words like "and," "looked," "wept," and "crept." You used repetition well for emphasis.</b></p>
	<b>Proficient</b>	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	<p>Movement emphasized the message by employing facial expression, eye contact, appropriate gestures, and handling of manuscript.</p> <p><b>When your face got involved, I became involved as your audience. Do this throughout the poem. Make gestures smoother and more gentle so they do not distract from your delivery - improving that will keep us engaged in your performance through the end.</b></p>
	Proficient	
	<b>Developing</b>	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature: <b>Edgar Mote</b>		Print Name/Code: <b>E. Mote</b>

Sample completed ballot from SpeechWire contest management software:

# Expos

WISDAA Middle Level 2 (Madison Middle School) ballot

Round 1, Section A, Room 43 (4:30 PM)

Adjudicator: B1 Judy Sheindlin (Madison Lutheran School)

**B1**

Code	Name	Title	1	2	3	4	5	QR
12D2	Andrew Schmidt (Info)	Pandemics	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M
7D3	Samir Asad (Info)	Emotional Support Animals	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M
4D1	Maya Johnson (Info)	Animation	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M
15D2	Jennifer Sanchez (Info)	Impact of Emojis on Writing	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M
7D1	May Zhang (Info)	Climate Change	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M
2D2	Aditya Kaleka (Info)	Fake News vs. Propaganda	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M
9D1	Paul Hansen (Info)	Essential Oils	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	Ma P D E Mi	E M

Adjudicator's signature: Judy Sheindlin (B1)

SAMPLE

# Speech Adjudicator Guidelines



## Before You Adjudicate:

- Familiarize yourself with specific rules and evaluation standards for categories you will evaluate.
- Make sure you're not adjudicating any students you know personally; immediately report conflicts to officials.
- Position yourself so your view and hearing for evaluation are unobstructed.
- If a student is not present, go on to the next. If the student shows, allow the student to perform last.

## Common Issues:

- **Accessibility requests** - Accommodate contestants with disabilities as noted on the ballot, without drawing undue attention. Evaluate each contestant on their own merits.
- **Time limits** - If a contestant continues presenting beyond the maximum time, the adjudicator shall stand, and the student may finish their sentence. Although there are no minimum time limits, adjudicators may reduce their rating and note as such in the second evaluation criterion, for a lack of development of content.
- **Disqualification** - If you believe a student is violating rules, please listen to the entire presentation and evaluate the best you can, then report the matter to contest officials, who will investigate and render a decision. Never *announce* disqualification, except *Demonstration Speech, RULE 4, where illicit items may endanger safety*.
- **Implicit Bias** - We are all influenced by implicit bias, or stereotypes that unconsciously affect our decisions. When adjudicating, our implicit biases negatively impact students who are traditionally marginalized and disenfranchised. Before writing comments or rating, reflect on any biases that may impact your decision-making process.
- **Video (virtual contests)** - Video quality may be impacted by lighting, internet, access to equipment, and other constraints. Your ratings and comments should focus only on the presentation itself and questions in evaluation criteria. Please **watch videos continuously** without pausing, rewinding/rewatching, so you are evaluating the work as if you were watching the presentation live, in person.
- **Face masks** – do not take presence nor absence of masks into account in your evaluation (in-person or videos) as you do not know circumstances by which students may need to be masked.

**Standards Areas:** Make specific written comments apply to each of the five evaluation standards - leave no area blank, and circle a proficiency level for each (Mastery, Proficient, Developing, Emerging, Minimal). Be honest, positive, supportive and helpful with suggestions for improvement or reinforcement of effective tactics. Use specific examples of what the contestant(s) did or said in their presentation. Need assistance for what to say? See the *Descriptive Words/Phrases List for Middle Level Adjudicators* on the next page.

**Overall Rating:** represents the contestant's overall achievement with their presentation; see rubric below:

	Merit Rating ★	Excellence Rating ★★
Level 1	The presentation is beginning its development, and the contestant(s) should make several improvements.	The presentation is engaging and meets expectations of proficiency or better <b>for at least two</b> evaluation standards.
Level 2	On balance, the presentation <b>falls short of proficient</b> for <b>at least three</b> of the evaluation standards.	Consistently meets expectations of <b>proficiency or better for at least four</b> of the evaluation standards, with just a few "fine tuning" comments for improvement.

## Return of Forms:

- At the conclusion of each round, record the overall rating (Merit/Excellence) from signed student evaluation sheets on the ballot provided, making sure ratings on the ballot are the same as those on evaluation sheets.
- Sign the ballot and return it, along with student evaluation sheets (unless otherwise instructed by the festival host) to the festival headquarters.

# Descriptive Words/Phrases for Adjudicators



## Content

layered meaning  
evoke emotion  
thought provoking  
persuasive arguments  
credible evidence  
balanced perspective  
timely source  
coherent  
cohesive  
nuanced  
dynamic  
cutting  
defined central narrative  
compelling plot  
range  
clever  
combination  
compilation  
unified  
convincing  
proficient  
mastered  
insightful  
wealth

## Effective Presentation

effective tactic(s)  
executed thoughtfully  
drew me in  
expressive  
articulate  
believable  
characterized  
credible performance  
committed character  
energetic  
lively  
animated  
honest  
genuine  
realistic  
authentic  
natural  
understated  
whimsical  
rhetorical  
passion  
vivacious  
vigor  
intimate

## Developing/Improving

artificial  
awkward  
broad / vague  
faulty  
flawed  
hindered  
incoherent  
misguided  
monotonous  
repetitive  
scarce  
absent  
incomplete  
lacks  
reassess structure  
requires  
potential  
pulled me out  
distracted  
gimmicky  
gratuitous  
incongruous  
reevaluate motives  
identify purpose

*Avoid vague terms: good • great • weak • needs work • practice more*  
*Instead, tell them: exactly what they did well; how they should improve;*  
*specific ineffective aspects of their presentation*





# Expository Speech

An expository speech allows for sharing of knowledge and experience with an audience. The speaker should limit the topic to ideas that can be developed well in the limited time allowed. The speech is to be organized, unified, and clear. A range of support materials are to be used which can include quotations, statistics, examples, and comparisons. Correct citation of support materials should be used where appropriate. A speech in this category must be informative in purpose in that it shares knowledge about an issue or raises awareness of a problem, and may explore potential solutions without urging support of particular action or change of attitude. Students seeking to develop thoughts on *what to do* about an issue or *what attitudes to have on an issue* should pursue the Persuasive Speech category.

## Rules to Follow

---

1. The speech must be written by the participant.
2. Visual supporting materials, mechanical sound effects, and lighting are **not** allowed.
3. Maximum time: **4 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
4. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students should avoid reciting from a word-for-word manuscript.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>4 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Expository Speech



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a suitable topic, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from a variety of factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. The contestant effectively narrowed focus of the topic within the time allowed.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



# Extemporaneous Speech

Each fall, WISDAA releases a set of questions centered around an annual topic area (p. 2 of this handbook and at [wisdaa.org/middle-level-categories-topics](http://wisdaa.org/middle-level-categories-topics)), and students are encouraged to investigate and research each of the questions as if preparing for an oral report or research paper. Students will organize/index, and highlight/annotate source material they collect, which they should bring to festivals. One half-hour before each round, students will draw five questions, select one, and prepare a response to that question, pulling information from the sources they have brought with them. Whether the speech is informative or persuasive in nature will depend on the question. Extemporaneous Speaking allows students to build awareness of current events and issues, as well as develop skills of research, organization, and clear presentation of information as prompted by each question they speak to.

## Rules to Follow

1. The student should do extensive research of each topic, including historical background as well as current news regarding the subject matter. The speech is to be written by the participant *at the festival*, and no speeches, outlines, notes, or parts of speeches – such as introductions, conclusions, or other materials prepared ahead of time – may be brought to the festival. Prior to a festival, the student may download/print any pertinent news articles that may be used to research a question topic – and those may be indexed, cross-referenced, and/or highlighted, but only materials *previously accessed* can be used. The participant may bring a dictionary.
2. Prior to each round at the festival, the student will draw five of the questions provided by WISDAA on the annual topic area, choose one and return the others. **Thirty (30) minutes** is provided to prepare. Students may not use the same question in more than one round.
3. A speech in this category may be either informative or persuasive in nature depending on the question chosen. It is the participant's responsibility to present a clear purpose statement in the speech to indicate whether the speech will be informative or persuasive. Regardless of purpose, the speech must directly answer the question chosen.
4. Before speaking, the participant must provide the adjudicator with the question actually drawn.
5. Props or visual materials are not allowed in this category.
6. Maximum time: **6 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
7. The speech is to be presented extemporaneously and notes limited to both sides of one 4"x6" card may be used. The host school shall provide a uniform, identifiable 4"x6" card.
8. Extemporaneous speakers may use a cell phone only as a timing device. Officials may verify usage.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>6 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Extemporaneous Speech



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Speech <u>specifically</u> addressed the topic/question chosen, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest and understand the informative or persuasive purpose chosen.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from a variety of factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. The speaker clearly explained the background and key concepts in response to the question chosen.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If a note card was used, it was handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



# Informative/Demonstration Speech

An informative speech explains, defines, describes, illustrates, or exhibits a process. The speaker(s) offers new information, fresh perspective and/or instruction to allow an audience to gain knowledge and understanding of a topic and/or process. Visual aids (charts, graphs, diagrams, maps, images, objects, etc.) are optional. The speech must be instructive and present valuable and significant information, citing outside sources where appropriate. Any other purpose such as to entertain or convince must be secondary.

## Rules to Follow

1. There may be one or two participants; when a pair of two students collaborate, they may either share the responsibility of speaking and demonstrating a process; or a second student may **assist** the first student, or **carry out** a process while the first student explains.
2. The speech must be written by the participant(s).
3. Audio/visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Appropriate uniform/clothing may be worn to facilitate demonstration of processes. All visuals, props, and equipment are to be supplied by the speaker(s); however, the use of digital presentations, videos, and other projection is not allowed. Props or equipment that would endanger any participant, or violate local (including host school) or state laws are prohibited. This includes but is not limited to: weapons of any kind, sharp knives, dangerous chemicals, and animals.
4. A normal-sized classroom with a normal-sized door should be expected by the participant. The host school will provide a table or desk. The participant must provide any other necessary materials.
5. Materials may not be passed around the room to audience members nor to the adjudicator before, during or after the speech. Attention should always be directed to the speaker's involvement with the materials being used as objects of demonstration.
6. Maximum time: **10 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant(s) should complete the sentence begun (setup/strike-down is no longer part of timing, but students should be respectful of time). There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
7. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students should avoid reciting from a word-for-word manuscript.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>10 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Informative/Demonstration Speech



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a suitable topic, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. If visual aids were used, the speaker actively used them to <i>illustrate</i> concepts and aid audience understanding.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



# Moments in History Speech

The challenge to the speaker is to select a historical topic within the limits presented each year by WISDAA. The general focus for a speech in this category is an exploration in history. Students may consider (but are not limited to) using the following areas of research: archival records, diaries, personal interviews, letters, newspapers, etc. The speaker is to use this researched information to compose and present a well-organized, informative speech. Speakers may use visual materials, but such materials must support not dominate the presentation. The category calls for a speech, not a visual media show nor an acting performance.

## Rules to Follow

1. The speech must be written by the participant.
2. Visual supporting materials, including costumes, may be used, but not worn. Mechanical sound effects and lighting are not allowed. The use of digital presentations, videos, and other projection is not allowed.
3. Maximum time: **6 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
4. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students should avoid reciting from a word-for-word manuscript.

## 2023-24 Time Period (select one or both time periods)

1900-1919 and/or 1970s (1970-1979) (choose one or both time periods)

Students may consider, but are not limited to these topic areas:

Politics or Military Action	Historical Sites/Monuments	Significant Speech	Geography
Ethnology/Legends/Folklore	Science/Inventions/Medicine	Natural Disasters	Sports
Fashion and Fads	Heroes or Villains	Arts and Entertainment	Religion
		Personalities	Transportation

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>6 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Moments in History Speech



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a suitable topic within the time frame(s), introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from a variety of factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. If visual aids were used, the speaker actively used them to <i>illustrate</i> concepts.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



# News Reporting

The category of News Reporting gives one to three students the opportunity to practice skills of research, organization, analysis and presentation of information based on current events. The student(s) will prepare and present a news program including news, weather, sports and an editorial. Sources of information for this category may include newspapers, magazines, radio, television, wire services, and web-based mainstream media organizations. For national and international news, students should consult [www.mediabiaschart.com](http://www.mediabiaschart.com) and utilize sources with minimal bias to the left (liberal) or right (conservative). This category helps students understand the importance of selecting, editing, and arranging information in a balanced way that will be meaningful for a listening/watching broadcast audience.

---

## Rules to Follow

1. An entry in this category is a presentation by one to three students in the style of radio or television. The contestant(s) will announce whether the presentation will be done as a radio or television report.
2. The presentation must include news, weather, sports and an editorial. News may include state/local, national, and international stories. No commercial advertisements or public service announcements are to be part of the presentation. The student(s) must report current events that occurred within the month prior to the festival. Students must update material between Level 1 and Level 2 to ensure timeliness. The introduction must be an integral part of the presentation, and timed within it. The participant(s) must prepare any transitions needed to establish connection between parts of the presentation.
3. Visual supporting materials may be used, but not worn as a costume; should not be the *primary focus* of the presentation, and are subject to evaluation. Mechanical sound effects and lighting are not allowed. The use of digital presentations, videos, and other projection is not allowed. The presentation is to be given without costumes or makeup.
4. A table or desk and chairs or stools may be used if available or provided by the participants.
5. Maximum time: **10 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant(s) should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization.
6. The news portion of the presentation requires the use of a manuscript.
7. Movement is limited only by what is appropriate to the material and the style of presentation.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>10 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## News Reporting



Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:
----------------	------------------

For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

<b>Material</b>	Mastery	Chose and edited material that was appropriate, timely, and interesting.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Organization</b>	Mastery	Presentation was well organized and easy for the audience to follow. Material was arranged so various parts (news, weather, sports, and editorial) created a balanced presentation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Conveying Meaning</b>	Mastery	Clearly identified radio or television style and presented based on the style selected. For television style, visual aids were used appropriately and were clear and easy to read.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Voice</b>	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Body Movement</b>	Mastery	Movement showed poise and effective handling of notes. Style was appropriate for – <u>television</u> : facial expression, eye contact, and gestures; <u>radio</u> : good posture for vocal projection and not rustling papers.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



## Non-Original Oratory

Non-original oratory, or *declamation*, gives students practice in the style of formal speech delivery by allowing them to interpretively perform a speech given by someone else, and in the context of the time and place that speech was originally delivered. Examples of non-original orations include persuasive speeches; eulogies (speech praising an individual and their contributions and urging others to develop the same qualities); speech from a famous person in history; or successful contest speeches. This category should provide opportunities to recreate worthwhile thoughts of others, and learn appreciation of effective organization and phrasing.

### Rules to Follow

1. A presentation in this category is to be a speech written by some person other than the participant.
2. A brief introduction which identifies the original speaker, the time, place, and occasion of the original speech and any other relevant information helpful to the audience's understanding of the speech must be prepared and presented by the participant.
3. No props or costumes may be used in this category.
4. Maximum time: **8 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
5. This speech may be delivered from memory or recited from a manuscript.
6. The student should not attempt, in any way, to imitate the original speaker. Their performance should be their own interpretation.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Non-Original Oratory



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

<b>Introduction/Transition</b>	Mastery	Provided information on the original speaker and audience, why the speech was first given, and its significance.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Selection/Material</b>	Mastery	Selection was suited to the speaker and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a feeling of completeness.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Conveying Meaning</b>	Mastery	Conveyed the meaning and emotional content of the selection.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Voice</b>	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
<b>Body Movement</b>	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:





# Persuasive Speech

The persuasive speech is expected to be a thoroughly prepared, well-composed, and well-expressed speech of persuasion on a significant topic. As such, the oration must be clearly persuasive in its purpose. It may fulfill its persuasive challenge in one of three ways: 1) by urging the audience to shift or reinforce their attitudes on a particular issue; 2) by affirming existence of a problem and urging personal action by the audience; or 3) by affirming existence of a problem and urging adoption of a policy. While the topic of the oration should be of significance to general society, it should be adapted to an audience composed of the speaker's peers. An effective oration includes well-researched facts and statistics from cited sources, round logic and reasoning, and genuine emotional appeals. An memorable oration is characterized by clear, vivid, and forceful language and appropriate stylistic devices such as metaphor, comparison/contrast, irony, allusion, analogy, etc.

## Rules to Follow

---

1. The speech must be written by the participant.
2. Visual supporting materials may be used, but not worn as a costume, and are subject to evaluation. Mechanical sound effects and lighting are not allowed. The use of digital presentations, videos, and other projection is not allowed.
3. Maximum time: **8 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
4. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students should avoid reciting from a word-for-word manuscript.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Persuasive Speech



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a suitable topic, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from a variety of factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. The speech was persuasive by urging action or change in attitude. If visual aids were used, the speaker actively used them to <i>illustrate</i> concepts.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



# Play Acting

An entry in the Play Acting category is a presentation of a scene or cutting from a play by a group of 2-7 participants. Lines are to be spoken from memory and participants are expected to move as they would in a fully-produced play. The goal of this category is to provide a group of students with the opportunity of working together for a presentation using their voices and bodies to suggest the intellectual, emotional and sensory experiences inherent in the dramatic material they have chosen. In this category the emphasis is on character development, interaction of the characters on stage (*on-stage focus*), and appropriate physical movement/blocking to bring the characters to life.

---

## Rules to Follow

---

1. An entry in this category is a presentation by a group of 2-7 students of a scene or cutting from one drama (play for theatre, screen, or radio).
2. The presentation must be memorized.
3. An introduction, written by the students, is required and must be presented without use of notes.
4. Participants should move as they would in a fully produced play, but without costumes, makeup, lights, or props. Merely dressing alike or coordinated outfits is **not** considered costuming. Available table, desk, and/or chairs are permitted; any other hand props and set pieces are not permitted. Physical actions other than stage movement will need to be pantomimed. Mechanical or electronic sound effects are also prohibited. Vocal music, if used, must be incidental and consist of no more than thirty (30) seconds total, after which there will be a one-point deduction.
5. Maximum time: **10 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant(s) should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
6. Student should not attempt, in any way, to imitate other performers. Their performance should be their own interpretation.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>10 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Play Acting



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	Provided title and author, and set the tone and theme of the presentation. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	Selection was suited to the speaker and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story (beginning, middle, end).
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Performed believable, consistent, and well-defined characters; and conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection. Overall pacing of the performance was appropriate.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Movement/blocking was done with purpose and intention, with actors employing facial expression, eye contact, and appropriate gestures.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



## Poetry Reading

Poetry uses the artistry of language to carry emotional weight and intellectual ideas, using such tactics as imagery, rhythm and oral sounds of words. Special attention should be paid to how the emotional and intellectual forms are dependent on one another. The interpretive reader should not memorize the selection, and if they do from repetition, they must still read from the manuscript to make the printed page come alive for listeners. The printed word is the source from which the reader should draw meaning to share with the audience. All the skills of reading aloud, including vocal flexibility, inflectional variety, clear articulation, correct pronunciation, as well as the use of pause and rate variation can be practiced through participation in this category.

### Rules to Follow

---

1. A presentation in this category may be a single poem, a cutting from a single poem or several related poems or cuttings. The material also may be original.
2. Whether the selection is original or not, an introduction – written by the student and presented without use of notes – is required to establish unity of development of the chosen theme. If used, transitions explain connection between parts of the presentation.
3. No props or costumes may be used in this category.
4. Maximum time: **8 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
5. Material is to be read from a paper manuscript. Even if memorized, students should read from their script.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Poetry Reading



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	Provided title(s) and author(s), and set the tone and theme of the presentation, explaining how each selection related to the overall program of performance. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a cohesive and connected program of performance.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Performance highlighted the artistry of language with such tactics as rhythm and pause; and conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Movement emphasized the message by employing facial expression, eye contact, appropriate gestures, and handling of manuscript.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:





## Prose Reading

Oral interpretation has been defined as "the effective communication of thoughts or feelings of the author to the listener." Careful study of the written word is necessary for the interpreter to give special attention to the author's meanings. The interpretive reader should not memorize the selection, and if they do from repetition, they must still read from the manuscript to make the printed page come alive for listeners. The printed word is the source from which the reader should draw meaning to share with the audience. Such practical skills as vocal flexibility, inflectional variety, clear articulation and correct pronunciation can be practiced through participation in this category.

### Rules to Follow

1. A presentation in this category is to be a selection or cutting from prose literature. In interpreting this rule, remember that if a dramatic production has evolved from the material chosen, the student is to use the original prose version for the reading. For example, a student may read from *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes, but not from the movie script adapted from that novel entitled "Charly." The material also may be original.
2. Whether the selection is original or not, an introduction – written by the student and presented without use of notes – is required to establish unity of development of the chosen theme. If used, transitions explain connection between parts of the presentation.
3. No props or costumes may be used in this category.
4. Maximum time: **8 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
5. Material is to be read from a paper manuscript. Even if memorized, students should read from their script.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Prose Reading



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	Provided title(s) and author(s), and set the tone and theme of the presentation, explaining how each selection related to the overall program of performance. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story or thematic concept.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Narration, and any character development used were relatable. Conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Movement emphasized the message by employing facial expression, eye contact, appropriate gestures, and handling of manuscript.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



## Readers Theatre

The goal of this category is to provide a group of 2-7 participants with the opportunity of working together for a presentation using their voices to suggest the intellectual, emotional and sensory experiences inherent in the material they have chosen. Interpretive readers should not memorize the selection, and if they do from repetition, they must still read from the manuscript to make the printed page come alive for listeners. The printed word is the source from which the reader should draw meaning to share with the audience. Such practical skills as vocal flexibility, inflectional variety, clear articulation and correct pronunciation can be practiced through participation in this category, along with learning to work together to present a harmonious, unified performance.

### Rules to Follow

1. An entry in this category is a presentation by a group of 2-7 students. The source material may be prose, poetry, essay, drama - or a combination of these forms. The material may be either original or non-original.
2. Material is to be read from a paper manuscript. Even if memorized, students should read from their script.
3. An introduction, written by the students, is required and, along with any transitions to connect material, must be presented without use of notes.
4. The group presentation is to be given without costumes, make-up, lights or props. Merely dressing alike or coordinated outfits is not considered costuming. Music and mechanical or electronic sound effects are also prohibited. The optional uses of chairs, stools or reading stands provided by the participants are permitted.
5. In this category the emphasis is on creating the action through oral interpretation for the audience without direct interaction (no eye contact or touching) among the participants. Participants should maintain off-stage (audience-centered) focus. The presentation should let the audience imagine the action rather than witness it. General gestures and movement may be used to enhance a performance, but they should not be pantomimed or acted. Appropriate handling of scripts is also a consideration.
6. Maximum time: **10 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant(s) should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
7. Students should not attempt, in any way, to imitate other performers. Their performance should be their own interpretation.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>10 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Readers Theatre



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	Provided title(s) and author(s), and set the tone and theme of the presentation, explaining how each selection related to the overall program of performance. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story or thematic concept.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Employed effective group oral reading techniques to cohesively present the selection with appropriate pacing. Conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Movement emphasized the message by employing facial expression, eye contact, appropriate gestures, and handling of manuscripts.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



## Solo Acting

Participation in this category provides a student with the opportunity to convey understanding and the emotional, intellectual and sensory experiences that are a part of the chosen selection. By using the self as a medium between the selection and the audience, the student shall create the character(s) and shall utilize action appropriate to the characterization(s) within the control of the setting. The solo (individual) actor may present multiple roles/characters. To tell a story through pantomime is also acceptable in this category.

### Rules to Follow

---

1. The source material may be prose, poetry, drama or essay and may be either original or non-original.
2. An introduction, written by the student, is required and, along with any transitions, must be presented without use of notes.
3. The presentation shall be performed without costumes, makeup, lighting, or props. A chair or stool and table may be used if available or provided by the student. Physical actions other than stage movement will need to be pantomimed.
4. Maximum time: **8 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
5. The student should not attempt, in any way, to imitate other performers. Their performance should be their own interpretation.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Solo Acting



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	Provided title and author, and set the tone and theme of the presentation. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story (beginning, middle, end).
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Performed believable, consistent, and well-defined character(s); and conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Movement/blocking was done with purpose/intention, with actor employing facial expression, eye contact, and appropriate gestures.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



## Special Occasion Speech

Most people will have an opportunity to present a speech on behalf of themselves or others. The ability to make appropriate and effective remarks on such occasions is a skill that can be practiced by participating in this category. . It is possible that a speech may pursue more than one of the standard general purposes of informing, persuading, or entertaining. Speakers may use visual materials but such materials must support – not dominate – the presentation. This category calls for a speech, not a visual media show. Contestants are required to develop a speech using one of the occasion topic areas established each year by the WISDAA.

### Rules to Follow

---

1. A speech in this category must be written by the participant.
2. Prior to the presentation, the participant is to announce which of the situations has been chosen. This announcement must be brief and is not considered part of the speech on which the student will be timed and evaluated (e.g., "I will speak on Situation 1; I will be giving a speech about HIV.").
3. Visuals are optional, but may not be worn. Mechanical sound and lighting are not allowed. The use of digital presentations, videos and other projection is not allowed.
4. Maximum time: **4 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
5. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students should avoid reciting from a word-for-word manuscript.

### 2023-24 Topic Choices *(Select one occasion to develop a speech for)*

---

1. A public apology
2. Address to Board of Education
3. Speech delivered to a school assembly of current students
4. Wedding toast

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>4 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Special Occasion Speech



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	Chose a concept appropriate to the occasion selected, introducing it clearly and in a way that made the audience take interest.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speech was organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from sources and/or the occasion's circumstances to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speech used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. If visual aids were used, the speaker actively used them to <i>illustrate</i> concepts.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:





# Storytelling

The art of storytelling is older than reading. Whether it is a story told in the hallways, an incident shared on the bus ride to a speech festival or a retelling of a video to a friend who has not seen it, students gain confidence and poise. To tell a story is to chronicle events in a coherent, unified, clear, and interesting manner. The student is expected to demonstrate a sense of audience, that is, tell the chosen story in a manner suitable for the intended audience, be it young children, teenagers, or adults. Learning this everyday art can result in students giving better class responses, increasing vocabulary, and improving language usage.

## Rules to Follow

1. A presentation in this category is to be a narrative. The student shall choose **one** of the following formats:
  - a. **Narrative intended for young children.** Examples are: traditional or contemporary children's stories, folk tales, tall tales and fables. The material may be from a published source or it may be written by the student. If the published source is pictorial in nature, the speaker may use the "storybook" as a visual aid, but may not read from the source. For this format, the storyteller should tell the story in an animated, dynamic, and spontaneous manner which will capture and hold the interest of young children.
  - b. **Narrative from an interesting personal experience.** For this format, the storyteller should use techniques to draw in and involve listeners in the experience by explaining the personal value and relevance (why they are sharing the story and why the audience should care).
2. This presentation is to be in the participant's own words. **NOTE:** If the story does not lend itself to retelling in the student's own words, it is not an appropriate selection.
3. An introduction, written by the student, is required to create atmosphere and mood for the presentation; and, along with any transitions, must be presented without use of notes. The student must identify author, title, **and** **format** (see Rule 1).
4. Costumes and props may not be used, except for the use of a "storybook" as a visual aid for children's stories.
5. Maximum time: **8 minutes**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant(s) should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for selection/material.
6. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students may not recite from a word-for-word manuscript. The presentation should appear to be spontaneous.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

Max. Time: <b>8 Min.</b>	Time:
Level: L1 L2	Round: 1 2 3
Rating: Merit Excellence	
Name/ Code:	Topic/ Title:

# MIDDLE LEVEL EVALUATION

## Storytelling



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Introduction/Transition	Mastery	Provided title and author, and set the tone and theme of the presentation. Transitions (if used) helped connect material.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Selection/Material	Mastery	Selection was suited to the performer and audience; it was effectively cut to the required time limit, yet presented a complete story (beginning, middle, end).
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Delivered in an imaginative, natural, and spontaneous manner; maintained storyteller's perspective as well as engaging, consistent, and well-defined characters. Conveyed meaning and emotional content of the selection.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Movement emphasized the message by employing facial expression, eye contact, appropriate gestures, and handling of book, if used as a visual aid (story must be performed, not recited).
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:



## Pro-Con Speeches

Participation in academic debate encourages students to appreciate opposing viewpoints by thoroughly researching and investigating the benefits and disadvantages of potential solutions to problems facing our society. By preparing two opposing speeches of up to four minutes apiece, students mirror *constructive* cases of popular debate categories, therefore, gaining introductory experience in argumentation.

### Rules to Follow

---

1. The speeches must be written by the participant.
2. Audio/visual aids may **not** be used to supplement and reinforce the message.
3. A normal-sized classroom with a normal-sized door should be expected by the participant. The host school will provide a table or desk. The participant must provide any other necessary materials.
4. Maximum time: **4 minutes per speech**; once the time limit has passed the timekeeper or adjudicator shall stand and the participant(s) should complete the sentence begun. There is no minimum time requirement but development of the presentation is open to critique in the standard for organization/sources.
5. The speech may be presented from memory or extemporaneously with limited paper notes/note cards; use of notes is subject to evaluation. Students should avoid reciting from a word-for-word manuscript.

Festivals are open to the public; adjudicators may remind spectators to be respectful, and may only ask people to leave when they are being disruptive.

### 2023-24 Topic Questions (choose one)

---

1. To what degree, if any, should generative artificial intelligence be regulated and by whom?
2. To what extent, if any, should schools require community service as a graduation requirement?
3. What actions, if any, should be taken by the government to ensure an individual's right to privacy?
4. What standards and processes, if any, should be used in determining appropriate content/books/texts in classrooms and school libraries?
5. What, if anything, should the government do to address economic inequality (e.g., minimum wage, jobs programs, food/housing security)?

# Pro-Con Speeches



For each of the five evaluation areas, circle how well the contestant met standards. Provide constructive suggestions for improvement as well as describe what the contestant did well. In the rating box above, award: **Merit** or **Excellence**.

Topic/Introduction	Mastery	How direct and defined are the speaker's responses to – and analysis of – the question selected?
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Organization/Sources	Mastery	Speeches were organized and easy to follow, using accurate, up-to-date information and quoting from factual sources to explain importance of the topic as well as details such as who, what, when, and where.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Conveying Meaning	Mastery	Speeches used vocabulary and grammar that were clear, understandable, and appropriate. Arguments were structured logically and defended well on both sides.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Voice	Mastery	Spoke clearly and audibly, with appropriate loudness, pitch, rate, enunciation (consonant sounds), and pronunciation.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Body Movement	Mastery	Directed presentation to the audience with poise. Movement emphasized message, including facial expression, eye contact, body movement, and appropriate gestures. If notes were used, they were handled effectively.
	Proficient	
	Developing	
	Emerging	
	Minimal	
Adjudicator Signature:		Print Name/Code:

# "Performance Plagiarism"

By Adam Jacobi

(adapted from *Rostrum* magazine, National Speech & Debate Association, 84:7, March 2010).

We normally associate plagiarism with words or ideas copied without attributing the original source. Does a concept of academic honesty extend to qualities of performance? With videos of other contest performances (not to mention films), familiarity with particular performances has become more widespread than just those who witnessed them live. What's more, students can study finer details of such performances in-depth and repetitively. Hence, performances have arisen that mimic several aspects of physical action and vocal technique, as well as duplicating the exact cuttings of scripts, almost verbatim.

When the International Baccalaureate revised its Theatre curriculum in 2007, advice within its professional development workshop materials included a paper by Nick Connolly, then director of studies at Worth School in England and a former IB deputy chief examiner. Connolly cites three words as central to exploring academic honesty in performance: **imitation**, **influence**, and **inspiration** (Connolly 4). These three descriptors provide a basis by which to understand where students derive ideas and the extent to which that affects their ultimate performance.

So where does one draw the line between these three concepts, and how can mimicry be proven? In the greater scheme of Speech—and academia—there is an understanding that work must be original, or there are consequences. The answers lie, perhaps, in investigating each component.

Guidelines for literary interpretation events often speak to the fidelity of cutting, ensuring adaptations are made for the purposes of continuity, and that authorial intent is upheld. So, is there an intellectual protection of the cutting itself? The creative process that goes into cutting certainly would seem to justify that mindset. Each reader brings different experiences and perspectives to the literature they encounter, so one person's attempt at cutting may hone in on different plot moments, character, etc., than another person's.

While adjudicators are offered some general guidance in terms of expected standards, much of style and

Note: When transcribing text from online videos, such as from YouTube, students always should research the source of the material to determine its genre. For example, a performance of a story could be prose, and not dramatic literature (play), so if a group performed it, it should be done in Group Interpretive Reading, and not Play Acting.

substance is left to subjectivity, particularly in interpretive events. Of course, there are unwritten norms and expectations that pervade the forensic community, including that performance must have some degree of original interpretation to it (hence the use of the term in the title of such forensic categories/events). That is why students today may avoid popular stage plays or screenplays as well as classic works too well known within the canon of literary studies. They tire of reading comments from adjudicators asserting their performance is too similar to a famous actor or does not explore the character in the way the adjudicator imagined it when reading that work. Within Connolly's framework, adjudicators are hesitant toward influence and inspiration that might inform the student's interpretation, and will rate those contestants accordingly.

Then there's the whole notion of mimicking performance by other forensic contestants. Several adjudicators may not have seen videos of performances that have been mimicked, so it is difficult for them to weigh that in their rank decision. Therefore, contestants imitating others' cuttings, blocking, and other mannerisms may go an entire tournament and earn success by standing on the shoulders of other students' creative efforts. Assuming most coaches would agree this is unethical and a brand of academic dishonesty, it begs the question of what penalty should befall a student who mimic's another's forensic performance.

Some proactive discussion among coaches regarding performance plagiarism may help raise awareness of this problem and encourage students and adjudicators alike to be cognizant of mimicry and avoid it in developing original interpretations.

## References

Connolly, N. (2007). "Theatre and Academic Honesty." International Baccalaureate/International Schools Theatre Association Training Materials.

# Integrating Speech in the Classroom



The program offered in the WISDAA Middle Level Division can be of many uses to you in the classroom. Integration of the rules and evaluation sheets into regular lesson plans can be achieved in a number of ways. By including these activities as a part of your regular classroom planning, you will also achieve an atmosphere of better performance possibilities in the festival situation. Fellow teachers have agreed to share the following materials with you in the hope of finding some new ideas to encourage your students to become successful communicators. The first section was provided by Maureen Bagg, Kenosha Public Schools.

## Warm-Up Activities

1. Give everyone a 3 x 5 card. Have them draw a line horizontally in center of blank side and place the words HOBBIES, FAMILY, SCHOOL and LIKES/DISLIKES in the four corners of the cards. Then randomly pair students and have them spend 5-10 minutes interviewing each other, placing answers to the questions on the 3 x 5 card. The name of the person interviewed should be written correctly in the blank. Then form circle and have each stand behind the person interviewed and introduce to class.
2. Have students write about themselves on an 8 x 10 piece of paper. Maybe even draw pictures that say something about themselves. Then give directions concerning how to make a paper airplane (as if you need to) and have students at a signal launch their planes. Then students pick up one plane and find the owner. Introduce them and look for things they may have in common.
3. Pass out pieces of paper that have five (5) descriptions on them. For instance: 1) a person who has a paper route; 2) a person who has ridden a horse; 3) a person who plays Nintendo; 4) a person who has seen "Home Alone"; 5) a person who has driven a car. Then at a signal instruct all to move around the room filling in the name of a person in the class who fills the description.
4. Give each person a "sturdy" square of toilet paper. Roll it into a tube. Then have groups of four (4) take hold of other end of each other's tube and move any way possible without disconnecting. Then join two more groups so eight (8) are together and so on until the whole class is moving without disconnecting. To end, have students untwist and return to initial position in circle.
5. Using four (4) or more locations in the classroom, designate each corner as a type of boat ((sail, motor, tug, barge, cruise) and have them go to the boat area that they feel is most like themselves. While in the corner, have them introduce themselves and then pair off into 2's or 3's and join with another group. Then introduce themselves and explain why they feel like the boat they chose.
6. Create two (2) "strange but symmetrical" graphics for the overhead. Give students a piece of typing paper and instruct them to face each other so that one has back to screen and other faces screen. Indicate that person facing screen will describe the graphics so that partner will be able to draw it exactly. No hand motions may be used and partner may not view screen until finished. Best communicators will produce partners with the closest imitation of the graphic on the screen. Then switch places.
7. Get students comfortable with looking at and talking to one another by having half the group line up and face the other half about 5 feet apart. Give them one minute to study each other silently. Then have them turn 180 degrees and change three things about the way they look. Then turn back and have partners guess what three things were changed.
8. Mirror activities promote eye contact and comfort with working with others. Have partners face one another. With eyes focused on eyes, and lips sealed, student are to open hands inches apart. Then one partner initiates slow motion movements keeping palms flat and movements of hands very slow. Other attempts to mimic exactly the hand motions of partner. Switch. This can also be done with pantomimed activities.
9. Exercise is a terrific warm-up. Have students stand beside desks and tell them you will lead them in a series of motions. 1) Rotate head in a circle, not moving anything else, 2) rotate arms in wide circles, 3) swivel hips as though hoola-hooping. This exercise requires the use of management commands discussed later.
10. Loosen up imaginations by playing such music as "Grand Canyon Suite" and let students imagine what is happening.

## Warming Up With Pantomime

1. Work from general to specific activity. Make a set of 3x5 cards with the following general activities:

housework	building a house	sports	circus acts
time at the beach	camping	office work	hospital work
performing in a band/orchestra		working out in a gym/health club	

Then group students 4-5 to a group. Hand each group a card. Give the groups five (5) minutes to figure out related specific activities that fit under their general activity. Each group performs and class may guess the general area first, then the specific or vice versa. **NOTE:** This activity helps students understand topic/subtopic concept in outlining or topic sentence and supporting material in paragraph writing.

2. In writing we want students to SHOW, NOT TELL us about characters, setting and action. Encourage this concept by creating a set of cards, with each on containing a specific emotion

cheerful	suspicious	energetic	arrogant (snotty)
stubborn	mischievous	bossy	triumphant
impatient	sly	bored	hesitant
amused	disgusted	angry	indecisive
annoyed	exhausted	terrified	tense
lonely	sulky	shy	sad

Then have student act out a situation in which the character **shows** this emotion by things he does.

3. Divide into groups and give students cards that have very "blah" verbs on them, such as walk, talk, run, look, say, hit, cut, eat. Have them use a thesaurus to find at least 4-5 more colorful verbs and then have members of the group act them out.
4. Divide into groups of 4-5 and have students come up with a scene for a short story beginning. Have them imagine this scene in great detail, including objects that might be a part of it. Have the group enter the room and move through their scene using or reacting to the objects that are a part of this setting. Remind students that the audience will only see objects they use in some way and will only see the setting by the way they move through it.
5. Students will better understand plot structure if they are required to create pantomimes which must have these parts:
  - initial situation (beginning)
  - complications and problems arising from it
  - resolution of these problems (ending)Exaggerate conflict by giving students a basic scene that they must give a totally unexpected, even illogical, imagination-defying twist.
  - A dentist extracting a tooth
  - A doctor checking a patient's reflexes
  - A mad scientist creating a monster
  - A gunman entering a bank
  - A patrolman about to issue a ticketEncourage groups to come up with a title for their scene, which won't give away the unexpected twist.
6. Through pantomime, students can review some of the parts of speech as well. Divide the class into groups of 3. Have one draw a card with a verb on it, another draw from a stack of cards with an adverb on it, and then have the third person act out a combination of the two.
7. Prior to writing a paragraph that emphasizes time order, have students do a simple pantomime consisting of 5-10 steps. The paragraph could follow the pantomime, giving the student a better sense of sequence.
8. Divide the students into groups of 4-5 and have them create a sound track using only sound effects they can create themselves. These sounds should suggest a setting and events occurring within that setting. For instance, midnight and a burglary is taking place. Then have groups pantomime to the sound track they have created.



## Improvisation: Informal Drama

1. Whole class improv can be done by dividing class into pairs. Decide who is A and who is B. Then allow whole class to act out separate scenes at the same time. Teacher can start these by:
  - a. Giving a starting line to person A or B. "You can't bring that thing in here."
  - b. Giving pairs a situation. "A, you are a traffic officer giving B a speeding ticket. B, you have what is in your opinion a very legitimate excuse for speeding."
  - c. Using characters from a piece of literature, give a situation - "A, you are Miss Havisham (from Great Expectations, and you are explaining to Estella how she can "break men's hearts"."End these by turning off lights, ringing a bell or if "far from the maddening crowd," use a whistle. Then share what each group came up with.
2. In literature classes, make up four envelopes. Entitle them: 1) "Good Guy/Girl"; 2) "Bad Guy/Girl"; 3) Problem; 4) Setting. Divide class into groups of 3-4 and have them create a scene after drawing four slips from the four envelopes. OR, make up envelopes that contain slips for these areas: 1) Setting; 2) Character; 3) Prop; 4) Weather Condition; 5) Time. Again divide into groups of 4-5 students and make up a scene that uses each of these elements. A variation of this is to discuss a story that has an item as the focal point. (A heart shaped box of candy in "The Valentine" or a necklace in "The Necklace.") Have students draw the names of an object from an envelope and develop an improvisation around it. **NOTE:** You may also use 2 or 3 objects.
3. Ask class to share one item (could be a place too) they have recently studied in 4 different classes. This could be Japan in geography, the newspaper in English, breads in Home Technology (home etc) and the Heimlich method in health. In groups, figure out a way to work in each of the items in a short scene. They must be mentioned at least once. Two children are studying together at one child's house when one takes a bite of bread and begins to choke on it. The other child races into the living room where their mother is reading the newspaper. The mother responds to the crisis by using the Heimlich Method and dislodges the bread.
4. Do TMATTY's. Tell Me About The Time You... Ask for individual volunteers to do this. You can review events from history, recent chapters read in a novel, short story incident, what characters may do after the story ends. Example: Be Harry Truman and tell about the time you decided to let the atomic bomb fall on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Be Mr. Pignati in the book The Pigman and tell me about the time you discovered Lorraine and John had thrown a party at your house.
5. One Situation - Three Attitudes. Take a situation from a novel or an event in history that allows three students to take three different character's roles. Then have each reveal how he felt from his own point of view. Example: From Great Expectations, take Miss Havisham's wedding and have these three give their reactions to it: 1) Miss Havisham; 2) Compenson; 3) Pip or Estella.
6. Do interviews. There are endless possibilities with the interview. It's wise to have students remember a few pointers first.
  - 1) Reveal background for interview and the name of the person to be interviewed immediately.
  - 2) Avoid questions that require a yes/no answer from the interviewee.
  - 3) Thank the person for the interview at the end. Possible situations for use of the interview:
    - a. Mock interview - Let pairs decide upon an interesting person to interview and make up the information themselves. Example: a hero who just saved someone, a person in an occupation.
    - b. Interview an author or characters from a story.
    - c. Interview someone who is over a certain age - 25 or 60
    - d. Take a field trip and interview residents of a nursing home.
    - e. Bring in an interesting individual for the class to interview.
    - f. Interview a historical figure.
    - g. Draw clippings from the lost and found section of a newspaper. Interview the person who lost it. Then the person who found it, trying to gain interesting details from each.
7. IF I HAD IT MY WAY improvisations. First discuss some of the everyday frustrations of being an adolescent. Divide into groups. Have each group act out two improvisations. One that depicts this problem in a real life situation. Then act out how it would happen "IF I HAD IT MY WAY."



8. FREEZE ACTION FINAL SCENE. Allow groups to draw or make up a "frozen scene" which might be the last frame of a movie or scene in story. They begin by showing this frame. Then they go back and make up a story that would have preceded it and act that story out. Example: A triumphant (sport participant) holds up a trophy. A sad child waves good-bye to his friend who is moving.
9. Improvisations can result from many sources: 1) Nursery rhymes such as "The Queen of Hearts"; 2) ending to short stories such as "Charles"; 3) sequels to plays read in class such as "The Marriage Proposal".

## Create a Play from a Simple Rhyme

### "The Queen of Hearts"

The Queen of Hearts made some tarts  
 All on a Summer's day.  
 The Knave of Hearts stole those tarts  
 And took them clean away.  
 The King of Hearts called for the tarts  
 And beat the Knave full sore.  
 The Knave of Hearts brought back the tarts  
 And vowed he'd steal no more.

**NOTE:** The success of this activity depends upon your ability to allow students to creatively brainstorm answers to questions that will follow. Ground rules for brainstorming are: 1) no judgmental comments from teacher or other students; 2) let ideas be wild (although appropriate for YOUR classroom); 3) have one or even two students record ideas on the board.

### PROCESS

1. Read the poem to the class several times or give them copies to read.
2. Brainstorm answers to questions about characters, setting, motives for actions, how to begin. Sample questions follow:
  - a. What is the Queen like? What does she look like? How is she dressed? Why is she cooking the tarts? How does she feel about cooking these tarts? Where is the castle cook? How does she get along with her family? Is she devoted to her husband, the King?
  - b. What is the King like? Does he like being King? What does he look like? How does he treat the Queen? Other people in the court? Why does the King call for tarts? Isn't there anything else to eat in the castle? Why does he beat the Knave full sore? Why such a beating for stealing tarts? Why doesn't a servant do the beating?
  - c. Who is the Knave? In fact, what is a Knave? What could he be in this court? Why does he steal the tarts? Has he had any run-ins with the King before? With the Queen? Why doesn't the Knave eat the tarts after he steals them?
  - d. What are some possible settings for this play?
  - e. What other characters might be a part of this play? If there was a cook in the kitchen, where are they now?
3. Brainstorm a potential opening scene. Remind the group that the opening scene might give background or motives for some characters' later actions – why the Knave wants the tarts, why the Queen is baking the tarts, why the King is so rough on the Knave later on, the King wants tarts.
4. Now divide class into smaller groups of 5-6 students. When assigning groups, try to place a leader in every group. Have them figure out their version of "The Queen of Hearts" by deciding: 1) what characters they will include; 2) where the play will take place; 3) what the events of the story will be.
5. Pass out a grid that will allow them to sequence the story by first envisioning what will happen in each scene. Emphasize the importance of the first scene arousing interest. (Perhaps the Knave is being scolded by his father the King for throwing rocks at the alligators in the moat.) It's fun to draw pictures of the scenes first and that seems to loosen them up too.
6. Begin to write the script. Set a deadline. Move among slower groups to encourage the flow of ideas and work.

7. Once scripts are completed, make copies so each individual can memorize lines and then practice. Access to a large room or an auditorium stage is ideal.
8. Have one member of each group introduce the play. He might even use the initial poem in the introduction. Be sure to videotape the results.

## **Performance of Literature: Expressive Reading**

1. NEW TWISTS ON OLD NURSERY RHYMES - Put a well-known nursery rhyme on the board along with a variety of ways to read it. As a group try a few.
2. NUMBER YOUR GREETING - Divide the class in half and have Side A face Side B. A uses the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 in place of the words "Hi, how are you?" B uses the numbers 5, 6, 7, 8 in place of the words "Fine, thank you very much." Then have individuals step forward using a variety of tones to greet: like old enemies, like snobs, like long lost friends, like drunkards, like robots, shyly, like business executives, in a bored manner, etc.
3. Using the following lines from Waiting for Godot, have students, in pairs, determine who is talking, where it takes place, the motives for each character and what is happening. Then have pairs memorize lines and act out the scene.
  - A. You're late.
  - B. I know. I couldn't help it.
  - A. I understand.
  - B. I thought you would.
  - A. I have something to give you.
  - B. Really?
  - A. Yes, this.
4. Using poems that have a definite narrative voice have students identify the speaker, how he feels, what experience he is talking about and his attitude toward it. Then, have students share a poem after a brief introduction that clearly defines the character speaking in the poem. Good examples of this are:
  - "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes
  - "Ambition" by Morris Bishop
  - "Incident" by Countee Cullen
  - "Sick" by Shel Silverstein
5. Group reading of poetry allows students to better appreciate the sound of poems. Divide the poem into parts and assign groups to do various parts. I like to use these poems:
  - "Congo" by Vachel Lindsay
  - "Lochinvar" by Sir Walter Scott
  - "Casey Jones"
  - "Gunga Din" by Rudyard Kipling
  - "The Cremation of Sam McGee" by Robert Service
6. One-minute "Low Voice" announcements - Have students prepare a one-minute announcement about school event or situation, news story. Have students write an announcement and deliver it from behind a screen while using a "low" voice.
7. News Broadcasts - Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students and have them make a news broadcast including these parts: 1) Hard news - local, state, national, international; 2) Editorial; 3) Sports; 4) Weather. Students will read from a manuscript but should look up often. Also I find it helpful to cover these areas before groups begin to create their own reports:
  - a. Practice summarizing a news story given to them.
  - b. Practice writing opinions supported with reasons.
  - c. Find alternatives to the verbs "won" and "beat" so sports reports have some variety.
  - d. Review the kind of news contained in a weather report on TV or in the newspaper.

## Speech: Reducing the Terrors

1. Impromptu speeches. Students draw a topic and speak for one minute. Make the topics fun and non-threatening. Examples:
  - a. How lunch could be improved.
  - b. What I would do if a Martian landed in my backyard.
  - c. The closest call I've ever had.
  - d. How I'd decorate this classroom.
2. Take advantage of the weird contortions that students often create while speaking and discuss them. Then have each student prepare a two-minute speech on any topic and exaggerate one or two of these distracting behaviors.
3. Sales pitches allow students to practice an art they use now and will need for the future - convincing people. Have students create a product to sell. They must give a name, a price, features, and benefits to a customer, etc.
4. Award or nomination speeches give students an opportunity to use a microphone and the lectern in the school auditorium. They become much more formal in that environment.

### HELPFUL HINTS

1. There will be noise. Know your own comfort level and use management strategies that will keep a lid on things. Discuss with class signals you will use to control activity.
  - a. To STOP activity: flashlights off and on, clap hands, bell, whistle or cymbal gong (depending on the sense of humor of teacher next door) "freeze."
  - b. After "freezing" sound and motion, demand "mime neutral", a term I use to get students quietly listening in an at ease posture.
  - c. Have students call "curtain" when they begin.
2. Train students to introduce their own performances. The following sequence works well:
  - a. Students set up scene.
  - b. Line up at front of stage.
  - c. Introduce themselves, then give background including the setting, any preceding events that audience should know and the title of the scene.
  - d. Get in position. Call "curtain" and begin.

I find it's wise to first practice this process with a group of 4-5 students and have them simply make up a title, background and introduction.
3. Allow NO unkind comments. In fact, judgment statements should be replaced by indications of what was seen or heard instead. Or, what students like and what they might have done in addition.
4. Evaluation - emphasize participation and cooperation.

## Favorite Resources

THEATRE GAMES FOR YOUNG PERFORMERS by Maria C. Novelly

Meriwether Publishing Ltd., Box 7710, Colorado Springs, CO 80933

*Filled with activities to use in the classroom. It has much for the drama teacher, but will be helpful to any teacher using activities to get kids speaking.*

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DRAMA by Brian Way

Humanities Press, 1973

*Many activities suggested especially in the areas of pantomimes and improvisations. Useful for elementary and secondary level classes.*

A GUIDE TO CURRICULUM PLANNING: Classroom Drama and Theatre from DPI.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 125 South Webster Street

PO Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841

*Gives good background to using informal drama as well as a list of objectives to be accomplished in elementary to high school classrooms.*

DOROTHY HEATHCOTE: DRAMA AS A LEARNING MEDIUM by Betty Jane Wagner

A National Education Association Publication, Washington, DC

*A theory book that anyone using creative dramatics in a classroom should read.*

CREATIVE COMMUNICATION: Projects in Acting, Speaking, Oral Reading by Fran Averet Tanner

Clark Publishing Company, c/o The Caston Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho 83605

*Lots of activities in the areas listed. Includes activity sheets, evaluation sheets, the works!*

IMPROVISATIONS FOR THE THEATRE by Viola Spolin

Northwestern University Press (1974), 1735 Benson Avenue, Evanston, IL

*Loaded with activities for pantomime and improvisation and learning to call upon sense awareness in drama.*

SPEAKING BY DOING: A Speaking - Listening Text by William Buys, Thomas Sill and Roy Beck

National Textbook Company, 4255 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood, IL 60466-1975

*The text is very practical. Some of the activities include how to introduce formally, how to interview, how to structure speeches well, what causes "stage fright" and how to overcome it.*

38 BASIC SPEECH EXPERIENCES by Clark S. Carlile

Clark Publishing Company, c/o The Caston Printers, Ltd., PO Box 700, Caldwell, Idaho 83605

*Give sample speeches for each of the speech types suggested. Many more than you'll ever use!*

CREATIVE DRAMATICS: An Art for Children by Geraldine Siks

*My copy is dated 1958, but the information is still invaluable if you are doing creative dramatics in the classroom.*

*Especially useful to elementary level teacher.*

*Kathy Kupfer, Whitefish Bay Middle School, provided the following activities.*

## **Martian, Tiger, Teacher**

Stand in groups of three (backs together). On count of three, everyone turns around and makes a sound:

Martian - fingers to head and say "Doodolloodolloo"

Tiger - hands up as paws and roar

Teacher - shake hands in front and say "Hi! How 'ya doing?"

Repeat a number of times to see if all three ever do same action.

**Circle Clap** Students form close circle. First two people face each other and clap at the same time. Second person turns to third person and they clap together. This continues around circle gradually building up speed.

Variations: 1) Students may choose to reverse the direction at any given moment.

2) Leader may choose to have several claps going around the room at the same time.

## **Bippidy, Bippidy, Bop**

Students in circle with one person in the middle. Leader stands in front of one person and says either:

1. "elephant" (center person forms trunk with two on either side forming the ears)

2. "kamikaze" (center person forms goggles with two on sides forming wings)

3. "bippidy, bippidy .." (center person must say "bop" before the leader does)

Leader quickly counts to 10 for # 1 & 2 above. First person unable to complete appointed task in 10 seconds or unable to say "bop" first goes to the center and tries to get other students in the middle.

**Emotional Symphony** Three people in front of a conductor. Each of the three people represents three different emotions (example: fear, happiness, hatred). Conductor points to a person who makes the sound of (no words allowed) their emotion. Conductor controls volume of the emotions by putting hands high for loud and low for quiet. Conductor may have more than one emotion going at one time.

**Circle Story** Divide students into groups of four to six students. Announce a title to all students. Students stand in their small circles. Each student says one word. Students must carry on the thought of the people before him/her. Must bring story to a conclusion.

**Directed Story** Six students up front with one director and a title. Director points to one person who must continue telling all lines of a story until the director points to another person. Director may cut a person off mid-sentence or even mid-word.

**Dr. Know-It-All** Four people stand in the front of the room. The crowd asks a question. Each person says one word at a time (like circle story) to answer the question.

**Status Game** Four people get a playing card that they do NOT look at. They place the card facing out on their foreheads. They are given a scene to act out (small business, party, elevator, etc.). Students must determine how high a card they have by how the other students are treating them.

**What Are You Doing?** Students line up on two sides of the room. First person does an action (exp. hopping on one foot). Second person asks, "What are you doing?" First person describes anything other than what they are actually doing (exp. "Playing tennis.") Second person must then act out what the first person just said. Now first person asks, "What are you doing?" Second person says a different action. Game continues until a person repeats something already said, couldn't perform the requested action or hesitates in mentioning a new action.

*Teresa Shelton, Spooner Middle School, has provided the following activities.*

**Be an Example** Don't be afraid to show kids how interesting and exciting storytelling can be. This integrates very well into Language Arts and Social Studies. (Tall Tales, Native American legends and African American slave stories) Also, you can "become" a person from the past and tell a story in history.

Sources used:

Keepers of the Animals

Michale Caduto and Joseph Bruchac

Keepers of the Earth

Michale Caduto and Joseph Bruchac

Best Loved Stories

National Storytelling Press

Larger than Life

Robert D. SanSauci

The People Could Fly

Virginia Hamilton

**Objects can tell a story** This is a fancy "show and tell". Read a book, relate it to your own life or the unit you are teaching. Bring in an object and tell it's story. Have students bring in an object and tell their family story. This works especially well with antiques or old photographs because students get into the history of their families and learn stories they otherwise didn't know.

Sources used:

The Quilt Story

Tony Johnson and Tomie dePaola

The Keeping Quilt

Patricia Polacco

**A room can tell a story** Pair kids up and tell them to close their eyes and think of a room that is special to them. They are to think of all the aspects of this room; sights, sounds, smells and emotions the room brings to mind. Then they open eyes and take their partner on a tour of the room. The person getting the tour may ask questions as they travel throughout the room. Once the tour is done, roles are reversed.

**Integrating with Language Arts and Social Studies** Acting out stories and poetry can be integrated into Language Arts and Social Studies. You can also take an event from history and have students brainstorm, write plays and act them out.

Sources used:

The First Forest

Tom Heflin

The True Story of the 3 Pigs

Jon Scieszka

Once Upon A Shoe

Joseph Robinette

**Use slides** This can be integrated into Social Studies, Science and Language Arts. Take slides of photographs in a book (i.e. archaeologists on a dig, Columbus). Show them as big as you can on the wall. Discuss who the people are, what they are doing, why they are there and what would they say if they could step out of the picture and talk. Have students take identical poses as people in the photograph. You can become an on the spot reporter and as they come to life you will interview them.

**News Reporting can be used for Social Studies and Current Events** A news team each week reports the latest events in the world. Nightly news reporting of past can also be used. (i.e., interviews and reports from the battlefields of Lexington and Concord.)

**Swapping Chairs With A Character** Place two chairs facing one another. Your partner will occupy one chair. Your character will occupy the other. That person has a life, a history, and relationships . . . to be developed. Even if you choose to be a frog, that frog has much more it would wish to say to the audience than just the lines given to it. You must answer for the character. That will require making up answers from that character's perspective. A fully developed character will have a past (even though the audience seldom sees it), their present and a future. You should have a sense of "where was I born? What kind of childhood did I have? Who did I go to as a child to feel safe? How long have I known the other characters I refer to or relate to? Am I steady on my feet? Do my shoulders sag under the weight of my problems? What makes my face light up? What makes me bored, scared, happy?" To develop a character, you must think about:

1. The situation, a climate, which determines what happens to you as a character.
2. How you react (not just blocking large movements, but also habits and mannerisms).
3. Your whole character development is based on why? . . . your motivation, aim or purpose.