

Oral Interpretation of Literature

Judging Criteria

- **INTRODUCTION:** The introduction should name the work and author, provide necessary background information, and establish the mood. If using a teaser or if lines from the selection are used in the introduction, the speakers must adhere to the rules of the event.
- **PROJECTION OF LITERATURE:** The interpreter should demonstrate a clear understanding of the literature and project its meaning, message, and tone. The speaker should capture and convey the plot and/or development. Imagery should be carefully colored so as to promote audience understanding and appreciation. In a presentation of a collection, there should be a unity to the program as a whole, made clear by the introduction and transitional material. Consideration should be given to the literary merit of the selection(s).
- **NARRATOR/CHARACTER CREATION:** The narrator should be believable and conversational. The narrator should be able to lead the audience through the details of the literature, keeping a consistent and clear attitude toward people, objects, and events within the literature. In collections, the interpreter should develop and maintain unique and distinct narrative voices for each selection within the program. If they are utilized, character voices should be distinctive, consistent, and appropriate to the character. The interpreter should be able to demonstrate the characters’ feelings and thoughts through the use of vocal inflections, facial expressions including visualization, and appropriate intensity.
- **VISUALIZATION:** The interpreter should help the audience to see the particular world of the narrator. The interpreter should establish a strong sense of environment. The interpreter should be able to see and replay the events described or recalled in the literature.
- **VOCAL VARIETY:** The interpreter should appropriately vary pitch, volume, rate, and intensity to convey the various moods and messages in the literature. Appropriate words should be stressed for clarity and understanding. The interpreter should appropriately play with sound devices such as alliteration and attend to the sound and meaning of every word. For poetry, the interpreter should capture and effectively vary existing poetic rhythm, making use of rhyme when necessary and avoiding it when not.
- **AUDIENCE AND SCRIPT CONTACT:** The interpreter should invite the audience into the presentation, directing eye contact and expressing his or her feelings to individual audience members when appropriate and necessary and consulting the script when it is not. The interpreter should focus away from the audience and the script effectively during moments of internal and private thoughts. There should be a natural balance between the audience and script where one does not take precedence over the other. The interpreter should stay in the moment, with facial expression and emotional consistency when making contact with the manuscript.
- **OVERALL EFFECT:** The overall performance should build to various moments and have a climax. The performance should be easy to follow and complete. The performance should display another world outside of the performance space.

(continued on next page)

SPEAKER POINT SCALE	
(whole number points only)	
99-100	Exemplary [A+]
96-98	Accomplished [A/A-]
94-95	Competent [B+/B]
92-93	Developing [B-/C+]
90-91	Emerging [C or below]
< 90	Justify to Tab

We are all influenced by implicit bias or stereotypes that, when unchecked, influence our judging in ways that may negatively impact the students we are called to judge impartially. Before writing comments or making a decision, please take a moment to reflect on any preconceived notions you may hold that may impact your decision-making process and/or jeopardize the student experience.

To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.

Oral Interpretation of Literature (continued)

Rules of Procedure

- The speaker shall prepare two programs of manuscript-based literature substantially different in content, author, and/or original source. Each program shall consist of a single piece, a cutting, or a series of short pieces united by author or theme. One program shall be published prose; the other, published poetry. If using a series of pieces, all titles and authors must be cited. It is the affirmative obligation of all FGCCFL coaches to ensure that all materials presented in interpretation events must be available and readily accessible to all members of the League.
- Each program must contain an introduction for purposes of explication, setting, or selection transitions. The performer has the burden to be clear at all times which piece is being used. Lines attributed to one character in the published source must not be attributed to another character in the performance. The author's words as published in the literature must not be altered for the presentation with the exception that cutting is permitted.
- The literature chosen may include any form of prose or poetry, fiction or non-fiction. Drama, including theatrical monologues, is prohibited. Speeches written to be delivered in real-life are prohibited.
- Speakers may use a persona and/or character voices, but it is not necessary.
- While singing is permitted, it should not be excessive or dominate the performance. Judges' ranks may reflect if singing has dominated the performance.
- No properties except a manuscript or binder may be used. Using "properties" means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance. Speakers using properties and/or wearing costumes must be ranked last.
- Speakers should keep eye contact between audience and manuscript in reasonable balance. Speakers who fail to maintain the illusion of reading from the manuscript must not be ranked first.
- Speakers should keep gesture and bodily movement to a minimum. The selection should be delivered from center stage. Movement and gestures, if used, should be appropriate to the selection. Speakers should not walk during performances. They should emphasize vocal variety and facial expression to enhance the literary interpretation. Only the performer's feet may touch the ground.
- **TIME LIMIT:** Maximum 10 minutes. This includes at most 1 minute of introductory and transition material other than the author's words. If the speaker goes over a 30 second grace period, that contestant must not be awarded first place. No minimum time.

SPEAKER POINT SCALE	
(whole number points only)	
99-100	Exemplary [A+]
96-98	Accomplished [A/A-]
94-95	Competent [B+/B]
92-93	Developing [B-/C+]
90-91	Emerging [C or below]
< 90	Justify to Tab

We are all influenced by implicit bias or stereotypes that, when unchecked, influence our judging in ways that may negatively impact the students we are called to judge impartially. Before writing comments or making a decision, please take a moment to reflect on any preconceived notions you may hold that may impact your decision-making process and/or jeopardize the student experience.

To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.