

What to Look for in a Performance

Introduction:

A good introduction will heighten the interest of the audience. It should set the background, if needed, mood, and setting (if applicable) of the selection. It must be memorized and include author and title of the selection. It cannot include the contestant's name or school affiliation. TV Commercials will not have an introduction. Oratory will have the introduction built in as the main idea of the speech.

Selection:

Remember to judge the presentation of the selection, not the selection itself. The judge may not like the selection, however it is the way the selection is presented. It should be well edited so that it is clear and unified. It must be a piece published in written form, except for the TV Commercial and Oratory, which must be original. The reader should be able to convey the meaning of the selection.

Performances of skits seen on television, such as Saturday Night Live skits, movie scenes that are not from published works of drama, and excerpts from comedy recordings, such as audio or video recordings of standup comedy acts, are typically not published works of literature and are not appropriate selections.

Vocal Control:

The contestant should be heard and understood. The voice should change for moods, emotions, and characters, and be consistently used throughout the piece. Be aware of dental appliances or breathing problems such as asthma, and how these may affect the pronunciation. Don't count off for them.

Body Control:

Every movement should have meaning. Prose and Poetry Readings should use only gestures from the waist up. All other categories should use full body movement. Facial expressions and eye contact are very important.

Approach to Audience:

The contestant should engage the entire audience, not just the judge. Please sit toward the middle of the room and not to one side, because acting has been practiced facing the audience.

Presentation and Characterization:

Moods and emotions should be communicated to the audience. Characters should be distinguished and consistent with voices, mannerisms, and facial expressions.