

ORATORICAL INTERPRETATION (O.I.)

This speech event encourages the student to understand the relationship of an oration to the times that inspired it. The student must analyze and understand the goals and motivation of the original speaker and interpret the oration with a whole new voice to a whole new audience. It is not an impersonation; it is an interpretation.

Tournament Requirements

1. The selection, or any portion of the selection, must not have been used in competition by the contestant in previous years in the same or in a different event.
2. The selection must be a published speech or part of a published speech which was actually delivered by a speaker in a public forum, excluding speeches used in high school or college speech competitions. The selection may be cuttings or excerpts from a single speech. Combining separate speeches is forbidden. The Internet may be used with the following stipulations: that the manuscript be printed directly from the screen; the first page in Web-site and all other pages which indicated table of contents and/or other information for the Web-site shall be included in the manuscript; downloaded manuscripts will not be accepted.
3. The introduction must include the name of the author, the title of the oration, if any, and the name of the source where the oration was published. In addition, the place and date of original delivery must be given.
4. A manuscript of the speech must be submitted including photocopies of the excerpts with the parts used highlighted, the title page, copyright dates, table of contents with speech listed, and the introductory and/or transitional materials, typed, double-spaced.
5. No more than 150 words may be used as introduction or transitions. The editing and/or delivery must not change the author's intent.
6. The speech must be memorized. Some leagues allow notes in novice division.
7. The presentation must not exceed ten (10) minutes. There is no minimum time, but preferably not shorter than five (5) minutes.
8. No props and/or costumes are allowed.

Selecting Material

1. Choose a suitable oration. The original speaker's gender or ethnicity may be a consideration.
2. Ask teachers, parents, librarians or other adults about any historical speeches they might know.
3. Research to find speeches.
 - Read Vital Speeches.
 - Check libraries for collections of famous speeches.
 - Browse the Internet.

Editing Material

1. Choose the parts of the speech that communicate the "essence" of the oration, the intent of the author, the concepts, the use of language, and the overall meaning to the audience. (Imagine the loss if a speaker delivered Martin Luther King's speech without the repetition of the phrase, "I have a dream.")
2. If parts are eliminated, make sure the speech still makes sense and flows smoothly.

Preparing the Final Presentation

1. Write a short introduction and any necessary transitions.
2. Memorize the speech.
3. Practice and practice, recreating the meaning of the selection through the use of voice, gesture, body movement, eye contact, and facial expression.

SAMPLE SELECTIONS FOR ORATORICAL INTERPRETATION

The following selections were used by contestants in oratorical interpretation at the California State Speech Tournament in 1991. (In some cases, source information may be incomplete due to inadequate information provided in the photocopied script submitted).

Baruch, Bernard, "Control of Atomic Weapons," *The World's Great Speeches*.

Biafra, Jello, "Die for Oil, Sucker," *Alternative Tentacles Records*.

Carlson, Richard, "When Worlds Collide," *Vital Speeches, July 15, 1988*.

Carmichael, Stokely, "Black Power," *The Rhetoric of Black Power*.

Darrow, Clarence, "Defense of Leopold and Loeb," *A Treasury of Great American Speeches*.

Dix, Dortha, "Memorial to the Legislature of Massachusetts," *American Historical Documents*.

Farrakan, Lewis, "The Time and What Must Be Done," *Minister Lewis Farrakan Speaks*.

Feinstein, Dianne, "Women in Politics," *Representative American Speeches: 1983-84*.

Ingersoll, Robert, "A Vision of War," *The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll*.

Jackson, Jesse, "Speech to the Democratic National Convention," *The American Reader*.

Kennedy, John F., "Inaugural Address," *The Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the U.S. 1789-1985*

King, Martin Luther, "Our God Is Marching On," *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

MacArthur, Douglas, "Farewell to the Cadets," *Contemporary American Speeches*.

Schanbert, Sydney, "The Risk of Being Different," *Vital Speeches, September 1, 1989*.

Tillich, Paul J., "Loneliness and Solitude," *Representative American Speeches: 1957-58*.

Truth, Sojourner, "When Woman Gets Her Rights Man Will Be Right," *The Voice of Black America*.

Wilkie, Wendell, "Lidice," *Representative American Speeches: 1942-43*.