



Official Description of Thematic Interpretation

WHAT ARE "INTERPRETATION" SPEECH EVENTS?

Interpretive speech events are events in which the competitors choose a selection (or selections) of published literature and creatively interpret them, from memory, within a given time limit.

WHAT IS THEMATIC INTERPRETATION?

A Thematic Interpretation presents literature from more than one genre, woven together around a single theme of the speaker's choice. The goal is to develop the intellectual, emotional and artistic aspects of the selections of literature for a uniquely original presentation. The use of a forensic notebook is required.

LITERATURE

Literature may be chosen from any genre, including, but not limited to plays, poems, novels, short stories, children's literature, song lyrics, great speeches, biographies, the Bible, or essays. However, media transcriptions from movies, TV, or audio recordings are not allowed. Speeches must contain at least three separate selections/excerpts from different genres of published works. A published piece of literature is a work by an author that is printed and available to the public. Anthologies are considered multiple sources.

Consideration will be given to the literary merit of the selections, as well as how well they support the development of the chosen theme. Original work is prohibited, except for background information in an introduction and transitional words. Limited changes, such as the use of transitional words, changing of verb tenses, and the substitution of pronouns/nouns shall be allowed. The presenter may not add language or take lines from a character and give them to another character. In cutting selections, the presenter must always honor the author's intent and the integrity of the original works.

NATURE OF SELECTIONS

Themes, and therefore literature selections, may be dramatic or humorous in nature. The humor or dramatic impact of the presentation must come from the author's words and not solely from the creativity of the competitor. Vulgarity, profanity, and racial slurs are prohibited.

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

Introductory, explanatory and transitional material must be in the speaker's own words, and should not exceed one third of the total presentation. Titles and authors should be clearly communicated within an opening introduction or prior to each individual selection. There is a penalty for neglecting to cite titles and authors. The chosen theme, supported by the various genres used, should be the unifying subject or idea for the speech, and should be clearly stated throughout. In other words, judges should hear a clear and complete development of purpose from the beginning to the end of the speech. Scoring and ranking will be based on the skill of interpretation, and how effectively the theme is developed and communicated.



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TIME LIMIT

Time begins when the speaker begins speaking and ends when the speaker has finished speaking. Maximum speech length for varsity competitors is 10 minutes total including introductions and transitions, with a 15-second overtime grace period. Speakers are encouraged to aim to complete their presentation in about 9 minutes 30 seconds. There is no minimum time requirement.

GUIDELINES

Specific to this event:

- There is a penalty for neglecting to cite titles and authors.
- Speeches must contain at least three separate selections/excerpts from different genres
- The use of a forensic notebook is required.

As for all Interpretive events:

- The presentation must be confined to the front and center of the presentation space.
- Movement should be limited and suggested rather than exaggerated.
- This is a literary interpretation and NOT a theatrical performance.
- The presenter may present one or more characters.
- Presenters are to maintain an off-stage focus while in character (and not make eye contact with the audience), except during narrative parts of the piece and original words in the introduction and transitions, during which they may make eye contact with the judges and audience.
- Dancing is prohibited.
- Only feet are permitted to touch the floor at any time.
- Very brief singing that is suggested by or included in the literature may be utilized to enhance the emotional impact of the piece.
- No props, costumes, or audiovisuals may be used.

USING A FORENSIC NOTEBOOK

- The use of a forensic notebook (a black 5½" x 8½" three-ring binder) shall be required for this event.
- The forensic notebook may be used creatively as a tool of interpretation.
- The forensic notebook shall be closed during all original words, including introductory remarks and transitional words, and open during the "teaser" and the rest of the literary presentation. This reveals to the audience the words of the author.
- The forensic notebook shall contain the following pages in the front:
 - a title page which includes the competitor's name, address, phone number, and coach/parent name
 - a facsimile of title, author, and copyright date pages from the literature used



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