



Official Description of Cold Reading

WHAT ARE “LIMITED PREPARATION” SPEECH EVENTS?

Limited preparation speech events are events in which a competitor is given a limited time to prepare their speech on-site just prior to presenting it within an allowable time frame to the judge(s).

WHAT IS A COLD READING?

Cold reading is a limited preparation speech event in which speakers read from a short script given to them in the competition room. Speakers will have two minutes to prepare approximately 3-4 minutes (450-550 words) of material. Speakers will be evaluated on the quality of their analysis and presentation. A good dramatic Cold Reader is able to communicate with fluency and clarity and to project speech rhythms well. He/she should also be able to bring out the intent, mood and characterization of a piece through appropriate articulation and body language.

SPEECH FORMAT

Speakers may read only what is in the script; they may not improvise by adding or deleting words. The presentation should be appropriate to the context of the piece. Speakers should not attempt to change the author’s intent. Speakers may use whatever vocal and/or physical techniques are appropriate to present the selection, including but not limited to: gestures, voices, facial expressions and movement. If visuals (e.g. pictures in a children’s book) are provided in the piece, students may incorporate them into the presentation.

SCRIPT SELECTION

The Tournament Director will select and provide appropriate scripts for each round. Selections may come from a wide variety of genres including, but not limited to, well-known literature, speeches, poetry, scripture passages, or other genre selected by the tournament for each round. Selections may all come from the same source if desired (e.g. book, play, etc.). All competitors in a round will receive the same selection. (However, at the option of the Tournament Director, competitors may be asked to draw from an envelope containing a choice of comparable selections taken from the same genre.)

Before speaking in a round, no competitor is permitted to listen to other competitors. Competitors must remain in the room after speaking, unless required to present in another event during the current round. Competitors, coaches, and audience members must not discuss the cold reading selection with anyone, including those competing at concurrent tournaments, until after the completion of the round. Anyone who observes a violation of this standard should notify the Tournament Director. Violators will be subject to disqualification in Cold Reading.

USING PREP TIME

The two-minute preparation time will begin when the speaker receives the selection. The timekeeper will give verbal signals every 30 seconds until two minutes have elapsed. If there is no timekeeper, the judge will start the timing device and place it in view of the speaker. Speakers may take notes on the script, but it must be returned to the judge before the speaker leaves the room. During the prep time there should be no talking in the room.



Official Description of Cold Reading

TIME LIMIT

Since the scripts are pre-selected, there is no set time limit. However, the speech should still be timed and speaking time recorded on the ballot. Time begins when the speaker begins speaking and ends when the speaker has finished speaking.

GUIDELINES

Specific to this event:

- The script must be read word for word without alteration.
- The speaker must return the selection to the judges before leaving the room.
- If needed, the judges may refer to the returned script after the round.

As for all CCofSE “Limited Preparation” speech events:

- The presentation must be confined to the front and center of the presentation space.
- Only feet are permitted to touch the floor at any time.
- The use of facial expression, vocal variety and appropriate gestures is encouraged.
- Physical movement, such as taking steps while speaking, should be limited to the center of the presentation space.
- Other than the script provided, no props, costumes, or audiovisuals may be used.
- The delivery of the reading should be enthusiastic, direct, sincere, and communicative, using good vocal variety, and clear enunciation.