

ARTICLE XIX Improvisation

Section 1. Entries. Each school may enter from one to three contestants in the District Contest.

Section 2. Selections/Materials.

Clause 1. Contestants will draw two situations and three separate characters without looking. The **three** - minute prep time will start when the contestant completes the draw. The contestant will return one situation and character. **All drawing and preparation will take place in the performance room.**

Clause 2. Drawn characters will not include proper names and/or real people.

Clause 3. Situations will be appropriate for high school students.

Clause 4. Materials used by, or the manner of presentation by students at contest deemed by the local contest judge(s) to be obscene or disruptive, may receive lower ratings, or in some cases may result in disqualification.

Section 3. Length. The performance will not exceed five minutes.

Section 4. Preparation and Presentation.

Clause 1. Three minutes prior to the speaking time, the contestant will draw two situations, and three separate character types which two should be the main characters of the presentation. After this the three-minute prep time will start. At the end of the three-minute prep time, the contestant will return one situation and one character. The remaining three selections (one situation and two characters) must be used in the presentation.

Clause 2. The contestants will have three minutes for preparation after the drawing. Contestant will hand the drawn slips to the room chairperson or judge as the student enters to present the selection. A student may not leave the performance room after the draw until time to speak, nor may the contestant receive help from a coach or any other student. The performer may interpret drawn characters as a real person.

Clause 3. The contestant should keep in mind that the performance may utilize characterization or a combination of narration and characterization.

Clause 4. The room chairperson or judge will announce each contestant's draw before the performance.

Clause 5. A single chair may be used in any way a student deems necessary and appropriate. Properties (other than the chair and normal wearing apparel) may not be used.

Clause 6. Students must not costume. They may, however **adjust** normal wearing apparel to enhance characterization (i.e. straightening tie, pushing glasses down on nose). Students **may** use wearing apparel as a property (i.e. removing it and placing it somewhere in the room). Properties (other than the chair and normal wearing apparel) will not be used.

Section 5. Timing and Signals. The local manager will appoint a timekeeper who will use a timing device and indicate with timing cards the time as it elapses. At the end of the first minute of the speech, a four will be held up, at the end of the second minute, a three will be held up and so on down the scale of numbers - 2,1,1/2 and 0. At the end of five minutes, the timer will rise and say STOP. The speaker must stop at once or be subject to the penalty of disqualification. (Article III, Section 6, By-Laws.)

Section 6. Judging.

Clause 1. Note cards or outlines will not be used during performance.

Clause 2. The presentation will be evaluated on the basis of creativity, spontaneous bodily activity, and the ability to develop two separate and distinct characters from their draw. The presentation should reflect the effective use of voice and speaker's ability to create and develop a plot.

CASEBOOK

Questions - Answers

1. Q. Is it possible for Improvisation to be serious in nature?
A. Yes.
2. Q. What are some typical examples of Improvisation categories?
A. A student might find the following:
 Characters: an 85-year-old lady
 a young girl
 Situation: someone is falling off a cliff
 a vending machine is malfunctioning
3. Q. May a student add another character(s) to the main character(s)?
A. Yes, but if they are predominant, the student may invite a lower rating.
4. Q. May students use any part of the performance room other than the floor?
A. Students should not use parts of the performance room that could be considered props, such as doors, tables, desks, windows, walls, etc. Accidental touch does not mean **USED**.
5. Q. May a student use the same performance at district and state?
A. No, a "canned" performance is unethical and will result in disqualification.
6. Q. What are character types?
A. May be people, animals, inanimate objects (i.e. a child, a big bear, or a light bulb).
7. Q. Are ethnic stereotypes, "off-color humor", offensive language, sexual innuendoes acceptable in Improvisation?
A. Such inclusions may invite lower ratings, or possibly disqualification.
8. Q. Is the use of or removal of objects from pockets (i.e. coins, sunglasses, wallets, Kleenex, keys, combs) considered normal wearing apparel?
A. No. Objects carried in pockets are considered props.
9. Q. If a student establishes the two distinct characters from their drawn characters, but does not fully develop one of the characters, does this invite disqualification?
A. This may invite a lower rating, but does not merit disqualification.
10. Q. May a performer watch any performer in any section?
A. Yes.
11. Q. May a student use note cards or outlines?
A. Yes, a student may use note cards or outlines for preparation, as long as they are not used in the actual performance.
12. Q. If a student is unfamiliar with a word or its definition, may the student ask the drawing room chair for clarification?
A. Yes.