

Dramatic Interpretation FAQ

Can I compete with the same speech in two different categories?

Speakers may not use the same speech in two separate categories at the same tournament. However, the same speech can be moved to a different category at a different tournament. If the speech qualifies to advance to a higher level (Regionals or Nationals) of competition in both categories the speaker will have to choose a category.

What is a published piece of literature?

A published piece of literature is a work of an author which is printed and available to the public.

Publish: To distribute copies (of a work) to the public. Black's Law Dictionary (7th Edition, 1999)

My piece of literature is not available at my local library. May I use the Gutenberg Press website for my Form 2 document?

No.

Can I use the dust jacket book cover synopsis in my speech, even if it is written by the same author as my piece of literature?

No, the items written in the dust jacket book cover, even if done by the author, are most commonly considered a different writing than the piece of literature itself.

Can I combine different books of the Bible for my Interp?

No, each book of the Bible is considered a different piece of literature.

May I use multiple pieces as long as they are published in one book, like a compilation of Peanuts comics or several Dave Barry newspaper articles?

No, you may only use a single piece of literature.

Can I use the 150 introductory word allowance for any other purpose?

No, the 150-word allowance is not to be used for other purposes. The intent of the 150 word allowance is for the introduction. It is not to be used to add words to the piece: not to incorporate more entertaining rhetoric, not to add original work into the piece, and not to incorporate another author's work into an interpretation.

In my introduction, may I have the author or author's character(s) with my own words to introduce my piece?

No

Can I add a Bible verse that helps to communicate my message?

No, adding a Bible verse would be considered a second source of literature.

In cutting my piece, may I combine phrases from several sentences?

Yes.

For example, from a J.R.R. Tolkien Tale (*Farmer Giles of Ham*):

1. "Without warning or formality he wooped out to give battle. Down he came upon them with a rush and a roar." - may be cut to read: "Without warning or formality he came upon them with a rush and a roar."

In cutting my piece, may I use single words of the author to create new phrases or sentences?

No

In cutting my piece may I insert single words into sentences within the literature?

No.

What is gratuitous vulgarity?

This refers to vulgar, obscene or profane language or gestures which are included for shock value. Gratuitous vulgarity is not appropriate.

Can I replace an objectionable word, such as vulgar or obscene language, in my piece with a less objectionable word?

The only words that may be substituted in interpretations are pronouns and verb tense. However, you may delete word(s). You might also delete the scene or that portion of the literature.

Can I add language that I believe to be consistent with what the author intended?

No, you may not add any language after the introduction.

I would like to change the setting in my script. It is set in Scottsdale, Arizona and I would like it to be on a farm in Vermont. I would only need to change a couple of words. Is this acceptable?

You are free to interpret the setting of your piece any way you wish. You are not, however, allowed to change the author's words.

Can I take lines from one or more characters and give them to another character?

Yes.

Can I change the tenses of verbs in my Interp?

Yes.

May I repeat the author's words or phrases when the author does not do so?

Yes

Can I add sound effects to my interpretive piece if it is not in the piece of literature?

Sound effects may only be used if they are not recognizable words found in a published non-internet-sourced dictionary, and if they are motivated by the piece of literature.

My Dramatic Interp piece is pretty intense and may not be suitable for younger audiences. Is there a way for me to help protect them?

The best way to protect the younger or more sensitive members of an audience is to announce before your speech begins that it may not be suitable for all audiences. This will allow younger students, families and others with care of small children, and also the timekeeper to leave the room before the piece begins.

Can automatic script penalties be waived for a speaker with learning disabilities or difficulty with memorization?

The answer is that there can be no exceptions. Competitive forensics reveals strengths in young speakers who did not believe they were capable. Speakers are frequently unable to memorize until they "have to." When speech participants have to, they often try harder and achieve more than they thought they could. Finally, the purpose of this activity is not to win, but to grow in communication ability. The memorization requirement is included to encourage speakers to be the best communicators they can be.

My child has special needs and/or circumstances. Can he be considered an exception to a competition rule?

From a practical standpoint, an exception here would open the door for a host of exceptions. An unlimited number of participants could see themselves in need of exceptions and an infinite number of potential exceptions requested. It becomes highly complicated to communicate the variety of potential exceptions to the judges as well as competitors. The ultimate purpose for participating in competitive forensics is to improve communication skills. Special students have shown much improvement in this environment.

Is it legal for us to submit a copy of our scripts?

Traditionally many copyrighted works have been used under the "fair use" doctrine for the purposes of interpretive competition events in an educational setting. However, each family is responsible for making their own determination based upon the works they select if written permission from the publisher is required. Further information on copyright law may be found here (<http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>).

If my script is accepted at the script submission check-in at my tournament, does that mean the script doesn't have any problems?

No, there still may be issues with the script or the piece. The script submission check-in reviews the script for structural compliance, meaning that submission is structurally in compliance with the format for submitting a script. Script submission check-in verifies that the script paperwork is completed correctly, but the script may not be in complete compliance with all of the rules and FAQs for the event.

Should I bold the title and author on my typewritten script (format #1)?

No, do not bold the title and author, and do not include that in your added word count. The title of the work should be italicized.

May I add script-style character names to my format #1 after I finish cutting my piece?

Yes, after you cut the piece of literature, you may use a script-style format with the character names designated at the beginning of each line. If you choose to do this, do not bold the character names or include these in your added word count.

What is a proper script-style format?

Here is an example:

John: Please sit down now!

May I also add in stage directions to my script?

Yes, stage directions, if used, must be included in parenthesis and italicized. Do not include stage directions in your added word count.

Is there a preference for double- or single-spacing the typewritten scripts?

The preference (although not mandatory) is to double-space typewritten scripts.