



SCHOLARSHIP CATEGORY ORAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

DESCRIPTION

Oral interpretation of Scripture involves the memorization and oral recitation of a passage of Scripture in an interpretive manner. You should seek to bring out the meaning of the text through vocal and facial expressions and gestures without costumes or props.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

You are free to choose your Scripture passage. Some possible selections are Jonah, Matthew 5 and 6, John 13—15, Romans 7 and 8, Ephesians 1—3, Titus, Hebrews 11 and 12, 1 Peter 1 and 2, and 2 Peter. The Scripture you choose must be a continuous passage. You may use either the King James Version or the New King James Version of the Bible for your recitation.

INTRODUCTION

You are required to present an introduction of your passage, not to exceed one minute in length. The introduction should include such items as the primary argument, the point of view, the topic, the characterization, or the theme.

MEMORY

You are required to present your oral interpretation from memory, reciting verbatim from the Scripture text. Give the judges the Bible you used in preparing the passage.

PREPARATION

You will find it helpful in your preparation to videotape your presentation so you can see and hear areas that need improvement (e.g., posture, gestures, vocal inflection).

TIME

The presentation, including the introduction, must be at least eight minutes and no more than ten minutes in length. At eight minutes the timekeeper

will stand long enough to notify you that two minutes remain. At ten minutes the timekeeper will stand again. Any contestant who uses less than eight minutes or more than ten minutes will be disqualified.

IMPROMPTU READING

In addition to your prepared recitation, the judges will ask you to present an impromptu reading of a designated Scripture passage of their choice. The passage will take one to two minutes to read. You will have 30 seconds to look at the passage before you present it. This presentation is not from memory.

BIBLE STUDY

To enable you to interpret your Scripture passage correctly, you are required to spend at least three hours studying the passage, using at least two sources. Consult your pastor for recommended Bible study books and commentaries. Prepare a one-page summary of your Bible study. Include also a bibliography and the amount of time of your study. You will not be judged on the summary of your study, but you must complete this assignment to be able to compete in the state and national contests.

GUIDELINES

1. Use a translation you are familiar with. If you use the King James Version, you may want to secure a recording of someone reading the KJV so you get a good sense of the flow and the natural cadences of early seventeenth century English.
2. Become familiar with your text by reading it **aloud**. Memorize your portion by repeatedly saying it **aloud**, and constantly rehearse it **aloud**.
3. Understand what the portion of Scripture means. Do more than the required study. Enlist the aid of your pastor to interpret properly the meaning of the text. From this study you will understand the character of the speaker and can better express his or her point of view.
4. After you have memorized your passage, add

your gestures and rehearse them diligently so they are natural to you. Do not saddle your presentation with overly stylized movements and gestures that disrupt the flow of the text. Be certain the gestures add to what you are saying and not detract from it.

5. Consider the character or the point of view of the one speaking. When speaking as a character, it is best not to make eye contact with your audience. When speaking from a point of view or in a narrative, it is good to make eye contact with your audience. When telling a story where one moves from narrative to characterization to narrative, use both techniques.

6. Portray the different characters in a passage through vocalizations and gestures. Changing positions to denote character change is usually not effective in oral interpretation of Scripture.

7. Believe what you are speaking. Your belief adds much to how your audience listens and how much they want to listen. If you believe what you are speaking, if your audience can clearly hear and understand what you are saying, and if you are true to your text, you will succeed as a communicator of the Scriptures.

CHURCH MINISTRY

To be eligible for state competition, you are required to present your oral interpretation of the Scripture passage you have chosen in your local church (or in some other ministry opportunity approved by your pastor). You must submit to the state judges a signed statement from your pastor or youth leader that you have done so.

STATE CONTEST

Submit four copies of your one-page Bible study summary at the time specified by your state TFC director. Include with your summary a bibliography of the sources you used and the amount of time of your study.

NATIONAL CONTEST

Each first- and second-place state winner intending to compete nationally must send four copies of his/her one page Bible study summary along with the bibliography and amount of time in study to GARBC/TFC, 1300 N. Meacham Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60173-4806 by **June 1, 2007**. Failure to submit all required elements by the deadline will result in a deduction of points at national competition.

ADJUDICATION AREAS

Introduction—time; appropriateness; clarity

Memorization—accuracy

Interpretation—proper emphasis; clear meaning

Enunciation and projection—clear; understandable

Voice control, variety, and inflection—appropriate

Gestures and facial expression—appropriate; natural

Pacing, timing, flow—smooth; interpretive

Audience relationship—eye contact; focus on audience

Impromptu reading

Appearance—appropriate attire; good grooming

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Most high school speech textbooks have one or more chapters about oral interpretation principles and procedures. Additional resources include current college textbooks for courses in oral interpretation, such as *Oral Interpretation* (tenth edition) by Charlotte Lee (Houghton Mifflin), *Performance in Life and Literature* by Paul H. Gray and James VanOosting (Alyn Bacon), and *Guide to Oral Interpretation* by Scriverener and Robinett (Bobbs Merrill Educational Publishing). A set of CDs called *Ruth Draper and Her Company of Characters* (www.drapermonologues.com) is highly recommended by some teachers as a model of this talent at work.