



Round One - Elocution: How to Pick a Speech

The contestant will be expected to deliver from memory, without the assistance of notes, an elocution piece 3 to 4 minutes in length. This may be an original composition, prose, or poetry taken from a book or printed copy. **Imitating recordings or tapes is not permitted.**

There are two divisions in this round for seventh grade: serious and humorous. There are three divisions in this round for eighth grade: serious, humorous, and patriotic.

Humorous Speech – A humorous speech includes a speech whose text, in and of itself, is funny and has the potential to make the listener chuckle.

Serious Speech – A serious speech includes a speech topic that is thought provoking, passionate or grave in content.

Patriotic Speech (8th grade only) – A patriotic speech includes a speech that expresses or inspires love and devotion for one's country. For Valley Catholic Middle School's Annual Speech Tournament, patriotic speeches are limited to American Patriotism.

Elocution Speech Tips

Before you pick your piece, take time to consider the judge's score sheet. Think about what the basic requirements will be:

Finding a piece: find a piece that expresses you. Find a piece you connect with and can understand – that you can connect with emotionally. Given this, you may choose to present a serious, humorous, or emotional speech, etc.

Delivery: This means how fast, slow, the proper pausing

Eye contact: Look at the judge like you look at everyone else. Look at everyone so they know you are looking at them.

Interpretation of the Author's Meaning: Did you present the speech the way the author intended it to be given? Were you sarcastic when you should have been excited? Did you think the author was joking when really you should have been sad?

Practice Materials for Round One

I have included the step-by-step instructions for round one. It is a copy of the script that the judge's assistant and judge will be using the day of the tournament. It might be helpful as you practice your elocution. I have also included a copy of the judge's score sheet.

Step-by-Step Instructions for Judge's Assistants

The door to the room should always be closed while in session. The judge's assistant may open the door once the dismissal announcement is made. (The office will make this announcement once all 30 rooms are finished with each round.) The office does this so that rooms that are finished early will not be making a lot of noise out in the halls and disturbing a room that has not finished. The office will also make an announcement to begin each round.

Round One

(These instructions are written for the judge's assistant and the judge. The *you* in this section refers to the judge):

Wait for the announcement to begin before you start this round.

You will say:

"Good Morning, and welcome to Valley Catholic Middle School. My name is _____ and I am the student assistant for this round. I would like to introduce you to your Judge _____. (If there is another student helper –introduce him or her too.) We hope you will do your best, and learn from this opportunity this morning. Our best wishes for a happy experience all day."

*"We are now ready for the Elocutions. After each recitation, we will allow time for the judge to finish tabulating the contestant's score before we proceed to the next student. **Please do not applaud during any of the round.**"*

"We also would like to remind you that the time requirement of 3-4 minutes will be enforced, as was stated in the coaches' packet."

At this point, you should make sure that the door is closed (if it wasn't already). Then you should call the first contestant by symbol, e.g. 12-08-123

The Judge should have the score sheets in front of him/her at this point.

(* If a contestant gets frightened and cannot go on, the judge may say, "Would you like to sit down for awhile and try again later?" Then call that contestant last before the round is over.

Once the contestant begins, you should begin timing by using the second hand on the classroom clock or by using the stop watch.

Once each contestant finishes, you should say "*Thank You*" as the judge finishes scoring

Once the judge has finished scoring this contestant, you should call the next contestant . . . (02-08-124) and continue as above.

When all are finished, you should say, "*We are finished now, but some of the other 29 rooms are not finished. So, until the announcement is made to end round one, please wait VERY QUIETLY until the dismissal announcement is made. Please remember there are contestants giving their speeches in rooms next to us we need to stay quite. Thank you.*"

At this point you should take your finished score sheets to the computer lab in the envelope for round one. Then return to your room. It is not break time yet.

Once all the score sheets are brought to the computer lab from all 30 rooms, an announcement will be made ending round one. The contestants will be given a fifteen-minute break to use the restroom, get a snack and to reach their next competition room. You and your judge will stay in the same room for all three rounds. (You may also take a break at this time, too. Please be sure that your judge takes the blank score sheets for round II and round III with him/her.)

How to Find a Speech: Places to Begin Your Search

Find a speech to express yourself! Think about a story that really moved you/evoked emotion from you. Did that story make you: happy, laugh, cry, angry, scared? If you felt strongly when reading/hearing this story/poem/speech – then use it yourself. Your job is to make your audience feel the same way about the story/poem/reading you give at the tournament.

Sources include (Do not use song lyrics):

- An excerpt from a favorite book/novel (children's books work well)
- Shel Silverstein (Do not pick rhyming poems or stories)
- Short Stories, such as *The Cremation of Sam McGee*, *Casey at the Bat*, etc.
- Chicken Soup for the Soul
- Sam Levison's Work

Toastmasters (speech club) have a few sights. They vary by areas of interest.

The following key words, used on an internet search, have proved helpful:

Full-text speech
Full-text speeches
Full text Speech
Full Text Speeches
Fulltext speech
Full Text speeches

Besides looking for speeches on-line or in textbooks, try looking for “poetry+stories” or short stories.

Suggestions:

When you pick a speech, find one that matches your personality/interest. If you like telling funny stories then pick a humorous speech, etc.

You may edit/cut your speech to fit your tastes. You can adjust or replace words or you can use a source as an example but rewrite the overall theme (For example, rewriting ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas to talk about the first day of middle school). If you do this, you start your speech by saying “An adaptation of ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas by - or Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas - by Major Henry Livingston Jr. (1748-1828) (previously believed to be by Clement Clarke Moore).

Notes from Mrs. Osborne (VCS Librarian):

There is a pathfinder is you wish to use it:

<http://library.valleycatholic.org/Finding%20a%20Speech.htm>

This link gives speech tips: http://library.valleycatholic.org/Speech_Tips.htm



Sample of Round One – Elocution

Student Code

Round 1: Grade and division - room number

Directions:

Rate the speaker for each of the criteria listed below, according to the following marking system:

5. Excellent 4. Very Good 3. Good 2. Fair 1. Poor

_____ Delivery: (Variety of pace; proper pausing)

_____ Voice Quality: (Pleasant, clear; enunciation, expression)

_____ Eye Contact: (With audience)

_____ Body Movement: (Natural, meaningful, appropriate use of gestures)

_____ Interpretation: (Interesting, varied, appropriate)

_____ Memory

_____ Within Time Limit (3-4 minutes)

** Please list the student's speech time here: _____

Scoring for the time limit requirement

A speech length of 3-4 minutes = a score of 5

1 - 20 seconds off either way = a score of 4

21 - 40 seconds off either way = a score of 3

41 - 80 seconds off either way = a score of 2

81+ seconds off either way = a score of 1

_____ Total