



Round Two – Extemporaneous Reading: How to Practice

This round is set up to determine how well the contestant can read with only 10 minutes of preparation. Students may have help during those ten minutes from parents, teachers or friends. All contestants will have the same selection, but they will have no opportunity to hear the preceding contestants read. After the ten-minute practice period is over, students will return their selection to the room chairperson. The chairperson will instruct contestants to wait outside the door until they are called to read, at which time the selection will be given back. When contestants are finished, they are to remain in the room until the entire round is completed. (This rule of courtesy holds true for all rounds and for all those attending the tournament.)

Where to begin:

Sample the content

When you are given the reading, try it out. Read from the practice copy aloud to see if there is any part that is confusing – words you do not know how to pronounce, phrases you do not understand, etc. Pay attention to the cadence or rhythm of the piece. Does it have a musical quality when read orally?

Talk about the author's purpose

It isn't enough just to say that an author's purpose is to inform or entertain. Oral readers must think how the purpose of the story is accomplished. Depending on the piece, the reader must make an abbey full of mice seem absolutely believable or the reader must make the audience/judge suffer for the sake of a mistreated dog. Think about and talk about the author's purpose. That will clarify your oral reading purpose and create a direct link between reader and listeners.

Mind the language

Find the places where the language sounds like what it means and help create the image for the audience. Make your audience (and the judge) see the image as they hear the words. In their minds,

Experiment with your technique

Professionals use two techniques to make their reading crackle: topping and pause. With topping, each sentence or phrase is spoken with more intensity than the preceding one, so that there's a build-up. Use topping when you want to build suspense or when you're approaching a punch line. And don't forget the pause, which gives listeners a chance to absorb. When using your practice copy, mark topping places with a small upward arrow and mark pauses with two diagonal lines (/ /). You will not have these notations for the final reading, but the effort may help you remember while you are being judged.

Practice, practice, practice - Use your parents for this round!

Just keep your focus on the cadence and the author's purpose you're trying to convey. Practice reading this to someone or some semblance of listener (or pretend someone is listening if you cannot find a real person.)

Taken From:

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/read-aloud/teaching-methods/3548.html?page=2&detoured=1>

Tips for appropriate body language

Your body language is very important during all three rounds (Elocution speech, Extemporaneous Reading, Impromptu Speech). It could make the difference between a good delivery and a prize-winning speech.

Hands: Try to incorporate gestures into your speech. This will give them something to do – But don't overuse gestures. Make them "Natural" through the movements themselves and/or by practicing them enough that they become second nature to you. Remember that bad gestures (awkward, not matching the text, etc.) are more distracting than no gestures at all.

Posture: Stand up straight, although if playing someone meek or weak you can show that in posture but stand up straight other times.

Feet: Don't rock, don't shuffle. Step forward to emphasize a point but be careful about stepping back. It's usually not a good idea.

Use body language to differentiate between people or scenes. Face left or right, or up or down. But, always keep one eye on the judge and the audience.

Eye Contact: If you are nervous about looking at the person, a good trick is to look at the top of their head. It will appear to the person that you are looking at them and it will not break your concentration by looking them in the eyes.

Also, good eye contact "rotates" throughout the room. For example, be sure to look in all directions, front, left, right.

Extemporaneous Reading Tips

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

Reading Ability: Did you pronounce all the words correctly? Did you read it choppy (awkward pauses) or did you read it smoothly, like a professional storyteller?

Did you have facial expressions, voice changes (Quiet when needed, loud when needed, fast to show excitement or fear, etc.?)

Think about the most memorable story from your childhood. Who read it to you, why did you like to hear it read by the person? Was it your grandparent, teacher, etc? What made the story INTERESTING to listen to?

Command of Reader's Attention: When you are finished reading, did the audience hear what the author wanted the audience to hear – did you convey the right meaning?

Practice Materials for Round Two

I have included the step-by-step instructions for round two. 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 Extemporaneous Reading. I have also included a copy of the judge's score sheet.

Step-by-Step Instructions for Judge's Assistants

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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 Two:

(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:

"Welcome to your new room. 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 – say: And to your room helper _____ .)"

*"This round is Extemporaneous Reading. You will have the same selection to read, and you will have a chance to study it beforehand. As I call your number, please come up for the selection and then you may go out into the hallway or stay in the room while you study the piece. You may have help during this time. When the announcement is made to collect the practice sheets, please come back into the room and return the selection to me. Then I will ask all of you to wait outside the room, **VERY QUIETLY**, until it is your time to read. You will not hear the participants before you read, but you will sit down in the room when your turn is over and hear the ones after you read.*

*Please remember that after each recitation, we will allow time for the judge to finish tabulating the contestants score before we proceed to the next student. **Please do not applaud during any of the round.**"*

At this point, you should wait for the announcement to hand out the practice sheets and then do so.

The contestants are given 10 minutes to practice their reading. Once ten minutes have passed, an announcement will be made to collect all practice sheets. Then you should call the first contestant by symbol, e.g. K-2.

You should call in contestants one at a time. When the contestant enters the room to read, he/she should be given the reading that is mounted to cardboard.

The judge should have the score sheets in front of him/her at this point. If he/she does not, please assist him/her.

Please remind the judge to put the contestant symbol (K-2) on the score sheet.

When the contestant has finished his/her reading, the reading that is mounted on cardboard should be taken from them for use by the next contestant. Each contestant stays in the room once he/she has finished. After each contestant has completed the reading, you should say “*Thank you*” and continue on.

Once the judge has finished scoring this contestant, you should call the next contestant . . . (M-6) 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 two, you may visit VERY QUIETLY until the dismissal announcement is made. Please remember there are contestants giving their speeches in rooms next to us so the visiting needs to stay quite. Thank you.*”

At this point you should take your finished score sheets down to the office in the envelope for round two.

Once all the score sheets are brought to the office from all 30 rooms, an announcement will be made ending round two. The contestants will be given five minutes to reach their next room. You and the judge will stay in the same room for all three rounds.



VALLEY CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

Speech Tournament

Sample of Judge's Score Sheet

Round Two – Extemporaneous Reading

17 - 7 - 1297

Round 2: 7th Extemporaneous - room 101

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

_____ Reading Ability: (Pronunciation, enunciation)

_____ Reading Ability: (Proper pausing, flowing)

_____ Reading Ability: (Expression)

_____ Communication of Author's Meaning

_____ Eye Contact: (With audience)

_____ Voice Quality: (Pleasant, clear)

_____ Poise

_____ Total (Total Possible: 35) Judge: _____