

- **One week prior** – The National Speech & Debate Association recommends closing registration one week prior to your tournament.
- **The week of your tournament. Download the LATEST version of Software.** – From your website, visit the **Administration » Software Download** page to download the latest version of the software.

## Interpretation Rules

Thank you for providing feedback throughout the year on our digital publication rules for interpretation events. The ad hoc committee for interpretation used your feedback and forwarded recommended rule changes to the Competition Rules Committee and the Board of Directors. These rule changes have been approved by the Board and are effective for the 2016-2017 school year. See our Interp FAQ below for additional clarification!

### Interp Rules: See What's New in 2016-2017

The following language appears in the [High School Unified Manual](#). *(The following section was updated 10/17/16. Additions are shown below in orange and deletions are shown in gray strike-through.)*

#### Interpretation Rules

This includes categories of individual (solo) performance of dramatic (serious) and humorous literature, as well as duo performance of either emotive appeal, with selections drawn from published, printed: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, or other printed, published works, **PDFs, e-books**, as well as limited online works as provided for in the rules below.

1. **Divisions:** Contests are conducted in Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, and **Program Oral** Interpretation. See additional rules for the supplemental and consolation interpretation events of Poetry, Prose, and Storytelling.
2. **Length:** The time limit in Interpretation Main Events (Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, and **Program Oral** Interpretation) is ten minutes with a 30-second "grace period." If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
3. **Material:** **Selections used in these contests must be cuttings from a single work of literature (one short story, play, or novel). If the source is an anthology (collection of short stories, plays, or novels), each selection of literature is independent and only one selection can be used, even if it is from the same author. In the genre of poetry, cuttings may come from one or more poems or a collection of poems. Unlike the other interpretation events, Program Oral Interpretation may use multiple sources for the program. Song lyrics may be used if the performer has an original, hard copy of the lyrics such as sheet music or a CD jacket. Lyrics may only be used from online sources that appear on the approved websites list.**

#### A. Print, PDF, and E-book Publications:

- 1) Print publications includes novels, short stories, plays or poetry, published in print **as per 4A.**
- 2) **In addition to the listed printed sources, published, unaltered PDFs that are commercially or professionally available are also eligible sources.**
- 3) **E-books (such as Kindle, Nook, etc.) may also serve as eligible sources. NOTE In addition to these sources, certain online materials are allowed as per 3B.**
- 4) Also, if a *treatment* of a movie script is ordered from a company that provides printed movie scripts, keep the original treatment. Please note that text of the treatment may differ from the actual film, so



students are advised against transcribing directly from the film.

**B. Digital (Online) Publications:** Material is only allowed from pre-approved online publishing sources listed at [www.speechanddebate.org/rules-forms-manuals](http://www.speechanddebate.org/rules-forms-manuals). Online material must meet the web page standards outlined below:

- 1) If the website offers online material in a variety of formats, only material that can be printed directly from the web page is allowed. ~~Downloaded files will NOT be accepted.~~
- 2) The Association defines a web page as a document coded with hypertext markup language (HTML), displayed in a web browser. ~~The Association defines a downloaded file as a specific non-hypertext format, such as PDFs or word processing documents.~~
- 3) These **following** guidelines determined digital (online) publication sources selected:
  - a. The literary material is from a website with strict editorial submission standards that include editorial review and acceptance. **Also, websites that have editorial review for their own staff writers are permissible. In either case, the website must be on the NSDA Approved List. See submission guidelines below.**
  - b. Unacceptable sites include:
    - i. Personal sites **(social network content, such as Facebook posts, tweets, and unmoderated blogs)**
    - ii. Personal professional sites (those where a writer who has their own site and can place their works for sale or view **such as Wix or similar platforms**)
    - iii. Publish it sites (those with one click upload or that accept submissions without a selection process)
  - b. Texts must come from a verifiable website that can be accessed universally by any user. The site and literary text needs to be verifiable on the web if challenged.
    - i. Unmarked or casual sites where individuals can easily post work either for performance or criticism will not be accepted.
    - ii. The website has been in existence for a minimum of two years prior to submission for consideration by the National Speech & Debate Association for the upcoming school year (several online tools allow for verification of the existence of a website).

**C. Prohibited Material:** not published in print or allowable online material as per above, including:

- 1) Recorded material (videotape, DVDs, audio tape, CDs, MP3s, or phonograph recordings).
- 2) Original material published in a high school publication such as a newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.

**D. Source Verification:** Interp source material must be available at all district tournament contests in the event of a protest. However, it shall be the choice of each individual District Committee whether or not to require these materials be submitted prior to the district contest. At the National Tournament, all quarterfinalists are required to turn in the **print, PDF, or e-book** original source OR printed web manuscript (as outlined below) to the ombudsperson by noon on the third day of competition **unless officially notified otherwise by the National Tournament director**. Photocopies are not acceptable. In addition, contestants must turn in the script highlighting all of the words used and noting any words added for transitional purposes only. Any contestant failing to produce the original source and highlighted manuscript to the bud room will not qualify for the semifinal rounds of competition.

- 1) **When requested by tournament officials, access to the source material upon demand, either in electronic or print form, must be presented.**
- 2) **For print publications, the original publication must be presented.**



3) For e-books, an original, unaltered e-pub or other recognized e-book format via flash drive or email must be presented; however, as some e-book formats are exclusive to their specific apps or electronic readers, students must provide the required technology and/or Internet access to verify the material performed for tournament officials.

4) For PDFs, an original, unaltered PDF via flash drive, email, or on an electronic device (e.g., laptop) must be presented. Manipulation of a PDF script outside the scope of the rules will be subject to disqualification.

4. **Material Availability:** It is the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered in Interpretation contests to determine absolutely that the cutting being performed meets all rules for material.

**A. Print Publications:** The original published source of any selection used must be immediately available at the tournament as well as a word-processed manuscript of the cutting performed, and a complete copy of the highlighted pages from the original script used in the cutting. The typed manuscript and the text used from the page copies of the original script should reflect the content performed. A complete script of the cutting from the original text includes:

1) A photocopy (or printed screenshot for e-books) of every page from which any line of the cutting is taken; pages are to be placed in the order in which they are performed (e.g., if text from one page is used more than once within the cutting, that page should be copied again with those words highlighted and re-inserted and re-inserted where it is used in the cutting).

2) All words used from the script should be highlighted (any words/lines not used should be left unmarked).

3) Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink. Failure to clearly indicate the addition of words will be subject to disqualification. Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language. Transitions may be used to clarify the logical sequence of ideas. They are not to be used for the purpose of embellishing the humorous or dramatic effect of the literature.

4) The NSDA provided checklist must be completed by the coach attesting that the oral interpretation typed manuscript and the pages submitted from the original script accurately reflect the performance. See sample checklist below:

**I certify that we, the coach(es), student(s), and administrator(s) directly affiliated with our NSDA chapter, have complied with the following requirements.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have included a word-processed manuscript of the cutting.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have included a highlighted copy of the original script. The pages are in the order of the cutting. If lines from one page were used more than once within the cutting, the original page was re-copied, highlighted, and inserted to show the order of the line(s) used.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have clearly indicated in ink any words added or changed as permitted in the rules.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am aware of the Transition Rule: "Failure to clearly indicate the addition of words will be subject to disqualification. Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language. Transitions may be used to clarify the logical sequence of ideas. They are not to be used for the purpose of embellishing the humorous or dramatic effect of the literature."

\_\_\_\_\_ The pages submitted from the original script accurately reflect the performance.

**B. Digital (Online) Publications:** The material the competitor performs must presently appear on the website if questions arise in competition; additionally, a printed manuscript must be available:

1) Manuscript items to be printed directly from the screen:

a. The first page in the website (the home page)



b. All other linked pages needed to navigate to the literary text selected for competition shall be printed out and the link must be highlighted in the manuscript

c. All web pages upon which the cutting appears

2) Each page must have printed in the header and/or footer:

a. Date the page was printed

b. Web address

3) Only the printed manuscript shall be considered adequate proof of authenticity. In other words, the student or coach must provide printed pages or an identical copy for examination.

4) The highlighted manuscript submitted for material verification will follow the same rules designated for printed publications **as per 4A**.

5) The website and online version of the digital publication need to be available for comparison if challenged. Online access is the fundamental responsibility of tournament officials and/or individual filing the protest. NOTE: If tournament officials cannot gain online access and the above requirements have been met, the piece is considered legal for use.

5. **Performance:** The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. During the presentation the contestant/team must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made.

Additionally:

A. *Adaptations* to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. The gender stated by the author must be honored. However, a female contestant may play a male role, and a male contestant may play a female role.

B. Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation selections must be presented from memory. **Program Oral Interpretation must use a manuscript.**

C. In Duo Interpretation, each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible.

D. Monologues, prose, and poetry selections are acceptable in Dramatic, Humorous, and **Program Oral Interpretation**. In Duo Interpretation, if the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.

E. **Artistic Plagiarism:** Videos of previous final round performances are intended to provide educational examples for coaches and students. They are not intended to serve as a model to directly imitate or duplicate in performance. The wholesale impersonation of final round performances is strongly discouraged.

6. **Focus:** In Dramatic, Humorous, and **Program Oral Interpretation**, use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction [the performers may look at each other] but must be indirect [off-stage] during the performance itself.

7. **Re-Use:** A student may not use a cutting from a work of literature the student used in National Speech & Debate Association district or national competition in any previous contest year. A student entered in two events may not use the same selection of literature in both events.

8. **Website Approval Submission Process:** Literature source submissions for the approved website list will be accepted year-round for review. If the source meets the stated criteria, it will be posted on the approved website list four times a year. Submission received by the 15th of each designated month will be reviewed and posted by the 1st of the next month. The months for submissions are August, November, February, and April. Once a site is approved (e.g., the *New York Times*), all articles posted by that source would be approved for use.

