

SPEECH AND DRAMA SECTION

GUIDELINES

The following are some guidelines for teachers, parents and performers who may not be familiar with what happens and what is expected of participants in the various classes in the Speech and Drama section of Ballymena Festival.

The vast majority of classes will take place in the Special Exhibition Gallery in The Braid. The major exception is Choral Speaking which takes place in the main Theatre. The Gallery holds about 120 people. A stage is set up towards the back of the room with the adjudicator's table in front. The adjudicator writes a report (adjudication sheet) which is given to the performer when the class finishes. The adjudicator will also speak to the audience to give feedback on the class and to note where improvements might be made.

There is no need to register your child's attendance, however, if there are any problems speak to either the adjudicator's steward or the Section Secretary before the class begins.

The Platform Steward will call each performer by name to come to the stage. They will always check at the end of the class for any latecomers to ensure that nobody misses their chance to participate.

VERSE SPEAKING

Those taking part in Schools Classes (SS 15 - 28) and Verse speaking classes (SV 31 - 47) will be expected to

- Come to the stage, stand towards the front and centre facing the audience.
- Stand with hands loosely by your sides
- Announce the name of the poem and the author
- Speak the poem using facial and vocal expression only. No gestures or actions are required.
- Finish the poem, wait for applause, then go back quietly to your seat.

SS 31 Primary School Group 'Acting of a poem'

This is a new class, introduced at the suggestion of a previous adjudicator. This year it will be non-competitive and free entry. The aim is to encourage primary schools to let children take part in some drama. This may be especially suitable for small primary schools, who have perhaps not taken part in verse-speaking before. Consult the syllabus for class specifications.

PROSE CLASSES

In prose classes the performers can choose to take part in Prepared Prose and /or Memorised prose. All these classes are own choice, however the teacher should give guidance on suitable material to be used

- Prepared prose should be a reading from a suitable book. Comic style books are not appropriate.
- Aim to hold the book comfortably so that eye contact with the audience can be maintained.
- Announce the name of the book and the author at the beginning of the performance.
- Memorised prose requires being able to speak the passage from the book with clarity and expression in order to engage the audience.
- In all prose classes, make sure that the time limit is observed.
- As with verse-speaking classes, only vocal and facial expression may be used.

DRAMA CLASSES

The stage is normally made bigger for drama classes to allow more scope for performance.

- If you need props on stage, the platform steward will be happy to assist in getting the stage ready.
- Announce the name of the play, the author, and if necessary give some background information to set the scene.
- Choose material that is suitable for a family audience.
- Be aware of time limits.

COMMUNICATION CLASSES

These classes are aimed at encouraging performers to communicate information to an audience in an engaging and interesting way. This will require preparation and practice to make sure that speakers benefit and gain confidence in being able to express themselves clearly and effectively.

- TV news reading demands that the reader communicates the information to the audience in a concise way, using pauses and controlling the pace of the bulletin.
- The content will be read, however, it is important to look up often.
- Be aware of the time limit for the class and judge pace accordingly.
- Informative Speech requires the speaker to impart information clearly and in an interesting manner.
- Use notes on cards rather than reading from a piece of paper.

- Remember the importance of introduction, and a firm conclusion.
- For inspiration, teachers could use youtube/television to see how professionals deliver either the news or important speeches.
- Bear in mind that the audience will not yet know the information so the speaker should take care to present facts and details clearly, giving those listening a chance to digest information.

The above guidelines will hopefully be of some help but if you require further information or guidance, please contact the Speech and Drama secretary.