



PUTTING SPEECHES IN CORRECT CATEGORIES

Some speeches may seem to reasonably fit into more than one speech category. Definitions given in the ODACS competition manual are brief and may be rather broadly interpreted. Most questions involve whether a speech belongs in Dramatic Interpretation, Religious Reading, or Declamation. Judges are instructed not to “draw too fine a line” when determining if a speech meets category requirements, but competitors are also urged to select speeches that clearly fit the categories. The information given below is intended only to help competitors and their teachers with the process of determining if a speech fits the categories described.

Dramatic Interpretation

A dramatic interpretation may be, but is not required to be, a cutting from a longer work. The mention of a religious element or elements is acceptable, but a speech which is significantly religious or whose purpose is spiritual conviction or inspiration must be entered as a religious reading. The word Dramatic, as it is used here, refers to a piece that contains elements of a drama (such as characters, situations, or progression of events) and not just to striking or forceful speaking.

Religious Reading

The apparent purpose of a speech in this category should be spiritual conviction or inspiration. The selection should include dialogue and other dramatic elements.

Declamation

Declamations generally do not include dramatic elements such as dialogue, characters, and progression of events, though such elements are not completely forbidden. The speaker addresses a topic rather than tells a story. Selections must come from published speeches *of high literary value, originally prepared by and presented orally by another person or persons.*