

# REGIONAL ACTING COMPETITION

## Judging Information

### **JUDGING RESPONSIBILITIES PER SCHOOL:**

For the regional competitions, each school entering the competition is expected to participate in the recruitment of qualified adjudicators. The basic guideline is for each school to provide at least one qualified judge for each block of 1 to 20 entrants, or pay a \$100 charge to cover the cost of hiring each judge(s). As judging practices have continued to evolve, there are now several ways a Troupe Director can satisfy their involvement in Judge recruitment:

- **SEND CANDIDATES TO JUDGES TRAINING.** This is the best way for us to grow our roster of qualified adjudicators. Help identify candidates and make sure they get the information necessary to register for this fun and informative Saturday event.
- Claim a judge who you have sent to training already. If more than one Troupe Director claims a judge who is already on the roster, it's first come first serve! Also, make sure you and your judge are forthcoming about any relationship he/she may already have with your students (you may have had this qualified individual coach students, for example, or work on a production with them). We can schedule accordingly.
- Troupe Directors may designate themselves as a judge, but may not judge any category where they have a student entered (Troupe Directors are not compensated for judging).

Since this is first and foremost an educational event, we want judges who can write meaningful and helpful comments about the performances they see. No oral comments are given at any time. Help us find judges who you would like your students to receive feedback from.

Qualified judges will be provided by Oregon Thespians at the State Showcase Auditions.

### **JUDGES' QUALIFICATIONS:**

Judges for the Acting competitions are expected to have the following minimum qualifications:

1. Amateur or professional acting experience.
2. Experience working with high school students.
3. Be at least 21 years of age and at least four years removed from high school.
4. A firm understanding of acting theory and how it is expressed in high school theatre, particularly; objective, character, blocking, dramatic & comic tension, and timing.

Directors bringing judges to Regional Acting Competitions, or sending them to the Judge Training event, are expected to check potential judge's qualifications. Share with any of your potential judges the information found in this guidebook. You can steer them to the Oregon Thespians website for complete information on the organization and the events.

## **JUDGES' TRAINING:**

Oregon Thespians will hold an annual judge's training workshop on a Saturday in advance of the Regional Acting Competitions. This workshop will be organized and hosted by an Oregon Thespian Troupe Director and the training team will be made up of other Oregon Troupe Directors. All teachers with entries participating in the competitions are welcome to attend (though no mileage will be paid) and contribute to the curriculum of the training. Though the training may present best practices for judging and define expectations for quality judging, the bulk of the training session will be practice judging of scenes in small groups and getting feedback on the scores and comments.

1. Each judge who participates in the training is expected to make themselves available to judge at the Regional Acting events and, if needed, for the State Showcase.
2. At the end of the training, each judge will be given a card and/or nametag certifying their completion of the training.
3. Lunch is provided by Oregon Thespians on Training Day.
4. State Qualified judges are paid at TWICE the normal level for judging at events.
5. \$100.00 is paid for judging at the State Showcase, plus round trip mileage from the place of residence to the audition site (at 35c per mile).

## **SEND A COMPETENT JUDGE TO TRAINING!**

- Each school should consider itself responsible for arranging for at least one competent judge for the first 20 entries, two judges for 20 to 40 entries, etc. *Please note: If one student is competing with three different scenes, he/she counts as 3 ENTRIES.*
- Schools should identify judges who are either already trained or are willing to attend the January Judge's Training. Schools who identify the same judges will be credited on a first come, first served basis.
- If necessary, untrained judges, except for Troupe Directors, will be paid \$8.00 per each round that they judge (or a total of \$50.00 if they judge every round). Since there are only two musical rounds (each musical round can last up to three hours), those judges will be paid 1 musical round = 3 acting rounds. Trained judges will receive double these amounts! Get your judges to register for the training!
- Please be sure that your judge has read and understands the material in this guidebook BEFORE you arrive for the competition. Refer them to the website.
- **ALL JUDGES MUST ATTEND THE MANDATORY JUDGE'S ORIENTATION MEETING ON THE MORNING OF THE COMPETITION.** Please make sure your judge arrives on time and is aware of the meeting.
- You may wish to copy and/or email the following JUDGE INFORMATION to your judges and/or judge candidates.

## OREGON THESPIAN EVENT JUDGES

Judges are the key to the success of the Regional Acting Competition, as well as other adjudicated events throughout the year. The top 20% of participants receive recognition at Regionals, as either Showcase Qualifiers or Regional Finalists. This means 80% of those participating leave with nothing other than the comments and feedback from the adjudicators who view their entry. Indeed, in terms of value, the educational feedback provided on the ballots by the judges is the most significant thing participants take with them. Though this sheet will give you some specific guidelines for judging, the key sentiment that covers the entire spectrum of what a judge does is: "Behave professionally, treat the competitors with respect."

The students you see have worked very hard on their scenes. For some, this may be the first time they have performed or competed (hence the novice divisions). Please help them all feel at ease by following these expectations and guidelines:

1. Do not talk to any contestant except to call their number to begin and to say "thank you" at the end of their presentation. Do not offer oral comments or suggestions. These may be in contradiction to what they have been directed to do and will only confuse them. In the past we have had judges who confess to students that they have never judged before. Please keep this to yourself. This doesn't give much confidence to the actors competing who are already understandably nervous. Do not ask the competitor what they will be presenting. Each should have practiced an introduction. See the rules regarding introductions for each category for what information may be included. In all cases, don't start timing the scene until after the student finishes the introduction and begins the scene.
2. Before the round begins, call each contestant's number to make certain all competitors are there. There may be an occasional performer who is participating in a musical scene. They will ask to either perform early in the round or to leave early. Please allow them to do so. All other contestants should remain in the room throughout the round.
3. **ALL SCENES EXCEPT SOLO ACTING HAVE FIVE (5) MINUTE TIME LIMITS.** The time limit for Solo Acting is three (3) minutes. The timing for the scene begins after the introduction when the actual scene begins. A student timer will be provided for you so that you are free to watch the scene. Thirty seconds before time is up, the red card should be held up to indicate the time remaining. It stays up for at least 15 seconds. There is a 15 second grace period beyond the limit; after that time, stop the student and judge them based on what you've seen. ***Do not penalize them for going over the time limit.***
4. It is important to check descriptors that best describe the performance. Please don't just randomly mark descriptors, but decide on one in each area of both the Mechanics and Acting categories that best fits the performance. Comments from the judges are very helpful and appreciated, please make written comments on the back and try to expand on any of the descriptors you checked. Please comment on the PERFORMANCE, NOT THE MATERIAL. Accept the actor's interpretation unless it is completely unrealistic to the piece. Such phrases as "good", or "OK" do not help the student in any way. If there

are negative comments, please offer suggestions for improvement. Again, remember some of these students are performing for the first time.

### **SCORING**

You will assign each entry a score based on the categories of Mechanics and Acting. The highest possible score in each category is 10, for a total of 20 points.

The RATE is determined in this way, by adding the Mechanics and Acting scores together. As a point of reference, the two scores together sum up the performance this way:

Superior	=	18-20 points
Excellent	=	14-17 points
Average	=	10-13 points
Fair	=	1-9 points

In filling out your ballot, you must also RANK the competitors (for REGIONAL competitions only). There can be no ties for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place ranks. Points are assigned to all participants according to the following:

1st place	=	5 points
2nd place	=	4 points
3rd place	=	3 points
All remaining	=	2 points

A “perfect” score, then, would be 25 (10 points for Mechanics, 10 points for Acting, and 5 points for being ranked first in the round).

On each ballot be sure to add the points you have given. Remember to write your name on the judge's sheet, and turn in the judge's sheets as quickly as possible after each round in order for us to stay on schedule. The tournament coordinator will check each sheet your ballots before you leave the tally area.

You may expect that some material may contain strong words or innuendo. Oregon Thespians does not censor material for competition and we ask that you do not either. Please do not mentally disqualify a scene because it might offend your personal sensibilities. Conversely, do not give a scene extra consideration simply because of its “edginess” or effect on a teenage audience. Consider: does the scene have merit because of material that anybody could say or is it enjoyable and wondrous because of the skillful timing, emotional relevance, and sheer humanity the actors bring to it? If the latter is true, then we certainly have a winner, irrespective of what comes out of the performers’ mouths.

Judges, except for directors, will be paid \$8 per round, or a total of \$50.00 for a complete day or \$25 for a half day; Judges who have participated in the Oregon Thespians Judges’ Training will be paid \$16 per round, or a total of \$100 for a complete day or \$50 for a half day.

**JUDGE CANDIDATES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THE JUDGES’ TRAINING DAY.** Registration for this event is available online. Registration is free. Lunch is provided and mileage is paid to participants.

# A Judge's Tip Sheet

Here are some helpful tips to refer to as you prepare to judge. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to speak with the Tournament Coordinator.

**Tip 1) Stick to the ballot.** Judge the scenes based on the criteria established in the scoring guide on the judge's ballot. You are encouraged to make comments, but please do so in respect to the descriptors on the ballot. You are not judging the material nor the student's interpretation, but the actor's skill and talent.

**Tip 2) Be comfortable that not everyone's going to agree with you.** Some judges can be reticent about scoring scenes because they don't want to offend the performer or the director. Your job is to call the scene as you see it, based on the guidelines we've provided for you on the ballots. Stick to the descriptors on the ballots and react as fairly and as objectively as possible. Some other judge may see it differently and score accordingly. History shows that some performances will inspire like scores from all three judges, others will be inconsistent.

**Tip 3) Winning isn't the most important thing, learning something is.** Though this often gets lost during the day, the reason for the competition is not "to beat out the competition", but for students to showcase their talent in front of peers who are mutually motivated. The focus shouldn't be on you as the ultimate judge, but on the level of concern the event raises in the student and how that energy can bring about new and profound performances. Winners rarely are "the best", just the most consistent. The State Showcase is an opportunity to see extraordinary student work, not a pageant of winners over losers. Thus, your comments should reflect this philosophy by encouraging the student's growth in performance rather than in relation to or in competition with others.

**Tip 4) Judge the acting, not the scene selection.** If you think the material is inappropriate, stop and consider first "is the material inappropriate or is it inappropriate FOR THIS PERFORMER?" The latter is what we're interested in you judging. If you personally find a situation or specific language use distasteful, please separate your personal bias from your job as a judge. Experienced students, in particular, often have extraordinary abilities to bring truth & relevance to "adult" themes and skill & polish to difficult material. Their performance should not be penalized because it does not meet your personal tastes or standards of how teenagers "should" act. However, if a student is using material inappropriately, then their score should reflect that. Part of the skill of the competition is to select material that showcases the performers' outstanding qualities.

**Tip 5) Don't disqualify students over questionable use of props or clothing.** Though we go to great lengths to define what is and what isn't allowed, it's not up to you to decide. REMEMBER, STICK TO THE BALLOT. If you suspect that students are using a costume or prop, please report it to the Tournament Coordinator - there is a committee established to rule on this matter. Score the scene as you would score any other scene, and provide helpful feedback for these students as well.