

Rules for Music Interpretation

Purpose of the Category

To develop skill in conveying an understanding of the poetic nature of song lyrics through body and voice.

Definition of the Category

The student should select a song or a group of songs centering on a specific theme or emotion.

Rules

1. Contestants should use published song lyrics for Music Interpretation. Adaptations should be for the purpose of continuity only. Multiple sources may be combined and creatively woven together to create a cohesive thematic performance.
2. An introduction, which includes the titles and artists is required, and should be presented without notes. The introduction must be the original work of the speaker. The presentation may begin with a read portion of the selected lyrics prior to the presenter's personal introduction.
3. The participant must use a manuscript. The manuscript can be a black book, paper, tablet, phone, or similar. The material is to be interpreted, however, participants will not be penalized whether or not the selection is memorized.
4. Platform movement should be minimal and non-intrusive. Chairs, costumes and props may not be used, with the exception of the manuscript. The manuscript and /or binder containing the manuscript may be used as a prop or in other creative ways. Use of the manuscript is subject to critique.
5. Vocal music is not permitted.
6. Maximum time limit: 5 minutes, with an allowable 15-second grace period. There is no minimum time requirement. Any entry exceeding the grace period may not be ranked first in the round. If all entries in a round exceed the grace period, no first rank shall be given in that round.

Criteria for Evaluation

1. The extent to which the introduction established the theme and contributed to an understanding of the song's lyrics.
2. The extent to which intended intellectual content (what is happening) was recreated. Individual judges may lower the rank due to use of profanity or vulgarity. Participants can make modifications to censor for profanity as they see fit.
3. The extent to which the emotional comprehension (how it feels) of the poetry was revealed through control of vocal quality, inflection, force and timing.
4. The extent to which the appropriate vocal techniques, including such items as rhythm, cadence, phrasing, articulation and pronunciation, were used.
5. The extent to which the physical presence was appropriate to the poetry, including such items as eye contact, facial expression, gestures and bodily movement.