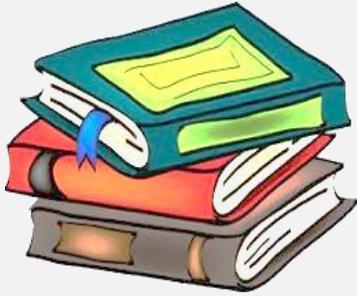


# Preparing your selection – turning literature into a performance

*There are lots of things to think about as you practice your piece. Here are some of them:*



## How to get started

- Individual students should choose a work that appeal to them.
  - They should start with reading the selection aloud. You will find that your feelings about the piece are clearer doing it this way rather than silently. Many pieces, e.g. Poems, have sound devices that are more enjoyable when spoken aloud.
  - Memorize the selection. Some Tips are: 1. Read the work out loud a few time to get the feel for the tone, any rhyme, and rhythm; 2. Build a storyline or an outline in your head; 3. Make a connection between verses, especially with new sentences; 4. When you Memorize a new line, always start to recite from the beginning; 5. Take a break! Grab a snack, call a friend, and just read the work out loud several times.
  - Practice your presentation to fine-tune the your performance.
  - Encourage parents or guardians to enter their child to enter the Spoken Word E-Festival.
  - As a classroom exercise, consider doing two choral group selections with the entire class and then have each student do a solo selection.
  - Encourage students to write their monologues to present in the Spoken Word E-Festival.
  - Adjudicators will be able to provide some feedback and encouragement.
- **Meaning!** Be sure you know what you are talking about...you must understand every word.
  - **Rhythm/Rhyme/Emphasis:** If the work has rhythm, e.g. a poem, choose words to emphasize because of their meaning. (Emphasis can be anything that makes that word different such as louder, softer, longer, shorter, higher lower....)
  - **Punctuation/Pause/Line Ends:** Punctuation is a gift from the author so you have a chance to breathe! Pauses should enhance meaning and give the audience time to absorb your thoughts.
  - **Spoken Word is Acting:** Think about emotions and characters! Performers should think about how they want the audience to *feel*, and make choices about speed, volume, pitch, and facial expression based on that.
  - **Character/Focus:** If the selection involves different characters, use a different style of speech or posture for each one. It also helps if you choose different areas to focus on when speaking as each character. This is called "Character Placement Focus."
  - **Movement/Gesture/Actions:** Movements should enhance or add meaning and should appear natural. Remember, the WORDS are always the most important thing.
  - **How the Work Sounds Out Loud:** Authors choose words not just for their meaning, but for their sound as well. Notice and enjoy sharing those sounds with the audience.
  - **Be heard:** Ensure you are speaking loudly, slowly, and clearly enough to be heard and understood.
  - **Introductions:** Always introduce the selection by saying the title and author. For a scene or a piece of prose, explain a little bit of the story to help the audience enjoy the selection.
  - **Your VOICE matters!** Practice using your voice in a healthy way by standing in alignment, with both feet on the floor and head floating up, let the breath go deep inside the body, and think about projection and resonance to make the voice louder – without shouting

*Have fun!*

