

THE NCFCA COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO SPEECH

Parent's Guide

National Christian Forensics and Communications Association

Edited by Natalia Rosa

First Edition, October 2016

Institute for Excellence in Writing, L.L.C.

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The NCFCA Comprehensive Guide to Speech

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First Edition, October 2016

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CONTENTS

Introduction 3

Interpretation

Module A – Selecting Quality Literature 13

Module B – Cutting Interpretation Scenes 23

Module C – From Scene to Script 29

Module D – Theater of the Mind 33

Platform Speaking

Module A – Selecting Your Topic 39

Module B – Structuring Your Speech 47

Module C – A Well-Rounded Speech 55

Module D – Physical and Vocal Delivery 61

Impromptu

Module A – Preparing for Impromptu 67

Module B – The Art of Storytelling 75

Module C – Making an Impact 79

Module D – Vocal and Physical Delivery 83

Apologetics

Module A – Understanding How We Are Shaped by Our Worldviews 87

Module B – Understanding and Organizing the Topics 93

Module C – Preparing Your Cards 97

Module D – Organizing Your Box and Delivery 101

Extemporaneous

Module A – Understanding the Framework and Answering the Topic Questions 103

Module B – Understanding and Researching Topics 107

Module C – Delivering Your Speech 111

Coaching 113

Appendix 125

Sample

WELCOME!

You are about to embark on a grand adventure! Pursuing education is important, but a head full of knowledge is only beneficial if the knowledge can be communicated effectively. We want to encourage you in your desire to grow the skills of critical thinking and gracious, articulate communication in your students. We want to empower you with practical instruction built on a strong biblical foundation as you are actively preparing your students to be culture shapers and sharpened tools in the hands of a mighty God.

As you may know, NCFCA has been providing fabulous tournament opportunities through its well developed system of competition for the past twenty years. Over the past few seasons, it has become clear that one of the most effective ways we can assist families is by providing not only top notch competitive opportunities, but also excellent training materials to support them in their preparation. We know successful communication skills are developed by more than going to tournaments. Speech and debate education begins long before the first tournament check-in!

Successful training is the result of a combination of hours invested by competitors, clubs, parents, and coaches in classrooms and living rooms across the country, along with judge feedback and tournament competition. While tournaments are a great way for students to practice their skills, if a student does not have the right foundation and mindset as they are preparing, then the tournament only provides opportunity to further develop an improper mindset. We've seen first-hand the old adage—"what goes in determines what comes out"—and that is why this curriculum was born.

This NCFCA *Comprehensive Guide to Speech* uses the general framework and constraints of NCFCA competition as its scope and sequence because the event choices and ballot criteria are carefully constructed to propel students toward godly communication. We'd love to have your students join us in competition because we know that putting into practice what they will learn through the pages of this curriculum is a necessary step towards achieving proficiency. However, competing in NCFCA tournaments, although highly encouraged, is not required to use this material.

Tournaments are important; there is great value in the "iron sharpening iron" experiences inherent in competition. However, our goal is not to produce tournament winners. Our goal is to train young people to be thoughtful, articulate, and gracious in their quest to share the love of God. Anyone can use this curriculum and the speech categories outlined in these pages to learn to glorify God through their communication, and we encourage you to do just that!

Let's begin! We have an exciting adventure to look forward to, and the adventure begins as students explore what it means to communicate from a biblical worldview in order to address life issues in a manner that glorifies God.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE NCFCA GUIDE TO COMPETITIVE SPEECH

The NCFCA Mission Statement

“The mission of the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA) is to promote excellence in communications through competitive opportunities where homeschool students develop the skills necessary to think critically and communicate effectively in order to address life issues from a biblical worldview in a manner that glorifies God.”

The NCFCA *Guide to Competitive Speech* has been developed using the three foundational pillars of the NCFCA Mission Statement. They are as follows:

1. Excellence

Throughout this curriculum, you will notice that excellence (the quality of being outstanding) is emphasized in every module. We stress excellence primarily because it is commanded throughout Scripture. Unlike the modern definition of “success” as a static destination to be achieved, excellence is viewed as an ideal that grows when one pursues it. It is much more than public recognition and awards, although it may result in those things. Excellence is the cultivation of character for its own sake: a lifelong journey of growing in wisdom.

My compelling desire is to do all that we do with excellence in order to magnify God in our work. We are called to be ambassadors for Him, and He deserves nothing less than for us to reflect His excellence to the degree we are able.

~ Teresa Hudson, NCFCA President

2. Critical Thinking

In order to effectively communicate a concept, you must first clearly understand that concept yourself. Critical thinking is being able to identify and explain the foundational why of what you believe. Critical thinking plays a special part in our vision for students to address life issues from a biblical worldview. Exercises and assignments throughout this curriculum will drive students to dig deeper for the answers themselves rather than looking to others to hand them pre-packaged solutions.

3. Effective Communication

The purpose of NCFCA competition is to test a student's communication skills. The competitive environment is controlled (set timeframe, judge panel, clear criteria, etc.) in order to give students the best opportunity to polish their communication skills before they fully engage today's world in both the battles and opportunities that lie ahead. At the same time, competition attempts to mirror real life as much as possible by varying the types of judges (age, gender, profession, etc.) that rate and give feedback to our students. The goal of this testing process is to increase the student's understanding and use of communication. This curriculum will serve to equip students in their preparation for tournaments, as well as equip non-competing students in their efforts to learn the building blocks of effective communication.

These three pillars of excellence, critical thinking, and effective communication work together to support our overarching goal, which is to help others learn to “address life issues from a biblical worldview in a manner that glorifies God.”

This goal of godly communication is threefold in its composition. It is designed to

1. address practical life issues

We seek to encourage students to use their oratorical skills in the real world as they have opportunity, both in the present and in the future. Rather than focus on forensics as merely an academic activity or a game of sorts, we seek to train students in skills that they can and will easily and directly apply to “real life.” The goal is teaching life skills, not trophy collecting!

2. from a biblical worldview

Many people one meets in the “real world” do not necessarily share a Christian or biblical worldview. Thus, one of the primary skills Christian communicators must possess in order to reach a lost world is a thorough understanding of their own worldview and the worldviews of those with whom they will be communicating. This curriculum emphasizes the importance of communicating with relevance without the loss of integrity.

Through NCFCA participation students learn to think hard about life's issues and determine their views based on what the Bible says. Focusing on the dictates of the culture will cause them to communicate differently.

3. in a manner that glorifies God

While this curriculum provides loads of practical instruction for speech preparation in competition, the ultimate goal of every lesson is to glorify God. What does it mean to glorify God? To glorify God is to reveal or make clear the glory of God by one's actions. This goal ties in directly with our first pillar of excellence. As you complete each lesson, we encourage you to contemplate your reflection of

God's character through speeches prepared for competition.

Introduction to NCFCA Speech

What is NCFCA?

In 1997, the HSLDA (Homeschool Legal Defense Association) Debate League began through the vision and efforts of Michael Farris and his daughter, Christy Farris. As they planned the first ever homeschool debate tournament, their goal was to equip Christian homeschool students with the skills needed to reach their world with God's truth. The homeschooling community was experiencing exponential growth, and in the year 2000, HSLDA decided it was time for the Debate League to become a league of its own. With the help and blessing of HSLDA, the National Christian Forensics and Communication Association (NCFCA) began the process of becoming a non-profit corporation.

NCFCA has grown over the years and currently has Affiliates and active clubs from coast to coast. The governing board of directors maintains the mission of NCFCA while local volunteer leadership consisting of regional coordinators and state representatives coordinate tournaments and support Affiliates. The vision remains centered on helping homeschool students "address life issues from a biblical worldview in a manner that glorifies God."

NCFCA Speech Categories

NCFCA has three basic categories of speeches, and included within these categories are eleven different events. Each offers a unique focus or skill, and students are encouraged to tackle different types of speeches to learn various elements necessary to become a compelling communicator.

Informative

The Informative speech is designed to give a student the opportunity to share on a topic of importance to the student. The goal is for the student to inform, instruct, or inspire the listener.

Biographical Narrative

The Biographical Narrative event is designed so that a student may explore the relevance and/or unique contributions of a person's life.

Persuasive

The Persuasive speech gives the student an opportunity to encourage others to make a difference and involves either a call to action or a call to rethink a position.

Illustrated Oratory

Illustrated Oratory offers the student a chance to develop the skill of creating and manipulating visual aids which will enhance his message.

Interpretation Category

Biblical Presentation

A Biblical Presentation challenges the student to develop and present one or two selections of Scripture in an effort to foster understanding of God's word, deepen the speaker's Christian faith, and encourage the listener.

Open Interpretation

An Open Interpretation provides an opportunity for a student to creatively explore and develop the intellectual, emotional, and artistic embodiment of a single selection of literature for performance.

Duo Interpretation

A Duo Interpretation allows two students to work together to creatively explore and develop the intellectual, emotional, and artistic embodiment of a single selection of literature for dual performance.

Original Interpretation

An Original Interpretation is a chance for a student to author a literary work for performance, giving him an opportunity to creatively develop the intellectual, emotional, and artistic embodiment of his own unique story.

Limited Preparation Category

Apologetics

Apologetics is a limited preparation event in which the speaker is given four minutes to prepare a six-minute speech on a topic related to articulating his or her Christian faith. Apologetics pushes the student to learn and understand what they believe and why they believe it, and then challenges them to be able to effectively articulate those truths.

A Note about Apologetics: *Apologetics is more than just a speech event; it is the study of the tenets of one's faith. While we can teach you how to foundationally approach the art of giving an Apologetics speech, it is beyond the scope of this curriculum to delve deeply into the subject matter of Apologetics. You may want to consider using supplemental material, such as Fearless Apologetics by Chap Bettis, as you prepare relevant subject matter for the NCFCA Apologetics event.*

Extemporaneous

Extemporaneous is a limited preparation event in which the speaker is given twenty minutes to prepare a seven-minute speech on a current event topic. Participation encourages the student to recognize God's hand on the world stage as well as here at home and develop thoughtful responses to questions about current events.

But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

~ I Peter 3:15

An Important Note about Competitive Material

Material chosen and presented for NCFCA competition should be appropriate for general audiences. Content should enhance the judge's understanding of the topic. Explicit material should not be included for shock value. Vulgarity is never acceptable. Discretion should be exercised by students, parents, and coaches when determining material for competition, keeping in mind that NCFCA is a high school league.

The preservation of good faith and trust among competitors and their judges and our mandate to glorify God in all things should guide competitors in their pursuit to protect their integrity and witness. There is a great responsibility on the part of the competitor to choose material carefully and from sources that will not compromise their witness for Christ. While it is important that each family do due diligence in assessing the appropriateness of material for competition, it should also be assumed that the source from which a competitor chooses a piece would follow the same guidelines as the actual material being presented. Others that view your student's work may trust that if a piece your student chose was suitable for competition, the original source material would also be suitable for competition.

Impromptu

Impromptu is a limited preparation speech in which the speaker is given two minutes to prepare a five-minute speech on a randomly drawn topic. It challenges the speaker to be able to think critically and share a meaningful message on a variety of topics as the opportunity presents itself.

think critically and share a meaningful message on a variety of topics as the opportunity presents itself.

A Parent's Role in Preparing Material for Competition

Parents have a very special role when it comes to helping their students prepare for competition. Your guidance and expertise is critical to helping young people develop their communication skills, but it is imperative that we not lose sight of the fact that the competitors are our children, ages 13–18.

Please give encouragement, guidance, and feedback to your students as they write their speeches, do their research, design their boards, and cut their chosen selections of literature. Remember, it is the students' original work that should be entered into competition.

OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

Terminology

There are many terms in speech and debate that may not be familiar to you as you start your adventure. Don't worry! As with any discipline, you will pick up much of the vernacular as you go. We've tried to cull out any of those words or phrasing that may be hard to understand, but if you find a word that is foreign to you, check in with a friend that is familiar with competitive speech or the NCFCA Representative in your area. He or she would love to meet you and give you any help you may need in this area.

***Please Note:** We use the terms “class” and “club” interchangeably. You may be using this curriculum as part of a class or co-op, you may meet as a speech club, or you may simply be using this material with your own children. There is no difference in how the curriculum will work.*

We also use the terms “coach” and “leader” interchangeably. We mainly choose to use “coach” because that is the common term used for one who is preparing others for competition, and this curriculum is written from that perspective. Along those lines, “competitor” and “student” are also interchangeable.

Event Rules and Documents

You will find the complete set of NCFCA rules, ballots, and script submission information in the Appendix of this book. Please take advantage of this convenient resource, and make very sure you have thoroughly read the rules for all the events in which you or your student is participating. It is imperative that the rules are followed in order to have fair competition across the country. It is not fun to work diligently on a piece and then find out that it is ineligible for competition!

Organizational Flexibility

This curriculum provides instruction for all eleven NCFCA speech events within the Platform, Interpretation, and Limited Preparation categories. In order to grant individual clubs and coaches the freedom to arrange this instructional material according to their unique needs, we have not locked the instruction into any particular teaching schedule. The three-ring binder allows you the flexibility to cover the categories in the order you choose. Simply make sure that you work through the modules inside each category in order, as they build upon one another. As long as you keep these modules in order, it is easy to design the flow of the coursework however best fits your needs!

Sample Schedule

Although each club is unique and should organize club instruction in the way that best fits the club's needs, we provide the following sample schedules for your convenience. Remember, there are two main components to learning speech—instruction and practice. These sample schedules accommodate both class lessons and practice/coaching sessions!

***A Note about Extemporaneous Scheduling:** Please note that the sample instruction schedule below is created with the assumption that students participating in Extemporaneous will meet separately. Due to the unique instruction and study necessary to expand the relevant general knowledge base, Extemp competitors often meet for discussion and coaching at separate times. This delineation gives the Extemp competitors time to share research, discuss current events, and practice speeches for competition.*

SAMPLE 1*INTRODUCTION*

Week	Unit	Module	Topic
1	Interpretation Impromptu	A A	Selecting Quality Literature Preparing for Impromptu
2	Platform Apologetics	A A	Selecting Your Topic Understanding How We Are Shaped By Our Worldviews
3	Interpretation Impromptu	B B	Cutting Interpretation Scenes The Art of Storytelling
4	Platform Apologetics	B B	Structuring Your Speech Understanding and Organizing the Topics
5	Interpretation Impromptu	C C	From Scene to Script Making an Impact
6	Platform Apologetics	C C	A Well-Rounded Speech Preparing Your Cards
7	Interpretation Coaching Session	D	Theater of the Mind
8	Platform Coaching Session	D	Physical and Vocal Delivery
9	Apologetics Coaching Session	D	Organizing Your Box & Delivery
10	Impromptu Coaching Session	D	Vocal & Physical Delivery
11	Tournament Prep Coaching Session		Tournament Preparation
12	One Day NCFCA Practice Day		

SAMPLE 2

Week 1	Unit	Module	Topic
1	Interpretation Impromptu	A A	Selecting Quality Literature Preparing for Impromptu
2	Interpretation Impromptu	B B	Cutting Interpretation Scenes The Art of Storytelling
3	Interpretation Impromptu	C C	From Scene to Script Making an Impact
4	Interpretation Impromptu	D D	Theater of the Mind Vocal & Physical Delivery
5	Platform Apologetics	A A	Selecting Your Topic Understanding How We Are Shaped By Our Worldview
6	Platform Apologetics	B B	Structuring Your Speech Understanding and Organizing the Topics
7	Platform Apologetics	C C	A Well-Rounded Speech Preparing Your Cards
8	Platform Apologetics	D D	Physical and Vocal Delivery Organizing Your Box and Delivery
9	Coaching Session		
10	Coaching Session		
11	Tournament Prep Coaching Session		Tournament Preparation
12	One Day NCFCA Practice Day		

MODULE A

INTERPRETATION

Selecting Quality Literature

We learn best – and change – from hearing stories that strike a chord within us.

~ John P. Kotter

SUMMARY

In this module we will review the NCFCA Interpretation events and the personal value of preparing an Interpretation. After considering why you should choose to participate in an Interpretation event, we will learn how to critically analyze potential Interpretation materials in order to ensure the selection of quality literature. The content you select in this module will drive your Interpretation. Since it is worth investing extra time to ensure the selection of quality material, we will guide you through a detailed process of how to make a proper selection. Prepare yourself for an exciting adventure! If you open your heart, the story you choose for Interpretation will change you and your audience in more ways than you can imagine.

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the NCFCA Interpretation events and their value.
- Learn how to critically analyze Interpretation materials.
- Implement practical steps for selecting (or writing) quality literature.

ASSIGNMENTS

The basic assignment for this module is to research and select a piece for Interpretation. To help you through this process, we have created two worksheets: the *Literary Evaluation Worksheet* and the *Character Analysis Worksheet*. Thus, the assignment is broken down into three parts:

1. Research and select a piece (or topic for Original Interpretation).
2. Complete *Literary Evaluation Worksheet*.
3. Complete *Character Analysis Worksheet*.

NOTES

Help your student search diligently for an Interpretation piece. It is easy to get lost in this decision, so give him a deadline to make a decision. The best places to begin looking for a piece are listed below.

MODULE A

Step 1: Passive Research

Before you actively research new titles, take time to consider literature you already know and love. The best option might end up being the book you keep on your bedside table!

- Favorite childhood books
- Family read-aloud chapter books
- Classics

Also ask family members to brainstorm their favorite titles.

Step 2: Active Research

If you have not selected a piece from the list of literature you already know and love, it may be time to seek out new possibilities. Below is a list of places to look and ways to seek out quality literature. Enjoy the adventure!

- Consult lists (For example: Newberry Award, book clubs, bestseller, etc.).
- Browse “classics” sections.
- Ask friends for favorites and get their reasons for liking.
- Talk to teachers, librarians, and other professionals.

Note: Take time to read the rules for each event! Remember, all event resources can be found in the appendix of this curriculum, as well as on the secure Affiliates’ “Individual Event Resources Page” via the NCFCA website login.

Quick Review

As you complete these assignments, consider your progress according to the following Module A goals and objectives:

Module A Goals

- Understand the NCFCA Interpretation events and their value
- Learn how to critically analyze Interpretation materials
- Implement practical steps for selecting (or writing) quality literature

Duo and Open Interpretation Ballot Objectives

- Presents a selection of literary merit and universal appeal
- Moves, entertains, instructs, and/or provokes the audience to thought
- Presents a selection that has a clear beginning, middle, climax, and resolution
- Meets time requirement

Original Interpretation Ballot Objectives

- Writes and presents a work or works of literary merit and universal appeal
- Moves, entertains, instructs, and/or provokes the audience to thought
- Demonstrates style, originality, and creativity
- Meets time requirement

Biblical Presentation Ballot Objectives

- Presents selection(s) which enhances one's overall understanding of Scripture
- Moves, entertains, instructs, and/or provokes the audience to thought
- Develops a unified total presentation
- Meets time requirement

VIDEO LINKS

Interpretation Demo:



ncfca.org/what-we-do/speech-and-debate-competition/speech

Les Miserables, by Victor Hugo
Congruency Checklist

Name of Piece: _____

Is your selection of story and characters congruent with your:

- Age
Explain: Although there is a significant age gap between me, Valjean and the bishop, there is considerable congruency between me and the characters in every other regard. Also, at 18 years old I feel capable of tackling the challenge of acting the characters of this more complex piece.
- Gender
Explain: Yes, I will only play one female character - the bishop's wife.
- Personality
Explain: My introversion lends itself to careful consideration of the feelings of others. I have already immersed myself in the characters' personalities.
- Skill Level
Explain: This will be the most difficult piece I have prepared. The emotions of the piece and characters are complex, but after three years of competition, I am ready for the challenge.
- Emotional Maturity
Explain: I can identify with the character's emotions. While I have never been a convict or bishop, I have been rejected and offered a second chance.
- Analytical Ability
Explain: Les Miserables is one of my favorite pieces of literature. I have read the book in its entirety and analyzed the various characters in my literature class.

Does the overarching congruency of the piece match your experience and abilities as a speaker? Will this selection help you grow in maturity and excellence? Remember: Know your limits, but don't limit yourself.

Challenges & Strengths Checklist

Identify and note the challenges and strengths your piece presents in the following five areas:

Checklist	Challenges	Strengths
Universality	Many are familiar with the story (especially the film version) Fans may be critical of my rendition	My story is known and loved by many...By focusing on the introductory plotline, I can present a fresh perspective
Characters	Maturity due to age of characters - I will have to practice a lot in order to portray a weathered convict and elderly bishop	Depth of emotions Relatability of characters' struggle
Plotline	Entire plotline is too long Is my selected subplot powerful enough to stand alone?	Message: redemption and forgiveness - powerful topics with strong emotional appeal!
Setting	The story takes place in France...Do I want to incorporate French words and accent?	Rich culture Historical elements

Congruency Checklist

INTERPRETATION

Name of Piece: _____

Is your selection of story and characters congruent with your:

- Age
Explain:

- Gender
Explain:

- Personality
Explain:

- Skill Level
Explain:

- Emotional Maturity
Explain:

- Analytical Ability
Explain:

Does the overarching congruency of the piece match your experience and abilities as a speaker? Will this selection help you grow in maturity and excellence? Remember: Know your limits, but don't limit yourself.

Challenges & Strengths Checklist

Identify and note the challenges and strengths your piece presents in the following five areas:

Checklist	Challenges	Strengths
Universality		
Characters		
Plotline		
Setting		
Length/Format		

Worksheet: Literary Evaluation

Name of Piece: Les Miserables, by Victor Hugo

Plotline Analysis

Identify and list the following four elements of your story's plotline:

Rising Action

- Bishop invites Valjean into dinner.
- Valjean goes to his room and ponders what he should do.
- Valjean determines to steal the silver and run away.

Climax

- Valjean is caught and is brought to the bishop's door.
- The police ask the bishop to confirm theft of the silver
- The bishop responds that he has given the silver to Valjean as a gift and asks why he left behind the silver candlesticks.

Resolution

- The bishop charges Valjean with the responsibility of a changed life in exchange for his act of mercy.
- Valjean continues on his journey - a new life - a new beginning.

Intro

- Valjean is thrown out of the tavern because he is an ex-convict.
- Valjean knocks on the door of the bishop's house.

Worksheet: Literary Evaluation

Name of Piece:

Plotline Analysis

Identify and list the following four elements of your story's plotline:

Climax

Rising Action

Resolution

Intro

Character Analysis Worksheet

Name of Piece: Les Miserables, by Victor Hugo

Character Names:	Valjean	Bishop	Madame Malgoire
Internal struggles:	Bitterness regarding injustice of his sentence Accepting forgiveness Injustice	Deciding to trust a convict Choosing forgiveness Preferring eternal treasure	Trusting a convict Trusting bishop's choice
External struggles:	Poverty Lodging and food Mockery and disdain "The Law"	Opening doors to convict/responding to police	Obedying bishop Keeping quiet about the theft
Personality:	Intense Thinks and feels deeply Tender (though outwardly rough) Introverted	Tenderhearted Deeply principled Authentic/Humble Calm/quiet Introverted Sacrificial	Opinionated Fearful Introverted
Appearance:	Physically fit Imposing figure Impoverished though uniquely distinguished	Kind smile Average (slightly short) Grey hair Wrinkled skin	Terse facial expressions Average (short) Grey hair Wrinkled skin
Age:	Middle Aged (early 40s?)	Older (early 70s?)	Unkown (50s?)

- How many characters are crucial to the story?
Valjean, the Bishop, and Madame Malgoire are essential. An inn-keeper and policeman may also be necessary.
- Does the piece provide a variety of characters in the story?
Yes. In order to present this piece, I will need to incorporate 5-6 characters. Furthermore, these characters are varied in struggles, personality, and appearances.
- How similar are you as the interpreter to the characters?
There is a significant age gap between me and the characters. Nonetheless, because I connect deeply with the emotional struggles of each character, I am excited to tackle this challenging piece!
- How different are you as the interpreter to the characters?
I have been neither impoverished nor imprisoned, but I have felt rejected and faced the struggle of forgiveness. I have also experienced the liberating effect of receiving undeserved mercy from others.
- Can you identify with the characters' main emotions and experiences?
Yes.

Character Analysis Worksheet

INTERPRETATION

Name of Piece: _____

Character Names: _____

Internal struggles:				
External struggles:				
Personality:				
Appearance:				
Age:				

- How many characters are crucial to the story?
- Does the piece provide a variety of characters in the story?
- How similar are you as the interpreter to the characters?
- How different are you as the interpreter to the characters?
- Can you identify with the characters' main emotions and experiences?

Sample