

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SPEECH/DRAMA STUDENT

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Learning Your Selection

1. *Practice your selection every day.* Say it at home every day. Be sure to say it for your parents at least once a day. Do it your very best each time.
2. *Stand correctly.* Stand up tall, yet relaxed. Look at your entire audience. Say the title and author, then wait for 3 seconds before you begin the selection. At the end of the selection, hold your last motion or feeling for 3 seconds, and then come back to your beginning position for 3 seconds as you smile at your audience. Never rush back to your seat on the last word.
3. *Say your selection with expression (feeling).*

Some of the main feelings you'll find are:

- Gladness
- Sadness
- Anger
- Fear
- Surprise
- Worry
- Wonder
- Pride

4. You will learn *motions* that help with your selection, if they are natural for the selection you have chosen. No speaker stands like a board while speaking, and of course, you certainly do not want to appear like a stiff board. But you want motions that add to your selection, which make it more interesting, more believable, and more enjoyable for you and your audience. Learn natural motions right away and practice saying your selection with the motions every time.
5. *Speak slowly and clearly.* Stop after each thought. Remember to speak with a TALL MOUTH (you should be able to put 2 fingers between your lips when you talk). This will help you say your words clearly and loudly. Say every sound (beginning, middle, and ending) of every word in your selection. If you have a tape recorder, it is a tremendous help in learning your selection. Students should train to project their voices for an audience situation. Microphones will not be used.

Areas to Work On

Inflection

1. Do I speak in a monotone or do I have the proper variation in pitch to make my voice interesting to listen to?
2. Do I change the pitch of my voice for different characters?
3. Do I have the proper intensity to show emotion or light humor?
4. Am I careful not to speak in a sing-song manner?

Meaning

1. Do I really *feel* what the author is trying to get across?
2. Do I understand the meaning of *every word* in the selection? Every sentence? Every paragraph?
3. Do I try my *very best* to share the meaning of my selection with my audience?
4. Do I really *act involved* in the message of my selection?

Rate

1. Am I too involved in the rhythm so that the meaning doesn't come through?
2. Do I pause when I should? Speed up where I should?
3. Do I change my rate of talking to emphasize the meaning of certain passages?

Volume

1. Can I be heard in all parts of the room?
2. Am I louder or softer in certain places to show the humor or the emotion of my selection?
3. Am I supporting my breath from the diaphragm?

Enthusiasm

1. Am I enthusiastic about my selection? Do I really believe it?
2. Do I try to get this enthusiasm across to my audience?
3. Do I look involved in my selection from the time I leave my seat until I return to it?
4. Am I using my voice—and my facial expression to show my enthusiasm?

Attitude

1. Do I *really want* to be doing this?
2. Am I willing to do *my very best* in preparing my selection?
3. Do I make, and accept, challenges gracefully?
4. Am I saying to myself, "I know that I can do well and I'll work my hardest to prove it?"

Memory

1. Do I know my selection backwards, forwards, and sideways, if necessary?
2. Do I have key words to remember so that I won't forget or leave out any paragraphs or stanzas?
3. Do I occasionally look over the written copy of my selection to make sure I am saying it 100% correctly?