



Interp Glossary and a 10-Week Rehearsal Plan.

For brand-new interpretation performers and their parents. Learn the vocabulary you will hear at tournaments, then follow a week-by-week plan from first read to first performance.

Beginner glossary

Interp

Short for interpretation, the family of performance events

Blocking

Planned positions and movements in the performance space

Introduction

A short spoken framing of the piece, title and author

Grace period

Extra time allowed past the limit. NSDA uses 30 seconds; going beyond it can cost you a 1st place ranking (penalties vary by league)

Focal point

A fixed spot a character looks at or speaks to

Climax

The highest point of tension or feeling

Round

One performance session in front of a judge or panel

Neutral

A relaxed standing position used between characters or scenes

Cutting

A shortened version of a published text made for performance

Teaser

A brief selection from the piece performed just before the introduction (if allowed)

Manuscript

The binder or folder holding the full text, required in NSDA Poetry, Prose and Program Oral Interpretation

Pop

A quick sharp movement that switches from one character to another

Arc

The emotional shape of the piece from beginning to end

Ballot

The judge's written feedback and ranking

Final round

The last round among top performers

Theme

The message that links the parts of a piece or program

Ten-week plan overview

This plan assumes about 30 to 45 minutes of practice, four days a week, and a tournament around week 10. Adjust it to your actual calendar and your league's rules.

WEEK	GOAL	KEY TASKS
1	Explore	Read widely, shortlist three pieces, check league rules and content limits
2	Choose and cut	Pick the piece, make the first cutting, time it aloud
3	Understand	Write the want and arc for each character, draft an introduction
4	Memorize	Learn the piece in chunks, run with script in hand

WEEK	GOAL	KEY TASKS
5	Voices	Assign voice, posture and focus to each character
6	Blocking	Plan and mark movement, rehearse transitions
7	Emotion	Mark the arc, practice climax and quiet moments
8	Run for others	Perform for two listeners, collect one note each
9	Polish	Cut weak moments, time three runs, practice recovery from a slip
10	Perform	Light run-throughs, rest, then perform with confidence

Weekly rhythm

DAY	FOCUS	TIME
Day 1	Warm-up and the week's goal	30 to 45 min
Day 2	Drill the hardest scene	30 min
Day 3	Full run, recorded	30 to 45 min
Day 4	Run for a listener, then notes	30 to 45 min

- ☐ I have my league's current rules and time limit written down.
- ☐ My piece is cut, timed and saved in a printed copy.
- ☐ I have an introduction under 45 seconds.
- ☐ I have run the full piece for at least three different listeners.
- ☐ I have a plan for what to do if I slip.
- ☐ I have packed everything for tournament day.

Notes and next steps

MY PIECE, MY GOAL, AND ONE THING TO FIX THIS WEEK

Want a plan built around your performer?

Book a free consultation at the link below.

Built from public guidance: NSDA High School Unified Manual (speechanddebate.org) · NSDA Speech and Debate Glossary · NSDA Interpretation of Literature textbook (Kiger and Newman). Rules change by league and tournament, so always confirm against your tournament invitation and current league rules.

NOTES

Want a plan built around **your** debater?

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