

*This document contains the updates made to the official CCA Speech/Individual Events (IE) documents with changes described when appropriate. While this guide should help highlight updates, it should not be considered a rule-setting document; please refer to the documents themselves for a full understanding of the updates in context. CCA Speech/Individual Events document updates are official as of **October 13, 2025**.*

All documents were reviewed and updated to promote readability, consistency, and clarity. All also now show the copyright symbol and a simpler dating/version convention in the footer.

Updates to Criteria and Competitor Standards (CCS)

Events were updated to indicate the 2026-2029 rotation, with 2026 season events shown in red underlined font.

Biblical Foundation

- Changed section name from “Biblical Worldview,” as that term refers to a specific requirement of Cultural Criticism. Even for events that have never required evaluation through an explicitly biblical worldview, competitors are to stand on a biblical foundation.
- Clarified that “Topics and literature that have an overtly Christian message are not required for CCA events other than Bible Interpretation, Extemporaneous Apologetics, and Cultural Criticism.” (Previously stated “...are not required for any event in CCA.”)
- Clarified wording for added emphasis on competitor, coach, and parent responsibility to ensure that topic and wording choices are not in conflict with biblical principles.

Key Standards

- Added “Authoritative biblical citations must be limited to the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments universally recognized across a broad range of Christian traditions.”
- Added “Competitors must not present divisive or tradition-specific theological claims as normative or authoritative for all Christians.”
- Added “Speech preparation (research/writing or cutting/preparing) must be solely the work of the competitor, except for reasonable coaching input.”
- Added “Prior to tournament participation, a coach and a parent must read each script and view each presentation to ensure compliance with all standards listed in this document.”

Competitor Divisions and Eligibility

- Eligibility for JV and JR competitors were added, as was eligibility cutoff date for competitor age (so that all eligibility rules are now included in the CCS)
- Added “Junior events are scheduled at Tournament Director discretion.”

Script Submissions for Oral Interpretation

- *Script Submission Cover Page* completion includes “with all required signed assertions”
- Proof of Copyright now also requires proof of Owner’s Permission to perform and/or payment of royalties (in cases where publisher Copyright information indicates that such is required). Examples are given.
- Parent and coach responsibility for investigating and ensuring satisfaction of publisher requirements has been added (permission to perform, royalties, cutting, right to photocopy, etc.)
- Public domain rule has been updated to 1930 or earlier.
- The section headed by “written permission for use from the author” has been changed to “if you cannot find the Copyright and the work is not in the public domain,” and clarification of “author-owner” has been made for his scenario. Clarification has been made that this written permission should be addressed to the competitor or parent.
- Clarification has been added that a transcript of an audio or video recording not authorized by the owner of the work (even if the word “copyright” is included) is not acceptable.

Script Submissions for Public Address

- *Script Submission Cover Page* completion includes “with all required signed assertions”
- Script submissions must now include either a Works Cited or References page (MLA or APA format suggested). Bibliography is no longer allowed.

Oral Interpretation - General Standards

- The Presentation section now includes clarification: “Creative use of the Forensic Notebook is permitted, except during the original introduction. Consider whether doing so enhances the particular presentation. Uses of the Forensic Notebook that distract from the presentation should be avoided.”
- The Literature section now includes “Literature should not be disturbing, in that it is morbid, dark, or without hope.” (Similar language had previously been included only in the DI and DDuo sections.)
- The Literature section now includes “Cutting of literature must be done in a manner that maintains the author’s intent for the spirit of the work.” The Movement/Interpretation section now includes “Interpretation of literature must be done in a manner that maintains the author’s intent for the spirit of the work.”
- The Movement/Interpretation section now includes “The Competitor’s presentation space is limited to a square no larger than one step in any direction from the center starting position” to replace and clarify the previous “The Competitor may not take more than one

step in any direction from the center starting position.”

- In order to clarify intent that Oral Interpretation selection(s) need not include character dialogue, The Movement/Interpretation section now states, “The competitor should employ off-stage focus during character dialogue, if included in selection(s).”

Oral Interpretation - Event Specific Standards

- The Prose section now includes “Pieces with literary merit must be selected.” (This language was also clarified for Poetry.)
- The Prose section now includes “Multiple selections should have a connecting theme.”
- The Poetry section no longer includes the requirement that the theme must be clearly identified in the introduction when multiple poems are presented. (Stating the theme in the introduction is still recommended, as in all Oral Interpretation.)
- The Bible Interpretation section no longer includes language requiring competitors to develop characterization, as use of character dialogue is optional for this event.
- Humorous Duo now specifies “appropriate” humor (previously only listed for HI).

Public Address - General Standards

- The introduction no longer states that competitors “apply biblical principles to the topic” (see reasoning under Public Address - Event Specific Standards below). It also no longer states that competitors “communicate truths in keeping with a biblical worldview,” as this relates specifically to Cultural Criticism and is discussed in that Event Specific section. (Note that all PA events are already subject to the overall requirement that no IE’s may conflict with biblical principles.)
- The Topics section summary of organization within a speech (an introduction to the topic, a main body, and a conclusion) now also lists “a clear/arguable thesis.” It also gives parenthetical details that the main body consists of “main points and evidence directly supporting (proving) the thesis.”
- The Citations section now requires at least three cited sources.
- The Citations section still requires a student to state “*when* it was said or written,” but now adds the words “(or accessed, if publishing date is not given for online source.)”
- The Citations section adds: “when using a citation from the Bible, the publication date and publisher need not be stated within the speech (though still must be included in the Works Cited or References page).”
- The Presentation section now clarifies: “All visual aids must be attached to a black presentation board or boards no larger than 20" x 30", which are to be displayed on a floor easel” and “Visual aids are appropriate when their use enhances audience understanding or impact of the speech.”

- In the Memorization and Violations sections, use of a script has been changed from a 2-rank violation to a **disqualification** from the event.

Public Address - Event Specific Standards

- The notation that a Cultural Criticism presentation must identify an artifact “from current American popular culture” has been changed to read “from current secular American pop culture” for better consistency with other documents.
- The Biographical Informative and Informative sections’ requirement that the topic chosen is “not common knowledge” was replaced with “not widely known by the general public” to avoid confusion with the common knowledge definition used for citation purposes.
- Clarification has been added to the Biographical Informative and Informative sections that the competitor should take a position on the topic. For Biographical Informative, this position may focus on a certain aspect of an individual’s life, if desired.
- The Persuasive, Informative, and Biographical Informative sections no longer contain “apply biblical principles to an issue,” “evaluate how biblical principles relate to that issue,” and “with an emphasis on how biblical principles relate to the subject’s life and influence,” respectively. The thesis for these events was never intended to be limited only to topics that can only be evaluated biblically (allowing, for example, a speech on military dogs, a speech on the impact of an inventor on daily life, etc.) These events, however, remain under the Key Standards and therefore may not conflict with biblical principles.

Limited Prep - General Standards

- Due to the degree of difference between the three Limited Prep events, the General Standards was shortened. Standards not applying to all three events were moved to the applicable Event Specific Standards.
- It was clarified that ALL Limited Prep events require the competitor to “adhere to the statement/topic/question given.”
- “Topics” in this context are now referred to as “prompts” for clarity, as elsewhere in the document, “topic” refers to the overall *general* subject area of a speech.
- Wording was added: “Content a competitor invents or is unsure about must not be presented as fact.”

Limited Prep - Event Specific Standards

- The Movement sections now clarify that NA students remain seated, IM students may use the speaker's triangle, and EA students' movement "should remain natural and conversational" **and not use the speaker's triangle.**
- The Impromptu section no longer contains "consistent with biblical principles" because this is addressed in the Key Standards section to cover *all* events, which may not conflict with biblical principles. Competitors sometimes mistook it here to indicate that they needed verses, as in EA.
- The Impromptu section no longer contains the words "and definitions" in the discussion of thesis support. It now states only: "The competitor should utilize examples and illustrations to support his thesis statement and the main points of the presentation."
- Edited News Analysis section for clarification and consistency with ballot and judge instructions. Removed: "A good presentation will synthesize the article and address the claims made by the author." Replaced with: "In the introduction the competitor will synthesize the information and claims presented by the article, interpret its meaning, develop a thesis (the position the competitor takes on the topic), and give a preview of the main points. Each of the points in the main body should clearly support (prove) the thesis."

Glossary

The Glossary (formerly a separate document) has been moved to the CCS to become a part of the rules governing Individual Events. Definitions of key ballot terms have been added to the rules, in some cases using guidance already existing in the Coaching Tips.

- **Edited Artifact** to better reflect other CCS language. The previous definition was "Anything that sheds light on the way the current American society lives, thinks or otherwise expresses itself and can be analyzed from a biblical worldview. It can be an item, trend, ideology, person, type of media, or form of technology." The new definition is "A specific item, trend, ideology, slogan, person, type of media, form of technology, or other similar element from current secular American pop culture that can be analyzed from a biblical worldview. An artifact should not be selected from Christian culture for the Cultural Criticism event."
- **Added Biblical Worldview:** "A comprehensive understanding of material and spiritual reality perceived through the lens of biblical principles." (Evaluation using an explicitly biblical worldview is required in Cultural Criticism.)
- **Replaced Cited and Citation with a clarified definition of Cite:** "To provide as an authority or proof the source of a direct or indirect quotation or reference given in a

presentation, as well as acknowledgement of a person's intellectual property. (Refer to event-specific citation requirements.)”

- **Edited Common Knowledge** (now used in the CCS only in reference to citation) from “Information possessed and regularly used by the general public” to “Information widely known by the audience.”
- **Removed Genre** (here it had referred to specific types of literature, versus how it is more commonly used in CCA to refer to the “genres” of forensic speaking: Interp, PA, and LP)
- **Simplified Literary Merit**: “Value, excellence, or superior quality (in a work of literature).”
- **Replaced Literature** with: “Creative works of prose, poetry, or drama. While not all prose writing is considered literature, even historical documents may be considered literature when they go beyond pure fact to narrative, style, or interpretation.”
- **Added Main Points**: “Statements which each directly support (prove) a Public Address, Impromptu, or News Analysis thesis. Each main point should further narrow the thesis's argument, serve as a mini-thesis for one major portion of the speech, and be directly proven by evidence. Background and applications of a topic are usually not appropriate main points and are generally better suited for introductions and conclusions, respectively.”
- **Clarified Prose**: “Prose is language that follows a grammatical structure with sentences and paragraphs, without a meter, verse, or rhythmic pattern.”
- Replaced **Proof of Copyright** with: “Evidence the script is not the competitor's own work, but that of the original author (Oral Interpretation). Recognizes the owner's intellectual rights, and teaches competitors how to research and properly document Copyrighted material. (Refer to specific requirements for evidence of Copyright, and related information where required, under the Script Submissions section of this document.)”
- **Added Theme**: “The message an author of a work of literature is conveying. (For example, the topic may be “love,” but the theme may be “true love puts the needs of others over the desires of oneself.”) If more than one theme is identified in work(s) of literature, one of these themes should be selected as the focus of an Oral Interpretation event.”
- Edited **Speaker's Triangle** to include the words “Typically used in Public Address and in Impromptu.”
- **Added Thesis**: “One sentence summarizing a Public Address, Impromptu, or News Analysis speech's claim about a specific topic. A claim is an arguable, debatable position, not merely a statement of fact.”

Updates to Script Submission Cover Page

Event-Specific Check Boxes

- To reflect CCS changes disallowing a Bibliography and establishing minimum cited sources, the Public Address checkbox reads: “PRINTED OR TYPED WORKS CITED OR REFERENCES PAGE IS ATTACHED, LISTING ALL CITED SOURCES (≥ 3)”
- To reflect CCS changes regarding evidence of permissions in certain cases, the Interp checkbox now begins: “PROOF OF COPYRIGHT (WITH OWNER’S PERMISSION, IF NEEDED), PUBLIC DOMAIN OR AUTHOR’S PERMISSION IS ATTACHED...”

Student Affirmation

- Affirmation has been strengthened to indicate that research (PA), writing, and cutting (Interp) is the student’s alone, except for reasonable input from coaches.
- Affirmation now requires confirmation that the Public Address is memorized as a requirement for script acceptance. (Note that memorization has always been required in the CCS for Public Address.)

Parent/Coach Affirmations

- Affirmation has been strengthened to “certify” that speech preparation is the work of the student (as parent/coach awareness/involvement in the preparation process best supports student integrity and education in the current age of AI).
- Affirmation has been strengthened from the previous requirement to read and/or see the speech to “I have read the attached script, seen the speech presented, and believe it to follow the CCA Criteria and Competitor Standards....The speech is memorized (Public Address).”
- Affirmation has been strengthened to include copyright verification (not just belief) and to reflect above-noted CCS changes regarding parent/coach responsibility for investigating and satisfying publisher requirements.

Updates to Glossary

The Glossary has been moved within the CCS and edited there (as noted above) and no longer exists as a separate CCA document.

Updates to Ballots

Varsity/JV Oral Interpretation

- To reflect CCS clarification indicating creative notebook use is not required, and only to be used where it enhances the presentation, the first bullet of Notebook Technique section has been changed from “Use of notebook is natural, effective, creative” to “Use of notebook is natural and effective.”
- Due to frequent judge confusion, the two-rank violation’s wording (“Failure to use a Forensic Notebook”) has been changed to “Lack of Forensic Notebook with the script.”

Varsity/JV Poetry

- For continuity with existing Oral Interpretation ballots for other events, CCS, and Coaching Tips, as well as new clarification in the Glossary definition of Theme, ballot reference to “theme(s)” was replaced with “theme.”
- To reflect CCS intent that poetry need not include character dialogue, the second bullet of The Interpretation section has been changed from “Off-stage focus is appropriate/consistent” to “Eye contact and/or off-stage focus is appropriate/consistent.”
- When a single selection of poetry including no character dialogue is presented, the competitor can demonstrate vocal/physical distinction in varying parts (or “scenes”) of a narration. To reflect this intent, the fourth bullet of The Interpretation section has been changed from “Narrator, characters, and/or selection(s) are vocally and physically distinct” to “Narrator(s), character(s), scenes, and/or selection(s) are vocally and physically distinct.”

JR Poetry

- To reflect CCS intent that poetry need not include character dialogue, the sixth checkbox has been changed from “You used different voices for each character” to “If your poem(s) had characters, you used different voices for each one.”

Varsity/JV Public Address

- Ballot language on Optional Visual Aids was clarified to read: “Appropriate when use enhances audience understanding or impact of the speech.”
- “Use of a script” was changed from a 2-rank violation to “Disqualification, DO NOT RANK”

Biographical Informative

- To reflect clarified thesis/points per the CCS, “Uses originality in explaining facts about person chosen” has been replaced with “Supports position using evidence.”

- To reflect the judge instructions that aspects of the individual's life unrelated to the thesis may be omitted, "Presents unique, topic facts beyond common knowledge" has been replaced with "Presents unique, relevant facts beyond common knowledge."

Cultural Criticism

- The word "prove" was added to "Points in speech clearly support (prove) thesis statement"

News Analysis

- Bullet was added: "Points in speech clearly support (prove) thesis statement"
- Two bullets were combined to read: "Presents clear and credible analysis of the article" (formerly, "Takes credible position" and "Presents clear analysis of the article")

Updates to Judge Instructions

Varsity/JV/JR Oral Interpretation

- In "Description of Event," clarified "presentation space" language to match new CCS clarification.

Varsity/JV Oral Interpretation

- Clarified "Violations to Watch for" section with "Lack of forensic notebook(s) containing the script."

Varsity/JV/JR Poetry

- Added "with literary merit" to "Things to Look for in a Good Presentation" section.
- Added "The competitor should employ off-stage focus during character dialogue, if included in the literature" to "Things to Look for in a Good Presentation" section.

Humorous Duo

- Added "The competitor should employ off-stage focus during character dialogue." to "Things to Look for in a Good Presentation" section.

Varsity/JV Public Address and Limited Prep

- Adjusted "Description of Event" and "Things to Look for in a Good Speech" for better consistency with CCS (and between Judge Instructions documents).

Varsity/JV Biographical Informative

- Clarified that "The speech's thesis may focus on an aspect of the individual's life; aspects unrelated to the thesis may be omitted."
- The violation for "Use of a script, notes, or prompting" has been changed from a

two-rank to a disqualification.

Cultural Criticism

- The violation for “Use of a script, notes, or prompting” has been changed from a two-rank to a disqualification.

News Analysis

- Removed “The best speeches consider and address the larger context of the topic, the specifics of the article, and the impact of the assertions” from “Things to Look for in a Good Speech.” These are indeed good to cover in NA, but are covered by the Ballot. Here, they gave the wrong impression that they ought to be the three main points.

Extemporaneous Apologetics

- In “Description of Event,” clarified what must be in the file box, as well as that it must not be accessed during the speech.
- In Things to Look for in a Good Speech,” clarified: “While scripture references and full citations are not required, it must be clear when scripture and other outside sources are being presented.”