

Use the following to help you prepare and practice your story:

Storytelling is relating a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture. It is not the same as reading a story aloud or reciting a piece from memory or acting out a drama, although it shares common characteristics with these arts. The storyteller looks into the eyes of the audience, and together they compose the tale. The storyteller begins to see and re-create, through voice and gesture, a series of mental images; the audience, from the first moment of listening, squints, stares, smiles, leans forward, or falls asleep, letting the teller know whether to slow down, speed up, elaborate, or just finish. Each listener, as well as each teller, actually composes a unique set of story images derived from meanings associated with words, gestures, and sounds. The experience can be profound, exercising the thinking and touching the emotions of both teller and listener.

— Committee on Storytelling, National Council of Teachers of English
<http://www.ncte.org/about/over/positions/category/lang/107637.htm>

SAMPLE BALLOT FOR TEXAS STORYTELLING YOUTH OLYMPICS

Below are the points on which you as the teller will be judged; there are a total of 60 points that can be earned. Take these points into consideration when preparing your story.

A. Story Choice 1 2 3 4

- ★ Colorful and unique delivery
- ★ Unusual or creative adaptation
- ★ Suitable to the teller
- ★ Memorable choice

B. Story Launch 1 2 3 4

- ★ Strong positive energy
- ★ Confidence and poise
- ★ Began with appropriate pace to capture audience's attention
- ★ Painted the story's picture
- ★ Spoke initial words clearly

C. Voice 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- ★ Vocal rate appropriate to the content of the story
- ★ Words flowed easily and naturally
- ★ Teller's voice filled the space
- ★ Special vocal effects enhanced the story
- ★ Story sounded natural rather than memorized or recited

D. Body 1 2 3 4 5 6

- ★ Eye contact with the audience natural and even
- ★ Facial communication helped to "tell" the story
- ★ Gestures enhanced the telling of the story
- ★ Body "in sync" with the story
- ★ Posture appropriate to the meaning of the story

E. Words 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

- ★ Grammar appropriate to the story
- ★ Wording appropriate for all portions of the story
- ★ Teller's dialect or speech patterns blended with the story
- ★ Balance of dialect with clear articulation

F. Story Closure 1 2 3 4

- ★ Story wound down appropriately
- ★ Final impression or flavor left with the listeners
- ★ Vocal intonation clued the story's end
- ★ Confidence and poise

G. Overall Performance Spirit 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

- ★ Caught the audience's attention
- ★ Enthusiastic and vibrant
- ★ Exhibited charm and expressive quality
- ★ Used appropriate energy
- ★ Demonstrated smoothness and natural performance style