



The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOL COMPETITION

COMPETITION PURPOSE: To develop students' critical thinking, close reading and public speaking skills through the reading, analysis and performance of Shakespeare as well as increase their self-confidence and overall appreciation of literature (by exploring the beauty of Shakespeare's language and the classic themes found in his works).

COMPETITION AIM: Students bring the timeless works of Shakespeare to life each in their own way and learn to express his words with understanding, clarity and feeling.

For more complete information, please view the 2016-2017 *Teacher Handbook* online at www.esuus.org.

SCHOOL COMPETITION GUIDELINES:

- The school competition must involve a minimum of three (3) students.
- Each student must select, memorize and present a monologue from one of Shakespeare's plays. Students should be familiar with the play from which the speech is taken.
- Students are limited to a monologue of no more than **20 lines (verse or prose)**. Length is determined according to the Folger Shakespeare Library editions of the plays (Simon & Schuster, 2003-2013). Students performing longer monologues will be disqualified. The selections included in our *Suggested Monologues List* (and its accompanying packet) adhere to this line count rule.
NOTE: The Folger editions of the plays are available for free online at: www.folgerdigitaltexts.org.
- Students cannot wear costumes or use props of any kind (including chairs, jewelry, items of clothing and hair/hair clips).
- Students' order of performance at the school competition should be determined by lot.
- Students at the school competition should introduce themselves *only* by name.
- Students should identify their selection before they begin their presentation.
- Students should speak naturally in their own voice (rather than affect a British accent).
- Students are expected to memorize their pieces. Prompting, however if necessary, is allowed. If students require prompting, they must say "Line."
- The winner of the school competition must also memorize and present a sonnet (in addition to their monologue) for their local English-Speaking Union Branch Competition. The student must select a sonnet from Shakespeare's 154 sonnet cycle. Please note editing of the sonnet is *not* allowed (i.e. the student must present the complete sonnet).
NOTE: All the sonnets are available for free online at www.folgerdigitaltexts.org.
- For students with documented hearing, learning, physical and/or visual disabilities, appropriate arrangements will be made for the Branch Competition. Advise the local English-Speaking Union Branch of any such disabilities **prior** to the Branch Competition.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some English-Speaking Union Branches require students to perform set selections rather than pick their own selections from the Suggested Monologues. Please check with your local ESU Branch Shakespeare Coordinator.