

Starburst Speech and Drama Exam

Grade 6

Preparation for Exams

You will be shortly taking the Grade 6 Starburst Exam. The content of your exam is as follows:

Requirements:

1. Speak from memory a short poem by an Irish poet.
2. Announce and perform a solo dramatic selection, using appropriate characterisation and movement (maximum time permitted: two minutes)
3. Read at sight a poem chosen by the examiner.
4. Be able to discuss the meaning and mood of the poem with the examiner.

Meaning and Mood of the Poem: The examiner will need to know that the candidate understands what his/her poem is about and how that might be discerned from the poet's words. In studying the poem, it is useful to know something about the poet, his/her life and other work.

Sight Reading

Use the time given for preparation to glance over the text before starting. Try to take in the overall mood and content. Pay particular attention to the opening and closing paragraphs. Are there any difficult words or dialogue?

When you're ready to start, adopt a balanced posture/stance. Hold the book/ page so that it doesn't hide your face.

Announce clearly the title of the Book and Author (try to do this directly to the audience, without reading it). Start slowly, and let your eye run ahead of your voice.

Don't read too quickly.

Try to reflect the mood(s) of the text in your voice, vary your pace and don't forget to use the pause. Try to use characterisation in your voice for any dialogue.

Try to make eye contact. However, fluency is more important than eye contact with the audience and darting your eyes up to the audience and straight back to the page is distracting. If you come across a difficult word, attempt it and go on - never stop or apologise - just keep going. Try and keep your voice strong to the final word.

To summarise:

- Glance over the piece
- Announce the title of the Poem and Author. (Do not read it)
- Watch your posture.
- Vary the rate - but, overall, speak slowly.
- Look up and make audience contact - hold the book/page away from your face.
- Tell the story clearly and with vocal and facial expression.
- Be natural and sincere
- Give it your best shot - don't stop



