NEW YORK STATE FORENSIC LEAGUE
VARSITY ORAL INTERPRETATION
of PROSE and POETRY BALLOT

Code ____________ Round__________ Room__________ Rank _____ of _____

Title:_________________________________________________________________________

Judge’s Name: _____________________________ Judge Affiliation: _____________

Judges:____________________________________ Judge Affiliation: __________

1. The best speaker should be given the rank of 1.
2. No two speakers may be given the same rank.
3. Time Limit: Maximum of ten (10) minutes with no minimum. There is a mandatory
   thirty (30) second grace period during which time no penalty may be assessed. Speakers
   that exceed this grace period may not be ranked first in the round.
4. Alternating rounds will feature either all prose or all poetry selections, which must be
   from published, printed literature, either as a complete piece, a cutting, or a series of short
   pieces united by a common theme or author. Speakers shall, as part of their presentation,
   name the author(s) and the source(s) used. Coaches are encouraged to guide their
   speakers in the direction of literary awareness.
5. The selection(s) must be read from a manuscript. A reasonable balance of eye contact
   with the script and audience should be maintained.
6. Gestures should be suitable to a reading rather than a stage performance – natural
   rather than mimetic. There should be no walking during the presentation – the speaker’s
   feet should be planted in a fixed position.

This is a contest in oral interpretation. Movement of character(s) should not be
represented or pantomimed. The speaker should allow the scene presented to unfold in
the mind of the audience rather than to locate it on the performance stage or inject
him/herself into it. The speaker should exhibit the literature rather than him/herself. The
audience should be presented with a unified scene, theme or story. Speakers should be
evaluated on: poise, vocal quality (inflection, emphasis, enunciation, pronunciation,
diction, phrasing) and especially the ability to accurately and consistently interpret
character(s) and the piece of literature as a whole.

Please use the back for extended commentary.