

# IOWA THESPIAN FESTIVAL

## 2020/21 Thespy Awards Guide



IOWA  
THESPIANS<sup>SM</sup>

AN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION AFFILIATE

*At the Iowa Thespian Festival, students have a chance to participate in the Thespy Award program, which is a part of the International Thespian Excellence Awards (formerly known as the National Individual Event*

*Showcase), sponsored by the Educational Theatre Association. The International Thespian Excellence Awards is an educational program that offers Thespians the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on prepared theatrical material and technical designs.*

The **performance** Individual Events include the following (click on the link to navigate directly to the rules):

- [Monologue](#)
- [Duet Acting](#)
- [Group Acting](#)
- [Solo Musical Theatre](#)
- [Duet Musical Theatre](#)
- [Group Musical Theatre](#)

The **technical** Individual Events include the following (click on the link to navigate directly to the rules):

- [Costume Construction](#)
- [Costume Design](#)
- [Lighting Design](#)
- [Makeup Design](#)
- [Scenic Design](#)
- [Sound Design](#)
- [Stage Management](#)
- [Theatre Marketing](#)
- [Short Film](#)

**Scoring:** A performance-based assessment rubric is used for all Individual Events.

- The ratings are (4), Superior, (3), Excellent, (2), Good, and (1), Fair.
- The ratings tabulate to a numeric total ranging from 4-24, depending on the number of criteria that are included in the individual rubric. Please familiarize yourself with the rubrics (available online).
- To determine an entrant's rating, add up the scores in the far right column and enter the total score at the bottom. Based on the total, circle the indicator of achievement to the left of the column.
- For an entrant's overall rating, average the two to three adjudicators' totaled numeric scores. Average scores will be rounded up to the nearest whole number; for example, an average of the three judges' scores of 17.5 rounds to 18. A 17.4 will not round up to 18 but down to 17.
- Student guidelines for each area are included in this document to help entrants understand adjudication.
- Each performance event will have two-three adjudicators

# QUALIFYING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL THESPIAN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

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To qualify for International Thespian Excellence Awards (Thespys for short) at the International Thespian Festival, entrants must:

1. Receive an overall assessment rating of **Superior** at their chapter conference/festival or at a similar qualifying event for their chapter; and
2. Be an inducted Thespian at the time of ITF registration. **In Iowa, students do NOT need to be inducted Thespians.** However, if a student qualifies for the Thespy Awards at the International Thespian Festival, he or she **MUST** be an inducted Thespian at the time of your ITF registration.

## Digital Adjudication

In 2020-21, all adjudications at our chapter festival AND the international level will happen virtually using an online competition platform. While the rules and guidelines for each category are largely the same as in person, students are encouraged to recognize and prepare for the inherent differences in presenting their categories digitally. Students should optimize their submissions for the online format to receive the best feedback and the best scores.

## Social Distancing/Masking Policy for Thespy entries requiring collaboration:

Participants submitting a collaborative entry (group/duet entries) are expected to follow masking and social distancing rules and recommendations while rehearsing and producing their final submission video. If participants are unable to perform safely together, they should consider submitting individual category entries instead.

- For example, if a mask mandate is in effect, participants should wear masks in their video submission. If requirements state that individuals not housed together are required to maintain a distance of six feet, participants should record their video at the recommended distance. It is important to note that certain masks and distanced performances may impact sound/speech and hide facial expressions, so discovering techniques to emphasize enunciation and characterization will be especially important. Duet and Group performers may choose to record their pieces separately and edit them together into a single video. Participants may consider using clear face masks to allow facial expressions to be seen by adjudicators.

## Tips for digital video submissions:

- Find an effective filming location:
  - Area should be quiet so we can hear both you and your track (if applicable).
  - Film in front of a non-distracting background. If possible, choose a solid-color wall or consider hanging a sheet behind you. The color should contrast with your clothing.
  - Dress neatly, in all black clothing as written in the guidelines. No costumes.
  - Make sure you are lit enough to be clearly visible.
- Reminders:
  - Before filming, conduct a full-volume test to make sure you can be heard (and that your track can be heard).
  - Ensure your blocking is effective and visible when filmed. Consider whether to decrease your movement or to adjust your camera angle.
  - Shoot your video horizontally, not vertically.
  - Try multiple takes and submit your strongest.

## Tips for digital portfolio submissions:

- You will be asked to share your portfolio as you would for an in-person presentation. Please upload the material asked for in the submission form in accordance with the program guidelines.
- Each of your samples should be clear and quality – good production or process photos, or easily readable documents.
- Uploads should be well-photographed or clearly readable. Though you will be able to expand in your video presentation, the sample should be able to speak for itself to a certain extent.

## **IOWA THESPY AWARDS SHOWCASE**

The Iowa Thespy Showcase will be a digital presentation of select performances submitted to be adjudicated. Inclusion in the Thespy showcase is at the discretion of the Thespy Award program producers. The virtual Showcase will be open to all delegates of the Iowa Thespian Festival.

### **PERFORMANCE EVENT RULES**

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1. After the introduction (slating), time begins with the first word, musical note or acting action (if it proceeds the first word or note). If a student exceeds the time limit, the judge will notate the time on the form and a final eligibility ruling will be determined in the tabulation room. If the student exceeds the time limit by 15 seconds, the timekeeper must stop the performance. No warnings are provided.  
Time limits for performance events are as follows:
  - Monologues: 3 minutes
  - All other performance events: 5 minutes
2. Each entrant is permitted to participate in only two Thespy Events at the Iowa Thespian Festival. (Please note: for 2020/2021, qualifying students may participate in more than one Thespy category at the International Thespian Festival.)
3. Entrants who qualify for the Thespy must present the same exact work from the State Festival. Substitutions are not allowed.
  - However, in the category of Group Musical Theatre or Group Acting, drops are allowed (you may drop a student from the group, but you may not add or substitute a student that did not participate in the group at the state level)
4. Acceptable material:
  - a. Non-musical performance events:
    1. Selections from full-length or one-act plays and musicals, and published by:
      - Broadway Play Publishing
      - Concord Theatricals (R&H Theatricals, Samuel French, Tams-Witmark, The Musical Company)
      - Dramatic Publishing
      - Dramatists Play Service
      - Eldridge Publishing
      - Music Theatre International
      - Playscripts, Inc.
      - Rodgers & Hammerstein Theatricals
      - Samuel French, Inc.
      - Smith and Kraus
      - Tams-Witmark
      - The Musical Company
      - Theatrefolk
      - Theatrical Rights Worldwide
      - YouthPLAYS
      - Any public domain play written prior to 1923
    2. The only D.M. Larson selection available for use in NIEs are from the plays listed below. All other D.M. Larson monologues will result in a disqualification.
      - *Beauty IS a Beast* - ISBN-13: 978-1511495967
      - *Big Nose* - ISBN-13: 978-1542471077

- *Death of an Insurance Salesman* - ISBN-13: 978-1518665547
  - *Ebony Scrooge* - ISBN-13: 978-1537655239
  - *Flowers in the Desert* - ISBN-13: 978-1530169085
  - *Holka Polka!* - ISBN-13: 978-1502445490
  - *Operation Redneck* - ISBN-13: 978-1540824349
  - *Somebody Famous* - ISBN-13: 978-1539753483
  - *Superhero Support Group* - ISBN-13: 978-1540471772
  - *My William Shatner Man Crush* - ISBN-13: 978-1505910155
  - *To Be A Star* - ISBN-13: 978-1541300200
3. Exceptions can be made for publishing companies not listed above (e.g., foreign publishing houses). Exceptions will need to be submitted nationally by May 15, 2021. Each chapter will have their own requirement for timing for their exceptions, but all exceptions will need to be approved by the Educational Theatre Association.
  4. The following are unacceptable material for non-musical performance events:
    - Author-only permission.
    - Any play (or monologue from a musical) not published by one of the publishers listed above or by a pre-approved publishing company.
    - Works available through self-publishing platforms.
  5. The following are unacceptable resources for non-musical performance events:
    - Use of set pieces, props, or costumes, including the use of hair, non-prescription glasses, earrings, or other personal items.
- b. Musical performance events:
1. Acceptable material:
    - Songs from a musical that have been used in a musical (regardless of its previous publication as a classical or popular song – e.g., *Forever Plaid*, *Mamma Mia*, etc.).
    - It must be publically available for sale in a vocal selection or musical score.
    - There must be a copyright mark on the music.
  2. The following are unacceptable material for musical performance events:
    - A cappella songs UNLESS originally written to be performed a cappella in the script.
    - Songs from films.
    - Songs from television.
    - Popular songs not used in a published work for the theatre.
    - Classical songs not used in a published work for the theatre.
    - Tracks with any background vocals.
  3. The following are unacceptable resources for musical performance events:
    - Use of set pieces, props, or costumes, including the use of hair, non-prescription glasses, earrings, or other personal items.
- c. It's difficult to address every situation in this document, but fundamentally, the guide is that the piece must either have:
1. publisher permission (NOT author-only permission); or
  2. available for sale in a libretto, play, vocal selection, or musical score.
5. Race, ethnic origin, gender, and sexual orientation should not influence a student's evaluation. Students are encouraged to choose pieces that speak to them, but copyright rules must be followed. For example: Students may play a role of any gender regardless of the gender with which they identify, but it is important to note that all copyright rules are to be enforced and the student cannot change pronouns without the express, written consent from the publisher.
  6. Disqualification. The International Thespian Excellence Awards program is meant to challenge, inspire, and educate students. As you'll note throughout this document, there are very clear rules to ensure equity among all participants. Violations of these rules can lead to disqualification.

- Disqualification reasons can be noted by individual adjudicators. The judges should note the issue(s) under their printed name and signature.
  - Regardless of individual disqualification reason(s), it is the responsibility of the tabulation room officials (or pre-defined designate) to rule on any disqualification.
  - Disqualifications at the Iowa Thespian Festival will be determined by the Individual Event coordinator.
7. Filming. Individual Events may not be filmed for rebroadcast or other use without prior written approval by the EdTA.
  8. Accommodations
    - Deaf/hard of hearing students are permitted a conductor (adult or student) for musical performances to guide their tempo.

## **TECHNICAL RULES (EXCLUDING SHORT FILM)**

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The entrant must prepare a presentation and design for one published play written for the theatre (play or musical). Designs for performances of original work, poetry, fiction, screenplays, television, or any other medium are not permitted. Originality of ideas/designs are paramount to the educational value of the program. All designs, logos, etc. should be original material. If non-original material is used, sources must be cited, and receipt of purchased material (when applicable) must be included in the presentation. Not doing so will result in disqualification.

1. Time limits for technical events are as follows:
  - Video Presentation, up to 8 minutes
2. The entrant must give an video presentation no longer than 8 minutes justifying the design and guiding the adjudicator through the entrant's creative process. The introduction to the presentation must include only the entrant's name, troupe number, title of play, and playwright. A thirty-second oral play synopsis should be prepared as part of the presentation. The video component can be a webinar-style presentation (i.e., voicing over a PowerPoint) or interview style (talking in front of the camera).
3. Additionally, entrants will be required to answer several written questions about their creative process in the application.
4. Read and follow exactly the category rules contained in this document for your technical entry.
5. Wear professional all-black clothing and solid-black shoes (including laces and sole trim) for the presentation before the adjudicators.

## SPECIFIC EVENT RULES

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### **Acting – Monologues**

In Acting – Monologues, the skills measured are:

- Use of transitions into and out of character
- Ability to create a believable character
- Communication of objective, tactics, and relationships
- Use of focus and concentration
- Integration of voice, body, movement, and staging.

In a monologue performance, the entrant must present two selections following these guidelines:

- Begin with an introduction (slating). The introduction must include only:
  - The entrant's names
  - Title of both selections
  - Name of the playwright(s)
  - Troupe number (optional)
- Remain within strict time limits.
  - After the introduction (slating), time begins with the first word or acting action (if it precedes the first word)
  - Monologues are not to exceed three minutes.
- Appropriate material:
  - Prepare two selections
  - Monologues should represent two contrasting selections (may be different in period, style or mood).
  - Each selection should be approximately one and one half minutes each.
  - Each selection should reflect an important moment in the play.
  - Only one character from each play may be portrayed in each selection.
  - Prior to the event, validate the material using the guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable material
- Entrants will present themselves as a blank slate, refraining from clothing or accessories that distract from the character. Follow strict limits on clothing and props:
  - Props (including hand held props), costumes, or theatrical makeup are not allowed.
  - One chair may be safely used.
  - Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification.
  - Clothing should be professional yet allow easy movement for the actor to accommodate the action of the performance.
  - Entrants should refrain from wearing anything that might distract the adjudicators
  - Failure to follow any of these guidelines will result in a disqualification

## **Acting – Duet/Group Scene**

A duet is defined as a performance for two players. A group scene is defined as a performance for three to 16 players. In each case, every participant must be actively involved in the scene chosen for performance.

In Acting – Duet/Group Scene, the skills that will be measured are:

- Use of transitions into and out of character
- Ability to create a believable character
- Communication of objective, tactics, and relationships
- Use of focus and concentration
- Integration of voice, body, movement, and staging.

In a Duet/Group Scene performance the entrants must:

- Begin with an introduction (slating). The introduction must include only:
  - The entrant's names
  - Title of selection
  - Name of the playwright(s)
  - Troupe number (optional)
- Remain within strict time limits.
  - After the introduction (slating), time begins with the first word or acting action (if it precedes the first word)
  - Duet/group scenes are not to exceed five minutes
- Appropriate material.
  - Each participant must be actively involved in the scene
  - Prior to the event, validate the material using the guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable material
- Follow strict limits on clothing and props.
  - Props (including hand held props), costumes, or theatrical makeup are not allowed.
  - For duo acting, two chairs may be safely used.
  - For group acting, one table and up to six chairs may be safely used.
  - Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in disqualification
  - Clothing should be appropriate to the situation yet allow easy movement for the actors to accommodate the action of the performance.
  - Entrants should refrain from wearing anything that might distract the adjudicators.
  - Failure to follow any of these guidelines will result in a disqualification
- Follow COVID-19 safety guidelines:
  - If performing in the same space and actors are six feet apart, masks are not required.
  - If performing in the same space and actors are less than six feet apart, masks are required.

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## **Musical Theatre – Solo Performance**

In a musical theatre solo performance, the entrant must present one musical selection from a published script written for musical theatre. The adjudicators will consider how well the piece is acted, not only how well it is sung. The selection may contain dialogue; however, this is primarily a “sung and not spoken” selection.

In Musical Theatre – Solo Performance, the skills that will be measured are:

- Use of transitions into and out of character
- Ability to create a believable character
- Communication of objective, tactics, and relationships through dialogue and music
- Use of focus and concentration
- Vocal skill and technique
- Use of dance and movement
- Integration of voice, body, movement, and staging.

In a musical theatre solo performance, the entrant must follow these guidelines:

- Begin with an introduction (slating). The introduction (slating) must include only:
  - The entrant’s name
  - Title of selection
  - Name of the composer and lyricist
  - Troupe number (optional)
- Remain within strict time limits.
  - After the introduction (slating), time begins with the first word or acting action (if it precedes the first word)
  - Musical theatre solo performances are not to exceed five minutes.
- Appropriate material.
  - Prior to the event, validate the material using the guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable materials
- Follow strict limits on musical accompaniment.
  - Performers **MUST** use pre-recorded, non-vocal musical accompaniment; no live music is permitted.
  - Accompanists are not permitted.
  - A cappella performances are not permitted.
- Follow strict limits on clothing and props.
  - Props (including hand held props), costumes, or theatrical makeup are not allowed.
  - One chair may be safely used.
  - Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in disqualification
  - Clothing should be professional yet allow easy movement for the actors to accommodate the action of the performance.
  - Entrants should refrain from wearing anything that might distract the adjudicators.
  - Failure to follow any of these guidelines will result in a disqualification



## **Musical Theatre – Duet/Group Performance**

In a musical theatre duet/group performance, the entrants must present one musical selection from a published script written for musical theatre. The judges will consider how well the piece is acted, not only how well it is sung. The selection may contain dialogue; however, this is primarily a “sung and not spoken” selection.

A musical theatre duet is defined as a musical theatre performance for two players. A musical theatre group scene is defined as a musical theatre performance for three to 16 players. In each case, every participant must be actively involved in the scene chosen for performance.

In Musical Theatre – Duet/Group Performance, the skills that will be measured are:

- Use of transitions into and out of character
- Ability to create a believable character
- Communication of objective, tactics, and relationships through dialogue and music
- Use of focus and concentration
- Vocal skill and technique
- Use of dance and movement
- Integration of voice, body, movement, and staging.

In a musical theatre duet/group performance, the entrants must follow these guidelines:

- Begin with an introduction (slating). The introduction must include only:
  - The entrant’s names
  - Title of selection
  - Name of the composer and lyricist
  - Troupe number (optional)
- Remain within strict time limits.
  - After the introduction (slating), time begins with the first word or acting action (if it precedes the first word)
  - Musical theatre duet/group performances are not to exceed five minutes
- Appropriate material:
  - Each participant must be actively involved in the performance
  - Prior to the event, validate the material using the guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable material
- Follow strict limits on musical accompaniment.
  - Performers MUST use pre-recorded, non-vocal musical accompaniment; no live music is permitted.
  - Accompanists are not permitted.
  - A cappella performances are not permitted.
- Entrants will present themselves as a blank slate, refraining from clothing or accessories that distract from the character. Follow strict limits on clothing and props:
  - Props (including hand-held props), costumes, or theatrical makeup are not allowed
  - For a duet musical theatre performance, two chairs may be safely used
  - For a group musical theatre performance, one table and up to six chairs may be safely used

- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in disqualification
- Clothing should be professional yet allow easy movement for the actors to accommodate the action of the performance
- Entrants should refrain from wearing anything that might distract the adjudicators
- Failure to follow any of these guidelines will result in a disqualification
- Follow COVID-19 safety guidelines:
  - If performing in the same space and actors are six feet apart, masks are not required.
  - If performing in the same space and actors are less than six feet apart, masks are required.

# TECHNICAL EVENTS

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## Costume Construction

In Costume Construction, the skills measured are:

- An understanding of the role of costume construction
- Sewing and construction skills
- The ability to present and explain the process of constructing the costume
- Attention to detail

Only one entrant may be involved in the construction. No collaborations are permitted. Designs for either theoretical or realized productions are acceptable.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making.
- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- A fully constructed costume that reflects the entrant's capabilities and strengths, constructed entirely by the entrant, using a publically available pattern (for plays or musicals).
- Pattern requirement:
  - The costume must be designed, developed and constructed from a pattern available for purchase. The pattern manufacturer's information must be included in the details of the presentation.
  - A pattern designed by the participant cannot be used.
  - There are no restrictions on the costume size. It simply needs to fit the person for which it was built.
- An itemized expense sheet with accompanying receipts for all materials used to construct the costume, such as fabric, thread, buttons, zippers, and trim.
  - Total may NOT exceed \$100. If using donated materials, the value must be determined and included in the budget.
  - The cost of the pattern is NOT included in that \$100.
  - If millinery, the budget limit is \$50. If using donated materials, the value must be determined and included in the budget.
  - The expense sheet must be presented (mounted on a display board or as part of an electronic presentation) as proof that the entrant did not exceed their budget.
- A costume production collage that focuses on the process of building the costume item (laying out the pattern, cutting the fabric, draping the fabric, etc.).
- Process photos must depict the garment at various stages of construction - *not the participant at a sewing machine*.
- Your digital presentation must display your work so all the judges can see the details.
- The garment should be presented on a hanger or, if an accessory, in a box. The entrant should NOT wear the costume to the presentation.
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Costume Design**

In Costume Design, the skills measured are:

- An understanding of costume design
- An understanding of the artistic and practical constraints which impact design
- An understanding of the relationship of costume design to a unifying concept
- The ability to carry out research into style, period, locale, and genre of the play
- The ability to present and explain design choices
- Attention to detail.

Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted. Designs for either theoretical or realized productions are acceptable.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making.
- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Five character renderings, either five different characters or a single character through five changes.
  - More than five character renderings will not be accepted
  - No finished costumes are permitted
  - Renderings should be large enough for all the judges to see at one time. In a physical board, 8" to 10". In a digital board, projections will be the most valuable.
- Template or trace characters are permitted.
- Swatches **MUST** be included and attached to the lower left-hand corner of the display board or if using a digital presentation, a separate physical board with the swatches.
- The board should be labelled in the following manner:
  - Upper left-hand corner: play or musical title and writer(s)
  - Upper right-hand corner: character's name, act, and scene
  - Lower right-hand corner: entrant's name and troupe number (optional)
  - **NO** other information may be included on the labels
  - Labels should be considered a part of the presentation; they must be neatly typed or carefully hand-lettered.
- A digital artifact binder must include a complete set of the following materials:
  - A design statement
  - Complete research
  - Theme of the show
  - Design unifying concept
  - Script requirements
  - Budgetary requirements or other constraints or considerations
  - Sources of inspiration for design and color palette (if used)
  - Preliminary sketches
  - Costume plot (showing who wears what when)
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## Lighting Design

In Lighting Design, the skills measured are:

- An understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a lighting designer and the technology/equipment to implement and support the design
- The ability to present and explain design choices.
- An understanding of the artistic and practical constraints which impact lighting design
- An understanding of the relationship of lighting design to a unifying concept
- The ability to carry out research into style, period, locale, and genre of the play

Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted. Designs for theoretical or realized productions are acceptable.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision making. The presentation should include:
  - Digital depiction of the light plot (1/4" or 1/2" equals 1'0") no larger than 24" x 36", indicating all information necessary to assure clear understanding of the designer's intentions.
  - The location and identification data of every luminaire, accessory, and specialty unit should be represented on the light plot, along with the following information as appropriate:
    - Color medium
    - Set and masking
    - Areas
    - Lighting positions with labels
    - Type of instrument
    - Unit numbers
    - Circuit
    - Channel
    - Focus/purpose
    - Gobos/patterns/templates
    - Practicals
    - Special instruments (LED, moving lights, foggers, hazers, fans, relays, etc.)
    - Instrument key
  - Title block including:
    - Show title
    - Facility
    - Drawn by
    - Scale
    - Date.

- A digital artifact binder must include a complete set of the following materials:
  - A design statement summarizing:
    - Research done on recurring themes/motifs, given circumstances of the play, author, and previous productions. (These could include notes, articles, sketches, photographs, colors, etc.)
    - Theme of the show
    - Unifying design concept
    - Script requirements
    - Sources of inspiration
    - Uses of color
    - Techniques used within the design
    - Reflections on the process.
    - Instrument schedule.
    - Magic sheet/cheat sheet.
    - Sample color media used with explanations of choices.
    - Description of 3 light cues organized by act and scene with a stated purpose for the cue and planned timing of the cue. Include a description of the use of intensity, color, movement, directionality, and/or quality of light to communicate to an audience both meaning and emotions during the scene **OR** three light renderings that include a description of the use of intensity, color, movement, directionality, and/or quality of light to communicate to an audience both meaning and emotions during the scene.
    - If the production was realized, photos should be included.
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Makeup Design**

In Makeup Design, the skills measured are:

- An understanding of makeup design
- An understanding of the artistic and practical constraints that impact design
- An understanding of the relationship of makeup design to a unifying concept
- The ability to carry out research into style, period, locale, and genre of the show
- The ability to present and explain design choices
- Attention to detail

Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted. Designs for either theoretical or realized productions are acceptable.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making.
- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Five character renderings, either five different characters or a single character through five changes.
  - More than five character renderings will not be accepted
  - For these purposes, teeth and hair are considered makeup
  - Renderings should be 8" to 10" tall and must be in full color
  - Board stands are optional.
  - The board should be labelled in the following manner:
    - Upper left-hand corner: play or musical title and writer(s)
    - Upper right-hand corner: character's name, act, and scene
    - Lower right-hand corner: entrant's name and troupe number (optional)
    - NO other information may be included on the labels
      - Labels should be considered a part of the presentation; they must be neatly typed or carefully hand lettered.
- A digital makeup binder must include a complete set of the following materials:
  - A one-page design statement
  - Complete research
  - Theme of the show
  - Design unifying concept
  - Script requirements
  - Budgetary requirements or other constraints or considerations
  - Sources of inspiration for design and color palette (if used)
  - Techniques used within the design
  - Preliminary sketches
  - Makeup plot (showing who wears what makeup when)
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Scenic Design**

In Scenic Design, the skills measured are:

- An understanding of the scenic designer's role and responsibilities
- An understanding of the artistic and practical constraints which impact the scenic design
- An understanding of the relationship of scenic design to a unifying concept
- The ability to carry out research into style, period, locale, and genre of the play
- The ability to present and explain design choices.

Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted. Theoretical or realized designs are acceptable.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making. The presentation should include:
  - A scale model (physical or digital) showing the design of an entire show (not just a scene) and its relationship to the theatrical space. At least one figure must be included in the rendering or model to show proportion and scale. Model or rendering can be generated through multiple media, such as SketchUp, Vectorworks, or 3-D printers.
    - The digital displaying of your scale model must allow the judges to see the details.
  - Floor plan (physical or digital, drawn to the same scale) for the production that clearly indicates:
    - Performance space
    - Backstage space
    - Audience areas
    - Sightlines
  - Title block including:
    - Show title
    - Floor plan source
    - Scale
    - Entrant name
    - Date.
- A digital artifact binder must include a complete set of the following materials:
  - A design statement summarizing:
    - Theme of the show
    - Unified design concept
    - Script requirements.
- The following may or may not be included in the binder, but must be presented:
  - Complete research
  - Sources of inspiration
  - Floor plan



- Models or renderings – if the student is using a model (instead of a rendering), they must bring the model – photos of a model are not an acceptable replacement
- Techniques within the design.
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Sound Design**

In Sound Design, the skills measured are:

- An understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a sound designer and the technology/equipment to implement and support the design
- An understanding of the artistic and practical constraints which impact the sound design
- An understanding of the relationship of sound design to a unifying concept
- The ability to carry out research into style, period, locale, and genre of the play
- The ability to present and explain design choices.

Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted. Theoretical or realized designs are acceptable.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making. The presentation should include:
  - Sound system plot indicating:
    - Speaker plot indicating where on the set and in the performance space loudspeakers will be placed
    - The clear relationship of speakers on the plot to speakers on the block diagram
    - Block diagram indicating signal flow through the sound system following the USITT Sound Graphics Standards (available at [www.usitt.org](http://www.usitt.org))
    - Rack diagrams
    - Microphone schedules
    - Pit diagrams
    - Patch assignments
    - Sound effects, both digital and Foley
    - Programming of the playback device
    - Engineering the show in a live microphone setting
    - Training the actors in the use of microphones
    - Setting preliminary sound levels and making adjustments during technical rehearsals
  - Title block including:
    - Show name
    - Facility
    - Source for drawing
    - Scale
    - Entrant name
    - Date.

- A digital artifact binder must include a complete set of the following materials:
  - A design statement summarizing:
    - Theme of the play
    - Unified design concept
    - Script requirements.
  - The following may or may not be included in the binder, but must be presented:
    - Sources of inspiration
    - Techniques used within the design
    - Representative examples of the sound design to be played on a provided sound system
    - Description of sound cues organized by:
      - Act and scene
      - Stated purpose of the cue
      - Planned timing of the cue.
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Stage Management**

In Stage Management, the skills measured are:

- An understanding the stage manager's role and specific responsibilities
- An understanding of the purpose and value of a production book
- The ability to organize stage management ideas, products, and choices that support a realized production.

Only one entrant may be involved in the presentation. No collaborations are permitted. The entrant's presentation may be from a theoretical or realized production.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making. The entrants should:
  - Approach the process as if he or she is interviewing for a college stage management program or a job
  - Discuss a realized production either in their middle or high school program or a community or professional theatre
  - Articulate the role of the stage manager/stage management process in the focused production
  - Address the collaborative process with cast, crew, director and production team
  - Effectively communicate an understanding of the stage manager's role as it relates to the focused production
  - Show personality and style
  - Exhibit consistency, clarity, and organization.
- A production book (a binder containing components of the stage management promptbook and paperwork used to perform responsibilities) should include but is not limited to:
  - Prompt script including blocking and all technical cues such as lights, sound, deck, etc. This may be broken into two scripts.
  - Examples of contact sheet, cast list, rehearsal schedule, props list, sound and lighting cue sheets. A written statement of the director's artistic concept of the production that includes a discussion of the theme and how the theme was executed.
  - A written statement of the director's artistic concept of the production that includes a discussion of the theme and how the theme was executed.
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
- Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Theatre Marketing**

In Theatre Marketing, the skills that will be measured are:

- An understanding of the marketing director's role and specific responsibilities
- An understanding of the purpose and value of research, resources, and personnel needed to communicate a marketing concept to an audience
- The ability to align a marketing campaign's components in a distribution strategy that supports a realized production.

Only one entrant may be involved in the presentation. No collaborations are permitted. The entrant's presentation may be from a realized or theoretical production.

The entrant must prepare and present:

- Written responses to several questions about their process within the application.
- Up to an eight-minute video presentation summarizing the work with connections to concept, collaboration, and design decision-making. The presentation should include:
  - A case study that methodically works through the marketing process.
  - The marketing campaign developed and executed for a published play written for the theatre and presented by the school.
    - Designs for performances of poetry, fiction, screenplays, or any other medium are prohibited.
    - It is strongly recommended that the entrant was responsible for actual publicity.
- Entrants should submit a digital portfolio binder that contains the components of their marketing campaign, including:
  - A finished poster
  - A finished program
  - Two press releases consisting of an informational article and a feature article
  - A copy of the marketing budget for the publicity campaign and justification of expenses
  - Any work that shows the progression of the creative process, including a brief statement of the design choices inspired by the script, research materials, and other sources of inspiration, if any.
  - Work will be adjudicated on creativity and results, not necessarily how much money was in the budget and how well the money was spent.
- **Presentation Format:**
  - Background
  - Introduce self and Thespian troupe number
  - Description of the show
  - Dates and number of performances
  - Description of executing the marketing plan (self and/or team responsibility)
  - Creative development

- Collaboration with production team
  - Target market (outside of school)
  - Research or inspiration to develop the design concept, if any
  - How the marketing design concept matches the production design
  - The development and creation of the marketing campaign's design concept
  - Reflections on what might be done differently if more time, money, etc., were available.
- **Execution:**
    - Describe and demonstrate the components of the marketing campaign (posters, tickets, promotional handouts, social media, etc.)
    - Explain how and where the marketing was distributed
    - Make clear the consistency in marketing (from the same campaign)'
    - Identify elements (images, colors, fonts, etc.) changed to fit the media of marketing components.
- **Outcomes for Realized Productions:**
    - Indicate budget versus money spent
    - Make note of free services (i.e. copies, printing) or vendor donations
    - Determine what the actual or comparable service would cost
    - Number of tickets sold per performance versus house capacity
    - Compare the outcome to a similar show previously produced.
- Entrants must wear all black. Clothing and shoes must be all black. Any visible color, including white, will result in a disqualification
  - Failure to follow any of the guidelines in this document will result in a disqualification

## **Short Film**

In Short Film, the skills measured are:

- The ability to create opening and closing titles, credits, and graphics that orient the viewer to the story
- The ability to visually develop a story with dialogue
- Camera, lighting, and sound use
- Editing, including scene length and flow
- The emotional and physical believability of the acting
- The filmmaker's use of film elements to create a successful product.

Films can be no longer than five minutes plus one minute for credits. Films must be of original content and may be a collaboration among entrants.

- **Short Film Execution:** Entrant must demonstrate:
  - Proper use of title cards and credits within the five-minute time limit
  - Properly executed camera angles and shot variation to enhance the storyline and finished product
  - Control over lighting exposures for clarity, storytelling, and a professional finished product
  - The ability to capture, record, and manipulate all audio aspects of your production
  - Controlled and manufactured editing choices that enhance the overall storytelling
  - The ability to complete a storyline which includes a clear arc (beginning, middle, and end).
- **Short Film Requirements:**
  - Music used in short films must be original, in the public domain, and/or properly credited.
    - If in the public domain or original, proper credit must be listed in the credits.
    - If it is not in the public domain or original, proper credit must be in the credits AND proof of payment for the rights to the music must be documented and shared with the adjudicators.
  - Material deemed by the adjudicator(s) to be obscene or disruptive may receive lower ratings or, in some extreme cases, may result in disqualification.
  - If the film receives an overall superior rating at the state level, it may be uploaded to YouTube for national judging.
  - Mark your video's YouTube privacy setting as either Public or Unlisted so the URL may be shared with judges (do not select Private or the judges will be unable to view the film)
  - The films will be viewed and critiqued by the judges prior to the Iowa Thespian Festival
  - The entrant does not have to make a presentation – the work should stand alone. Judges will supply feedback in the adjudication form online.

# SECURING PERFORMANCE RIGHTS FOR INDIVIDUAL EVENTS MATERIALS

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It is the responsibility of entrants to obtain permission for the use of copyrighted material. In certain cases, permission is not required.

- The performance of a song from a published musical in an adjudicated category is considered a fair use, and no permission is required.
- The performance of a monologue or scene from a non-musical play at chapter conference/festival or in an adjudicated category may be subject to an agreement previously negotiated between EdTA and several major publishers. Determine the identity of the publisher (check the title page of the script or consult an internet database like findaplay.com or doollee.com), then check the following listing for the publisher's most recent policy. If the work is published by a house not included below, an entrant must apply for a Special Rights Form.
- If there is an exception as noted above (e.g., Neil Simon plays), complete the appropriate sections of the Rights Application and Permission Form and mail it to the publisher or leasing agent. The name and address of the publisher or agent should be in a notice of copyright published with the script.

## Play Publishers

- **Broadway Play Publishing, Inc.:** <https://www.broadwayplaypub.com/performance-rights/>
  - All competitions require a performance-rights license with the exception of those five minutes or under in duration for which no license is required. For competitions with a duration of greater than five minutes a standard fee of \$50.00 per performance applies for full-length plays and \$35.00 per performance for short plays.
- **Concord Theatricals (R&H Theatricals, Samuel French, Tams-Witmark, The Musical Company)**
  - Monologues and brief excerpts of less than 20 minutes for adjudicated school theatrical festivals do not require a license or other permission. If the piece is under 20 minutes, there is no need to request or pay for a license.
  - The exceptions to this are works of Neil Simon and the musical Grease
    - Neil Simon, the rights need to be secured, in advance, EVERY time it is presented, including Thespy adjudication (the minimum rate is \$125).
    - Grease is not available to be used for adjudicated festivals.
  - A license must be obtained for any performance of a copyrighted work, including cuttings and excerpts over 20 minutes. A brief summary of proposed cuts or scenes must be included in the appropriate section of your license request.
- **Dramatic Publishing Co.:** <http://www.dramaticpublishing.com>
  - There is no charge for use in the International Thespian Excellence Awards program at Thespian national or chapter conferences/festivals.
- **Dramatists Play Service:** <http://www.dramatists.com>
  - All Dramatists Play Service properties are pre-approved for Thespian Festivals, with no written permission required, for no royalty unless the student is selected for the NIE Showcase.
  - If the student is selected for the NIE Showcase, the student must secure performance rights within 48 hours of the showcase:  
<https://www.dramatists.com/cgi-bin/db/secure/scenenpa.asp>.
  - The exceptions to this guide are plays by Samuel Beckett and Edward Albee. In both of these cases, the student must secure the rights in advance and for each time it is performed.
- **Samuel French, Inc.:** <http://www.samuel french.com>



- Monologues and brief excerpts of less than 10 minutes do not require a license or other permission from Samuel French. If the piece is under 10 minutes, there is NO need to ask or pay for the rights.
  - The exception to this guide are works of Neil Simon and the musical *Grease*
    - If Neil Simon, the rights need to be secured, in advance, EVERY time it is performed (the minimum rate is \$125).
    - If *Grease*, a single song is OK, but if any dialogue or scenes are used, you must ask and secure the rights in advance.
  - A license must be obtained through [www.samuelfrench.com](http://www.samuelfrench.com) for any performance of a copyrighted work, including cuttings and excerpts over 10 minutes. Titles approved for cuttings are marked "Cuttings approved for competitions." A brief summary of proposed cuts or scenes must be included in the appropriate section of your license request. If the piece is over 10 minutes:
    - 10-45 minutes - flat fee of \$45 is due and payable in advance.
    - Over 45 minutes - the same cost as a full production - due and payable in advance.
    - At the chapter level, Samuel French has requested that for ALL works over 10 minutes, the Chapter collect and remit a single payment with a list of all the pieces being done (vs. having each student submit separately).
  - For more information, please visit [www.samuelfrench.com](http://www.samuelfrench.com) or for a list of state specific licensing reps: <http://www.samuelfrench.com/contact-representative>.
- **Playscripts, Inc.:** <https://www.playscripts.com/help/rights>
    - Royalties are waived for the performance of excerpts lasting less than 10 minutes at adjudicated school theatrical festivals or auditions, unless otherwise noted in the script. These particular performances, and only these, are automatically authorized by the playwright when you purchase books from Playscripts. (Note: Any other cuttings must receive prior approval from Playscripts.)
  - **Smith and Kraus:** <http://www.smithkraus.com>
    - Most Smith and Kraus collections include a blanket permission statement for audition use. Remember, however, the particular piece you're interested in performing must be found in one of these collections that include blanket permission.
  - **Theatrefolk:** [www.theatrefolk.com](http://www.theatrefolk.com)
    - Monologues and scenes/excerpts lasting 10 minutes or less taken from scripts published by Theatrefolk may be performed in any Thespian Society Individual Event program without royalty.
  - **YouthPLAYS:** [www.youthplays.com](http://www.youthplays.com)
    - Royalties are waived for monologues and scenes/excerpts lasting less than 10 minutes for Thespian IEs. To receive a statement of permission, an entrant must purchase a single printable perusal copy of the play through the YouthPLAYS website, then email [info@youthplays.com](mailto:info@youthplays.com) with their name(s), school, and event information.