

# VIRTUAL JUDGING: PERFORMANCE CATEGORY

## Performance Basics

Performances are original, dramatic presentations that present and provide supporting evidence for an historical argument.



- **No longer than 10 minutes.** Timing does not begin until the first words *after* the introduction of the project. There is no minimum time for a performance.
- **An original production.** An original script, but can include quotes from historical material. May include actual historical characters or composite characters based on historical research.
- **Effective scenes and props.** Props and scenery should be appropriate and effective. It's better to be simple and support the argument, rather than elaborate and difficult for performers to manage.
- **Strong stage presence and acting can make for a captivating performance, but, it can't make up for a weak argument and/or inadequate research.**

### ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND PROCESS PAPER

In addition to the performance itself, judges will review the following written documents as part of the evaluation of the performance.



- The **annotated bibliography** will document the research upon which the project is based. It should be separated, at minimum, into primary and secondary sources.
- The **process paper** answers key questions about how the students researched and created the project.
  - How did you choose your topic and how does it relate to the annual theme?
  - How did you conduct your research?
  - How did you create your project?
  - What is your historical argument?
  - In what ways is your topic significant in history?

(Virtual Contests Only) The **Performance Companion Worksheet** allows judges to better understand a project by describing the specific scenes, use of characters, and props.

## Virtual Contest Performances

Social distancing and distance learning has impacted the performance category. The following guidelines have been developed to provide consistency to students in all situations with performances. The **Performance Companion Worksheet** will help judges understand the dramatic aspects of the project.

Individual Performance	Group Performance
<p><b>Individual Performances should be performed as if presenting in person.</b> The recordings must be done in a single, continuous take. Students are not permitted to edit multiple recordings together into a final presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>timing begins after</b> the student introduction. Remember this when looking at the total file length.</li><li>• The <b>camera</b> should be in one, fixed position, in front of the student. The camera should not zoom in or out, or follow the performer.</li><li>• <b>Backdrops, props, and costumes</b> are allowed. The recording does <u>not</u> need to show the <b>set-up/ take-down</b> of the props.</li><li>• Judges should remember that students recorded these performances in non-traditional settings. <b>Be understanding of personal items visible</b> in the background.</li></ul>	<p>Even if students are able to get together in-person, <b>Group Performances needed to be recorded as a single, continuous take as an online "table-read"</b> and not performed/ recorded together in person. Each student "performed" their part in their own location, interacting virtually with the other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>timing begins after</b> the student introduction. Remember this when looking at the total file length.</li><li>• Students should have used an <b>online meeting platform</b>, such as Zoom, GoogleMeets, FaceTime, etc., set to <b>"gridview"</b> so that all group members are visible and remain in the frame throughout the recording.</li><li>• <b>Backdrops, props, and costumes</b> are allowed. The recording does not need to show the <b>set-up/ take-down</b> of the props.</li><li>• Judges should remember that students recorded these performances in non-traditional settings. <b>Be understanding of personal items visible</b> in the background.</li></ul>

## How does a rubric-based evaluation work?

Judges assess each project against the **evaluative criteria** (categories on the left) and specific standards for each **level of achievement** (check boxes across the page in the same row). For each evaluative criteria, select the level of achievement best describes the project you are viewing.

- A project's level of achievement will likely vary across different evaluative criteria. All check marks **do not need to be in the same column** down the entire page (e.g. all good, or all superior).
- Scoring a project against a rubric is different from selecting projects to advance in the competition.
  - **Scoring a Project:** How a project scores on the rubric is based on the strength of the specific project against the criteria. Do not adjust the ratings of a project to account for which projects are moving on in a contest.
  - **Selecting Winners:** The project(s) that advance should generally have higher ratings than those that do not. Determining the strongest projects can be more difficult when ratings are about the same and judges should include robust written feedback to help support their decisions.

## Historical Quality - 80%

The majority of a judge's evaluation is based on historical quality and is consistent across project categories. This includes: historical argument, wide research, primary sources, historical context, multiple perspectives, historical accuracy, significance in history, and student voice. [Judges must review our general judge training](#), in addition to **this category-specific document, for detailed information on the historical quality criteria.**

## Performance Clarity of Presentation

Clarity of Presentation addresses how well the student used the category to present their ideas.

	SUPERIOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	NOT EVIDENT
PERFORMANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> Presents a theatrical performance with a well-developed dramatic arc <input type="checkbox"/> Speech is consistently articulate, easy to understand, and appropriately paced	<input type="checkbox"/> Presents a theatrical performance with a clear dramatic arc <input type="checkbox"/> Speech is mostly clear and appropriately paced	<input type="checkbox"/> Presents a theatrical performance with a basic dramatic arc <input type="checkbox"/> Speech is somewhat clear and appropriate but with inconsistent pacing	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not present a theatrical performance with a dramatic arc <input type="checkbox"/> Speech is unclear and pacing impedes understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
TECHNICAL	<input type="checkbox"/> Offers a well-practiced, polished performance <input type="checkbox"/> Conveys appropriate emotion through tone of voice and movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Offers a practiced performance <input type="checkbox"/> Conveys mostly appropriate emotion through tone of voice and movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Performance indicates some practice <input type="checkbox"/> Conveys some appropriate emotion through tone of voice and movement	<input type="checkbox"/> Performance indicates little practice <input type="checkbox"/> Does not convey appropriate emotion through tone of voice and movement	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

## Performance Rules Compliance

**Major Rule Violations:** Have the potential to give a project an unfair advantage over their competition. Major violations must be taken into consideration when deciding rankings. **Consult with History Day staff if your top entries have a major rule violation.**

- Missing bibliography
- More than 15 seconds over the time limit - unless the overage was a result of an unexpected interruption to the performance (laughter, cell phone, etc.) Do not count the student introduction in the performance length.

**Minor Rule Violations:** Note on the judge sheet, but should not be the focus of a judge's written commentary. Should not influence a project's ranking, unless projects are *exceptionally* close in quality.

- Missing process paper
- Incorrect citation format, missing annotations, or bibliography not sorted into primary/secondary sources
- Not including correct information on title page