

## **Kern County Oral Language Festival**

The Kern County Oral Language Festival is an opportunity for students to focus on interpretations of age-appropriate literary works.

Please review the rules, guidelines and score sheets carefully prior to festival preparation. Your regional contact will be responsible for having the site administrator sign off entries for the Kern County competition. The site administrator should be familiar with all entries and approve of the appropriateness of all entries. A school representative must review the entry(ies) for compliance with the competition rules. **Any selection to be presented at the Kern County Oral Language Festival must be submitted by completing a Regional Winner Form for each entry. A KCSOS committee will review each piece for appropriateness prior to the Kern County event. Inappropriate selections will disqualify the student(s) from participating.**

The Kern County Oral Language Festival's five events are:

- Interpretation Serious-Solo
- Interpretation Humorous-Solo
- Interpretation Serious-Duo
- Interpretation Humorous-Duo
- Verse Choir

Timing for all events: Minimum time – 3 minutes and Maximum time – 5 minutes

**Students may participate in only one event.**

The Kern County Oral Language Festival will be held on the following date:

**Saturday, April 25, 2026**  
**Stonecreek Junior High, Bakersfield**

8:30 am -10:45 am – grades 4-6

11:30 am –1:45 pm – grades 7-8

\*A virtual competition will be held in the event that in-person events are not allowed.

School and regional events must be completed and entries submitted by **Friday, March 6, 2026**. The fee for this event is **\$50 per entry**. Please make **checks or Purchase Orders** payable to: Kern County Superintendent of Schools and mail to: 1300 17th Street, 4th Floor, Bakersfield, CA 93301 - **Attn: Humanities**. Please do not send it directly to the Business Office. For information about regional events, please contact your regional contact person.

For additional information, please contact Dina Esparza-Diaz at 661-636-4645 or [diesparzadiaz@kern.org](mailto:diesparzadiaz@kern.org), or Cherie Freeman at 661-636-4157 or [chfreeman@kern.org](mailto:chfreeman@kern.org).

## **Kern County Oral Language Festival Rules**

The Kern County Oral Language Festival is an opportunity to share quality children's literature and feature students' abilities to interpret the literature in an oral format for a community audience. In an effort to provide the best possible experience for our students, families, and the community, we have provided the following guidelines and a checklist to complete to assist students and teachers to select and present appropriate children's literature for the Kern County Oral Language Festival.

### **Selection of Literature:**

Each presentation at the Oral Language Festival must be of published children's literature appropriate for the age of the students in the competition. The literature must be in print and must be something that all students are able to access free of charge. Publishing requirements include:

- Selections that can be found in a published book available in the library or at the school. It should contain publishing data (publisher, date of publication, city of publication).
- Selections must have an author.
- Selections only available in magazines, newsletters, on the Internet, or in video format (such as a comedic performance or monologue) are not acceptable.

Please be careful regarding the selection of literature that is too mature for our students and especially for the younger siblings that are in the audience the day of the event. Refrain from choosing selections that contain:

- Profanity
- Bathroom humor – (e.g., passing gas, diarrhea)
- Violence of any kind to people or animals
- Graphic scenes
- Abuse – physical, verbal, or psychological
- Suicide
- Sexual innuendos
- Drugs or alcoholism

Literature selections should be written for children, not adults. Literature selections should be told from a child's point of view. A non-example of this would be a selection from *Chicken Soup for the Teacher's Soul*. If using *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* in junior high school, choose carefully; many pieces deal with the topics listed above and are too heavy for a showcase competition. Monologues by Peg Kehret will not be allowed at all for students in the 4-6 grade category, and in the 7-8 category, only if they do not deal with the above topics.

### **General Presentation Guidelines for all events:**

All presentations should be between 3 and 5 minutes in length. Timing of the speech begins with the student's first utterance.

- Students must begin the presentation by stating the title and author of the piece.
- Students may not give their names, school or district names in their presentation.
- Students should use voice, pauses, and rate of speaking as means of interpreting the selection. Using skill to gain and to keep audience attention, the student should be persuasive in communicating the literature.
- The student may use appropriate and natural gestures to suggest the essence of the characters as the author saw them.
- No props may be used or costumes worn. School uniforms may be worn.
- No prompting or directing from the audience.
- The selection must be memorized.
- The student must remain standing (no kneeling or lying down).
- Wording may be deleted from literature to meet time requirements, but no text may be added unless using an excerpt from a novel length piece of literature or when combining two pieces of literature and then, only a brief introduction or bridge to connect pieces is allowed.
- Sound effects or singing may only be included if they are part of the original text.

### **Additional Presentation Guidelines for Specific Events:**

#### **Solo Presentations:**

- A solo interpretation is an oral recitation of literature presented by one student.
- The student may move around in front of the audience as appropriate for the selection, but must remain standing (no kneeling or lying down).

#### **Duo Presentations:**

- A duo interpretation is two students reciting a literary selection in both unison and solo parts.
- Students may not move around in front of the audience. They must remain standing with their feet planted.
- There should be a balance of solo and duo parts

#### **Verse Choir Presentations:**

- A verse choir is a group of at least three and not more than six students reciting a literary selection in unison using whole group and small group parts.
- Students may not move around in front of the audience. They must remain standing with their feet planted.
- There should be a balance of the whole group and small group parts. No solo parts are allowed.