

Dobyns-Bennett High School
Forensics Team
DRAMAHAWKS

Coach: Ms. Debbie Coram

D-B Theatre Mission Statement:

The Dobyns-Bennett Theatre Department is dedicated to the development of communication skills as well as leadership skills, service opportunities, creativity, self expression, discipline, commitment, and dedication to hard work and excellence.

I. What is Forensics?

Forensics is a word that is used in many different ways. When most people think of this word, the first thing that comes to mind is medicine or crime related. However, the term forensics is **most** often used to describe different types/categories of speech and speech competitions.

II. What does D-B High School Forensics department offer?

It offers speech and drama events such as public speaking and acting. The students select their choice of events and prepare for competition with their peers in other school districts. Also, under the direction of their coach, Ms. Coram, the students will learn acting skills and perform plays throughout the year.

III. Who should join the Forensics team?

The forensics department at D-B High School is open to any student. **No experience is required!** Any student who has an interest in acting, giving public speeches, or has plans for a career in which communication skills are required may join.

IV. How do I join the Forensics team at D-B High School?

Any student wishing to join the Forensic team at D-B High School may enroll in the Forensic class which now has become a singleton class. If you are unable to enroll in the Forensics class and would like to be a part of the Forensics team, contact Ms. Debbie Coram.

V. What does it costs to be on the Forensic team at D-B High School?

TOURNAMENTS: Students are required to attend all tournaments. Students are required to compete in three events during most tournaments. The cost is \$7.00 per event for a total of \$21.00 per tournament (one tournament per month). The students are also responsible for their lunch and dinner (if applicable) at the tournaments. If a student has to miss a tournament due to an extreme situation, then that student must make it up. See Ms. Coram for more details on making a tournament up.

The Smoky Mountain Invitational Tournament (OPTIONAL) will cost approximately \$125.00. The students are required to enter 4-5 events at this tournament. The cost includes registration fees, 3-night room fee, and transportation to Gatlinburg and back to Kingsport. The cost may vary depending on number of rooms needed and the type of transportation used to transport students to Gatlinburg and back.

The state tournament will be in Memphis this year. Those that qualify will be advised of the cost at the appropriate time.

T-SHIRTS: Students are asked to purchase a team T-shirt to wear for awards' ceremony purposes. The T-shirt will have a volcano on the back with the DB Dramahawks logo on the front. We will probably be ordering another T-shirt throughout the year, but the students do not have to purchase this shirt; it's optional.

VI. DISNEY TRIP:

This year we will be going to Disney for approximately four days over Fall Break. It is an optional trip; we do not require you to go. Disney will cost **approximately** \$550 a person. A 100.00 deposit was due in May. The payments should be completed by October 9th. This money is non refundable once any payment is made.

The payment schedule looks like this:

Deposit	100.00
August 15	100.00
August 29	100.00
September 13	150.00
October 1	<u>100.00</u>
	550.00

The \$550.00 includes three nights at an All-Star Resort, a four day park hopper pass, and the charter bus. The total due will depend on the number of students and adults we have going on the trip.

About the Trip:

We will be taking Clark Family Tours Charter there and back and staying at All Star Music, a Disney Resort Hotel. We will attend a three hour improvisation class on a designated day that we are at Disney. This improv class is required for every student

attending the Disney Trip. Also, every student is required to watch a certain number of live Disney performances. Make sure your child has a cell phone because he or she will be required to call his or her chaperone every few hours for check-ins. As long as your child has a cell phone you or your child may contact each other at any time. Your child may go to any of Disney's parks as many times as they like during park hours using Disney's transportation; however, he or she must be with a group of three or more from our group. We have a curfew set up anywhere from 10-1:00 A.M. depending on that day's agenda. We add the Disney trip to our schedule because it's so enjoyable. All the students that have attended this trip in the past will tell you it's the best trip we take all year long! This trip is not only educational, but extremely fun as well! More details later!!!

VII. Why should your child become a member of the Forensics team at DB High School?

1. The student develops character, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-expression.
2. The student learns commitment, dedication, and responsibility.
3. The student learns how to communicate with others.
4. The student learns how to "become" part of a team.
5. Forensics creates a fun and rewarding experience for the student (individually and as a team player)
6. Forensics creates an opportunity for the student to develop communication skills that will be used throughout the student's life-time. These skills will help him/her acquire a job in the future.
7. Forensics creates an opportunity for the student to travel and meet students from different school districts.

The College Board Organization, which administers the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and Advanced Placement Tests (AP) that are used for college admissions, has concluded that active participation in speech, drama, and debate activities is the best predictor for success in college (College Board, 2003).

VIII. What categories of speech/drama events are offered in Forensics at Dobyns-Bennett High School?

A. Speaking Events:

1. Original Oratory: (Commonly referred to as "O.O.")

A student prepares a speech of his or her choosing. The speech must be persuasive and informative. The length of the speech is generally 10 minutes long and must be memorized and delivered without the use of visual aids or notes.

2. After Dinner Speaking: (Commonly referred to as “A.D.S.”)

A student may choose an important topic and make greater sense of it through humor. This should have a common theme, entertaining, but not a series of jokes, usually lasting 6 to 8 minutes.

3. Impromptu:

Students are given a topic, usually a single word or phrase, which may be a person, thing, well-known saying, a less-known quotation, current event, or an object. They then compose a speech within 15 seconds to 3 minutes based on the prompt, which generally last 4-6 minutes in length. Speech should be funny, but also deliver a point.

4. Extemporaneous: (Commonly referred as “Extemp.”)

This is a speech in which students are given three questions relating to current events and asked to choose one to prepare a speech. The prep time is usually 30 minutes in which the student is allowed to use periodicals to prepare for the speech. After preparation, the speech generally last from 4-7 minutes long. The student may or may not use note cards.

5. TV Broadcasting:

This is a speech in which a student delivers a 5 minute newscast. The student is given a packet containing international, national, and local news, one or more advertisements, sports news, and weather forecast. Scripts are prepared the day of the tournament in a 30 to 45 minute prep-period.

6. Storytelling:

The student chooses a children’s book, or folk tale to read and tells in his/her own words. The student presents the story, using different voices to distinguish the different characters in the story. No stage make-up, costumes, or props may be used. Each character should be easily distinguished. The story should last 6-8 minutes.

B. Acting and Interpretation Events:

1. Dramatic Interpretation: (Commonly referred to as “DI”)

The student interprets a selection from a dramatic theatrical script (novels, plays, short stories, or poetry). The student plays several parts representing different characters, which are differentiated using various positions and voices. No props are allowed. This presentation generally last around 10 minutes.

2. Humorous Interpretation: (Commonly referred to as “HI”)

The student selects a literary work of a humorous nature. The student plays several parts representing different characters, which are differentiated with various positions and voices. No props are allowed. This presentation generally last around 10 minutes.

3. Duo Interpretation:

Two students select a cutting from any literary work. They are not allowed to make physical or eye contact with each other. A manuscript must be used and the students are focused on oral reading rather than acting. This presentation generally last around 10 minutes.

4. Duet Acting:

Two students select a topic from a serious or humorous literary work. With this presentation, the performers are allowed to make physical and eye contact. One stage prop and one hand prop are allowed for each character. This presentation generally last around 10 minutes.

5. Prose Interpretation:

A student presents a 10 minute dramatic or humorous reading from a novel, essay, or short story. The student may use a manuscript in a 10 inch black binder. The student interprets the literature using facial expressions and eye contact; memorization is generally helpful. In most cases the literature is memorized and the student is merely pretending to read the material. However, points may be deducted if a prose is too memorized and the student does not look at his/her binder enough. Time limits for these events range 8 to 10 minutes.

6. Poetry Interpretation:

A student presents a 10 minute dramatic or humorous reading from a novel, essay, or short story. The student may use a manuscript which is a 10 inch black binder. The student interprets the literature using facial expressions and eye contact, memorization is generally helpful. In most cases the literature is memorized and the student is merely pretending to read the material. However, points may be deducted if a poem is too memorized and the student does not look at his/her binder enough. Time limits for these events range 8 to 10 minutes.

IX. How does the D-B High School drama team perform/compete?

Each student selects a(n) event(s) to perform. The student is required to perform 1 to 3 events per tournament. At times, students may practice during forensics class, and/or after school depending upon individual needs, time limit, and coach discretion. Once preparation has been completed, the students, along with their coach, travel to different school districts within a 100 mile radius to perform/compete against students of their own age in different schools. The schools, which host these events, charge participating students a fee per event. These fees are collected by Ms. Coram in advance.

X. High School Drama Tournaments:

A tournament takes place on Saturday and usually lasts from 6-8 hours. It consists of 3 rounds. In each round, there will be 5-6 students from different schools who will perform before a judge. The students are usually ranked between 1st and 6th place and given a numerical score of 70 - 100 in each category. The students with the highest rank and score out of the first 3 rounds in each category will perform in the semi-final round. This is commonly referred to as "Break" into the semi-final round. There will be 5-6 students from different schools performing before a judge. They will be ranked and scored the same as in the other rounds. The students with the highest rank and score in each category will be awarded trophies during a ceremony at the end of the day. The high school with the most points will be ranked 1st through 3rd place and awarded a trophy during the ceremony. The D-B drama team usually competes in 4-5 tournaments a year. The students who rank and score the highest from each school perform/compete in Districts and State Tournaments at the end of the school year.

XI. Dress Code for Dramahawks:

Boys:

1. White OR black shirts.
2. Solid ties. **(No cartoon characters, bold designs or words on ties or stripes).**
3. Dark suits/dark jackets.

4. Black or brown shoes and dark socks.
5. Long hair **must be** put in a pony tail or jelled out of eyes.

Girls:

1. Collared blouse or turtleneck shirt under jacket acceptable. **(No tank tops)**
2. Dark suits/dark jackets/suit jackets **must coordinate** with pants.
3. **No miniskirts allowed.**
4. Closed toed black or brown shoes.
5. Hair **must be** out of face (half up, pony tail, or bun). **(No ribbons or bows in hair acceptable)(No pigtails or braids)**
6. Simple earrings; simple accessories.
7. Light make-up suggested.
8. Nail polish should be subtle, **not distracting.**

(Rule of thumb)

KEEP IT SIMPLE!!!!

Hygiene:

1. Hair should be clean and well-groomed
2. Clothes should be clean, in good condition and wrinkle free.
3. Body should be clean and in good condition

Bus Rides to Competition (when applicable):

1. Casual wear. Capri pants or shorts to the knee are acceptable. **(No sleep wear, no tank tops, no sweatpants).**
2. **No changing on Bus!!!!**

Awards Ceremony:

1. Team T-Shirts/Team sweatshirts with jeans or dark suits worn during ceremony. **(NO Street clothes allowed during ceremony)**
2. Tennis shoes and clogs are acceptable foot wear during ceremony. **(No flip flops allowed)**

All members must be clean, well-groomed, and professional looking before boarding the bus to competitions. If your attire and/or appearance are not acceptable you will not be able to perform neither will you be allowed to “go along for the ride”.

**The dress code has been established to help the students’ performance. If the student is front of a judge wearing clothes, shoes, or accessories that are distracting, the judge is more apt to focus their mind on the students’ appearance rather than focus on their performance. This may cause the student not to receive the rank and score they deserve. It is so important for the student to wear their team shirts to award ceremonies because it shows team spirit

XII. What are the students' expectations?

The students are required:

1. To be on time for class, rehearsals, competitions, and other drama functions.
2. To be responsible for his/her actions.
3. To keep up with his/her props, selection piece, and clothes on trips.
4. To show dedication and commitment.
5. To learn how to balance academics and drama activities.
6. To exhibit a **Positive Attitude**
7. To exhibit a **strong work ethic**
8. To communicate with Drama Coach
9. To realize the importance of a good rehearsal without interruptions, by turning off cell phones and leaving them in a secure place.

XIII. What is the Attendance Policy for students on the Forensic Team?

The Dobyons-Bennett Theatre Department considers all rehearsals and tournaments mandatory and unexcused absences can affect a student's Forensics grade. **Ms. Coram should be notified by the student if a conflict exists.**

Excused Absences:

- 1) Death in the immediate family
- 2) Personal illness (doctor's excuse)
- 3) Previously scheduled event of an important nature (overseas travel)

Unexcused Absences:

- 1) Doctor, dentist or hair appointments. (If an appointment is necessary, I would rather that a student miss his scheduled Forensics class time during the school day than an after school rehearsal)
- 2) UT Football Games

Other:

- 1) If a student needs to make up work or to attend tutoring for another class, the student should make every effort to schedule around practice.
- 2) After school detention needs to be scheduled on Wednesdays.

XIV. What are the Parents' expectations?

The Parents are requested:

1. To help your child by getting him/her to events on time.
2. To stay informed by reading emails & frequently checking the web-site.
3. To be prompt in payment of all fees.
4. To support the Drama's fund-raising efforts.

5. To communicate with the Drama Coach.

XV. 2009-2010 D-B High School Dramahawks' Student Officers and Student Board:

**Co-Captains- Tanya Cato
Colin Perry**

**Jr. Captains- Anna Mader
Kelli Frawley**

Team Leader

Team 1 – Hannah Purdy/Anna Mader
Team 2 - Savannah Hunter/Maxine Poole
Team 3 - Tanya Cato/Zach Shafer
Team 4- Lydia Hyché/Jessica Loflin
Team 5- Colin Perry/Storm Priester
Team 6- Astrid Rotenberry/Kelli Frawley

FACEBOOK-

**Technical Support –
Elizabeth Jeulfs**

XVI. 2013-2014 D-B Dramahawks' Parent Officers and Parent Board:

**Presidents- Alfreda Cato-Lewis
Vice President and Treasurer-Connie Marshal
Webmaster- Eric Hyché
Refreshments/Meals/Snacks- Kristy Loflin/Christy Stout**

The Parent Board's positions and duties are as follows:

1. President:

- i. Presides at all meetings.
- ii. Supervises all of the affairs of the drama team.
- iii. Appoints all standing and special committees.

2. Treasurer:

- i. Custodian of all monies of the Drama team.
- ii. The treasurer makes payments and disbursements as directed by the Board and deposits the funds collected.
- iii. The treasurer keeps an exact account of the financial standing of all members and furnishes complete financial reports at each monthly Board meeting.

XVII. How may I as a parent get involved with the Drama Team?

Ms. Coram encourages every parent to get involved in the Drama team. Ms. Coram has a goal and vision for her students; however, she cannot fulfill it without the help of the parents. Becoming a part of the Drama team is a fun and rewarding experience. Your involvement will make a difference not only in your child's life, but the lives of other students. The impression you make on these students will last a lifetime.

Parents may assist with judging at competitions, chaperoning on away trips, providing snacks, assisting with fund-raising, assisting with banquets, assist with production of plays, and many other things.

Anyone interested in getting involved may contact Ms. Coram at D-B High School.

XVIII. Judging at Competitions:

Judges at High School tournaments are actually parents, friends, relatives, and/or prior Drama students. Anyone can be a judge!!!!

If anyone is interested in becoming a judge, read the Judging tips in the next section and contact Ms. Coram, Drama Coach.

XIX. Judging Tips:

Judging at high school competitions does NOT require extensive training. All it takes is someone who is willing and has an open mind. In the preliminary rounds of competition, you will be the only judge in the room. In the final round of competition, you will be one of three judges in the room. You will be judging approximately 4-6 speaking events. The frequency of judging is based on the number of students participating and the number of judges participating. Sometimes a person, who has agreed to judge prior to the competition, doesn't always show up, therefore it would be necessary that you would fill in. The hosting school's drama coach makes all those decisions.

On arrival, you and the other parents will meet in the judges' lounge. The hosting school always provides breakfast and lunch at no charge for the judges. We await our assignment from the coach of the hosting school. You will be given your room assignment and the paper work you will need. The paperwork gives instructions on the speaking event you will be judging as well as the rules of the event on the back. Take a few minutes to look those over. Once you have received and reviewed your assignment, go to the appropriate room. Place your personal belongings near you. Turn your cell phone off and NO chewing gum (as this might interrupt the student performing). The paperwork includes a ballot for each student.

When you are ready to begin judging ask the students present if any of them are "doubling" or "tripling". What that means is that some students will be performing 2 or 3 times each round. Those students in your room should be allowed to go first, so that they can complete their speaking events in a timely manner. **(Always make sure there is no student from our school in your room to be judged). If you do have one of our students, report it to someone from the hosting school immediately.** As each student stands in front of you to perform his/her selection, always begin by asking their name and the title of their selection. Write that information down at the top of each student's ballot. Ask the student if he/she is ready to begin. Have a watch available so that as each student begins his/her selection you can time the selection (that is part of the judging criteria). During the student's performance, the judge may show emotion (laughter, tears, etc), or choose to keep a solemn face. This is at the judge's discretion; however, **the judge is not to make any verbal comments to the student about his/her selection. The judge may only say "Thank you" or "I enjoyed that"**. If the students ask, the judge may tell the student the time limit of his/her event. **You are only there to offer written commentary. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!!!!!!!!!!! This is for every student you judge!**

Once you have listened to every student perform his/her event, complete your ballots on each student by writing positive comments, negative comments, then assign each performer a score numerical score of 70-100, and a rank according to scale of 1st place to 6th place. **The score and rank should correlate.** For example, if you rank a student a “1” that student should have the highest numerical score, also. There can be **no** ties. Numerical scores are used to break ties in rank points to determine who advances to final rounds. Please do not give unreasonable marks (high or low). Consider carefully the value of the performance.

Give each student valid comments. This will help them in future preparation for another event. Be sure you reward or penalize the performer and **not** the selection (content). This is very hard to do. As a judge, if you love the selection (content), it is easy to over look the performer’s presentation. **REMEMBER** you are here to judge the performer and not the selection (content). A selection that you hate, which is presented without flaws, deserves a higher rank and score than a selection, which you loved, presented with many flaws. Appearance of the performer should be neat and clean and no costuming. If you find their dress objectionable, **comment about it constructively** on the ballot. If their dress is bad enough deduct for it on the score, especially, if it is the only thing that differentiates one performer from another. **(It is very important that you have a piece of scrap paper with you, so that you can make notes after each student performs and not wait until the end. Most of the time after every student has performed it is hard to remember things about each one).**

Begin assigning values or using a check mark system throughout the round, so at the end of the round it makes ranking and scoring easier. **Negative comments should be WRITTEN in a POSTIVE CONSTRUCTIVE manner.**

Each student has worked hard to prepare for his/her event. **Let’s encourage them, instruct them, but not tear them down with criticism.** Be honest and make constructive comments. We want them to continue to compete not quit.

These students take very seriously everything a judge says. **Keep in mind** each student will take home the sheet that you filled out on them. Once your ballots are complete turn them in to the designated area assigned by the host school. Return to the judge’s lounge for food, fellowship and wait for the next round of events. The judges for each round are always called and ballots handed out in the judges’ lounge. Sometimes, you are chosen to judge in every round and at other times you may only judge in 1-2 rounds. If your name is not called to judge the 2nd or 3rd round, you may sit in the judges’ lounge or go into the hallways to check on the students to see how they are doing, and assist them in any way. **If one of the students has an issue with a judge or another student, please find the coach and/or the drama president.** You may also watch one of our students perform an event, if you are not judging a round. **Always let**

someone know where you are. You also may be called to judge in the final rounds. After the first 3 rounds, the students will go to the cafeteria where lunch is provided for them at a small fee. Usually we visit the students at this time and find out how they feel about their performances. During the lunch period for the students, the hosting school is tallying the results of the first 3 rounds. The students with the highest rank and score will go to the final round. Once the hosting school has tallied the results of all students in each category, the results are posted on the wall. Each category is listed with the name of the students who will perform in the final round, the name of the 3 judges for the final round, along with the room number where the final round will be held. Once the list is posted, the judges go receive their ballots for the final round. Once the final round is completed, the hosting school will tally the results.

When the results are ready, everyone goes to the auditorium for the awards ceremony. The judges from our school is to make sure each student is present and wearing their D-B attire. Awards are given out to individual students with the highest ranking and score, and to the school whose students scored the most points. After award ceremony is completed, pictures are taken and the students board the bus for the trip home.

Each drama coach is given the ballot sheets for his/her students that performed. The drama coach shares these results with the students.

XX. Criteria for Judging:

1. Eye contact: Appropriate? Enough? Too much?

2. Character Development:

Does the audience get a sense of the character or characters being portrayed? If a character goes through a change during a scene, do you see that development? Are characterizations appropriate? Voices consistent? Physicality appropriate?

3. Articulation:

Is speech clear? If an accent is attempted is it consistent? Are words and names pronounced appropriately? When in doubt, always assume the performer is correct.

4. Projection:

Is volume adequate? Remember there is a difference between volume and projection. There can be lots of volume without clarity.

Projection means that someone in the back of the room can understand what is being said.

5. Rate of Speech:

Is the performer rushed? Does it drag out? Is the performer comfortable with the rate at which they are performing?

6. Use of Manuscript (if applicable):

Does the performer turn pages? Look at the manuscript at the appropriate intervals? Handle the manuscript discreetly? This is always a challenge because the reality is that almost everything is memorized (by virtue of practicing so much) so most performers really don't need their manuscripts, but there should be some effort to give at least the illusion of using it in appropriate events. While we are on the subject of manuscripts the "convention" is that the book is closed during the introduction to the selection.

7. Movement:

Is movement used appropriately? General rule of thumb is little or no movement below the waist for interpretive events such as Poetry and Prose. Duo interpretation is not allowed to look at each other or interact physically. Movement, in Storytelling, is challenging... some coaches interpret limited movement as a four foot square box... others set no limits. My general rule of thumb is if the movement in storytelling does not distract from the performance, let it go. In speaking events, movement should be purposeful. A basic stage rule is... never move without a purpose.

8. Emotional range:

Does the selection provide for a variety of emotions? A piece with limited range of emotions or characterizations is easier than one with a variety of characters or emotions displayed. Are the emotions portrayed convincingly? Do you sense that the performer understand what is happening in the selection?

9. Complexity of selection (difficulty):

This is an important part of judging. Some questions you can ask yourself are: Does the selection allow a performer to show a variety of expression? Did you only understand it because you read the book, or is it a complete scene? Did you feel that the selection challenged the performer?

Dear Forensic Judge,

Please be aware that every level of student is represented from learning disabled students to advanced placement students. Remember each student should be judged on his own performance ability. Also, keep in mind that no one student may receive the same percentile when ranking. No oral critiques are given.

These comments may be used in helping you critique more constructively. Please give both positive and negative criticism.

Fair
70-76

Good
70-76

Excellent
77-86

Superior
87-94

Presentation of Piece:

Facial expression
Maintain character
point
Knowledge of selection
Adequate volume
Eye contact
Confidence
Voice presence-fair, good, excellent
Good concept of rhythm
Emphasis
groups
Intensity
author's thought
Content of introduction
introduction
Energy level
Interacting between performers
Refreshing personality
Good selection

Oral Reading:

Handling of Script
Establishing focal

lackadaisical attitude
Stumbling over words
Mumbling
Listlessness, bored
Effective reading
Interesting reading
Breaking up thought

Communicate

Good portrayal of

Establish mood
Establish focal point

Negative Comments: (Constructive)

De-emphasize rhythm and rhyme
Differentiate between characters (vocal and focal)
Polish
Needs emphasis and intensity
Gain confidence and poise
Control breathing
Do not let presence slide
Do not read from script constantly
Sounds too memorized
More voice inflection