

IMPROVISATION FESTIVAL HOST GUIDE

Congratulations! You are hosting Oregon Thespians Improvisation Festival. The following guide will help you organize and run this event. The guide is exactly that, a guide, meant to give suggestions for creating a successful event with as little stress as possible. You can vary your techniques, but this guide will help you get started.

As you plan, consider planning for the first time attendee. That way, anyone who attends for the first time will be comfortable and clear on where to go and what to do along just like all other participants who've attended before.

GENERAL

- Rally your troupe. Have students sign up to help with Improv Fest. It's their event. Let them lead the way, with you as their Troupe Director and supportive guide.
- Please ask the Board for sample documents to help you coordinate this event. Documents include how to do rounds, which includes number of judges, host rooms, etc. and other documents for signage, schedules, team slips, volunteer sign ups, tally rounds, and more as templates with details.

THEME and INSPIRATIONS

- Your troupe members can help select a theme for the event. Just about anything goes. It's okay if you repeat themes as new students are involved over the years.
- Previous themes have included board games, breakfast cereals, Shakespeare quotes, song titles, found objects, country song titles, tabloid headlines
- Each team competing gets an inspiration based on the theme. It is optional to provide a prop, too. All inspirations should be given to team captains prior to the rehearsal time.

REGISTRATION

- Registration is done online and handled through Oregon Thespians.
- Registrants will be sent to you via email.
- Registration spreadsheet will be sent to you when registration closes in order to do rounds.

TEAMS

- To determine the number of teams, take the total number of students (post-registration deadline) and then divide by the number of bodies you want on each team. That gives you the number of teams you need. (Ex: 350 participants total divided by 7 per team = 50 teams.) Participation can be anywhere from 250-600 students. It's best to estimate around 350, which is a typical amount of participants.
- Although the SOP states 5-8 people per team, it's best not to make any teams of 5-6 initially. Instead, 7 people per team is recommended because you will have drops and you will want to be able to move people around at the last minute easily to keep teams as balanced as possible.

- If you can, move your own students when adjusting teams so it's easier for the other schools. You can prep your own students that will happen so they are more flexible about switching because it will happen.
- You will assign "captains" to each school by NUMBER. Make sure each TEAM has a captain, but not every school will necessarily have a captain, others might have more than one.
- Once the registration information is received, an easy way to do teams is to make 7 (or 6 or 8) slips of paper for each team with the team number on it. One of those is identified as the team leader's slip of paper (red ink or paper or something).
- Assigning one number for each participant per school. Once one school is assigned numbers, pick up with the next school where you left off, and so on until you get to the last team number. Start over with the next school. (Ex: If there are 350 participants, that will be 50 teams. If Roosevelt brings 38 participants, then they will be on teams 1-38; one per team. If Scappoose brings 23, then they get teams 39-50, as well as 1-11. If Canby is next, they will get teams starting with 12 and so on.)
- Make an envelope (letter size, small) for each school attending with the number of participants they're bringing written on it, and then "deal" the little slips of team-numbers into the envelopes accordingly so each envelope has the right number of slips and all teams are evenly distributed. You want to make sure the larger schools are at the front end of that deal, so their kids don't get put on the same team.
- At registration that day, the number of participants with the school will be confirmed BEFORE they get their envelope.
- If there are drops (and there will be), the same number of slips will be pulled from that school's envelope and laid out in order to try not to pull the same number out of another school's envelope to avoid making any one team too small in advertently.
- If there are adds, check what teams that school has already been assigned to and try to avoid those if possible when adding more team members. If possible, use the pulled team numbers to add members to keep team numbers balanced.

LOCATION/ROOMS

- You need PREP SPACES (one per team), PERFORMANCE-ROUND SPACES (one for every 5 to 7 teams), and the FINAL ROUND LOCATION (your auditorium). If 350 participants are estimated, that's 50 teams, thus 50 prep spaces, and 9 or 10 performance space rooms.
- Once the number of teams is determined, the number of PREP SPACES should equal the number of teams. Prep spaces don't need to be actual rooms. Ends of hallways, foyer areas, commons areas, etc. have worked for these spaces. You need five times as many prep spaces as you need actual rooms for competition. Creativity counts. They just need to be able to meet as a team and create their scene.

- The number PERFORMANCE-ROUND SPACES should be equal to having 5 teams per competition room or five times less than rehearsal space as teams are consolidated into the same room to compete against one another.
- The FINAL ROUND takes place in the auditorium. Everyone watches the final round together.
- It's very helpful to students unfamiliar with your school to have a map of the campus with rehearsal spaces marked, as well as competition rooms. It's best to have one map per participant if possible. If not, posting larger maps at hallway intersections and common spaces work well.

FOOD

- All schools should be prepared to have students bring their own lunches.
- In the event that food is available within easy walking distance to the school, or food will be available to purchase at the school, that information can be sent to registered troupes in advance for planning purposes.
- You coordinate breakfast/snacks for all Judges and Troupe Directors AND lunch for all Judges, Troupe Directors (at the TD meeting), and Troupe Presidents (one per school attending, plus the STO, for the Troupe President's meeting). That can be done through onsite catering or food service, but keeping the cost to a reasonable amount. Oregon Thespians covers the cost of the food.

ROUNDS

- Improv Fest only has two rounds to create: Round I and Round II. The Final Round is based on the top five to six teams and they compete in front of everyone.
- When you assign rounds, count the total number of students (post-registration deadline) and then divide by the number of bodies you want on each team. That gives you the number of teams you need. (Ex: 350 participants total divided by 7 per team = 50 teams.)
- When you build the rounds, build by teams. Build Round I first. (For example: Teams 1-5 compete against each other, Teams 6-10 against one another, and so on.) Even though it seems not so obvious, and you might think building both rounds at once might be easier, it's not after all. Instead, simply readjust the columns so that no two teams are competing against each other in Round II as much as you can control that. (For example: Teams 1, 6, 11, 16, and 21 would compete against one another; Teams 2, 7, 12, 17, and 22 against one another; and so on.)
- It's best if they don't have the same judge either which you can fix by keeping the judges in the same room and moving the teams.

JUDGES

- You'll have roughly 5 teams per round per room.
- You need one judge per room. Thus, if you have 50 teams, that would be 10 judges. Adjust the number of judges based on the total number of teams.
- Make sure they don't see the same team in Round II as any they saw in Round I.
- You'll want three fresh judges for the Final Round so they haven't seen any of the finalists in their earlier rounds.

SIGNAGE

- Have signs leading arriving schools to the registration table and/or auditorium.
- You need maps of the campus indicating rehearsal and competition rooms, as well as other rooms posted throughout the rehearsal and competition hallways.
- Each competition room needs a sign with teams listed by round so students know where to go to compete.

ENTERTAINMENT

- You need to provide some sort of entertainment after the final round so the judges can confer about the winners.
- Entertainment can be anything from scenes to improv to a hired group coming in (although the cost may come from your own budget). Entertainment should be able to last anywhere from 15-45 minutes with the option of stopping at any point the judges are done conferring and ready to announce the winners.

AWARDS

- Ribbons for winning team members will be brought to the event by the Oregon Thespian Board.
- You need to provide a table on stage on which to place the ribbons for ease of distribution.

SCHEDULE

8:30 A.M.	Registration Opens
9:15 A.M.	Welcome and Introductions
9:30 A.M.	Prep Time for HS Teams; Improv Workshop for Junior Thespians
10: 00 A.M.	Troupe Director meeting
10:45 A.M.	Round I for HS Teams; Prep Time for Junior Thespians
11:45 A.M.	LUNCH
1:00 P.M.	Round II for HS Teams; Performance Round for Junior Thespians
2:00 P.M.	Final Round and Special Presentation
3:30 P.M.	Awards