

Harmony Tree International Speech Festival (HTISF)

2026-2027 Set Pieces for Asia Division

Monologue

Born in 2008-2010

Helmet

by William Shakespeare (Adapted version)

CHOICE A
Time Limit:
5 minutes

PRINCE HALMET: Why is it that everything I think about... turns into another question? I try to decide something simple. And suddenly, it becomes complicated. Right becomes wrong. Action becomes risk. Silence becomes guilt. People say, "Just make a decision." But they don't understand what happens before that decision is even possible. It is not one thought. It is a thousand small arguments inside my head. Each one speaking at the same time. Each one refusing to disappear.

I see every possible outcome before I move. Every consequence. Every mistake that might follow me. And then I stop. Not because I don't care too much about getting it wrong.

Everyone around me seems certain. They act like life is clear. Like every choice has a correct direction. But for me... nothing stays simple. Even silence feels like a decision. Even waiting feels like action.

Maybe that is my problem. I think too much. Or maybe thinking is how I survive uncertainty. Because if I stop thinking...maybe I step forward without understanding. And that feels even more dangerous.

But then another thought comes. What if thinking is just another form of delay? What if life was never waiting for the perfect answer... only for the courage to choose an imperfect one? What if I have been standing at the edge of every moment...without stepping in?

The world does not pause for clarity. It moves. With or without me. And while I am busy analyzing every possible future...the present is already becoming the past. So I ask myself again. TO BE ... OR NOT TO BE.

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CHOICE B
Time Limit:
5 minutes

The Importance of Being Earnest

by Oscar Wilde (Adapted version)

(Stands perfectly upright. Chin lifted. She observes the room with complete composure and superiority.)

LADY BRACKNELL: I must say... to lose one parent may be regarded as a misfortune.

To lose both... suggests carelessness. *(Pause.)*

But to be found in a handbag... a handbag with handles...

That is not misfortune. That is a lack of proper arrangement. *(Slow step forward.)*

You mentioned you were found at a railway station. Quite so.

But I must inquire—was there no proper guardian present? No luggage of respectable quality?

No explanation prepared in advance? One expects a certain level of order in such matters.

(Slight tilt of head.)

Was it a station of good standing? The Brighton line? The West End line?

Or one of those places where anything may occur without warning?

These details are not trivial. They define character. *(Adjusts imaginary gloves.)*

My daughter has been raised with the strictest attention to decorum.

She understands family, reputation, and expectation.

And yet I am asked to consider a gentleman whose origins are... unclear at best.

(Pause. Calm, colder tone.)

You speak as though identity were accidental. As though one might appear, without explanation or record. But society does not accept uncertainty. It requires structure.

It requires proof. *(Steps slightly forward.)* Even education must be accountable.

Even character must be traceable.

And you are not providing any of these assurances. *(Long pause.)*

I cannot approve of what cannot be explained. And I will not allow my daughter's future to rest upon uncertainty dressed as charm. If one cannot account for one's beginnings...

one should not presume upon anyone's ending. *(Final pause. Chin lifts.)*

Good day.