



*Rocky Mountain Classical  
Christian Schools Speech Meet  
Official Selections*

## RMCCS speech and Bible selection requirements

---

### *Bible Selections*

Students may choose a Bible passage of a suitable length according to the guidelines below. It is the responsibility of the student to **print off a copy** of the Bible passage in the **English Standard Version (ESV)** to turn in to their teacher.

### *Speech*

Speech Meet selections have been expanded for **grades 2-10** to include a variety of speeches. A list of approved speeches is found below. You may also, of course, request an outside speech. It is up to you, the student, to choose an excerpt of the speech that is long enough for your grade level. Once you have chosen an excerpt, it is your responsibility to **print off** that excerpt to turn in to your teacher.

---

### Requirement and Guidelines

Grade	Minimum Word Count of Speech Excerpt	Minimum Verse Count for Bible Passages	Minimum Lines for Poetry Selections
1st	<i>No speech selections for first grade</i>	5-10 verses	10-20 lines
2nd	100 or more	8-15 verses	15-25 lines
3rd	100 or more	10-15 verses	15-25 lines
4th	200 or more	12-18 verses	20-30 lines
5th	350 or more	14-20 verses	25-35 lines
6th	350 or more	16-22 verses	30-40 lines
7th	450 or more	18-24 verses	35-45 lines
8th	450 or more	20-26 verses	40-50 lines
9th-12th	550 or more	22-28 verses	45-55 lines

## Speech possibilities

---

### Political Speeches

Alexander the Great's victory speech, found [here](#)

Pericles' Funeral Oration from Thucydides, found [here](#)

Demosthenes - The Third Philippic, found [here](#)

Queen Elizabeth I, The Spanish Armada speech, found [here](#)

Winston Churchill, We Shall Fight on the Beaches, found [here](#)

William Wilberforce, Abolition Speech

### American

Live your Life, Chief Tecumseh

Citizenship in the Republic, Teddy Roosevelt (Man in the Arena), found [here](#)

Reagan's Farewell Address to the American People

John F Kennedy, Inaugural Address

Martin Luther King Jr., I Have a Dream

Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address

Washington's Farewell Address 1796, found [here](#)

Patrick Henry, Give me Liberty or Give me Death

Theodore Roosevelt, Strength and Decency

### Shakespeare:

*Hamlet*, "To be or not to be"

*Macbeth*, "Tomorrow, tomorrow, and tomorrow"

*Julius Caesar*, Marc Antony's speech "Friends, Romans, Countrymen"

*As You Like It*, Jaques, "The Seven Ages of Man"

### Epics:

- Homer's *Iliad*, Book I, lines 1-50
- Homer's *Iliad*, Book VI, lines 462-520
- Homer's *Iliad*, Book VI, lines 556-600
- Homer's *Iliad*, Book XVIII, lines 91-150
- Homer's *Iliad*, Book XXII, lines 157-199
- Homer's *Iliad*, Book XXII, lines 270-320
- Homer's *Iliad*, Book XXIV, lines 893-944
- Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XIII, lines 324-373
- Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XIV, lines 1-53
- Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XXIV, lines 1-48
- Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XXIV, lines 241-293
- *Paradise Lost* by John Milton, lines 1-75

# Rocky Mountain Classical Christian Schools

## Speech Meet Official Selections

### Seventh Grade

#### Seventh Grade: Poetry

	<b>2</b>
Beowulf, an excerpt	2
The Chambered Nautilus	5
The Cremation of Sam McGee	6
The Crucifixion	9
First Chorale Ode from Antigone	12
Forgetfulness	13
No Coward Soul Is Mine	14
Ode to the West Wind I-IV	16
Paradise Lost, an excerpt	17
Puck's Song (from Puck of Pook's Hill)	19
To a Waterfowl	



# Seventh Grade: Poetry

---

Beowulf, an excerpt

*Translation by Seamus Heaney*

In off the moors,  
down through the mist bands  
the God-cursed Grendel came greedily loping.  
The bane of the race of men roamed forth, hunting  
for a prey in the high hall.

Handsomely structured,  
a sturdy frame braced with the best  
of blacksmith's work inside and out.  
No shielding elder believed  
there was any power or person upon earth  
capable of wrecking their horn-rigged hall.

Under the cloud-murk Grendel moved  
towards it until it shone above him, a sheer keep  
of fortified gold.

Spurned and joyless, he journeyed on ahead  
and arrived at the bawn. The iron-braced door  
turned on its hinge when his hands touched it.  
Then his rage boiled over, he ripped open  
the mouth of the building, maddening for blood, pacing  
the length of the patterned floor  
with his loathsome tread, while a baleful light,  
flame more than light, flared  
from his eyes. He saw many men in the mansion, sleeping,  
a ranked company of kinsman and warriors  
quartered together. And his glee was demonic,  
picturing the mayhem:  
Before morning he would rip  
life from limb and devour them, feed on their flesh;  
but his fate that night was due to change,  
his days of ravening had come to an end.

For mighty and canny,  
Hygelac's kinsman was keenly watching  
for the first move the monster would make.  
Nor did the creature keep him waiting  
but struck suddenly and started in;  
he grabbed and mauled a man on his bench,  
bit into his bone-lappings, bolted down his blood  
and gorged on him in lumps, leaving the body  
utterly lifeless,  
eaten up  
hand and foot.  
Venturing closer, his talon was raised to attack Beowulf  
where he lay on the bed; he was bearing in  
with open claw when the alert hero's  
comeback and armlock forestalled him utterly.  
The captain of evil discovered himself  
in a handgrip harder than anything  
he had ever encountered in any man  
on the face of the earth. Every bone in his body  
quailed and recoiled, but he could not escape.  
He was desperate to flee to his den and hide  
with the devil's litter, for in all his days  
he had never been clamped or cornered like this.

Then Beowulf sprang to his feet  
and got a firm hold. Fingers were bursting,  
the monster back-tracking, the man overpowering.  
The dread of the land was desperate to escape,  
to take a roundabout road and flee  
to his lair in the fens. The latching power  
in his fingers weakened; it was the worst trip  
the terror-monger had taken to Heorot.  
And now the timbers trembled and sang,  
a hall-session that harrowed every Dane inside the stockade.

Then an extraordinary wail arose, and bewildering fear  
came over the Danes. Everyone felt it  
who heard that cry as it echoed off the wall,  
a God-cursed scream and strain of catastrophe.  
The howl of the loser, the lament of the hell-serf  
keening his wound.

Grendel:  
overwhelmed and manacled tight  
by Beowulf who of all men  
was foremost  
and strongest  
in the days of this life.



## The Chambered Nautilus

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,  
Sails the unshadowed main,  
The venturous bark that flings  
On the sweet summer wind its purpled  
wings  
In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,  
And coral reefs lie bare,  
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their  
streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;  
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!  
And every chambered cell,  
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to  
dwell,  
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,  
Before thee lies revealed,  
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt  
unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil  
That spread his lustrous coil;  
Still, as the spiral grew,  
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,  
Stole with soft steps its shining archway  
through,

Built up its idle door,  
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew  
the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought  
by thee,  
Child of the wandering sea,  
Cast from her lap, forlorn!  
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born  
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!  
While on mine ear it rings,  
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a  
voice that sings:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my  
soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more  
vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's  
unresting sea!

## The Cremation of Sam McGee

*Robert W. Service*

*There are strange things done in the midnight sun  
By the men who toil for gold;  
The Arctic trails have their secret tales  
That would make your blood run cold;  
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,  
But the queerest they ever did see  
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge  
I cremated Sam McGee.*

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee, where the cotton blooms and blows.  
Why he left his home in the South to roam 'round the Pole, God only knows.  
He was always cold, but the land of gold seemed to hold him like a spell;  
Though he'd often say in his homely way that "he'd sooner live in hell."

On a Christmas Day we were mushing our way over the Dawson trail.  
Talk of your cold! through the parka's fold it stabbed like a driven nail.  
If our eyes we'd close, then the lashes froze till sometimes we couldn't see;  
It wasn't much fun, but the only one to whimper was Sam McGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight in our robes beneath the snow,  
And the dogs were fed, and the stars o'erhead were dancing heel and toe,  
He turned to me, and "Cap," says he, "I'll cash in this trip, I guess;  
And if I do, I'm asking that you won't refuse my last request."

Well, he seemed so low that I couldn't say no; then he says with a sort of moan:  
"It's the cursed cold, and it's got right hold till I'm chilled clean through to the bone.  
Yet 'tain't being dead—it's my awful dread of the icy grave that pains;  
So I want you to swear that, foul or fair, you'll cremate my last remains."

A pal's last need is a thing to heed, so I swore I would not fail;  
And we started on at the streak of dawn; but God! he looked ghastly pale.  
He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day of his home in Tennessee;  
And before nightfall a corpse was all that was left of Sam McGee.

There wasn't a breath in that land of death, and I hurried, horror-driven,  
With a corpse half hid that I couldn't get rid, because of a promise given;  
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say: "You may tax your brawn and brains,

But you promised true, and it's up to you to cremate those last remains."

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid, and the trail has its own stern code.  
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb, in my heart how I cursed that load.  
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight, while the huskies, round in a ring,  
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows— O God! how I loathed the thing.

And every day that quiet clay seemed to heavy and heavier grow;  
And on I went, though the dogs were spent and the grub was getting low;  
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad, but I swore I would not give in;  
And I'd often sing to the hateful thing, and it hearkened with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge, and a derelict there lay;  
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice it was called the "Alice May."  
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit, and I looked at my frozen chum;  
Then "Here," said I, with a sudden cry, "is my cre-ma-tor-eum."

Some planks I tore from the cabin floor, and I lit the boiler fire;  
Some coal I found that was lying around, and I heaped the fuel higher;  
The flames just soared, and the furnace roared—such a blaze you seldom see;  
And I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal, and I stuffed in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn't like to hear him sizzle so;  
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled, and the wind began to blow.  
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled down my cheeks, and I don't know why;  
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak went streaking down the sky.

I do not know how long in the snow I wrestled with grisly fear;  
But the stars came out and they danced about ere again I ventured near;  
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said: "I'll just take a peep inside.  
I guess he's cooked, and it's time I looked"; ... then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm, in the heart of the furnace roar;  
And he wore a smile you could see a mile, and he said: "Please close that door.  
It's fine in here, but I greatly fear you'll let in the cold and storm—  
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee, it's the first time I've been warm."

*There are strange things done in the midnight sun  
By the men who toil for gold;  
The Arctic trails have their secret tales  
That would make your blood run cold;*

*The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,  
But the queerest they ever did see  
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge  
I cremated Sam McGee.*

## *The Crucifixion*

James Weldon Johnson  
Jesus, my gentle Jesus,  
Walking in the dark of the Garden --  
The Garden of Gethsemane,  
Saying to the three disciples:  
Sorrow is in my soul --  
Even unto death;  
Tarry ye here a little while,  
And watch with me.  
Jesus, my burdened Jesus,  
Praying in the dark of the Garden --  
The Garden of Gethsemane.  
Saying: Father,  
Oh, Father,  
This bitter cup,  
This bitter cup,  
Let it pass from me.  
Jesus, my sorrowing Jesus,  
The sweat like drops of blood upon his brow, Talking with his Father,  
While the three disciples slept,  
Saying: Father,  
Oh, Father,  
Not as I will,  
Not as I will,  
But let thy will be done.  
Oh, look at black-hearted Judas -- Sneaking through the dark of the Garden --  
Leading his crucifying mob.  
Oh, God!  
Strike him down!  
Why don't you strike him down,  
Before he plants his traitor's kiss  
Upon my Jesus' cheek?  
And they take my blameless Jesus,  
And they drag him to the Governor,  
To the mighty Roman Governor.  
Great Pilate seated in his hall,--

*Great Pilate on his judgment seat,  
Said: In this man I find no fault.  
I find no fault in him.  
And Pilate washed his hands.  
But they cried out, saying:  
Crucify him!--  
Crucify him!--  
Crucify him!--  
His blood be on our heads.  
And they beat my loving Jesus,  
They spit on my precious Jesus;  
They dressed him up in a purple robe, They put a crown of thorns upon his head, And they  
pressed it down --  
Oh, they pressed it down --  
And they mocked my sweet King Jesus. Up Golgotha's rugged road  
I see my Jesus go.  
I see him sink beneath the load,  
I see my drooping Jesus sink.  
And then they laid hold on Simon,  
Black Simon, yes, black Simon;  
They put the cross on Simon,  
And Simon bore the cross.  
On Calvary, on Calvary,  
They crucified my Jesus.  
They nailed him to the cruel tree,  
And the hammer!  
The hammer!  
The hammer!  
Rang through Jerusalem's streets.  
The hammer!  
The hammer!  
The hammer!  
Rang through Jerusalem's streets.  
Jesus, my lamb-like Jesus,  
Shivering as the nails go through his hands; Jesus, my lamb-like Jesus,  
Shivering as the nails go through his feet.*

*Jesus, my darling Jesus,  
Groaning as the Roman spear plunged in his side;  
Jesus, my darling Jesus,  
Groaning as the blood came spurting from his wound.  
Oh, look how they done my Jesus.  
Mary,  
Weeping Mary,  
Sees her poor little Jesus on the cross.  
Mary,  
Weeping Mary,  
Sees her sweet, baby Jesus on the cruel cross, Hanging between two thieves.  
And Jesus, my lonesome Jesus,  
Called out once more to his Father,  
Saying:  
My God,  
My God,  
Why hast thou forsaken me?  
And he drooped his head and died.  
And the veil of the temple was split in two, The midday sun refused to shine,  
The thunder rumbled and the lightning wrote An unknown language in the sky.  
What a day! Lord, what a day!  
When my blessed Jesus died.  
Oh, I tremble, yes, I tremble,  
It causes me to tremble, tremble,  
When I think how Jesus died;  
Died on the steeps of Calvary,  
How Jesus died for sinners,  
Sinners like you and me.*

## First Chorale Ode from Antigone

*Sophocles*

Creation is a marvel  
And man its masterpiece:  
He scuds before the southern wind  
Between the loud white-piling swell.  
He drives his thoroughbreds  
Through Earth (perpetual  
Great goddess inexhaustible)  
Exhausting her each year.

The light-balanced light-headed birds  
He snares; wild beasts according to their  
kind.  
In his nets the deep sea fish are caught—  
O master mind of Man!  
The free forest animal he herds,  
The roaming upland deer.  
The shaggy horse he breaks to yoke  
The mountain-powered bull.

He's trained his agile thoughts

(Volatile as air)  
To civilizing words.  
He's roofed against the sky  
The javelin crystal frosts  
The arrow-lancing rains.  
All fertile in resource  
He's provident for all  
(Not beaten by disease)  
All but death, and death—  
He never cures.

Beyond imagining he's wise  
Through labyrinthine ways both good and  
bad:  
He is law-abiding, pious;  
But displaced when he promotes  
Unsavory ambition.  
And then, I want no part with him,  
No parcel of his thoughts.



## No Coward Soul Is Mine

*Emily Bronte*

No coward soul is mine,  
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:  
I see Heaven's glories shine,  
And Faith shines equal, arming me from Fear.  
O God within my breast,  
Almighty, ever-present Deity!  
Life, that in me has rest,  
As I, undying Life, have power in Thee!  
Vain are the thousand creeds  
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;  
Worthless as withered weeds,  
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,  
To waken doubt in one  
Holding so fast by Thy infinity,  
So surely anchored on  
The steadfast rock of Immortality.  
With wide-embracing love  
Thy Spirit animates eternal years,  
Pervades and broods above,  
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.  
Though earth and moon were gone,  
And suns and universes ceased to be,  
And Thou wert left alone,  
Every existence would exist in Thee.  
There is not room for Death,  
Nor atom that his might could render void:  
Thou - Thou art Being and Breath,  
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

## Ode to the West Wind I-IV

*Percy Bysshe Shelley*

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,  
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,  
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed  
The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow  
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill  
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)  
With living hues and odours plain and hill:  
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;  
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,  
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,  
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,  
Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread  
On the blue surface of thine aëry surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head  
Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge  
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,  
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge  
Of the dying year, to which this closing night  
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might  
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: oh hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams  
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,  
Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,

And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,  
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers  
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou  
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers  
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below  
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear  
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know  
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,  
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh hear!

#### IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;  
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share  
The impulse of thy strength, only less free  
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even  
I were as in my boyhood, and could be  
The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,  
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed  
Scarce seem'd a vision; I would ne'er have striven  
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.  
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!  
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!  
A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd  
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

## Paradise Lost, an excerpt

*John Milton*

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing, Heav'nly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of Chaos; or, if Sion hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first  
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,  
Dovelike sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;  
That, to the height of this great argument,  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.

Puck's Song (from *Puck of Pook's Hill*)

*Rudyard Kipling*

See you the ferny ride that steals  
Into the oak-woods far?  
O that was whence they hewed the keels  
That rolled to Trafalgar.

And mark you where the ivy clings  
To Bayham's mouldering walls?  
O there we cast the stout railings  
That stand around St. Paul's.

See you the dimpled track that runs  
All hollow through the wheat?  
O that was where they hauled the guns  
That smote King Philip's fleet!

Out of the Weald, the secret Weald,  
Men sent in ancient years  
The horse-shoes red at Flodden Field,  
The arrows at Poitiers.

See you our little mill that clacks,  
So busy by the brook?  
She has ground her corn and paid her tax  
Ever since Domesday Book.

See you our stilly woods of oak,  
And the dread ditch beside?  
O that was where the Saxons broke,  
On the day that Harold died!

See you the windy levels spread  
About the gates of Rye?  
O that was where the Northmen fled,  
When Alfred's ships came by!

See you our pastures wide and lone,  
Where the red oxen browse?

O there was a City thronged and known,  
Ere London boasted a house!

And see you, after rain, the trace  
Of mound and ditch and wall?  
O that was a Legion's camping-place,  
When Caesar sailed from Gaul!

And see you marks that show and fade,  
Like shadows on the Downs?  
O they are the lines the Flint Men made,  
To guard their wondrous towns!

Trackway and Camp and City lost,  
Salt Marsh where now is corn;  
Old Wars, old Peace, old Arts that cease,  
And so was England born!

She is not any common Earth,  
Water or Wood or Air,  
But Merlin's Isle of Gramarye,  
Where you and I will fare.

## To a Waterfowl

*William Cullen Bryant*

Whither, 'midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps  
of day,  
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou  
pursue  
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye  
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee  
wrong,  
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,  
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,  
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care  
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,--  
The desert and illimitable air,--  
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fann'd

At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere:  
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end,  
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and  
rest,  
And scream among thy fellows; reed shall  
bend  
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven  
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my  
heart  
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast  
given,  
And shall not soon depart.

He, who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy  
certain flight,  
In the long way that I must tread alone,  
Will lead my steps aright.