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# INTERNATIONAL THESPIAN SOCIETY

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**HONORING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATRE**

## The Official High School Thespian Point System

The International Thespian Society (ITS) is the honor society for middle and secondary school theatre students. Membership is granted for the performance of meritorious work in theatre arts that meets the Society's general guidelines. High school student induction eligibility requirements and procedures are detailed in the *Thespian Troupe Handbook*.

Students meet one important induction requirement by earning Thespian points. These are awarded based on the quality and quantity of work they perform in theatre and related disciplines. "Quality" may include the caliber of the work done and the educational value of the experience. The "Official High School Thespian Point System" provides recommended guidelines for awarding points. Troupes may adopt changes to the point system to meet the unique needs of the school's theatre arts program and its students. Approved changes must be codified in the troupe constitution and bylaws and shared with all theatre students.

Troupe directors must notify theatre arts program participants that records of their activities will be maintained and that Thespian membership may be conferred when qualifications have been met. The troupe director makes the final decision regarding the awarding of Thespian points. The troupe secretary or clerk is often responsible for maintaining point records, which should be available for student review. Point record sheets are available for downloading in the member services section of EdTA's website.

The recommended Thespian point awards listed on the next page provide the troupe director with a quick and easy way to award points for work performed in most theatre programs. Numbers indicate the recommended maximum point awards for the duties listed. Troupe directors may award up to 2 additional points for any task performed with exceptional merit, and should use their discretion in awarding points—from 0 to the maximum—according to the quality of effort and work accomplished.

The following are general guidelines for the awarding of Thespian points:

- Inductees must earn 10 points, 5 of which should be awarded for work done at the school where he or she will be inducted.
- In general, 1 point represents approximately 10 hours of excellent work. Troupe directors should use this formula in awarding points for categories not specifically listed in the recommended Thespian point awards.
- A Thespian moving to another affiliated school is entitled to transfer his or her membership. Transferring Thespians bring a minimum of 10 points with them to the new school. See the *Thespian Troupe Handbook* for details.
- Induction points should be earned through participation in at least two full-length productions, or one full-length and two one-acts, or four one-acts.
- Induction points should be earned in at least two of the listed categories, for example, acting and production.
- Inducted Junior Thespians automatically begin their high school careers with half of the points needed for high school Thespian induction (normally 5 of the 10 induction points required).
- Students may earn up to 5 points toward induction through participation at the middle school level; in community, children's, or professional theatre; or in other activities in the performing arts. They may earn additional points after induction at the troupe director's discretion and upon knowledge or verification of participation.
- Thespian membership will be made available on an equitable basis to all students who qualify. No student will be elected into the Society. No student will be denied membership if he or she has accumulated the required 10 points and has fulfilled all membership requirements. Eligible students are invited to join the International Thespian Society. Induction invitation cards are available from the EdTA home office. Students should be informed of the cost of the one-time induction fee and date/site of the induction ceremony. No hazing of student candidates is permitted. Troupe directors induct students by submitting their names, contact information, and induction fees to the EdTA home office. Induction ceremonies are local celebrations of induction. Ceremonies ranging from the very informal to formal styles are described in the "Ceremonies" document available on the EdTA website. See the *Thespian Troupe Handbook* for details on the induction process.

Troupe directors can recognize exceptional Thespians after induction by awarding Thespian stars for each additional 10 points earned. Additional Thespian honor ranks are awarded at 60, 120, and 180 points. The "Thespian Honor Rank Summary" chart on the following page outlines the basic system. Detailed information is available in the *Thespian Troupe Handbook*.