



# **Old Dominion Association of Church Schools**

## **Frequently Asked Questions for ODACS Bible, Academic, and Fine Arts Competition**

Updated February 6, 2026

**Q:** May a student use a 12-string guitar for Classical Guitar Solo?

**A:** Yes

**Q:** May a student use a pick for Classical Guitar Solo?

**A:** No. ODACS and AACs have consulted with the national judges on this question and on the previous one. According to them, the term *Classical Guitar* does not include music performed with a pick.

**Q:** How many students may be involved in a Videography category?

**A:** The Videography categories have always been considered group categories. However, this year ODACS has clarified that the minimum number of contestants in the group must be 2. There is no maximum number of students in the group.

**Q:** Can Videography entries be judged a second time between Regional Competition and State Competition?

**A:** No. The primary reason for this policy is logistics. There simply is not enough time between Regionals and State to do all the work that would be involved in judging the Videography entries a second time.

**Q:** May a student use a 3D printer in an Art category?

**A:** No. The only categories in which 3D printing could plausibly be permitted are Sculpture and Crafts. However, the purpose of these categories is to develop actual sculpting and crafting skills, not computer skills. The new rules expressly prohibit the use of a 3D printer in Sculpture. For Crafts, the use of a 3D printer is not included in the list of pre-approved projects, nor will ODACS issue a Craft Approval Form for a 3D printed project.

**Q:** May a student use a reference photograph for an Art entry (drawing, painting, or other)?

**A:** It depends. If the student uses a reference photograph that was taken by another person, then there are very strict rules that apply, and it is common for students to fail to follow those rules. First, the student must have permission from the owner of the photograph, must submit a copy of the photograph, and must document the permission. Second, even with the permission, the student is prohibited from copying the image. Though the 40% rule has been deleted from the rules, there still must be "evidence of artistic changes," which should be construed as a higher standard than the 40% rule.

The simple solution to this challenge is for the student to take the photograph herself. If she does so, then she owns the image, and she has license to copy the image as closely as she wishes. In this case, the student is still required to supply a copy of the image and to document ownership of the image.

**Q:** Is an Elementary student who enter an Art category required to submit an Artist's Idea Statement?

**A:** Yes. This is a new requirement in 2026. The primary rationale for the change is the easy access to and increasing reliance upon Artificial Intelligence. ODACS has decided that because such access is common for all ages, it was time finally to require an Artist's Idea Statement for Elementary Art.

**Q:** What are the current rules regarding original copies of music?

**A:** ODACS has long allowed students to provide photocopies of music to the judges for adjudication. This practice is still allowed. ODACS has carefully studied the Fair Use doctrine and concluded that this practice falls well within a valid Fair Use defense.

Contestants in categories that do not require memorization must perform from a legally obtained copy of the music. In this situation, the Fair Use doctrine does not apply.

An accompanist must perform from a legally obtained copy of the music. In this situation, the Fair Use doctrine does not apply.

A director must direct from a legally obtained copy of the music. In this situation, the Fair Use doctrine does not apply.

Groups advancing to the AAC National Competition need to carefully study the AAC policies, which are different from ODACS policies on certain points.

Increasingly, the best option is to purchase digital sheet music. Accompanists, directors, and performers are allowed to use a tablet to display the legally obtained music and to advance to each new page by swiping or by using a digital page turning device.

In all cases, the contestant or group must supply the judges with either proof of purchase or proof that the music is in the public domain.