

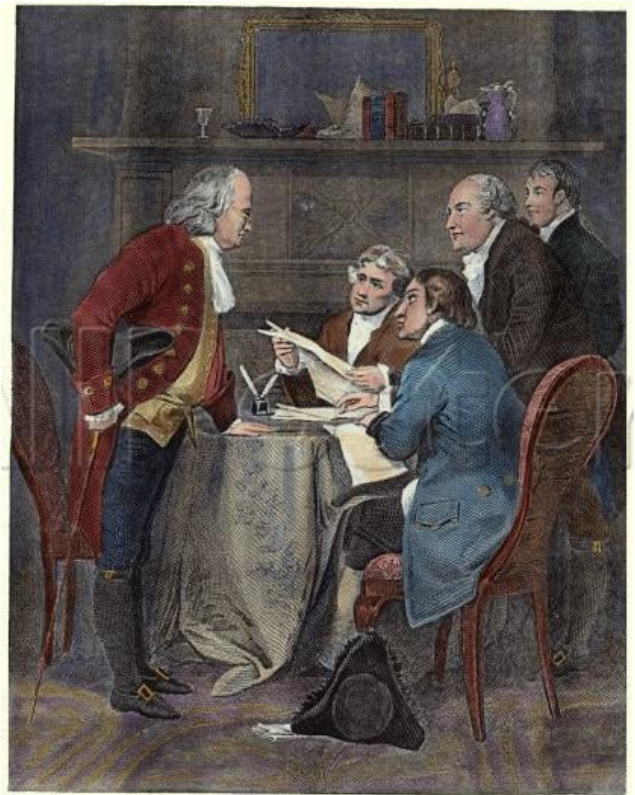


Department of NC

The American Legion
High School
Oratorical Scholarship Program

**“A Constitutional Speech
Contest”**

Grades 9-12



2024-2025



FORWARD

This Chairman's guide has been prepared to help the Oratorical Chairman organize and conduct a successful Oratorical Contest. This guide is also for use in conducting County, District, Division and State Contests.

The primary purpose of the Oratorical Contest is to involve high school students in America's great heritage; "The Constitution of The United States" and to promote interest in the democratic form of government.

The American Legion hopes that every high school will participate in this educational opportunity for their students to become better informed citizens and to allow them to compete for scholarship awards.

Each North Carolina American Legion Post must provide the initiative and leadership to make this fine program work. We are counting on you!

FRANK STANCIL
State Chairman

Oratorical Contest and Education Committee

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**THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**** THE 2025 NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL CONTEST ****

The 2024-25 National and Department Rules contain all information student contestants need to prepare themselves for competition. For the benefit of the contestants, it is imperative that all rules and regulations be followed explicitly at every level of the contest. Post Oratorical Chairmen should be responsible for contacting their local high school to insure that the Oratorical Contest is part of their school's annual program.

Oratorical Chairmen at all levels (Post/County, District, Division and Department) are responsible for selecting a site, judges, and contest officials as well as publicizing their contests. Contestants must provide a copy of their prepared oration at the Department "State" Contest.

Contest deadline dates are listed below and will be followed.

***December 17, 2024 School Contest-** On or before this date, participating schools must have conducted eliminating contests to insure only a single contestant to represent a single school. School officials in charge of the contest (or Post Official) should call the Department Headquarters immediately following the conclusion of the contest to certify the winner and to be given information on the subsequent contest. The number is (919) 832-7506, or email, drose@nclegion.org .

***Dec 18-Jan 15, 2025 Post or County Contest -** Where there is more than one contestant in a particular county. Must be conducted under the direction of the District Chairman or the County Chairman where one has been appointed. If there is any question, please contact local Legion Post to clarify District Chairman. (List attached)

***Jan. 16-Feb 11, 2025 District Contest -** Is made up of all county winners and will be conducted under the direction of the District Chairman. District Chairmen are responsible for forwarding the completed winner certification form to Department Headquarters and to the Division Chairman immediately following the contest. The District Chairman is responsible for escorting the District winners to the Division Finals. **All District winners participating in the Division Contest will be presented with a \$200.00 scholarship check at the Division Contest only.**

***Feb 12-Mar 2, 2025 Division Contest -** Is made up of all District winners within the Division. The Division Chairman is responsible to see to proper execution of the contest and that winner certification form is filed with Department Headquarters immediately following the contest. He is also responsible for seeing that the Division winner is escorted to the Department Finals. **All judges scoring sheets shall be forwarded to Department Headquarters after the contest is completed.**

***March , 2025 (TBD) Department (State) Finals -** TBA. (a \$100.00 travel allowance will be paid to the Division winner to defray cost of attending Department (State) Finals. This check will be presented at the Department (State) Contest. **All (Inclement weather) judges scoring sheets shall be forwarded to Department Headquarters after the contest is completed.**

All Dates are WEATHER PERMITTING. Please check with level chairman if weather is questionable.

National Contest to be held May 16-18, 2025, Hillsdale, Michigan

ASSIGNED TOPICS FOR 2025 ORATORICAL CONTEST

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment XVIII

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XXVI

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

DIVISION ORATORICAL CHAIRMEN

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Division IV

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Division V

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PLEASE NOTE: Any name not in bold, District Commander did not report a District Oratorical Chairman.

HOW TO START AN ORATORICAL CONTEST IN YOUR AREA

Obtain a copy of *The National High School Oratorical Contest Chairman's Guide* and read through it to familiarize yourself with the workings of a contest.

Work with your schools:

- Set up an appointment to speak with the school Principal, English teachers, Governmental History teachers, and ROTC instructors. Discuss what an oratorical contest is all about. Be sure to let them ask questions so they fully understand the program.
- As Post chairman, be sure to leave your name and phone number with them so they can reach you. Offer to help them conduct an in school contest for practice. This could be one of the most important steps as it helps everyone understand the rules and concept. Make sure all the proper judging, timekeeping, and tabulation sheets are used.
- Be available to address the students directly if allowed, and use school bulletin boards and school newspapers to get the word to the students.
- Be willing to return at a later date to address the students, if the schools desire.
- Be sure every student has a copy of the High School Oratorical Scholarship Program Official Rules 2025. They will need it for the assigned topics for 2025. They can be downloaded at the national site or by contacting our office. We will email them to you.

Be organized.

- Study the rules and regulations covered in chapter 3 on page 8 of the *Chairman's Guide*. This will insure correct information being passed along through the various stages of the contest.
- Be sure to have extra copies of your judges scoring sheets along with timekeeping and tabulating sheets.
- A copy of the Video "How to Conduct The National High School Oratorical Contest" is available as outlined in Chapter Eleven of the *Chairman's Guide* by downloading from the national website.
- Chairman's Guide is available at www.legion.org. go to Programs , Oratorical Contest, Resources, or call Department Headquarters. We will email one to you.

More information is available online:

www.legion.org/oratorical

click on resources

SUGGESTED SUPPLIES NEEDED

1. National Rules Brochure (Gives complete details on contest)
2. Department Rules and Dates Brochure.
3. Adequate Judging Forms (Attached to Rules Brochure). Winner Certification Forms (District and Division Contest Only) provided by Department Headquarters.
4. Time Cards, with numbers 3,4,5 and 8,9 and 10. (To be held up by Time Keepers).
5. Stop Watches (2).
6. Some Type of Award for Contestants; (i.e., certificates, medals, cash award, etc.)

AWARDS AND MEDALS

It is suggested that suitable medals be given to those contestants who place first, second and third in the local Post, County, and District contests. **Medals are available through National Emblem Sales, PO Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

Level of Competition	Gold (First Place)	Silver (Second Place)	Bronze (Third Place)
Post	#717.305 - \$ 12.99	#717.305 - \$ 11.99	#717.305 - \$ 10.99 (page 136 Emblem Sales)
District	#717.311 - \$31.99	#717.311 - \$28.99	#717.311 - \$23.99 (page 138 Emblem Sales)

*Division #717.319 #717.319 #717.319 Furnished by Department

***These medals are furnished by the Department at the Division Contest Level to those contestants placing 1,2 or 3. All other contest medals must be purchased by a local American Legion Post or by the District.**

All District Winners who participate in the Division Contest will receive a cash award of **\$200.00 Scholarship** from Department Headquarters presented at the Division Contest. District winner **MUST** participate in the Division Contest to collect this award. Medals for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place will be awarded to Division winners at the Division Contest, furnished by the Department.

All Division winners who participate in the Department (State) Contest will receive an appropriate plaque signifying their accomplishments. As contest rules state you must compete at the next level to receive the award, **Division plaques will be given out at the Department (State) Contest.**

All Division winners who participate in the Department (State) Contest will receive a travel allowance of \$100.00 to defray expenses incurred in attending the Department (State) Contest. **The travel allowance will be presented at the Department (State) Contest.**

Department (State) Contest awards are as follows:

1st Place -	*\$2,500.00 Scholarship	(*NOTE: Scholarships may be used to attend any college or university in the United States and will be paid directly to the institution of higher education.)
2nd Place -	\$1,500.00 Scholarship	
3rd Place -	\$ 1,000.00 Scholarship	
4th Place -	\$ 1,000.00 Scholarship	
5th Place -	\$ 1,000.00 Scholarship	

*National Headquarters provides an additional \$2,000.00 scholarship to Department (State) winner who participates in the Quarter finals of the National Contest.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES

1. Judges may seat themselves wherever they desire, but are requested not to sit together nor to confer. Five judges will be used from the District level and up.
2. Names of orators will not be announced. The orators are numbered on the Judge's record cards, and judges will record them in the order of their appearance.
3. Both the prepared and assigned topic features are required and must be judged separately.
4. Please study carefully the point scoring system in relation to the two factors to be considered namely:
Content (Originality, Skill in selection, Logic and Comprehensiveness)
Speaking Skills (Voice and Diction, Style, Body Action)
5. Each speaker will first deliver his/her prepared oration. When all prepared orations have been delivered, assigned topic addresses will follow, each speaker appearing in the same order as for the prepared oration.
6. The Chairman of the meeting will announce the time for each contestant. If a contestant fails to use all of his minimum allotted time or uses more than his total allotted time in the delivery of his prepared oration or extemporaneous feature, a PENALTY OF ONE POINT for each minute or fraction thereof shall be assessed against the contestant's total score.
7. Notes, cards, books, exhibits, pointers, uniforms, etc, are not allowed.
8. Lack of emphasis in the prepared oration or the assigned topic feature on the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen must result in downgrading the contestant.
9. After completing his record, each judge will place his name at the top, and place the card in the hands of the usher appointed to receive it. Judges are requested to remain in the hall until the decision is announced, in order that they may be available in case a question should arise relative to the scoring.

"PREPARED ORATION" -- The prepared oration must be the original efforts of each contestant and must not require less than eight minutes nor more than ten minutes for delivery. The penalty for plagiarism will be disqualification.

"THE ASSIGNED TOPIC FEATURE" -- The assigned topic oration must not consume less than three minutes nor more than five minutes for delivery. The purpose of the assigned topic feature is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject and the extent of his research and the ability to extemporaneously discuss the subject as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution.

TIMEKEEPER INSTRUCTIONS

There shall be two (2) timekeepers for the contest who shall be seated on the main floor and in full view of the contestants as they deliver their orations. At the discretion of the contest chairman, a back-up third timekeeper can be employed who would provide the official time only when time was not available from the principle timekeeper(s).

The timekeepers shall be equipped with:

1. Stopwatches (2)
2. Timekeeper Record Card
3. Time cards numbered 8, 9 and 10 for prepared oration.
4. Time cards numbered 3, 4 and 5 for assigned topic.
5. Clipboards (2) or suitable writing surface.

The contest chairman will meet with the timekeepers prior to the contest. Timekeepers should practice and be completely familiar with the operation of the stopwatch.

TIMING PROCEDURE

1. Begin timing when contestant begins his/her oration and stop when contestant ceases to speak.
2. Enter exact time consumed for both the prepared oration and the assigned topic on the Timekeeper Record Card.
3. The prepared oration must be at least eight (8) and no more than ten (10) minutes in length. Repeat the process explained in item 3 above, utilizing numbered cards 8, 9 and 10.
4. The assigned topic must be at least three (3) and no more than five (5) minutes in length. Utilize the numbered cards 3, 4, and 5.

REPORTING TIME CONSUMED

1. The contest chairman will advise how the timekeeper should report time.
2. The best practice is to report minutes and seconds consumed.

TABULATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Each contest shall have three tabulators who will be certain that the judges have fully tabulated and signed their scorecards before submitting them for final tabulation. The judge's scorecards will then be numbered one through five in the upper right-hand corner. Utilizing the tabulation card provided, enter the judges' record-of-choice for each contestant (by speaking order). When this is accomplished for all five judges' scorecards, total the contestants' score. The contestant receiving the low score when totaling the tabulation card will be declared the winner. (EXAMPLE: If one contestant receives two firsts, two seconds and a third on the judges' scorecards and tabulation card, his total record-of-choice points will be nine; if the second contestant receives two firsts, two seconds and a fourth, his total record-of-choice points will be ten. Even though the second contestant received two firsts, his total record-of-choice point score of ten will place him second.)

TIEBREAKER: If after tabulation of the Judge's Record-of-Choice, two contestants receive the same placement point score total, the tie shall be broken by comparing the Record-of-Choice scores of the five judges for the two contestants. One of the contestants will be the winner over the other by a majority of the Judges' Record-of-Choice when only the placement of the tied contestants is considered. (EXAMPLE: Consider that Contestants No 1 and no 2 are tied. If Judges Card 1 reflects Record-of-Choice for Contestant No 1 as 3 and Contestant No 2 as 4, then it is considered that this judge ranks Contestant No 1 ahead of Contestant No 2. Use this procedure for all five Judges' Scorecards and a majority of the five judges will break the tie and determine the winner.)

If, after tabulation of the Judges' Record-of-Choice, three or more contestants receive the same placement point score total, the tie shall be broken by reference to final Total Points on the judges' Scorecards. Only in this instance will the contestant with the largest Final Total Points be declared the winner. In the case of a tie on the Final Total Point basis, the judges will then meet, compare their scores, and discuss all features of the contest in order to arrive at a final choice. The decision of the judges shall be final.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CLERKS/TABULATORS

1. Attached is a Tally Sheet to be used in tallying Judges' scores.
2. After each talk, the Time Keepers record card is completed and turned in.
3. When the speakers have finished, collect the judges' Tally Sheets.
4. First, check the judges' Tally Sheets to be sure they are fully tabulated by the judges' and that signatures are affixed.
5. Check the judges' Tally Sheets for any discrepancies in totaling scores or placing contestants.
6. Make no corrections or changes on judges' Tally Sheets. Return any judge's Tally Sheet where there is any question to the judge for correction.
7. When it has been determined that all judges' score sheets are completed correctly, number The judges' sheets 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Record the high and low scores for each contestant from all judges' Tally Sheets on to the clerk's tally sheet.
8. Total low score points for each contestant. Recheck your figures for first or second place (lowest score), sign the tally sheet and give it to the Chairman of the Contest. He will announce the winner.
9. Assemble the time sheets and judges' Tally Sheets and place them in the envelope provided for purpose, and give them to the Chairman of the contest.

ESCORT INSTRUCTIONS

There shall be one (1) Escort for each contestant, and all Escorts will meet the contest chairman for final instructions prior to the contest.

The Escorts will be assigned to a specific contestant and will remain with that contestant throughout the contest, except when the contestant is delivering his or her Prepared Oration or Assigned Topic.

USHER INSTRUCTIONS

The number of Ushers required will be determined based on the number of doors affording entrance to the auditorium. The Ushers should meet with the Contest Chairman for final instructions prior to the contest.

The Ushers will assist in seating the audience and distributing programs before the contest. The Contest Chairman will acknowledge his introduction and make necessary announcements and request the Ushers to close the doors and not allow anyone to enter or leave while a contestant is speaking.



JUDGE NUMBER _____

THE AMERICAN LEGION

High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest – “A Constitutional Speech Contest”



JUDGE'S SCORECARD

DATE: _____

A. CONTENT			Contestants					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Originality, freshness, directness, application of knowledge of topic. 16 points	Prepared Oration	12 points						
	Assigned Topic	4 points						
2. Skill in selecting examples, description, analogies,, specific data. 16 points	Prepared Oration	12 points						
	Assigned Topic	4 points						
3. Logic (correctness of inference). 16 points	Prepared Oration	12 points						
	Assigned Topic	4 points						
4. Comprehensiveness if knowledge, knows the subject matter. 22 points	Prepared Oration	16 points						
	Assigned Topic	6 points						
B. SPEAKING SKILLS			1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Voice and diction 10 points	Prepared Oration	6 points						
	Assigned Topic	4 points						
2. Style: language, use, word arrangement Transition, word selection. 10 points	Prepared Oration	6 points						
	Assigned Topic	4 points						
3. Body actions: poise, eye contact, posture, Gestures. 10 points	Prepared Oration	6 points						
	Assigned Topic	4 points						
SUB-TOTAL								
PENALTIES: 1 point for each minute or fraction Thereof over or under allotted time.	Prepared Oration							
	Assigned Topic							
1-10 points for failure to speak on the Constitution								
FINAL TOTAL POINTS								
Position Number Highest Points= 1 st place, Second Highest Points= 2 nd place, etc.			Record of Choice					

Score all contestants – NO TIES PERMITTED

Name of Judge: _____ Judge's Signature: _____



THE AMERICAN LEGION

High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest



TIMEKEEPER RECORD CARD

CONTESTANT	Time Consumed PREPARED ORATION		Time Consumed ASSIGNED TOPIC	
	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Seconds</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Seconds</u>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

(BOTH TIMEKEEPERS' SIGNATURES REQUIRED HERE)



THE AMERICAN LEGION

High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest



TABULATION CARD

JUDGES	CONTESTANTS RECORD OF CHOICE						CONTESTANTS – FINAL TOTAL POINTS *(For 3 – way tiebreaker only!)*						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1													
2													
3													
4													
5													
TOTALS													

NOTE: all TABULATOR'S signatures are required below.

SCRATCH TALLY SHEET FOR JUDGES

PREPARED ORATION

Contestant
NO. _____

DOES THE CONTESTANTS ORATION RELATE TO SOME PHASE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH WILL GIVE EMPHASIS TO THE ATTENDANT DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF A CITIZEN TO OUR GOVERNMENT? ___Yes___No

A. Content	Score	Remarks and Notes
1. Originality, freshness, directness, application of knowledge on topic.	(12)	
2. Skill in selecting examples, description, analogies, specific data.	(12)	
3. Logic (correctness of inference).	(12)	
4. Comprehensiveness of knowledge, knows the subject matter.	(16)	

B. Speaking Skills

1. Voice and diction.	(6)	
2. Style: language use, word arrangement, word selection, transition.	(6)	
3. Body action: poise, eye contact, posture, gestures.	(6)	

Penalty Points	
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Notes:

Tentative Total	
------------------------	--

SCRATCH TALLY SHEET FOR JUDGES

ASSIGNED TOPIC

Contestant NO. _____

DID THE CONTESTANT SPEAK ON THE SUBJECT? ___ Yes ___ No

A. Content	Score	Remarks and Notes
1. Originality, freshness, directness, application of knowledge on topic.	(4)	
2. Skill in selecting examples, description, analogies, specific data.	(4)	
3. Logic (correctness of inference).	(4)	
4. Comprehensiveness of knowledge, knows the subject matter.	(6)	

B. Speaking Skills

1. Voice and diction.	(4)	
2. Style: language use, word arrangement, word selection, transition.	(4)	
3. Body action: poise, eye contact, posture, gestures.	(4)	

Penalty Points	
-----------------------	--

Notes:

Tentative Total	
------------------------	--