

Section 1442: MODERN ORATORY

(a) REPRESENTATION.

- (1) *Contestants.* Students in the seventh and eighth grades who are eligible under Section 1400 may enter this contest. A student may enter no more than two speech events.
- (2) *Divisions.* This contest will consist of only one division. With the approval of the district executive committee, a district may have separate divisions for each grade.
- (3) *Individual Competition.* Each participant school may enter as many as three contestants per division in the district meet.
- (4) *Team Competition.* There is no team competition in this contest.

(b) NATURE OF THE CONTEST.

- (1) *Summary.* In this contest, the contestant will select one of the topics, determine the critical issues in the topic, and acknowledge both pro and con points citing support discovered in their research. Students will choose a side they will defend and support that side with additional evidence. Along with the skills of analysis, research, note-taking, documentation, evaluation and decision-making come those of memorization and delivery.
- (2) *Contest Format.* Students will deliver a three to six minute speech on their topic without the use of notes.
- (3) *Topics.* The League will provide three to five topics in the *Constitution and Contest Rules* and on the UIL web site each year from which the student will pick one.

(c) PREPARATION.

- (1) *Guidelines.* In the process of preparing for the contest, the student will need to:
 - (A) define the problem;
 - (B) determine the pro and con issues;
 - (C) research the issue;
 - (D) look at both sides of an issue;
 - (E) reach a conclusion; and
 - (F) support that conclusion with documentation.

To achieve and maintain the educational goals of the contest activity, teachers and parents may guide the development of the research and writing of the speech, but no one other than the contestant shall be permitted to write the speech.

- (2) *Topics.* Contestants must select one of the following topics for developing the oration.
 - (A) Can government do more to reduce poverty in the United States?
 - (B) Is the American health care system in crisis?
 - (C) Should high school athletes be subject to random drug testing?
 - (D) Do Americans have too much debt?
 - (E) Is the two-party system good for American democracy?
- (3) *Delivery.* The oration must be delivered from memory, without the assistance of notes, and must be between three and six minutes in length. Contestants may not use costumes or props in the contest. Delivery may include an introduction, statement of the question, development of both pro and con points, statement of the position, defense of that position and a conclusion.

(d) CONTEST ADMINISTRATION.

- (1) *Personnel.*
 - (A) *Contest Director.* The contest director will be in charge of running the contest and resolving any problems that arise. The director may appoint an assistant director. The contest director may be the coach of a participating student.
 - (B) *Timekeeper.* A timekeeper should be provided for each section to notify the contestant of the

amount of time remaining from the total allotted time. The timekeeper should demonstrate to the contestant the type of time signals to be used. While the timekeeper may use either hand signals or time cards to indicate to the speaker the remaining time, time cards are a much preferred method of signal.

- (C) *Judges.* The contest director may recruit one judge or an odd-numbered panel of judges for each section. Judges may not be coaches of participating students. So far as possible, judges should not know what school any contestant represents.
- (D) *Monitors.* One person is needed for each section to see that the contest progresses without problems. Monitors may be coaches of participating students.
- (2) *Creating Sections.* A section shall consist of no more than eight contestants. If nine or more students enter modern oratory, they must be divided into sections using the guidelines in Section 1003. Districts may create smaller sections when space permits. A separate room is needed for each preliminary section. Winners from the preliminary rounds will compete in a final round using the guidelines in Section 1003.
- (3) *Materials.*
 - (A) *Provided by UIL.* The following materials will be provided to schools submitting the appropriate requisitions. See Section 1408 (c) for the dates when invitational materials will be available. See Section 1408 (e) for the dates when district materials will be available.
 - (i) Topics will be published in the *Constitution and Contest Rules* and posted on the UIL web site each year.
 - (ii) Evaluation sheets for 30 contestants in each packet.
 - (iii) Three Judges' Ballots.
 - (iv) One Contest Director's Ranking Sheet for a panel of judges.
 - (v) Two contest rosters.
 - (B) *Other.* No other materials or notes may be used in the contest.
- (4) *Time Allotted for Contest.* The maximum time limit for each speech is six minutes. Each speech must be at least three minutes long.
- (e) **CONDUCTING THE CONTEST.**
 - (1) *Creating Sections and Speaking Order.* Contestants may be assigned to sections and speaker order may be established prior to the day of the meet. If the contest director prefers, the contestants in each preliminary section may draw for speaker order just before the contest begins.
 - (2) *Call Contestants to Contest Room.* Contestants are to be called into the contest room one at a time according to their arranged speaking order. Contestants may remain in the contest room.
 - (3) *Audience.* The audience should be instructed to remain seated and quiet during all presentations. Audience courtesy should be extended at all times.
 - (4) *Coaching.* No speaker may be coached or prompted in any manner during the presentation.
- (f) **JUDGING.**
 - (1) *Briefing Judges.* Judges should be encouraged to give students written evaluations on the Modern Oratory Evaluation Sheet. Oral critiques are optional, but when given, should be directed to the group as a whole, acknowledging good points and giving suggestions for improvement.
 - (2) *Criteria.* Criteria for judging the contest should include:
 - (A) *Delivery:* Did the speaker demonstrate effective communication? Was the speaker able to enlist and hold the interest of the audience?
 - (B) *Content:* Did the student analyze the topic, giving both sides of the issue?
 - (C) *Organization:* Did the student have an appropriate introduction? Did he/she clearly define the problem and show both sides of the issue? Did he/she reach and support a conclusion?

- (D) Overall effectiveness.
- (3) *Ranking the Contestants.* If a panel of judges is used, the contest director must tabulate all judges' ranks to determine places. See Section 1003 (b). Students going over or under the time limit shall be penalized one rank. For example, if the judges rank a student second who has gone over the time limit, that student shall be assigned third place and the student who was ranked third will be given second place.
- (4) *Questions.* Questions must be made to the contest director before the decision of the judges is announced as official. Decisions of the meet officials in these matters are final.
- (5) *Points.* Points are awarded through sixth place according to Section 1408 (i).
- (g) **VERIFICATION PERIOD.** If a panel of judges is used, a verification period should be provided, during which unofficial results should be posted. Coaches should be given no more than 15 minutes to verify that rankings were tabulated correctly. The ranks assigned by the judges are not subject to question.
- (h) **OFFICIAL RESULTS.** The contest director shall announce the official results. Official results, once announced, are final.