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**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL®

# Speech Contest Rulebook 2010

**For International, Evaluation, Humorous,  
Table Topics, and Tall Tales Speech Contests**



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**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL®

Speech  
Contest  
Rulebook  
2010

**For International, Evaluation, Humorous,  
Table Topics, and Tall Tales Speech Contests**



**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL®

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**Item 1171**

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# Introduction

Speech contests are an important part of the Toastmasters International educational program. Speech contests provide an opportunity for proficient speakers to gain contest experience, and they provide interesting educational programs for members and the public. They also allow those Toastmasters who are not participating in the contest to learn by observing proficient speakers.

Since so many members participate in contests, it's important that all contests be conducted fairly and that they follow the rules. In this booklet are rules for the International Speech Contest, as well as rules for Evaluation, Humorous, Table Topics, and Tall Tales Contests. The International Speech Contest is conducted at the club, area, division, district, semi-final, and International levels. All other contests originate at the club level and proceed through the area, division, and district levels. Judges' Guides and Ballots for each contest are available from World Headquarters. Visit [www.toastmasters.org/shop](http://www.toastmasters.org/shop) for prices and ordering information.

If you are involved in conducting or participating in a speech contest, read the rules carefully and follow them. By doing so you will ensure a fair speech contest and an enjoyable event for everyone. Additional information on speech contests may be found in the Speech Contest Manual (Item 1173). This rulebook controls all decisions regarding contests. The comments in the Speech Contest Manual and training materials are intended to give guidance but are not rules.

Rules for these contests are established by Toastmasters International's Board of Directors. The Board reviews the rules periodically, and any recommended changes are made the following year. Changes are highlighted by a mark (■) in the left margin.

# General Provisions

The following general provisions concern all contests conducted at all levels of Toastmasters International.

1. The only contest a district must conduct is the International Speech Contest. Districts have the option to conduct up to three additional contests, and these contests must be those contained in this rulebook. The only contests permitted at the area, division, or district levels are those that originate at the club level and proceed through the area, division, and district levels.
- 2. In those districts with 10 or more divisions, two separate run-off competitions among division winners may be held before the district contest finals. Insofar as practical, the number of divisions competing in each run-off will be the same. The three highest-placed available contestants from each run-off competition will then advance to the district contest.

# International Speech Contest Rules

## 1. Purpose

- A. To provide an opportunity for speakers to improve their speaking abilities and to recognize the best as encouragement to all.
- B. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.

## 2. Applicability

These rules, unless otherwise noted, apply to all Toastmasters speech contests that select contestants for the annual International Speech Contest, which is conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions are permitted.

## 3. Selection Sequence

- A. Club, Area, Division, District. Each club in good standing is permitted to select a contestant to compete in the area contest. A club is permitted to choose its contestant by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with all these rules and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest (if applicable). The division winner then proceeds to the district contest. Should an area or division contest winner be unable to participate in the next level contest, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level. Each district selects a winner. The chief judge ranks all district-level contestants in the order of results. A comprehensive list shall be submitted to World Headquarters. Information concerning the semi-final contest is then mailed to the winner and alternate. If a district contestant cannot compete in the semi-final round, the next highest placed contestant will be contacted by World Headquarters.
- B. Eight weeks prior to the area contest, if an area has four assigned clubs or fewer, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each club to compete in the area contest. Should additional clubs charter prior to the area contest, the two highest placed available contestants from each club are permitted to compete. In those divisions with four assigned areas or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each area to compete. In districts with four assigned divisions or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each division to participate in the district contest.

The decision whether or not to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, from area to division, and/or from division to district must be made and communicated throughout the district prior to the commencement of the contest cycle – i.e., prior to any club contests being held. Once the decision is made, it must be implemented consistently throughout the district in all clubs, areas, and divisions affected. If a district decides to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, its decisions regarding the number

to advance from area to division and/or from division to district need not be the same.

- C. Semi-finals are to be held at the International Convention, and will include all district winners randomly assigned to nine separate contests. Each semi-final contest shall select a winner and an alternate, and provide this information to World Headquarters staff immediately following the announcement of contest results.

#### 4. Eligibility

- A. To be eligible to compete at any level of the International Speech Contest, an individual must:
  - 1. Be a member in good standing of the club in which he or she is competing. The club also must be in good standing. A new, dual, or reinstated member must have dues and membership application current with World Headquarters.
  - 2. Have completed at least six manual speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual prior to the club contest. However, a charter member of a club chartered since the previous July 1 is permitted to compete without having completed six manual speeches in the *Competent Communication* manual. The club must be officially chartered before the area contest.
  - 3. Maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.
- B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest: incumbent international officers and directors; region advisors or region advisor applicants; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and/or district event at which the contest will be held; presenters of educational sessions at the International Convention. An individual is not permitted to be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.
- C. The winner of the contest finals held each August during the International Convention is not eligible to compete again at any level.
- D. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one club International Speech Contest, the contestant is permitted to represent only one of the clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area International Speech Contest, even if the two areas are in different divisions or different districts.
- E. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club, area, division, or district being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.
- F. Each contestant must complete the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183) and submit it to the chief judge prior to the contest.

- G. Each contestant must be present to compete. Participation by audio and video tape and teleconference is not permitted.

## 5. Speech Subject and Preparation

- A. Subject for the prepared speech shall be selected by the contestant.
- B. Contestants must prepare their own five- to seven-minute speeches, which must be substantially original and certified as such in writing to the chief judge by the contestants prior to the presentation of the speeches (on Item 1183, Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality). Any quoted material must be so identified during the speech presentation.
- C. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chairman. All contestants and judges will be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins. The contestants are permitted to speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.
  - 1. A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.
  - 2. If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone shall be made available, if possible. It is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.
  - 3. All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.
- D. Every participant must present an entirely new and different speech for the International contest than given in any International speech contest since January 1 of that same year. Up to and including the semi-final contest, contestants are permitted to use the same speech, but are not required to do so.
- E. Winners of the semi-final contest will prepare and deliver to World Headquarters outlines of their semi-final winning speech, which will be given to the chief judge at the International contest.

## 6. General Procedure

- A. At the club level contests, a contest chairman, chief judge, at least five judges, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed, as far as practical.

At the area level contests, there shall be at least five judges or equal representation from the clubs composing the area in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers.

At the division or district level contests, there shall be at least seven judges or equal representation from the areas composing the division or district in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers. At the district contest, no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant.

At the International contest, there shall be at least nine judges or equal representation from the districts; no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant. In addition

to these judges, five qualifying judges, a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed.

All judges will judge all contestants.

All judges shall be members in good standing. Insofar as practical, all judges at area, division, district, semi-final, and International speech contests shall have been a Toastmasters member in good standing since July 1 of the previous year and have completed at least six Competent Communication manual projects. In addition, if practical, at semi-final and International contests, judges shall be at least an Advanced Toastmaster Bronze or Advanced Communicator Bronze and have previously judged a Toastmasters speech contest at area, division, district, or semi-final level.

- B. Before the contest, contestants are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters, and timers are briefed on their duties by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.
- C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, is permitted to attend the briefing in place of the primary contestant. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced to conduct the contest, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Should the primary contestant arrive after the briefing but before the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant is permitted to compete, provided the primary contestant:
  - 1) reports to the contest chairman upon his/her arrival, and
  - 2) has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest. The primary contestant waives the opportunity of a briefing.
- D. Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name, speech title, speech title, and contestant's name.
- E. There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the judges will mark their ballots.
- F. Contestants are permitted to remain in the same room throughout the duration of the contest.
- G. In contests with five or more participants, a third-place winner (if wanted), a second-place winner, and a first-place winner will be announced. In contests with four or fewer participants, a second-place and first-place winner will be announced.
- H. Announcement of contest winners is final unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters, or timers are permitted to immediately interrupt to correct the error.

## 7. Timing of the Speeches

- A. Speeches will be five to seven minutes. A contestant will be disqualified from the contest if the speech is less than four minutes 30 seconds or more than seven minutes 30 seconds.
- B. Upon being introduced, the contestant shall proceed immediately to the speaking position. Timing will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered

by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.

- C. Timers shall provide warning signals to the contestants, which shall be clearly visible to the speakers but not obvious to the audience.
  - 1. A green signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
  - 2. An amber signal will be displayed at six minutes and remain displayed for one minute.
  - 3. A red signal will be displayed at seven minutes and remain on until the conclusion of the speech.
  - 4. No signal shall be given for the overtime period.
  - 5. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at five, six, and seven minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
  - 6. In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.
- D. Prior to announcing results, the chairman shall announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.

## 8. Protests and Disqualifications

- A. Protests concerning eligibility and originality will be limited to judges and contestants. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding originality or eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.
- B. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the judges. A majority of the judges must concur in the decision to disqualify.

The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.

- C. At the International contest, should qualifying judges determine that a contestant did not present an entirely new and different speech, the chief judge shall notify the contestant of a disqualification prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The disqualified contestant does not have the opportunity to respond to the qualifying judges. A contestant receiving three or more disqualifying votes from the qualifying judges is disqualified.
- D. All decisions of the judges and qualifying judges are final.

## 9. Travel Allowances

- A. Toastmasters International shall pay the travel expenses of each district's contestant participating in the International Speech Contest at semi-final and International levels. Neither Toastmasters International nor its districts shall reimburse these contestants for any other expenses. Reimbursement shall be as follows:

1. Air, Bus, or Train – Full reimbursement, round trip at the lowest rate (coach air fare or discount fare if applicable) between the commercial airport or passenger terminals nearest the convention site and the home of each contestant.
2. Car – On the basis of reimbursement at 32 cents per mile by the most direct route not exceeding the lowest air fare rate (coach or discount if applicable).
3. Any other mode of transportation – Actual costs incurred not exceeding the lowest air fare rate (coach or discount if applicable).

A person riding with another person receiving reimbursement is not entitled to reimbursement.

- B. Reimbursement will be made by World Headquarters as soon as practicable on receipt of certification of attendance at the semi-final and International levels and upon receiving ticket receipt(s) for air, bus, or train travel, or mileage for car travel.
- C. Hotel or room accommodations are not included in allowances for contestants, unless otherwise stated.

## **10. International Taped Speech Contest**

- A. Members of undistricted clubs and provisional districts are invited to participate in the International Taped Speech Contest. Tapes must be in English.
- B. The Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rules are to be followed as far as they are applicable. Naturally, there is no area, division, district, or semi-final competition, nor are there any travel allowances. To enter, clubs shall conduct a speech contest and submit a tape of the winning speech. Only one taped speech per club may be submitted.
- C. The tape shall be made using the following procedures:
  1. Use fresh tape and record on a standard audio cassette before a live audience. Video tapes will not be accepted.
  2. Time the speech carefully to comply with the speech contest rules.
  3. Clearly mark the audio tape and container with the participant's name and club number and be sure to enclose a completed Certification of Eligibility and Originality form.
  4. Tapes must be received at World Headquarters on or before 5 p.m. Pacific Time March 31 to be eligible for competition.

# Evaluation Contest Rules

These rules apply to all Evaluation Contests, which are conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions are permitted.

## 1. Purpose

- A. To encourage development of evaluation skills and to recognize the best as encouragement to all.
- B. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient evaluators who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.

## 2. Selection Sequence

- A. Each club in good standing is permitted to select its club Evaluation Contest winner to compete in the area contest. A club is permitted to choose its contestant by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with all these rules and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest (if applicable). The division winner then proceeds to the district contest. Should an area or division contest winner be unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level.
- B. Eight weeks prior to the area contest, if an area has four assigned clubs or fewer, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each club to compete in the area contest. Should additional clubs charter prior to the area contest, the two highest placed available contestants from each club are permitted to compete. In those divisions with four assigned areas or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each area to compete. In districts with four assigned divisions or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each division to participate in the district contest.

The decision whether or not to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, from area to division, and/or from division to district must be made and communicated throughout the district prior to the commencement of the contest cycle – i.e., prior to any club contests being held. Once the decision is made, it must be implemented consistently throughout the district in all areas and divisions affected. If a district decides to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, its decisions regarding the number to advance from area to division and/or from division to district need not be the same.

## 3. Eligibility

- A. All Toastmasters who are members in good standing of the club in which they are competing are eligible to compete. The club also must be in good standing. New, dual, or reinstated members must have dues and membership application current with Toastmasters International.

A member must maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

- B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest: incumbent international officers and directors; region advisors or region advisor applicants; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and/or district event at which the contest will be held. An individual is not permitted to be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.
- C. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one club Evaluation Contest, they can represent only one of the clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area Evaluation Contest, even if the two areas are in different divisions.
- D. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club, area, or division being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.
- E. Each contestant must complete the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183) and submit it to the chief judge prior to the contest.
- F. Each contestant must be present to compete. Participation by audio and video tape and teleconference is not permitted.

#### 4. General Procedure

- A. At the club level contests, a contest chairman, chief judge, at least five judges, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed, as far as practical.

At the area level contests, there shall be at least five judges or equal representation from the clubs composing the area in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers.

At the division or district level contests, there shall be at least seven judges or equal representation from the areas composing the division or district in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers. At the district contest, no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant.

All judges will judge all contestants.

- B. Before the contest, contestants and the contest sergeant at arms are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters, and timers are briefed on their duties by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.
- C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, is permitted to attend the briefing in place of the primary contestant. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced to conduct the contest, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Should the

primary contestant arrive after the briefing but before the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant is permitted to compete, provided the primary contestant:

- 1) reports to the contest chairman upon his/her arrival, and
- 2) has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest.

The primary contestant waives the opportunity of a briefing.

- D. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chairman. All contestants and judges will be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins. The contestants are permitted to speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.
1. A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.
  2. If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone shall be made available, if possible. It is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.
  3. All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.
- E. At the beginning of this contest a five- to seven-minute test speech will be presented. The test speech shall be either a contest-type speech, or taken from one of the assignments in the *Competent Communication* manual. Contestants are permitted to make preparatory notes during the test speech using materials of their choice. It is recommended that at all levels of the contest, the Toastmaster giving the test speech is not a member of the same club as any one of the contestants. The test speaker shall be introduced by announcing the speaker's name, speech title, speech title, and the speaker's name. Neither the manual project nor any objectives that the speaker may have shall be made known to the contestants, judges, or audience.
- F. At the conclusion of the test speech, all contestants shall leave the room. They then have five minutes to prepare their evaluation using materials of their choice. Timing and preparation supervision shall be under the control of the contest sergeant at arms. Where this is not practical, contestants will complete their five minute preparation in the same room under the control of the contest sergeant at arms.
- G. After five minutes has elapsed no further preparation shall be allowed and with the exception of the first contestant, who shall be called back as first evaluator (where preparation is done in the same room, with the exception of the first contestant, the others shall leave the room), all others shall hand all written material to the contest sergeant at arms. Preparation material shall be handed back to contestants as they are introduced to present their evaluation.
- H. Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name twice.
- I. There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the judges will mark their ballots.
- J. Announcement of contest winners is final, unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief

judge, ballot counters, or timers are permitted to immediately interrupt to correct the error.

## 5. Timing

- A. Evaluations shall be from two to three minutes. Contestants who speak less than one minute 30 seconds or more than three minutes 30 seconds will be disqualified.
- B. Timing will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.
- C. The green signal will be displayed at two minutes and remain displayed for 30 seconds. The amber signal will be displayed at two minutes and thirty seconds and remain displayed for 30 seconds. The red signal will be displayed at three minutes and remain displayed until the evaluation is concluded. No audible device, such as a buzzer, shall be used for the over-time period.
- D. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at two minutes, two minutes 30 seconds, and three minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
- E. In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.
- F. Prior to announcing results, the chairman shall announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.

## 6. Protests and Disqualification

- A. Protests are limited to judges and contestants and are limited to protests based on eligibility. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.
- B. The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.
- C. All decisions of the judges are final.

## 7. Winners

In contests with five or more participants, a third-place winner (if wanted), a second-place winner, and a first-place winner will be announced. In contests with four or fewer participants, a second-place and first-place winner will be announced.

## 8. Contest Schedule

Districts conducting Evaluation Contests shall announce the date of the district contest and establish dates by which the division, area, and club contests must be completed.

# Humorous Speech Contest Rules

These rules apply to all Humorous Speech Contests, which are conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions are permitted.

## 1. Purpose

- A. To provide an opportunity for speakers to improve their speaking abilities and to recognize the best as encouragement to all.
- B. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.
- C. To recognize the value of humor in speaking.

## 2. Selection Sequence

- A. Each club in good standing is permitted to select a contestant to compete in the area contest. A club is permitted to choose its contestant by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with all these rules and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest (if applicable). The division winner then proceeds to the district contest. Should an area or division contest winner be unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level.
- B. Eight weeks prior to the area contest, if an area has four assigned clubs or fewer, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each club to compete in the area contest. Should additional clubs charter prior to the area contest, the two highest placed available contestants from each club are permitted to compete. In those divisions with four assigned areas or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each area to compete. In districts with four assigned divisions or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each division to participate in the district contest.

The decision whether or not to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, from area to division, and/or from division to district must be made and communicated throughout the district prior to the commencement of the contest cycle – i.e., prior to any club contests being held. Once the decision is made, it must be implemented consistently throughout the district in all areas and divisions affected. If a district decides to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, its decisions regarding the number to advance from area to division and/or from division to district need not be the same.

## 3. Eligibility

- A. All Toastmasters who are members in good standing of the club in which they are competing are eligible to compete. The

club also must be in good standing. New, dual, or reinstated members must have dues and membership application current with Toastmasters International.

A member must maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

- B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest: incumbent international officers and directors; region advisors or region advisor applicants; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and/or district event at which the contest will be held. An individual is not permitted to be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.
- C. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club Humorous Speech Contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one club Humorous Speech Contest, they can represent only one of the clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area Humorous Speech Contest, even if the two areas are in different divisions.
- D. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club, area, or division being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.
- E. Each contestant must complete the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183) and submit it to the chief judge prior to the contest.
- F. Each contestant must be present to compete. Participation by audio and video tape and teleconference is not permitted.

#### **4. Speech Preparation**

- A. The subject for the humorous speech shall be selected by the contestant. The speaker shall avoid potentially objectionable language, anecdotes, and material.
- B. Contestants must prepare their own five- to seven-minute speech, which must be substantially original and certified as such in writing to the chief judge by the contestants prior to the presentation of the speeches (on Item 1183, Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality). Any quoted material must be so identified during the speech presentation.
- C. The speech must be thematic in nature (opening, body, and close), not a monologue (series of one-liners).

#### **5. General Procedure**

- A. At the club level contests, a contest chairman, chief judge, at least five judges, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed, as far as practical.

At the area level contests, there shall be at least five judges or equal representation from the clubs composing the area in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers.

At the division or district level contests, there shall be at least seven judges or equal representation from the areas composing the division or district in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers. At the district contest, no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant.

All judges will judge all contestants.

- B. Before the contest, contestants are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters, and timers are briefed on their duties by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.
- C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, is permitted to attend the briefing in place of the primary contestant. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced to conduct the contest, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Should the primary contestant arrive after the briefing but before the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant is permitted to compete, provided the primary contestant:
  - 1) reports to the contest chairman upon his/her arrival, and
  - 2) has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest. The primary contestant waives the opportunity of a briefing.
- D. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chairman. All contestants and judges will be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins. The contestants are permitted to speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.
  - 1. A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.
  - 2. If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone shall be made available, if possible. It is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.
  - 3. All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.
- E. Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name, speech title, speech title, and contestant's name.
- F. There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the judges will mark their ballots.
- G. Contestants are permitted to remain throughout the duration of the contest, in the same room.
- H. Announcement of contest winners is final unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters, or timers are permitted to immediately interrupt to correct the error.

## 6. Timing

- A. Speeches shall be from five to seven minutes. Contestants who speak less than four minutes 30 seconds or more than seven minutes 30 seconds will be disqualified.

- B. Time will begin with the first word uttered by the contestant. However, should the contestant engage in definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience (including the playing of music or other sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.) prior to reaching the speaking position and uttering the first word of the speech, the timer shall activate the timing device at that point. If this results in the contestant going overtime, the contestant will be disqualified.

The green signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed for one minute. The amber signal will be displayed at six minutes and remain displayed for one minute. The red signal will be displayed at seven minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded. No audible device, such as a buzzer, shall be used for the overtime period.

- C. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at five, six, and seven minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
- D. In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.
- E. Prior to announcing results, the chairman shall announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.

## **7. Protests and Disqualifications**

- A. Protests will be limited to judges and contestants. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to the announcement of the winner, and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding originality or eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.
- B. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the judges. A majority of the judges must concur in the decision to disqualify. The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.
- C. All decisions of the judges are final.

## **8. Winners**

In contests with five or more participants, a third-place winner (if wanted), a second-place winner, and a first-place winner will be announced. In contests with four or fewer participants, a second-place and first-place winner will be announced.

## **9. Contest Schedule**

Districts conducting Humorous Speech Contests shall announce the date of the district contest and establish dates by which the division, area, and club contests must be completed.

# Table topics Contest Rules

These rules apply to all Table Topics Contests, which are conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions are permitted.

## 1. Purpose

- A. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.
- B. To encourage development of impromptu and/or extemporaneous speaking skills and to recognize the best as encouragement to all.

## 2. Selection Sequence

- A. Each club in good standing is permitted to select a contestant to compete in the area contest. A club is permitted to choose its contestant by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with all these rules and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest (if applicable). The division winner then proceeds to the district contest. Should an area or division contest winner be unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level.
- B. Eight weeks prior to the area contest, if an area has four assigned clubs or fewer, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each club to compete in the area contest. Should additional clubs charter prior to the area contest, the two highest placed available contestants from each club are permitted to compete. In those divisions with four assigned areas or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each area to compete. In districts with four assigned divisions or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each division to participate in the district contest.

The decision whether or not to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, from area to division, and/or from division to district must be made and communicated throughout the district prior to the commencement of the contest cycle – i.e., prior to any club contests being held. Once the decision is made, it must be implemented consistently throughout the district in all clubs, areas, and divisions affected. If a district decides to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, its decisions regarding the number to advance from area to division and/or from division to district need not be the same.

## 3. Eligibility

- A. All Toastmasters who are members in good standing of the club in which they are competing are eligible to compete. The club also must be in good standing. New, dual, or reinstated

members must have dues and membership application current with Toastmasters International.

A member must maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

- B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest: incumbent international officers and directors; region advisors or region advisor applicants; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and/or district event at which the contest will be held. An individual is not permitted to be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.
- C. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club Table Topics Contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one club Table Topics Contest, they can represent only one of the clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area Table Topics Contest, even if the two areas are in different divisions.
- D. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club, area, or division being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.
- E. Each contestant must complete the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183) and submit it to the chief judge prior to the contest.
- F. Each contestant must be present to compete. Participation by audio and video tape and teleconference is not permitted.

#### **4. Topics**

- A. All contestants shall receive the same topic, which shall be of a general nature, and shall speak for two minutes.
- B. The topic shall be of reasonable length, shall not require a detailed knowledge and shall lead to an opinion or conclusion.

#### **5. General Procedure**

- A. At the club level contests, a contest chairman, chief judge, at least five judges, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed, as far as practical.

At the area level contests, there shall be at least five judges or equal representation from the clubs composing the area in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers.

At the division or district level contests, there shall be at least seven judges or equal representation from the areas composing the division or district in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers. At the district contest, no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant.

All judges will judge all contestants.

- B. Before the contest, contestants and the contest sergeant at arms are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters, and timers are briefed on their duties by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.
- C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, is permitted to attend the briefing in place of the primary contestant. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced to conduct the contest, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Should the primary contestant arrive after the briefing but before the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant is permitted to compete, provided the primary contestant: 1) reports to the contest chairman upon his/her arrival, and 2) has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest. The primary contestant waives the opportunity of a briefing.
- D. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chairman. All contestants and judges will be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins. The contestants are permitted to speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.
  - 1. A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.
  - 2. If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone shall be made available, if possible. It is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.
  - 3. All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging for their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.
- E. When the contest begins, all contestants except the first shall leave the room.
- F. Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name, the topic, the topic, the name.
- G. There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the judges will mark their ballots.
- H. Announcement of contest winners is final unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters, or timers are permitted to immediately interrupt to correct the error.

## 6. Timing

- A. Speeches shall be two minutes long. Contestants who speak less than one minute or more than two minutes 30 seconds shall be disqualified.
- B. Time will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.

The green signal will be displayed at one minute and remain displayed for 30 seconds. The amber signal will be displayed at one minute 30 seconds and remain displayed for 30 seconds. The red signal will be displayed at two minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded. No audible device, such as a buzzer, shall be used for the overtime period.

- C. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at one minute, one minute 30 seconds, and two minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
- D. In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.
- E. Prior to announcing results, the chairman shall announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.

## **7. Protests and Disqualifications**

- A. Protests will be limited to judges and contestants. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to the announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.
- B. The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.
- C. All decisions of the judges are final.

## **8. Winners**

In contests with five or more participants, a third-place winner (if wanted), a second-place winner, and a first-place winner will be announced. In contests with four or fewer participants, a second-place and first-place winner will be announced.

## **9. Contest Schedule**

Districts conducting Table Topics Contests shall announce the date of the district contest and establish dates by which the division, area, and club contests must be completed.

# Tall Tales Contest Rules

These rules apply to all Tall Tales Speech Contests, which are conducted in English only. These rules may not be supplanted or modified, and no exceptions are permitted.

## 1. Purpose

- A. To provide an opportunity for speakers to improve their speaking abilities.
- B. To provide an opportunity to learn by observing the more proficient speakers who have benefited from their Toastmasters training.
- C. To provide participants with the opportunity to create an original, highly improbable, humorous tale.

## 2. Selection Sequence

- A. Each club in good standing is permitted to select a contestant to compete in the area contest. A club is permitted to choose its contestant by whatever means the club desires. If a contest is held, it must comply with all these rules and the contest result is final. The area speech contest winner then proceeds to the division contest (if applicable). The division winner then proceeds to the district contest. Should an area or division contest winner be unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance to that level.
- B. Eight weeks prior to the area contest, if an area has four assigned clubs or fewer, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each club to compete in the area contest. Should additional clubs charter prior to the area contest, the two highest placed available contestants from each club are permitted to compete. In those divisions with four assigned areas or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each area to compete. In districts with four assigned divisions or less, districts have the option to allow the two highest placed available contestants from each division to participate in the district contest.

The decision whether or not to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, from area to division, and/or from division to district must be made and communicated throughout the district prior to the commencement of the contest cycle – i.e., prior to any club contests being held. Once the decision is made, it must be implemented consistently throughout the district in all clubs, areas and divisions affected. If a district decides to allow two contestants to advance from club to area, its decisions regarding the number to advance from area to division and/or from division to district need not be the same.

## 3. Eligibility

- A. All Toastmasters who are members in good standing of the club in which they are competing are eligible to compete.

The club also must be in good standing. New, dual, or reinstated members must have dues and membership application current with Toastmasters International.

A member must maintain eligibility at all levels of any contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant must be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

- B. The following are ineligible to compete in this contest: incumbent international officers and directors; region advisors or region advisor applicants; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor, or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; international officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division, and/or district event at which the contest will be held. An individual is not permitted to be a judge at any level for a contest in which they are still competing.
- C. Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club Tall Tales contest in which membership in good standing is held. However, should they win more than one club Tall Tales contest, they can represent only one of the clubs at the area level contest. No contestant can compete in more than one area Tall Tales Contest, even if the two areas are in different divisions.
- D. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club, area, or division being represented when competing in a speech contest at the next level.
- E. Each contestant must complete the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183) and submit it to the chief judge prior to the contest.
- F. Each contestant must be present to compete. Participation by audio and video tape and teleconference is not permitted.

#### **4. Speech Preparation**

- A. The subject for the Tall Tales speech shall be selected by the contestant.
- B. Contestants must prepare their own three- to five-minute speech, which must be substantially original and certified as such in writing to the chief judge by the contestants prior to the presentation of the speeches (on Item 1183, Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality). Any quoted material must be so identified during the speech presentation.
- C. The speech must be of a highly exaggerated, improbable nature and have a theme or plot. Humor and props may be used to support or illustrate the speech.

#### **5. General Procedure**

- A. At the club level contests, a contest chairman, chief judge, at least five judges, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers are appointed, as far as practical.

At the area level contests, there shall be at least five judges or equal representation from the clubs composing the area in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers.

At the division or district level contests, there shall be at least seven judges or equal representation from the areas composing the division or district in addition to a contest chairman, chief judge, a tiebreaking judge, three counters, and two timers. At the district contest, no judge shall be a member of the club represented by a contestant.

All judges will judge all contestants.

- B. Before the contest, contestants are briefed on the rules by the contest chairman. Judges, counters, and timers are briefed on their duties by the chief judge. Contestants will then draw for their speaking position with the contest chairman.
- C. If a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, is permitted to attend the briefing in place of the primary contestant. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced to conduct the contest, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant. Should the primary contestant arrive after the briefing but before the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant is permitted to compete, provided the primary contestant: 1) reports to the contest chairman upon his/her arrival, and 2) has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest. The primary contestant waives the opportunity of a briefing.
- D. All contestants will speak from the same platform or area designated by the contest chairman. All contestants and judges will be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins. The contestants are permitted to speak from any position within the designated area and are not limited to standing at the lectern/podium.
  - 1. A lectern/podium will be available. However, the use of the lectern/podium is optional.
  - 2. If amplification is necessary, a lectern/podium fixed-mounted microphone and a portable microphone shall be made available, if possible. It is suggested that the fixed-mounted microphone be nondirectional. The selection and use of a microphone is optional for each contestant.
  - 3. All equipment will be available for contestants to practice prior to the contest. Contestants are responsible for arranging their preferred setup of the lectern/podium microphone and other equipment in a quiet manner before being introduced by the Toastmaster.
- E. Introduce each contestant by announcing the contestant's name, speech title, speech title, and contestant's name.
- F. There will be one minute of silence between contestants, during which the judges will mark their ballots.
- G. Contestants are permitted to remain throughout the duration of the contest in the same room.
- H. Announcement of contest winners is final unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters, or timers are permitted to immediately interrupt to correct the error.

## 6. Timing

- A. All speeches shall be from three to five minutes. Contestants who speak for less than two minutes 30 seconds or more than five minutes 30 seconds will be disqualified.

- B. Time will begin with the first word uttered by the contestant. However, should the contestant engage in definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience (including the playing of music or other sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.) prior to reaching the speaking position and uttering the first word of the speech, the timer must activate the timing device at that point. If this results in the contestant going overtime, the contestant will be disqualified.  
  
The green signal will be displayed at three minutes. The amber signal will be displayed at four minutes. The red signal will be displayed at five minutes and remain displayed until the speech is concluded. No audible device, such as a buzzer, shall be used for the overtime period.
- C. Any visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of his or her own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at three, four, and five minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such signal is/are required, the contestant must provide same.
- D. In the event of technical failure of the signal, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.
- E. Prior to announcing results, the chairman shall announce if time disqualification(s) occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.

## **7. Protests and Disqualifications**

- A. Protests will be limited to judges and contestants. Any protest will be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chairman prior to announcement of the winner and alternate(s). The contest chairman shall notify the contestant of a disqualification regarding originality or eligibility prior to that announcement before the meeting at which the contest took place is adjourned.
- B. Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the judges. A majority of the judges must concur in the decision.  
  
The contest chairman can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.
- C. All decisions of the judges are final.

## **8. Winners**

In contests with five or more participants, a third-place winner (if wanted), a second-place winner, and a first-place winner will be announced. In contests with four or fewer participants, a second-place and first-place winner will be announced.

## **9. Contest Schedule**

Districts conducting Tall Tales Contests shall announce the date of the district contest and establish dates by which the division, area, and club contests must be completed.

# Notes

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**Item 1171**