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# Oratorical Contest/ Kids Speak Out Program

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This program consists of two parts: 1) the Oratorical Contest for children under age 16 and 2) Kids Speak Out for younger children. Clubs can choose to offer either one or both of these programs depending upon the ages of the children involved.

## Purpose

This speech contest is designed to inspire today's youth to motivate and inform others through the art of public speaking. It provides young people with the opportunity to compete for a college scholarship and express their views on a pre-assigned topic.

## History of the Contest

Since its start in 1928, the Optimist International Oratorical Contest has become the longest-running program sponsored by Optimist International. Nearly 2,000 Clubs participate in this program each year. The contest is designed for teens to gain experience in public speaking and to provide them with the opportunity to win a college scholarship. Two winners from each District winner receive college scholarships and gain valuable experience! **Districts may choose to hold a combined gender contest. Districts choosing to hold a combined gender contest must make this decision during their fourth quarter District conference and report their choice to the Programs Department at Optimist International by October 1 of each year. Additionally, they must perform the same type of contest for at least three years.**

## How to Enter

Interested students prepare a speech on the pre-assigned topic to be presented at their local Optimist Club's contest. The speeches are judged at the Club level, Zone level and finally at the District level.

## Eligibility

Contestants shall not have attained the age of 16 years as of December 31st of the 2003-2004 school year. There is no minimum age. **Boys and girls may now compete in the same contest, or the District may choose to hold gender-separate contests.**

## Topic

"Thinking, Working and Expecting the Best"

## Length of Speech

The speech must be at least 4 minutes but not over 5 minutes in length.

## Prizes

**Club level** - medallion

**Clubs are now allowed to give monetary awards of up to \$500 for the Oratorical contest in addition to the official medallions. The Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary. All District and International level scholarships will remain the same.**

**Zone level** - plaque (optional)

**District level** - plaque and a college scholarship

Plaques should be ordered directly from Shumsky Enterprises or the Canadian Service Centre. Scholarships are administered by Optimist International, funded by the Optimist International Foundation.

**Scholarship amounts may vary. Combined gender Districts may award two \$1,500 scholarships or one each in the amount of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500. Districts with separate gender contests award each boy and girl first-place winner a \$1,500 scholarship.**

## Contest Deadlines

District contest date is set by the District Oratorical Chair, to ensure results are submitted to the Programs Department no later than **July 1, 2004**.

Zone contest date is set by the District Oratorical Chair with the lieutenant governors to occur prior to the District contest date.

Club contest date is set by the Club Chair, once the Zone and District dates have been obtained.

## Criteria for Judges

Three **non-Optimist** judges are required for each level of the contest.

Judges should have expertise in the field of public speaking. It is preferred that the judges be from different professions such as:

Toastmaster, Broadcaster, Politician, Teacher, Judge, Lawyer, Minister or Law Enforcement Officer.

Judges should not be related to or acquainted with contestants. This is of particular concern when using



teachers as judges. Judges should also not be related to each other or be an Optimist's spouse. They should be completely neutral.

Good judges are willing to study the rules and follow them carefully when scoring the participants. Judges are also potential new members, so don't forget to recruit them!

## Securing Judges

Always have a back-up judge, just in case someone gets sick. Give the judges the rules and a membership brochure to review and introduce them to the world of Optimism over lunch before contest day!

## Judging the Speeches

Three non-Optimists judge the speeches. The contest Oratorical Chair supplies each judge with a copy of the rules and the judging forms. Judges should never discuss or compare their impressions of the speakers or their scores. Each judge must score independently from other judges and Optimists. No one is permitted to view the scores except the contest Oratorical Chair.

## How to Judge a Good Speech

Several books available from your library can be of assistance to judges in advance as they prepare for your contest:

"How to Be the Life of the Podium," by F. H. Simmons, AmaCom

"The Public Speaker's Bible," by Stuart Turner, Thorsons Publishers Group

"Speakers and Toastmasters Handbook," by Herbert Victor Prochmow, Prima Publishers

## Getting the Contest Started in Your Community

There are several ways to find participants for this speech contest.

Your Club can approach local schools to distribute information and coach the students in preparation for the Club level contest, or Club members with experience in public speaking can coach interested students themselves.

Having your Club members work directly with the participants will give the young people positive contact and an experience that can help them later in life. Giving these young people the forum to express their thoughts and views before an audience is an opportunity young people often don't find. The

program is recommended by both the **National Association of Secondary School Principals** and the **American Association of School Administrators**.

This endorsement can go a long way when your Club is requesting that principals and teachers offer this program to their students.

## Other Avenues to Explore When Looking for Participants

- Contact the Department of Education and get a contact name for home-schooled students.
- Contact your local private and parochial schools.
- Contact your local newspaper or television station and see if they will co-sponsor the contest and promote it.
- Contact your local PTA/PTO president to distribute information to parents at their next meeting.
- Contact local churches and synagogues and ask them to place an announcement in their bulletins.
- Contact local bookstores, YMCA/YWCA, libraries, and places where young people gather to put up posters with contact information listed.
- Contact local youth Clubs such as Boy/Girl Scouts and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Promote this contest in as many creative ways as possible. It will help make your Club's name more visible in your community and broaden the scope of potential future Optimists. Be sure to supply everyone you contacted with a Club member's name and phone number and send them a nice letter of thanks for helping promote the great opportunity for young people in your community.

## Timekeepers

One timekeeper should be appointed. This person can be an Optimist Club member. This person is responsible for recording the official length of each speech and assessing penalties if needed, noting failure to announce the topic, verbal identification of non-original material as noted in the typed copy of the speech and totaling all penalties on the timekeeper's score sheet. The timekeeper will need the official form, pen, stop watch and copy of each participant's speech. The completed timekeeper's score sheet is turned in to the Contest Chair to be included in the master scores of each speaker.



## Handling Protests

A sergeant-at-arms should be the contact for protests and given index cards and pens/pencils to distribute when necessary. Anyone who wishes to protest should raise their hand at the completion of the student's speech before the next speaker begins. The sergeant-at-arms gives the person protesting an index card and pen/pencil. The protest must be written on the card. The sergeant-at-arms collects the card as soon as it is completed. This process is repeated for any person who wishes to make a protest. The Contest Chair collects the protest cards before leaving the room to compile scores. Protests are addressed at that time by the Chair and decided. Any adjustments judges need to be aware of will be made at that time. This procedure allows the students to compete without interruption or embarrassment, allows for an accurate description of the protest to be reviewed and should prevent any disturbance or public discussion.

## Videotaping Guidelines for Children Who Want a Copy of Their Speech

All Oratorical contests must be conducted live, not judged on videotape. However, you may allow for the use of one video camera at a contest to give participants a take-home copy of their speech, provided the camera remains stationary, existing room light is used, and the camera is placed at a sufficient distance from the speaker so as not to obstruct the vision of the speaker and audience. Each contestant shall have the option of having the camera off during his/her presentation. Videotaping can be done by having a camera donated for the contest day by a Club member or one of the parents. An Optimist Club member (not a contestant's parent) should run the camera. A tape supplied by the Club or contestant is put into the camcorder at each break between speakers. The tape should be labeled with the speaker's order designation. When the speaker is finished, the tape is removed and a new one is inserted. This process is repeated for each child who wants a copy of their speech. A master copy could also be recorded of all speakers, then copied for contestants. This gives everyone the chance to have a copy of their speech, and allows the contestants to make their speech with minimal interference. The tapes could be distributed once the judges leave to compile the scores.

## Minimum Number of Participants

Separate gender Club Contests must have no less than six participants (three boys and three girls). Combined gender Club Contests must have no fewer than three participants.

**The District Oratorical Contest Committee is responsible for all phases of the Oratorical Contest in the District. All District competition must be conducted by Optimists only, and this responsibility must not be delegated to outside groups.**

## After the Club Contest

The Club Chair should:

1. Announce the boy and girl winner to the audience and present their medallions.
2. Have the winners sign their Zone/Regional/District Entry Form.
3. Announce the date and location of the Zone contest.
4. Submit for each winner:

\_\_\_\_\_ Completed Zone/Regional/District Entry Form  
\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of Birth record  
\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of speech  
\_\_\_\_\_ Entry fee (if applicable)

## To The Zone Chair/Lt. Governor

Complete and submit the Evaluation Form and any good photos to the Programs Department.



## Zone Contests

Zone contests will be held at times and places determined by the District. The Chairperson of the Zone contests will be determined by the District and supervised by the District Oratorical Contest Committee.

All Zone contests must comply with the official rules and only the Zone winners shall be eligible to compete at the District Contest. Each Club is allowed to send two contestants to the next level. If the District decides in advance to hold combined gender contests, the representation to the next level from each Club in that District can be from two boys, two girls or a boy and a girl. If the District decides in advance to hold separate contests for boys and girls, the representation from each Club to the next level will be from one boy and one girl only.

## After the Zone Contest

The Zone Chair should:

1. Announce the boy and girl winner to the audience and present their winner plaques.
2. Submit for each winner:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Zone/Regional/District Entry Form
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of speech
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of birth record
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Entry fee (if applicable)

## To the Regional (if applicable) or District Oratorical Chair

## Regional Contest

This is a mandatory level for Districts with 11 or more Zones, but it is optional for smaller Districts. This level is designed to reduce the contestant pool to 20 students. Depending upon District decision, this pool can be 10 boys and 10 girls (separate gender contest) or any combination of 20 contestants (combined gender contests).

The Regional Chair should:

1. Announce the winners to the audience and present their winner plaques.
2. Submit for each winner:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Zone/Regional/District Entry Form
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of speech
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of birth record
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Entry fee (if applicable)

## To the District Oratorical Chair



## District Contest

The District administration shall determine the date and location of the District Contest. If District preliminary contests or regionals are necessary, they may be held as determined by the District administration, at locations other than at the site of the District Contest.

## After the District Contest

The District Chair should:

1. Announce the winners to the audience and present their winner plaques.
2. Have the District Governor sign each Winner's Information Form.
3. Submit for each winner:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ The Winner's Information Form
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Zone/Regional/District Entry Form
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of speech
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of birth record

### to:

*(For United States & Caribbean Clubs)*

**Optimist International Programs  
Department • Attn: Essay Coordinator  
4494 Lindell Blvd. • St. Louis, MO 63108  
or fax to: 1-314-371-6009**

*(For Canadian Clubs)*

**Optimist International Canada  
4559, boul. Métropolitain Est  
St-Léonard, Qc H1R 1Z4 • Canada  
or fax to: 1-514-721-1104**

## Contest Day Checklist

Get to the contest location early and make sure:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Seating is sufficient
- \_\_\_\_\_ Podium/lectern is present
- \_\_\_\_\_ Microphone is working
- \_\_\_\_\_ Awards are present
- \_\_\_\_\_ Certificates are signed and present
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video Camera (see guidelines for rules on use) is set up in an appropriate place
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assistants are aware of their responsibilities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sergeant-At-Arms are aware of their responsibilities if being used to record protests (see guidelines)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contestant's briefing is held
- \_\_\_\_\_ Judges' briefing is held
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contestants draw letters for speaking order
- \_\_\_\_\_ The emcee begins the contest on time

## Once All Speakers have Finished:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Judges and timekeepers total their individual scores for each contestant, sign their score sheets, and give them to the Contest Chair
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contest Chair leaves the room to review and rule on protests, and to complete scoring procedure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Announce the first, second, and third-place winners
- \_\_\_\_\_ Present each with their award and give the date and location of the next contest level
- \_\_\_\_\_ Introduce the judges and timekeeper
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take lots of pictures to use with post-event press releases
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have the first-place winners sign any required forms for the next contest level before they leave



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## After the Contest Day:

Mail:

1. Zone/District Entry Forms
2. Birth records
3. Copies of speeches
4. Entry Fee (if applicable) to the next contest level's Chair

**Complete the Evaluation Form and mail it to**

*(For United States & Caribbean Clubs)*

**Optimist International Programs**

**Department • Attn: Essay Coordinator  
4494 Lindell Blvd. • St. Louis, MO 63108  
or fax to: 1-314-371-6009**

*(For Canadian Clubs)*

**Optimist International Canada**

**4559, boul. Métropolitain Est  
St-Léonard, Qc H1R 1Z4 • Canada  
or fax to: 1-514-721-1104**

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## Supplies Needed on Contest Day

- \_\_\_\_\_ Podium
- \_\_\_\_\_ Microphone
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stop watch
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pencils/pens
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of Judging Forms
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of Rules
- \_\_\_\_\_ Awards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Calculator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Certificates
- \_\_\_\_\_ Date and time of next contest level
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cards or paper for protests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sufficient seating for expected attendance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meals (if luncheon is being served)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of Optimist membership brochures and JOOI Youth Club information
- \_\_\_\_\_ Guest sign-in book



# Official Rules

## Section I — Contests

1. Optimist Clubs have the option of sponsoring an Oratorical Contest.
2. Any Optimist Oratorical Contest must be sponsored in its entirety by an Optimist Club, Zone or District.
3. Zone and District contests are conducted by the District administration.
4. An Optimist Club must be in good standing in its District and Optimist International to be eligible to compete in the Zone or District Oratorical Contests.

## Section II — Contest Phases

The Optimist International Oratorical Contest is divided into several phases. The contest will begin at the Club level, proceed to the Zone level and end with a contest at the District level.

1. Club Contest —
  - A. **A Club may be represented by only two qualified contestants. If the District decides in advance to hold combined gender contests, the representation to the next level from each Club in that District can be from two boys, two girls or a boy and a girl. If the District decides in advance to hold separate contests for boys and girls, the representation from each Club to the next level will be from one boy and one girl only.**
2. Zone contests —
  - A. Zone contests will be held at times and places determined by the District. The Chairperson of the Zone contests will be determined by the District and supervised by the District Oratorical Contest Committee.
  - B. All Zone contests must comply with the official rules and only the Zone winners shall be eligible to compete at the District contest. Each Club is allowed to send two contestants to the next level. If the District decides in advance to hold combined gender contests, the representation to the next level from each Club in that District can be from two boys, two girls or a boy and a girl. If the District decides in advance to hold separate contests for boys and girls, the representation from each Club to the next level will be from one boy and one girl only.

3. District Contest —
  - A. The District administration shall determine the date and location of the District contest.
  - B. If District preliminary contests or regionals are necessary, they may be held as determined by the District administration, at locations other than at the site of the District contest.
  - C. The District Oratorical Contest Committee is responsible for all phases of the Oratorical Contest in the District. All District competition must be conducted by Optimists only, and this responsibility must not be delegated to outside groups.
  - D. **The District has the right to decide whether to have combined gender contests, or to separate the contests so that boys compete against boys and girls compete against girls.**

## Section III - General Rules

1. The contests are open to all boys and girls who are sponsored by an Optimist Club.
2. Each contestant shall prepare his or her own speech. However, the contestant may receive advice in the preparation of the speech and may make minor changes or improvements in the speech at any time.
3. Optimist International will have the right to edit, publish and record any speech used in any contest without payment to the author.
4. The transportation of a contestant to a Zone, and/or District contest, and the maintenance of the contestant at the contest site shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Optimist Club.
5. In keeping with the prestige of the Oratorical Contest and Optimist International, alcoholic beverages shall not be sold, consumed or possessed at any Optimist Oratorical Contest.
6. Any award bearing the words “Optimist Oratorical Contest,” “Optimist International,” “Friend of Youth” and/or the emblem of Optimist International, must be obtained from Optimist International. These marks are owned by Optimist International and may not be manufactured without the permission of the Optimist International Board of Directors.



## Section IV - Qualifications for Contestants

1. Contestants shall not have attained the age of 16 years prior to or on January 1 of the current school year. There is no minimum age.
2. All contestants in any Optimist Oratorical Contest must furnish age verification records with their entry before competing.
3. Each contestant entered in the Zone or District contest must present one typewritten copy of the speech, double-spaced and identified with contestant's name and sponsoring Optimist Club. This copy must be attached to the official entry form along with contestant's birth record before competing in the contest. The contestant must sign the entry form.
4. A contestant is eligible to enter/compete in only one Optimist Club Oratorical Contest during a contest year (October 1 to September 30 next year).
5. Any contestant who has won an Optimist International Oratorical scholarship award is ineligible for any future competition.

## Section V - Contest Rules

1. All contestants must receive a copy of the official rules and be instructed to thoroughly familiarize themselves with these rules.
2. The Contest Chairperson, prior to the beginning of the contest, shall conduct a drawing with all contestants present for the speaking order. All contestants will then be introduced as "Speaker A," "Speaker B," etc.
3. All contestants must speak on the official topic.
4. All contestants must state the official topic before beginning their speech in order for the timekeeper to record the exact time of the speech. A 3-point penalty is automatically assessed by the timekeeper for failure to state the official subject. Timing will begin immediately after the official topic is expressed. Any salutation to judges, audience, etc., should precede the announcement of the subject. Timing will stop when contestant finishes.
5. A speech may be delivered in a language other than English if the language used is an official language of the country in which the sponsoring Club is located.

6. Any quotation or copyrighted material used in the speech must be identified verbally during the speech and in the written copy of the speech with the original author's name. The contestant shall be fully responsible for the use of any quoted material and Optimist International shall assume no responsibility. Failure to identify non-original material shall result in disqualification.
7. No reference may be made that might identify the contestant, his or her family, or the specific geographical or political area from which he/she originates. This does not include religion or nationality. Maximum penalty may be 5 points as decided by each individual judge.
8. The time allowed will be not under 4 or over 5 minutes in length. Contestants going over or under the time limit will not be cautioned, but will be penalized 1 point for each 15 seconds or fraction thereof over or under the allotted time. These penalties will be determined by the official timekeeper.
9. An interval of at least one minute shall be allowed between contestants.
10. The use of props, special costumes or clothing, or the use of prompters will not be permitted. Penalty is disqualification. Notes and lecterns may be used if the contestant desires.
11. At all District final contests a neck type and a lectern microphone will be available for contestant's use, if desired.
12. No spectator may enter or leave the audience while a contestant is speaking. The audience must be alerted to these rules before the competition begins, and at various intervals, by the contest Chairperson. A sergeant-at-arms should be appointed to enforce these rules.
13. Contestants shall not be identified by names or sponsoring Clubs until after the last oration has been presented and the judges and timekeeper have left the room.
14. No contest shall have more 20 contestants competing. Depending upon District decision, this pool can be 10 boys and 10 girls (separate gender contests) or any combination of 20 contestants (combined gender contests). When a contest has more than 20 contestants, preliminary contests, in turn, shall have no more than 20 contestants.
15. In the event that a first-place winner in a Club or Zone contest cannot compete in a subsequent contest for any reason, the second-place winner shall be declared an alternate contestant.



16. Any protest in the conduct of any Club, Zone or District Oratorical Contest must be made immediately after the condition is noted that brings about the protest. Protests received after the next contestant has been introduced, or in the case of the last contestant, after the judges have retired for deliberation, will not be entertained under any circumstances. The Contest Chairperson will decide all protests in conformity with these rules. The decision of the contest Chairperson is the final word, and no higher appeals will be recognized. In the case of Club contests, the Club contest Chairperson has this authority; in the case of Zone or District contests, the final authority is vested in the District Oratorical Contest Committee Chairperson.

## Section VI — Judging and Timing

1. Each contest shall have three judges and one timekeeper. The judges for all Oratorical Contests cannot be Optimists and cannot be acquainted with any of the contestants. The judges should be well-qualified.
2. The judges and timekeepers cannot be identified at the time of the contest or by advance publicity, but only after the last oration has been presented.
3. Judges and timekeeper must use the official score sheets furnished in this planning guide.
4. During the contest the judges and timekeeper shall each be in different locations within the room.
5. The timekeeper shall be provided with a stopwatch or equivalent timing device.
6. Each judge must render a final decision on all contestants without consultation with other judges or any other person. Each judge and timekeeper must sign his/her official score sheet.
7. The result of a judge's decision must be kept confidential. No one shall attempt to discuss a contestant's score with the judge.
8. After the judges have totaled their scores for each contestant, deducted penalty points and ranked each contestant, the judges shall sign their score sheets and give them to the Contest Chairperson. Each judge's score and rank for each contestant shall then be entered and tabulated for each contestant on the Official Oratorical Contest Report Form. From this form, the contest winner will be determined.

9. In all Club and Zone contests, the first, second and runner-up contestants shall be determined and announced. However, if preliminary contests are held, then only the first-place winner will be announced; or if desired, the top two or three contestants, without reference to their actual position in the contest.
10. **Each District will declare either two or three winners. In combined gender contests, there will either be two winners awarded \$1,500 each, or three winners awarded scholarships of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively for first, second and third place. In Districts conducting separate contests for boys and girls, each first-place boy and girl will receive a scholarship of \$1,500.**
11. No judge may serve at more than one level of competition in the Optimist Oratorical Contest, i.e., Club, Zone or District.

## Section VII - Scoring of Contest

Scoring in all Club, Zone and District contests will conform to the following scoring schedule.

Poise: (Appearance, Personality) 20 points

Content of Speech: (Subject Adherence, Theme, Logic, Content, Color) 35 points

Delivery & Presentation: (Voice, Volume, Pronunciation, Gestures, Eye Contact, Sincerity & Emphasis) 35 points

Overall Effectiveness: (Appeal, Impression, Attitude, Effect) 10 points

## Section VI – Penalties

1. Use of props, costume: disqualification
2. Self-identification: 1-5 points
3. Time penalties: 1 point for each 15 seconds over or under the official limits
4. Failure to announce topic: 3 points
5. Failure to complete speech: disqualification
6. Failure to identify non-original material: disqualification



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## Section IX - Awards

The following are the only awards to be given in the Optimist International Oratorical Contest at all Club, Zone, Regional and District contests. These official Optimist International awards are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or the Canadian Service Centre.

1. Club Awards — The official Optimist International medallions must be awarded. They may be awarded as first, second and third, or as first, second and runner up. Any combination of medallions may be presented at the option of the Club. The official medallions will be available in any of these combinations from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or the Canadian Service Centre.

Clubs are now allowed to give monetary awards of up to \$500 for the Oratorical contest in addition to the official medallions. The Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary. All District and International level scholarships will remain the same.

2. Zone Awards — Zone Winner Plaques and Certificates of Participation are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or The Canadian Service Centre.
3. Regional Awards—Regional Winner Plaques and Certificates of Participation are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or the Canadian Service Centre.
4. District Awards —District Winner Plaques from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or Canadian Service Centre should be given to the boy and girl winner. AWARDS WILL NO LONGER BE ORDERED OR SENT AUTOMATICALLY.

A. **Each winner of the District level contest will receive a scholarship for use at a college, university or trade school. In combined gender contests, there will either be two winners awarded \$1,500 each, or three winners awarded scholarships of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively for first, second and third place. In Districts conducting separate contests for boys and girls, each first-place boy and girl will receive a scholarship of \$1,500.**

B. Scholarships are funded by the Optimist International Foundations of the United States and Canada.

C. All scholarships will be payable either to the student or to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.

- D. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
- E. Scholarships are held for 12 years from the effective date.

Make photocopies of this form to distribute to schools, community centers, churches, etc. Tear pads of this sheet may be purchased from Shumsky Enterprises or the Canadian Service Centre.

# Application for the 2003-2004 Optimist International Oratorical Contest

Name \_\_\_\_\_ M F

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ SSN/SIN \_\_\_\_\_

Have you participated in any other Optimist Club's Oratorical Contest this school year?  Yes  No

*I wish to enter the Optimist Oratorical Contest to receive training and experience in public speaking. I will study the rules of the contest and will be bound by all of the requirements of the rules.*

Contestant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

*I give my permission for my son/daughter to participate in the Optimist Oratorical Contest.*

Parent or Guardian's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsored by the Optimist Club of \_\_\_\_\_

## Official Topic: "Thinking, Working & Expecting the Best" Official Rules

### Section I — Contests

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3. Zone and District contests are conducted by the District administration.
4. An Optimist Club must be in good standing in its District and Optimist International to be eligible to compete in the Zone or District Oratorical Contests.

### Section II — Contest Phases

The Optimist International Oratorical Contest is divided into several phases. The contest will begin at the Club level, proceed to the Zone level and end with a contest at the District level.

1. Club Contest —
  - A. **A Club may be represented by only two qualified contestants. If the District decides in advance to hold combined gender contests, the representation to the next level from each Club in that District can be from two boys, two girls or a boy and a girl. If the District decides in advance to hold separate contests for boys and girls, the representation from each Club to the next level will be from one boy and one girl only.**
2. Zone contests —
  - A. Zone contests will be held at times and places determined by the District. The Chairperson of the Zone contests will be determined by the District and supervised by the District Oratorical Contest Committee.
  - B. All Zone contests must comply with the official rules and only the Zone winners shall be eligible to compete at the District contest. Each Club is allowed to send two contestants to the next level. If the District decides in advance to hold combined gender contests, the representation to the next level from each Club in that District can be from two boys, two girls or a boy and a girl. If the District decides in advance to hold separate contests for boys and girls, the representation from each Club to the next level will be from one boy and one girl only.
3. District Contest —
  - A. The District administration shall determine the date and location of the District contest.
  - B. If District preliminary contests or regionals are necessary, they may be held as determined by the District administration, at locations other than at the site of the District contest.
  - C. The District Oratorical Contest Committee is responsible for all phases of the Oratorical Contest in the District. All District competition must be conducted by Optimists only, and this responsibility must not be delegated to outside groups.
  - D. **The District has the right to decide whether to have combined gender contests, or to separate the contests so that boys compete against boys and girls compete against girls.**

### Section III - General Rules

1. The contests are open to all boys and girls in public, private or parochial schools who fulfill the qualifications for contestants and are sponsored by an Optimist Club. Home schooled children are also eligible.
2. Each contestant shall prepare his or her own speech. However, the contestant may receive advice in the preparation of the speech and may make minor changes or improvements in the speech at any time.
3. Optimist International will have the right to edit, publish and record any speech used in any contest without payment to the author.
4. The transportation of a contestant to a Zone, and/or District contest, and the maintenance of the contestant at the contest site shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring Optimist Club.

5. In keeping with the prestige of the Oratorical Contest and Optimist International, alcoholic beverages shall not be sold, consumed or possessed at any Optimist Oratorical Contest.
6. Any award bearing the words "Optimist Oratorical Contest," "Optimist International," "Friend of Youth" and/or the emblem of Optimist International, must be obtained from Optimist International. These marks are owned by Optimist International and may not be manufactured without the permission of the Optimist International Board of Directors.

### Section IV - Qualifications for Contestants

1. The contest is open to students under age 16 as of December 31 of the 2003-2004 school year. There is no minimum age.
2. All contestants in any Optimist Oratorical Contest must furnish age verification records with their entry before competing.
3. Each contestant entered in the Zone or District contest must present one typewritten copy of the speech, double-spaced and identified with contestant's name and sponsoring Optimist Club. This copy must be attached to the official entry form along with contestant's birth record before competing in the contest. The contestant must sign the entry form.
4. A contestant is eligible to enter/compete in only one Optimist Club Oratorical Contest during a contest year (October 1 to September 30 next year).
5. Any contestant who has won an Optimist International Oratorical scholarship award is ineligible for any future competition.

### Section V - Contest Rules

1. All contestants must receive a copy of the official rules and be instructed to thoroughly familiarize themselves with these rules.
2. The Contest Chairperson, prior to the beginning of the contest, shall conduct a drawing with all contestants present for the speaking order. All contestants will then be introduced as "Speaker A," "Speaker B," etc.
3. All contestants must speak on the official topic.
4. All contestants must state the official topic before beginning their speech in order for the timekeeper to record the exact time of the speech. A 3-point penalty is automatically assessed by the timekeeper for failure to state the official subject. Timing will begin immediately after the official topic is expressed. Any salutation to judges, audience, etc., should precede the announcement of the subject. Timing will stop when contestant finishes.
5. A speech may be delivered in a language other than English if the language used is an official language of the country in which the sponsoring Club is located.
6. Any quotation or copyrighted material used in the speech must be identified verbally during the speech and in the written copy of the speech with the original author's name. The contestant shall be fully responsible for the use of any quoted material and Optimist International shall assume no responsibility. Failure to identify non-original material shall result in disqualification.
7. No reference may be made that might identify the contestant, his or her family, or the specific geographical or political area from which he/she originates. This does not include religion or nationality. Maximum penalty may be 5 points as decided by each individual judge.
8. The time allowed will be not under 4 or over 5 minutes in length. Contestants going over or under the time limit will not be cautioned, but will be penalized 1 point for each 15 seconds or fraction thereof over or under the allotted time. These penalties will be determined by the official timekeeper.
9. An interval of at least one minute shall be allowed between contestants.
10. The use of props, special costumes or clothing, or the use of prompters will not be permitted. Penalty is disqualification. Notes and lecterns may be used if the contestant desires.
11. At all District final contests a neck type and a lectern microphone will be available for contestant's use, if desired.



12. No spectator may enter or leave the audience while a contestant is speaking. The audience must be alerted to these rules before the competition begins, and at various intervals, by the contest Chairperson. A sergeant-at-arms should be appointed to enforce these rules.
13. Contestants shall not be identified by names or sponsoring Clubs until after the last oration has been presented and the judges and timekeeper have left the room.
14. No contest shall have more than 20 contestants competing. Depending upon District decision, this pool can be 10 boys and 10 girls (separate gender contests) or any combination of 20 contestants (combined gender contests). When a contest has more than 20 contestants, preliminary contests, in turn, shall have no more than 20 contestants.
15. In the event that a first-place winner in a Club or Zone contest cannot compete in a subsequent contest for any reason, the second-place winner shall be declared an alternate contestant.
16. Any protest in the conduct of any Club, Zone or District Oratorical Contest must be made immediately after the condition is noted that brings about the protest. Protests received after the next contestant has been introduced, or in the case of the last contestant, after the judges have retired for deliberation, will not be entertained under any circumstances. The contest Chairperson will decide all protests in conformity with these rules. The decision of the contest Chairperson is the final word, and no higher appeals will be recognized. In the case of Club contests, the Club contest Chairperson has this authority; in the case of Zone or District contests, the final authority is vested in the District Oratorical Contest committee Chairperson.

#### Section VI — Judging and Timing

1. Each contest shall have three judges and one timekeeper. The judges for all Oratorical Contests cannot be Optimists and cannot be acquainted with any of the contestants. The judges should be well-qualified.
2. The judges and timekeepers cannot be identified at the time of the contest or by advance publicity, but only after the last oration has been presented.
3. Judges and timekeeper must use the official score sheets furnished in this planning guide.
4. During the contest the judges and timekeeper shall each be in different locations within the room.
5. The timekeeper shall be provided with a stopwatch or equivalent timing device.
6. Each judge must render a final decision on all contestants without consultation with other judges or any other person. Each judge and timekeeper must sign his/her official score sheet.
7. The result of a judge's decision must be kept confidential. No one shall attempt to discuss a contestant's score with the judge.
8. After the judges have totaled their scores for each contestant, deducted penalty points and ranked each contestant, the judges shall sign their score sheets and give them to the contest Chairperson. Each judge's score and rank for each contestant shall then be entered and tabulated for each contestant on the Official Oratorical Contest Report Form. From this form, the contest winner will be determined.
9. In all Club and Zone contests, the first, second and runner-up contestants shall be determined and announced. However, if preliminary contests are held, then only the first-place winner will be announced; or if desired, the top two or three contestants, without reference to their actual position in the contest.
10. **Each District will declare either two or three winners. In combined gender contests, there will either be two winners awarded \$1,500 each, or three winners awarded scholarships of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively for first, second and third place. In Districts conducting separate contests for boys and girls, each first-place boy and girl will receive a scholarship of \$1,500.**
11. No judge may serve at more than one level of competition in the Optimist Oratorical Contest, i.e., Club, Zone or District.

#### Section VII - Scoring of Contest

Scoring in all Club, Zone and District contests will conform to the following scoring schedule.

- Poise: (Appearance, Personality) 20 points
- Content of Speech: (Subject Adherence, Theme, Logic, Content, Color) 35 points
- Delivery & Presentation: (Voice, Volume, Pronunciation, Gestures, Eye Contact, Sincerity & Emphasis) 35 points
- Overall Effectiveness: (Appeal, Impression, Attitude, Effect) 10 points

#### Section VI – Penalties

1. Use of props, costume: disqualification
2. Self-identification: 1-5 points
3. Time penalties: 1 point for each 15 seconds over or under the official limits
4. Failure to announce topic: 3 points
5. Failure to complete speech: disqualification
6. Failure to identify non-original material: disqualification

#### Section IX - Awards

The following are the only awards to be given in the Optimist International Oratorical Contest at all Club, Zone, regional and District contests. These official Optimist International awards are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or the Canadian Service Centre.

1. Club Awards — The official Optimist International medallions must be awarded. They may be awarded as first, second and third, or as first, second and runner up. Any combination of medallions may be presented at the option of the Club. The official medallions will be available in any of these combinations from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or the Canadian Service Centre.
2. Zone Awards — Zone Winner Plaques and Certificates of Participation are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or The Canadian Service Centre.
3. Regional Awards—Regional Winner Plaques and Certificates of Participation are available from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or the Canadian Service Centre.
4. District Awards —District Winner Plaques from Shumsky Enterprises (U.S.) or Canadian Service Centre should be given to the boy and girl winner. AWARDS WILL NO LONGER BE ORDERED OR SENT AUTOMATICALLY.
  - A. **Each winner of the District level contest will receive a scholarship for use at a college, university or trade school. In combined gender contests, there will either be two winners awarded \$1,500 each, or three winners awarded scholarships of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively for first, second and third place. In Districts conducting separate contests for boys and girls, each first-place boy and girl will receive a scholarship of \$1,500.**
  - B. Scholarships are funded by the Optimist International Foundations of the United States and Canada.
  - C. All scholarships will be payable either to the student or to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
  - D. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
  - E. Scholarships are held for 12 years from the effective date.

**For more information please call:**



# Speaking Order Slips

<b>Speaker A</b>	<b>Speaker F</b>
<b>Speaker B</b>	<b>Speaker G</b>
<b>Speaker C</b>	<b>Speaker H</b>
<b>Speaker D</b>	<b>Speaker I</b>
<b>Speaker E</b>	<b>Speaker J</b>

## Oratorical Contest Chair:

Please cut apart the slips to be used to determine speaker order. Each contestant should draw a slip before the contest. You should record the speaker's name and letter on your Contest Worksheet. Contestants should keep their slip as a reminder of their speaking order. They can also be used to claim their copy of the videotape if being utilized.



Make 2 copies

Combined Boy Girl  
(Circle One)

# Club Contest Worksheet

Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Facility \_\_\_\_\_  
District \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Speaking Order	Contestant's Name	Club Entry Blank	Birth Record	Place in Contest

### Instructions:

1. Check entry forms and birth records as submitted from the contestants. All items must be presented by the contestants before your contest begins.
2. When all contestants are present, have them draw for speaking order using the slips provided and record the information on the form.
3. When the official results of the contest are confirmed, transfer the results to this worksheet by writing "first, second and runner up" in the appropriate column. Introduce the runner-up first, then the second-place winner and then the first-place winner. This worksheet should be made a part of the Club's records. It is not forwarded with information to the next level of the contest.



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(Circle One)

# Official Oratorical Contest

## Judge's Score Sheet

For all Club, Zone and District contests

ITEMS TO BE JUDGED										
Speakers' Order of Appearance	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Poise <i>(Appearance, Personality)</i> 20 points										
Content of Speech <i>(Subject Adherence, Theme, Logic, Content, Color)</i> 35 points										
Delivery & Presentation <i>(Voice, Volume, Pronunciation, Gestures, Eye Contact, Sincerity, Emphasis)</i> 35 points										
Overall Effectiveness <i>(Appeal, Impression, Attitude, Effect)</i> 10 points										
<b>Total Judge's Points</b>										
<b>Each judge shall assess the following penalties against a contestant as infractions of the rules occur.</b>										
Contestant	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Use of props, costume <i>(Judge's penalty is disqualification)</i>										
Self-identification not to include nationality or religion <i>(Judge's penalty 1 to 5 points)</i>										
<b>The timekeeper penalty will assess the following penalties only after a judge has totaled the speech score for each contestant</b>										
Time Penalties <i>(1 point each 15 seconds or portion over or under official limits)</i>										
Failure to announce the official topic at beginning of speech <i>(Automatic 3 points)</i>										
Failure to complete speech <i>(Disqualification)</i>										
Failure to identify non-original material verbally during the speech <i>(Disqualification)</i>										
<b>Total Penalty Points</b>										
<b>Net scores of points (no ties allowed)</b>										
<b>Contestant's rank in the contest</b>										

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Judge's Name \_\_\_\_\_



# Instructions to Judges

*The contest scoring has been divided into four phases. The general intent of each phase is as follows:*

**1. Poise .....20 points**

**2. Content of Speech .....35 points**

*(Subject Adherence, Theme, Logic, Content, Color)*

In this category just the material and its organization as presented by the contestant should be judged. A judge should consider the importance of adherence to the subject of the speech, the proper introduction and the logic and coherent development of the theme which brings about a successful and adequate conclusion. Figures of speech, similes, metaphors, colorful choice of words and zestful, descriptive phrases are important qualities.

**3. Delivery and Presentation .....35 points**

*(Voice, Pronunciation, Enunciation, Gestures, Emphasis)*

Delivery and presentation shall be judged on several factors. Voice quality should be recognized in tone, pitch and volume. Delivery should be continuous without hesitation or halting. Enunciation and pronunciation are most important. Gestures should be appraised for frequency, nature and effectiveness. Movement and gestures should not be awkward. Desire to be convincing should be obvious, therefore, emphasis should be well placed and dynamic.

**4. Overall Effectiveness .....10 points**

*(Appeal, Impression, Attitude, Effect)*

In this category the overall impression created by the speaker and the speech should be rated. In any contest of this type, the overall impression of a specific effect is a result of many factors. Some of which are indefinable and inexpressible and cannot be individually scored. Yet the final impression persists and is most important. In this phase of scoring, this general overall impression is given actual point values. While it must not be used as such, it is in making this particular score that a judge would most closely approach a conclusion that would actually rank the contestants in his or her own opinion.

## Penalty Explanations

- A. **Use of props, costumes, etc.** - The use of props or special costumes or clothing or the use of teleprompters will not be permitted. The penalty is disqualification. Notes and lecterns may be used if the speaker desires to do so.
- B. **Self identification** - To eliminate any bias or prejudice, no speech or part of a speech may be used that identifies the contestant or family. This does not include nationality or religion. For example: "My father the mayor" would be considered self-identification and must be assessed a penalty. The maximum penalty is 5 points but is assigned by each judge based on the degree of self-identification.
- C. **Time penalties** - The time limit for speeches is not to be less than 4 minutes or over 5 minutes in length. Contestants going over or under the time limit will not be cautioned, but will be penalized one point for each 15 seconds or portion thereof over or under the limits. These penalties will be determined by the timekeeper.
- D. **Failure to announce the official topic at the beginning of the speech** - To assist the timekeeper in establishing a uniform starting time, all contestants must express the official topic of the speech before beginning the speech. A 3-point penalty must be assessed by the timekeeper for failure to state the official topic.
- E. **Failure to complete the speech.** Each contestant must complete the entire speech. The penalty is disqualification.

## Ranking contestants

Contestants should be ranked from first to fifth place with the lowest rank for all contestants being 5.







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**Combined    Boy    Girl**  
(Circle One)

# Official Report Form

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**For all Club, Zone and District contests**

Contestant's Speaking Order	First Judge		Second Judge		Third Judge		Total of Point Grades	Total of Rank	Place
	Point Grades	Rank	Point Grades	Rank	Point Grades	Rank			
A									
B									
C									
D									
E									
F									
G									
H									
I									
J									

**Please read instructions on the reverse side before filling in the chart above**

The Oratorical Contest Chair should check the addition for each contestant's score. Enter the final point grades and ranks on this report form. The Contest Chair should announce the results from this form.

For preliminary contests, the Chair will name by letter the two or three best contestants without announcing first, second or third-place.

For final contests, the Chairperson will name by letter the third, second then first-place winner.

**Read instructions on the other side**



## Please read before filling in chart on reverse side

To determine rank in Club, Zone and District contests, each judge ranks the speakers as 1, 2, 3, etc., according to their scores. Ties are not permitted.

At the end of the contest, the Chair or assistant collects the judges' score sheets and checks the math. The point grade and position of rank for each contestant is entered on the Official Report Form for each judge. The winning contestant is then determined as follows:

1. If any contestant is ranked first by a majority of the judges, he or she is automatically declared the winner. This method is not used to rank a contestant second or third.
2. All other contestants are ranked by the "total of rank" system. This means that the rank, not the points each judge has given each contestant, is added and this figure is placed in the Total of Rank column. First-place is determined by this means also, if no one qualifies under the method explained in #1 above. The lowest total wins first-place, the next lowest wins second-place and so on.
3. If a two-way tie results for any place, it is broken by a preferential vote. Using the rankings given on the ballots, a tabulation is made on the number of judges who placed one of the tied contestants higher than the other. Example: Two contestants, speakers D and H, are tied for third place and each has received a rank of nine.

Contestants' Rank of Order	Rank of Judge 1	Rank of Judge 2	Rank of Judge 3	Total of Rank
D	3	4	2	9
H	5	3	1	9

**Speaker H would be declared the third-place winner as two judges (#2 and 3) ranked H higher than speaker D, who would be ranked fourth in the contest.**

4. If a three-way tie results by the total of rank system, then and only then, are the point grades for each contestant totaled to break the three-way tie.

**Caution:** The scoring process can be complicated. Allow adequate time to complete the Report Form carefully. Scores and rankings should be checked by a second person to ensure accuracy, but remember this information is confidential! Announcing winners incorrectly can be disastrous!



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(Circle One)

# Official Zone/Regional/District Entry Form

Zone Oratorical Chair is \_\_\_\_\_

District Oratorical Chair is \_\_\_\_\_

***This form should be filed with your Zone, Regional or District Chair at least two weeks before the contest.***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ SSN/SIN \_\_\_\_\_  
month/day/year

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

## To Club and District officers

*“As a contestant, I received a copy of the official rules for the Optimist International Oratorical Contest and fully understand them. I agree to be bound by all requirements. I have prepared my own speech with limited assistance on the topic, and have given due credit in writing and verbally in my speech. I understand that any omission or violation of the rules on my part will mean immediate disqualification.”*

Contestant’s signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Contest Information to be completed by the appropriate level’s Chair as the paperwork progresses with the winner.

Number of youth in Club contest \_\_\_\_\_

Number of youth in Zone contest \_\_\_\_\_

Number of youth in Regional contest \_\_\_\_\_

Number of youth in District contest \_\_\_\_\_

## For Club, Zone, Regional Chairs’ signatures

*“We, the undersigned, in full compliance with the Optimist International Oratorical Contest rules, enter this contestant in the Zone/Regional/District Contest. We understand that this form, copy of speech and birth record must be submitted to the contest Chair before this contestant competes in the next level of the contest.”*

Optimist Club of \_\_\_\_\_ District name \_\_\_\_\_

Club Number

Club President’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Club Contest Chair’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Zone Chair’s Signature (to enter regional or District level) \_\_\_\_\_

Regional Chair’s Signature (to enter District level) \_\_\_\_\_



## **Instructions:**

The reverse side of this page contains the official Entry Form for your Zone/Region/District Oratorical Contest. This form must be completed for your contestants to be eligible to compete in the contests.

Be sure that your contestants are fully qualified to compete by filling in each line of this entry form. The contestant is required to sign this form and cannot be processed without the signature. Be sure that your Club completes all its requirements on the entry form including signatures. Attach a copy of the speech and birth record, and submit them to the Chair of the next level at least two weeks prior to the contest date.

Information about Zone and District contest dates is available from the District Chair or Lieutenant Governor. To obtain the name of your District Oratorical Chair or :Lieutenant Governor, contact the District's Governor.





## **Instructions:**

1. Record in column 1 the speaking order of the contestants once it has been determined.
2. Record in column 2 the contestants' names and sponsoring Clubs.
3. Record in column 3 the receipt of the Official Zone/Region/District Entry Forms.
4. Record in column 4 the receipt of birth records.
5. Record in column 5 the copy of the speeches.
6. Record in column 6 first, second and, third-place winners.

It is the responsibility of the Club to provide the entry form, birth record and copy of the speech to the Zone Contest Chair. It is the responsibility of the Zone Contest Chair to provide this information to the District Chair.

**This form and its contents should be viewed by contest officials only.**



Make 2 copies

For Programs Dept.  
Use Only

# District Oratorical Winner's Information Form

To Be Completed by the District Oratorical Chair Only

Please print or type

Combined Boy Girl  
(Circle One)

Name of District Winner \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ SSN/SIN \_\_\_\_\_  
month/day/year

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsored by the Optimist Club of \_\_\_\_\_

District Name & Number \_\_\_\_\_

We certify that the above named contestant is the winner of the \_\_\_\_\_

District

Oratorical Contest conducted on \_\_\_\_\_  
month/day/year

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Governor

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
District Oratorical Chair

Submit this form (with all required signatures) along with the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of Birth Record
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of Speech
- \_\_\_\_\_ Official Zone/Regional/District Entry Form

To: (For United States & Caribbean Clubs)

**Optimist International Programs Department • Attn: Oratorical Coordinator**  
**4494 Lindell Blvd. • St. Louis, MO 63108**  
**or fax to: 1-314-371-6006**

(For Canadian Clubs)

**Optimist International Canada**  
**4559, boul. Métropolitain Est • St-Léonard, Qc H1R 1Z4 • Canada**  
**or fax to: 1-514-721-1104**

**To be received no later than July 1, 2004!**



# Oratorical Contest Evaluation Form

Year

## Attention contest Chair:

Once your contest is over, please complete this form and mail or fax it to:

*(For United States & Caribbean Clubs)*

**Optimist International Programs Department • Attn: Oratorical Coordinator**

**4494 Lindell Blvd. • St. Louis, MO 63108**

**or fax to: 1-314-371-6006**

*(For Canadian Clubs)*

**Optimist International Canada**

**4559, boul. Métropolitain Est • St-Léonard, Qc H1R 1Z4 • Canada**

**or fax to: 1-514-721-1104**

District Number

Did you hold a Combined \_\_\_\_\_ or Separate Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Contest?

Number of Boys \_\_\_\_\_, Girls \_\_\_\_\_, competing in the contest

Number of Schools \_\_\_\_\_, Clubs \_\_\_\_\_, other Organizations \_\_\_\_\_ involved in the contest

Number of years, including this year, that you have Chaired the contest \_\_\_\_\_

Number of members recruited this year from activity in the contest \_\_\_\_\_

## On a scale of 1 to 5 rate the topic

Liked 1 2 3 4 5 Disliked

When were you appointed to Chair this contest? \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Month/Year

## Rate the materials on a scale from 1 to 5

Rules/Entry pad Liked 1 2 3 4 5 Disliked

Poster Liked 1 2 3 4 5 Disliked

Planning Guide Liked 1 2 3 4 5 Disliked

Please describe what you enjoyed most about the contest and why. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What recommendations, if any, would you propose for improving the Oratorical contest? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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# Kids Speak Out

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This is a program for boys and girls who may be too young to participate in the Optimist Oratorical Contest.

All young people can legitimately compete in the Optimist Oratorical Contest. Often youngsters of ages 10, 11, or 12 win at various levels of the competition, but as the contests progress from Club to Zone to District level, the competition usually narrows to the older contestants. For this reason, your Club may want to conduct a “pre-Oratorical” program, providing a more equitable competition for younger speakers.

Two general rules governing the conduct of such a competition quickly become evident. First, the Optimist Oratorical Contest rules must be loosely interpreted and used only where common sense applies. Second, winning should be secondary to participating. The real test of this program is not who wins, but rather providing the opportunity for boys and girls to gain experience in speaking to an audience.

Although winners are normally selected, emphasis should be placed on making all contestants feel like a winner merely by participating. Participation certificates are available through Shumsky Enterprises (U.S. and Caribbean) or the Canadian Service Centre.

To begin conducting a “Kids Speak Out” program, contact local elementary schools, administrators and teachers. If permitted, Club members can visit the classroom where presentations can be made as part of the elementary curriculum.

An abbreviated set of rules are outlined. They may be adapted to suit the needs of your local schools and the desires of the teachers involved. There is no higher level of competition, so whatever combination of rules work best should be used. If additional rules are deemed necessary, adapt what is needed from the traditional Oratorical Contest rules.

Photocopies of some of the judging forms and other materials contained in the Oratorical Contest Planning Guide may be used in conducting this program.

**Note:** Oratorical medallions or plaques intended for the regular Oratorical Contest should not be presented.



## Section I

### General Rules

1. There is only one level of competition and this occurs at the Club or local level.
2. Boys and girls compete together in the same contest.
3. Each contestant prepares his or her own presentation. However, contestants may receive advice in this preparation, and changes or improvements may be made at any time.
4. Presentations are to be made within the classroom, before the student's peers. Optimists may attend if agreeable with the teacher.

## Section II

### Qualifications for Contestants

1. Contestants must be pupils registered in a grammar or elementary school.
2. The presentation may be delivered in the student's native tongue.
3. Any quotations or non-original material used in the presentation must be identified and properly credited.

## Section III

### Contest Rules

1. The official subject of the contest is the same as the regular Oratorical Contest.
2. All contestants must speak on the official subject and announce the subject before beginning in order to begin timing the speech.
3. Text or notes may be used if the contestant desires.
4. Microphones may be used if deemed necessary by the teacher, so long as all contestants have the same option.
5. Presentations should not be less than two minutes and not more than three minutes.
6. The teacher should conduct a drawing before the contest to determine the speaking order.
7. Judges may be Optimists if the teacher desires, or other teachers may be selected.

## Section IV

### Scoring

1. Poise 20 points  
(*appearance, poise and personality*)
2. Content of Speech 20 points  
(*subject adherence, theme, content, logic and color*)
3. Delivery and Presentation 40 points  
(*voice, enunciation, pronunciation, gestures, sincerity and emphasis*)
4. Overall Effectiveness 20 points  
(*appeal, impression, attitude and effect*)

## Section V

### Penalties

1. Failure to announce title 3-point deduction
2. Time penalties 2-point deduction for each 15 seconds or fraction thereof over or under allotted time.

**Note:** The above penalties may be used only if the teacher feels this is beneficial.

## Section VI

### Awards

1. Teachers and Optimists should agree on the number of winners. Each should be given an appropriate award.
2. All contestants should receive a certificate of participation.