

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from COMBINED grade levels 7 and 8 OR ages 12 and 13 respectively by Sept. 1 of the current school year, if in an ungraded school, may be entered in the MODERN ORATORY District Contest from each school. Designated adults representing each school will select contestants to represent the campus at the District Meet based on their abilities and interest in public speaking, as well as other factors, which are decided upon by each school.

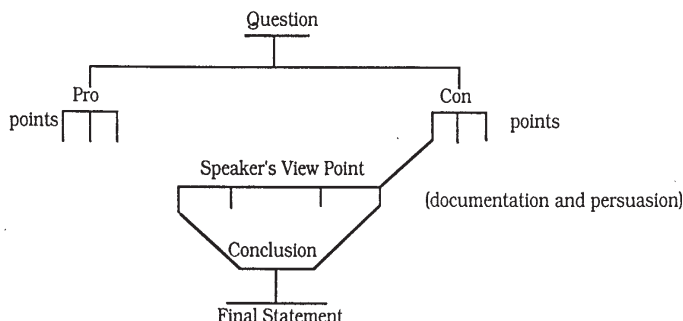
• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** 4 must compete in a grade for 2 to advance (See page 8 for complete rules.)

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** The Modern Oratory contest provides opportunities for students to explore the use of the voice and body in speaking situations; to organize ideas; to prepare and deliver a researched speech; and to develop self-confidence. In Modern Oratory, the contestant will **select one of the topics listed for the current year**, determine the critical issues in the topic, and determine and acknowledge both pro and con points, citing support discovered in the research. Students will decide which side they will defend and support that side with additional evidence.

The maximum time limit for each speech is **six** minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the allotted six minutes shall be disqualified. Better speeches are at least three minutes in length, however. A “30-seconds left card” should be held up by the director/timekeeper to indicate time left in speech.

The format of the speech should include an introduction, statement of the question, development of both pro and con points accompanied by documentation, statement of the position the writer will defend, defense of that position with documentation, and a summary and conclusion with a final statement. After writing and editing the paper, the oration in its final form **MUST** be **delivered from memory without notes.**

Along with the skills of analysis, research, note-taking, documentation, evaluation and decision making come those of delivery and the skill of memorization. Because so few situations create a format for the development of the skill of memorization, this contest might provide just that incentive. Study the diagram of the contest development diagram below:



**Appropriate Gestures:** The Impromptu Speaking contest rules include the following instructions: Responsive use of the body (i.e., spontaneous changes in posture, gesture, and place-to-place movement) are permissible. However, this active use of the body should:

- (A) be appropriate to the demands of the selection;
- (B) be a natural outgrowth from the literature to be performed;
- (C) not call attention to itself; and
- (D) be limited in scope.

The judge's opinion in this matter is final.

### **2009-2010 MODERN ORATORY TOPICS**

Contestants must select one of the following topics for developing the oration.

- 1) **Does today's popular culture provide positive role models for teenagers?**
- 2) **Can the Food and Drug Administration do more to protect food supplies in the US?**
- 3) **Should the Texas Legislature convene more frequently than its current biennial schedule?**
- 4) **Has the "War on Drugs" been successful?**
- 5) **Does the US have a responsibility to aid in resolving conflicts abroad?**

• **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.** 1) The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for evaluation pick-up and/or awards presentation. (Alternates taking the place of absent registered contestants should be sure to let the contest director know as they enter the room to save time in roll call.) 2) The contest director will call speaker number 1 into the room, either from the hall or a holding room. 3) The contestant will present his/her speech before an audience, and either one or three judges. (All speech events are judged by an odd number of judges.) When only 30 seconds are left in the allotted time for a speaker, the contest director, who also serves as the timekeeper, will hold up a “30 seconds left” card in order to assist the contestant in stopping the speech prior to the end of the time limit. After speaking, **the contestant will exit the room to the holding area.**

• **ADVANCING TO THE FINAL ROUND.** If there are more than 9 students in the competition, two or more sections of the contest (preliminary round) will be held. The top ranked contestants from each section (top 3 if 2 section/ top 2 if 3 sections) will advance to the final round. Contestants may perform the same speech at all levels of competition at both district and state, but they may also present a different speech.

• **POSTING THE PRELIMINARY ROUND.** After judges have made their decisions in the preliminary rounds, contestants pick up their evaluations at the time and place designated on the schedule. At this time the names of the contestants advancing to the final round will be announced in random order and posted on a designated bulletin board in a random speaking order for the final round.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES / CONTEST DIRECTORS

• **PREPARATION FOR CONTEST.** Read and follow all instructions provided in the “Information Pertaining to All Contests” section of the *PSIA Academic Handbook*. Observe and practice with students all rules and procedures delineated in the “Instructions to the Contestant” and in the “Checklist for Contest Directors” and the “Checklist for JUDGES.” Preparation for the MODERN ORATORY Contest should include instruction in organizational speech delivery. There are no study materials to order.

Teachers/Coaches will find that Modern Oratory provides participants with an opportunity to:

- 1) formulate ideas;
- 2) define problems;
- 3) research the issues;
- 4) express ideas effectively;
- 5) recognize the rights of others to have differing viewpoints;
- 6) formulate opinions based on solid documentation;
- 7) write multiple-paragraph compositions incorporating outside information with documentation;
- 8) write persuasive discourse of a variety of types;
- 9) revise written work for content, organization, topic development, appropriate transition, clarity of language, appropriate word and sentence choice, according to the purpose and audience for which a piece is written.

Teachers and parents may assist the student in Modern Oratory BUT SHOULD NOT WRITE THE SPEECH FOR THE STUDENT. Middle school students have amazing talent, but it takes good teachers to help it all come together.

• **DRESS CODE:** Contestants are expected to wear regular clothing without school logos. Instruct students to dress comfortably, but avoid wearing shorts, short dresses, cut offs, or any article of clothing that would diminish the quality of the presentation. Although NOT a disqualification for wearing inappropriate clothing, justification for a lower ranking should be expected.

• **PERSONNEL NEEDED FOR CONTEST.**

1. *Contest Director/Timekeeper.* May be a knowledgeable coach of contestants in the contest.

2. *Judge(s).* One or three judges may judge a section of 9 or fewer contestants. Judges should be experienced in speech or language arts studies, and each should have had experience judging at least three speech contests (in the classroom is minimal) prior to being selected to judge at a district or state tournament.

• **EVALUATION AND JUDGES’ BALLOT.** Coaches and teachers should use the Modern Oratory Evaluation Sheet and the Judge’s Ballot included in the *PSIA Academic Handbook* to assist in preparing contestants for competition. The preliminary round posting form follows on page 48, and the “Ranking Procedure for Speech Contests” follows the Impromptu Speaking section in the handbook (pages 34-36).

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES / CONTEST DIRECTORS

**Contest directors should bring the judge’s ballot to the Tab Room.** After judging, judges should give their ballots to the contest director. Evaluations should be kept by the contest director to be returned to students at the designated time and place on the schedule. **The contest director should pick up QUALIFIER ribbons (if available)** for all contestants not advancing, and paper clip awards to evaluations.

**Assistants in the Tab Room will complete the Preliminary Results Form (see page 36).**

**A Tab Room Posting Official will be asked to make 3 copies of the completed Preliminary Results Form.** One copy will be placed in the Finals Director/Timekeeper Packet. One copy will be placed on the POSTING board in the hall (on white paper) AFTER the time for the preliminary evaluation return has begun. The 3<sup>rd</sup> copy should be taken with the contest director to the room designated on the schedule for contestants to report to receive

their evaluations and hear the announcement of names of those advancing. The original goes to the meet director, who will file the official results.

• **SECTIONING.** By random placement, make sure that students from the same school are in different sections, if possible, and make sure that the first persons listed on the entry forms are not all in the same section.

• **Stop watches** (issued by number and section) should be checked in the designated Tab Room area for Prose/Poetry, Impromptu Speaking and Modern Oratory. To cut down on cost, it is best if the individual Contest Director/Timekeeper supply a stopwatch from his/her school

• Place ribbons/evaluations not awarded on the labeled table in the Tab Room.

• For the final round, all speech evaluations should be returned to contestants at the awards presentation.

**Final results at State will be posted on purple paper in a centrally located place on the campus.**