



# District 26 Contestant Briefing

Online Contest November 9, 2024

The contestant briefing is conducted by the Contest Chair. All Contestants, Toastmaster, Chief Judge and Sergeant at Arms (Zoom Master) should be present. Judges and Ballot Counters attend a different briefing conducted by the Chief Judge. Contestants in the Online Speech Contest are permitted to remain in the same virtual room throughout the duration of the contest.

Per the 2024-25 Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rule Book, for the Online contest, the following should be addressed at this briefing:

1. Introduce the functionaries, Chief Judge, Contest Toastmaster, Primary Timer, and Zoom Master
2. Verify the presence of all contestants and pronunciation of their names. Note: During the contest, a brief informal interview with each contestant after all ballots are collected will be conducted.
3. Review the speech contest rules with speakers. Guidance on how technical difficulties will be addressed
4. Review Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality form (Item 1183)
5. Review timing protocols with speakers, review Timer form with Timers, confirm backgrounds
6. Determine speaking positions, as dictated by the rules
7. Protest guidance
8. How contestants and contest officials can contact the chief judge, contest chair, and other meeting moderators during the contest.
9. How the chief judge and/or contest chair can communicate with contest participants during the contest.
10. The chief judge and contest chair establish a way to privately communicate or signal that the contest should be paused.
11. Acquaint contestants with the exact speaking area. For the Online Speech Contest, the contest chair works with each contestant to test their audio and video and set a standard speaking area based on the limitations in their setting

<< Text >> Are instructions within the script that are not meant to be stated

## Contest Chair:

<<Call the meeting to Order>>	<i>For online, raise virtual hand to move your Zoom window to the top</i>
Welcome to the Briefing for the _____ Area Speech Contests. My name is _____ and I am the Contest Chair for these contests. The Online Speech Contest enables members to practice public speaking and content	

<p>development in a competitive setting using an online platform. The topic and purpose of each speech is determined by the speaker. Every speech should fit within the overall purpose of the contest: To clearly develop and present ideas in a substantially original speech.</p> <p>Thank you for participating in this event and for attending this briefing. The briefing has several purposes, including completing required contest forms, determining the speaking order, and reviewing the rules and procedures for the contest.</p>	
<p>1. First, let's introduce our functionaries.</p> <p>Chief Judge_____, Contest Toastmaster_____ the Primary Timer_____, and the Zoom Master _____</p> <p>Thank you for giving your time and energy to this speech contest!</p>	<p><i>Coordinate this before the briefing and have names ready</i></p>
<p>2. Thank you, Contestants! Congratulations on making it to the Area contests. Let's verify that all the contestants are present and that we have verified all your paperwork.</p> <p>&lt;&lt;Contest Chair/Contest Toastmaster &gt;&gt;</p> <p>If paperwork is still missing, please turn this in now so we can get you verified.</p> <p>Let's also check name pronunciations.</p> <p>A Reminder: We are going to interview all contestants when the final Area Contest ends and all the ballots have been collected.</p>	<p><i>Chief Judge: Verify you have all Speaker Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms.</i></p> <p><i>Contest Toastmaster: Verify you have all Contestant Profiles.</i></p> <p><i>Confirm the Contest Chair has deemed the contestants eligible to compete for the contest.</i></p>
<p>3. Let's review the speech contest rules.</p> <p>In the event, a contestant is absent from the briefing, the alternate speaker, if present, is permitted to attend the briefing in place of the primary contestant.</p> <p><b>&lt;&lt;only read the following if alternate speaker is present at briefing&gt;&gt;</b></p> <p>1. If the primary contestant is not present when the person conducting the contest is introduced, the primary contestant is disqualified and the alternate officially becomes the contestant.</p> <p>2. 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:</p> <p>a) Reports to the contest chair upon their arrival.</p> <p>b) Has all required paperwork in good order before the person conducting the contest is introduced to begin the contest.</p>	<p><i>Excerpts from the rule book for contestants that do not attend a briefing</i></p>

<p>c) Waives the opportunity of a briefing.</p>	
<p>3. Rules continued:</p> <p>At Area contests, there must be an equal number of voting judges from each club in the Area, or a minimum of five (5) voting judges. In addition to these voting judges, a contest chair, chief judge, tiebreaking judge, two (2) counters, and two (2) timers must be appointed. For the Online Speech Contest, a minimum of one (1) backup timer is also appointed in case of any technical difficulties. Contest officials must not serve in more than one (1) role for the same contest at the Area (when practical)</p>	<p><i>Excerpts from the rule book for number of functionaries</i>  <i>Ensure the contestants that the judges have or will be briefed and will be unbiased in their selection</i></p>
<p>Because this is a Zoom platform, introductions will be slightly different than in-person contests. As Toastmaster, I will say, "Will our next contestant enable your microphone and camera and pin the timer? When you have done so, please say READY."</p> <p>I will then announce the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Contestant's name</li> <li>b) Speech Title</li> <li>c) Speech Title,</li> <li>d) Contestant's Name</li> </ul> <p>To ensure that each contestant's audiovisual equipment is functional, each contestant must say, "Thank you, Toastmaster/Contest Chair," after being introduced.</p> <p>If the audiovisual equipment is functional, I will respond, "You're welcome."</p> <p>Timing will begin with the contestant's next definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the next word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects. The speaker should begin speaking within a short time after arriving at the speaking area, and is not permitted to delay the contest unnecessarily.</p> <p>If the audiovisual equipment is not functional, the contest chair will notify the contestant and pause the contest to allow for the appropriate corrections.</p> <p>For this Online Speech Contest, a contestant will be allowed 10 minutes to attempt to make the appropriate corrections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. If the contestant is able to correct the equipment within the 10 minutes, I will reintroduce the contestant.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Excerpts from the rule book for introductions and if there are technical difficulties</i></p>

<p>ii. If the contestant is unable correct their equipment within the 10 minutes, the contest will continue with the next contestant.</p> <p>If a contestant experiences a technical difficulty in which their audio, video, or both are severely weakened or completely lost during the contest: The chief judge and contest chair confer and determine whether the contest is paused.</p> <p>If the contest is paused, the impacted contestant is allowed no more than 10 minutes to attempt to reestablish a secure connection to the contest.</p> <p>a) If the contestant is able to reestablish a secure connection within the 10 minutes, the contest chair indicates the last word or sentence that was heard and the contestant continues their speech from that point with no additional time allowance.</p> <p>b) If the contestant is unable to reestablish a secure connection within the 10 minutes, the contest continues with the next contestant.</p>	
<p>4. Review the Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183)</p>	<p><i>Have form ready to go over Remind contestants that by signing this form they certify that they have read and understand the rules regarding eligibility and originality.</i></p>
<p>5. Review timing protocols with speakers and review Timer form</p> <p>There will be one (1) minute of silence between contestant speeches, during which voting judges and the tiebreaking judge will mark their ballots. All voting judges and the tiebreaking judge will judge all contestants; the chief judge does not judge contestants.</p> <p>When the last contestant in each Area finishes speaking, the contest Toastmaster will ask for silence until the ballot counters have collected all ballots at the end of each Area Contest. The chief judge will notify the contest chair when all ballots have been collected. The next Area contest must only resume once this notification is received. When the final Area Contest ends, the same procedure is followed. Then the Chief Judge and ballot counters will leave the room to tabulate all ballots.</p>	

<p>Online contest speeches must be from five (5) to seven (7) minutes. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than four (4) minutes 30 seconds or more than seven (7) minutes 30 seconds. Timers must not consider fractions of a second. A contestant is not qualified until their time reaches four (4) minutes and 30 seconds and is not disqualified until their time reaches seven (7) minutes and 31 seconds.</p> <p>For these contests: a) The green signal will be displayed at five (5) minutes and remain displayed for one (1) minute. b) The yellow signal will be displayed at six (6) minutes and remain displayed for one (1) minute. c) The red signal will be displayed at seven (7) minutes and will remain on until the conclusion of the speech.</p> <p>In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.</p> <p>If a timer experiences a technical difficulty in which they are unable to hear or see a contestant well enough to complete their responsibilities, they must notify the chief judge immediately.</p> <p>A. The backup timer must time all speeches but their time record sheet will only be consulted from the point at which the primary timer completing the Time Record Sheet was unable to complete their role.</p> <p>B. If there is only one backup timer, they must also be ready to operate the signaling backgrounds should the primary timer operating the backgrounds be unable to complete their role.</p> <p>Timers: please review the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and Instructions for Timers (Item 1175). Each timer will fill out a form and time each contestant. Only the Primary Timer will show the background slides.</p>	<p><i>Also brief the timers in the proper use of the timing equipment (zoom backgrounds), if necessary.</i></p>
<p>6. We will draw for speaking order so that the chief judge can share the information during her/his judges' briefing, which will be taking place after this briefing. Each Area will be done separately and have its own speaking order.</p> <p>Contest Toastmaster, please note the order on your script.</p> <p>Zoom Master, please create slides from the speaker order for presentation at the contest.</p>	<p><i>Use <a href="http://wheelofnames.com">wheelofnames.com</a> for speaking order. The name drawn for the first spin is for the contestant that will speak first. The second spin provides the second speaker and so on.</i></p>

	<i>If possible, have contestant names entered and ready to run</i>
<p>7. Protest guidance</p> <p>Protests are limited to eligibility, originality, and reference to another contestant or another contestant’s speech and must only be lodged by voting judges and/or contestants. This does not include the tie-breaking judge. The tie-breaking judge must remain secret. Any protest must be lodged with the chief judge and/or contest chair prior to the contest being adjourned.</p> <p>Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, or for referencing another contestant’s speech, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the voting judges. A majority of the voting judges must concur in the decision to disqualify.</p> <p>Twenty-five percent or less of the speech may be devoted to quoting, paraphrasing, or referencing another person’s content. Any quoted, paraphrased, or referenced content must be so identified during the speech presentation. Each judge must determine if they believe that 25 percent or less of the speech was devoted to quotes.</p> <p>The contest chair can disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.</p>	
<p>8 - 9. Let’s establish how contestants and contest officials can contact the chief judge, contest chair, and other meeting moderators during the contest.</p> <p>Let’s also establish how the chief judge and/or contest chair can communicate with contest participants during the contest</p>	<i>This can be via phone, text or email. It is encouraged that all functionaries have a way to communicate that is not over Zoom</i>
<p>10 - 11. Let’s have our contestants acquaint themselves with the exact speaking area, confirm lighting, sound, etc. During this time, the chief judge and contest chair will establish a way to privately communicate or signal that the contest should be paused.</p>	<i>Explain it is important to stay within the area and while they will not be disqualified for going outside the designated area, judges may take that into consideration. All contestants shall have the opportunity to test any amplifying equipment before the contest. Timing</i>

	<i>starts with the first word, sound, or gesture made to the audience.</i>
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Any questions?

Conclude briefing within the hour so that Chief Judge and Zoom Master can attend next briefing.

Thank you.