



Department
of Florida

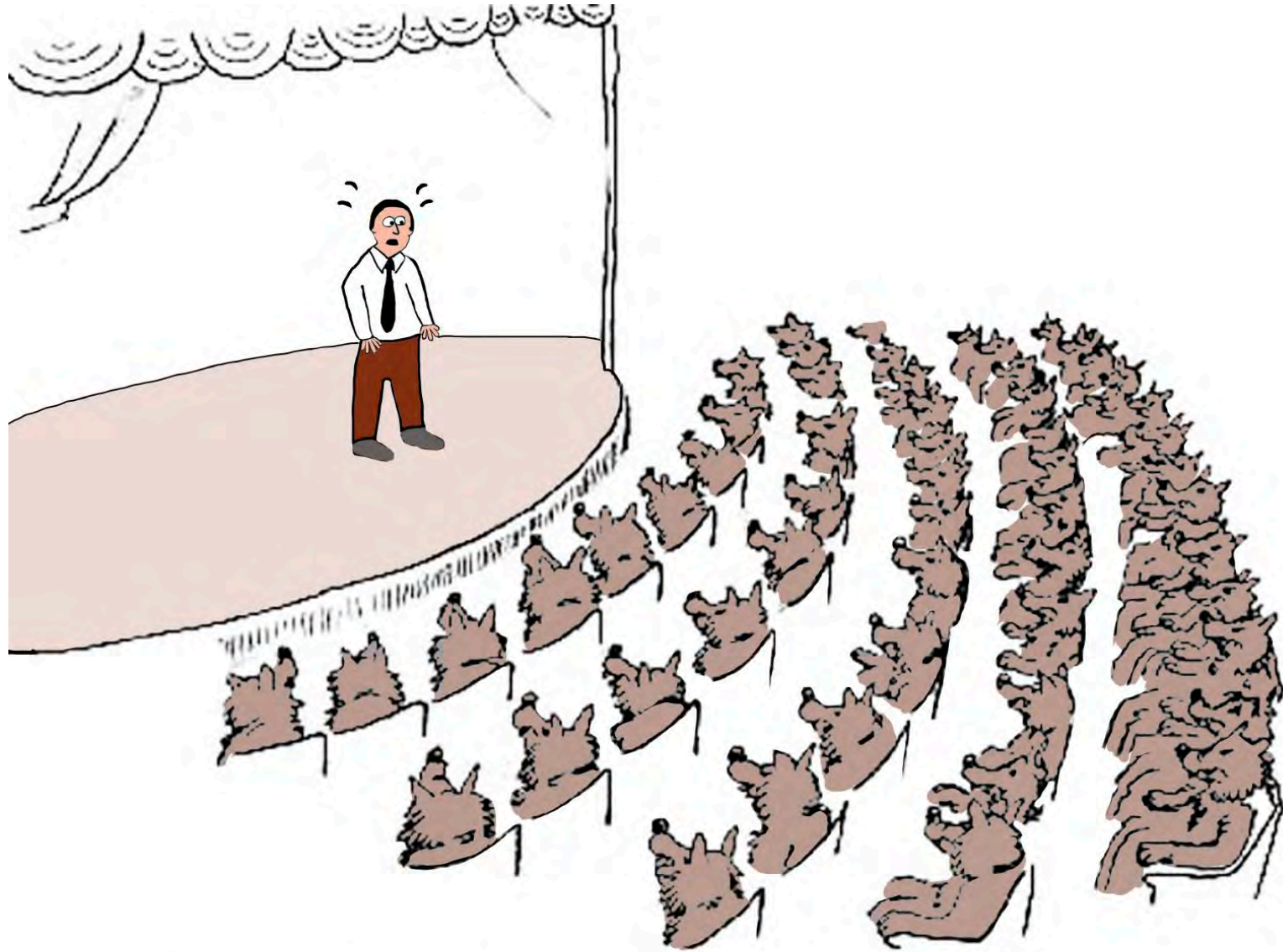


Oratorical Program

*A Constitutional Speech
Scholarship Contest*

Instructor: Doug Hockenberry
Department Oratorical Chair

2025-2026 DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA



“I’m a little nervous. You see, I didn’t expect to be thrown to the wolves.”

Oratorical Contest



Getta Mihocha, of Ocala, Florida

2015 American Legion National Oratorical Contest Champion
Sponsored by American Legion Post 27 of Ocala, Florida



Oratorical Contest

The American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Since 1938, the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Eligibility

- Must be a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States and a resident of the State of Florida.
- All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of 20 years on the date of the national contest who is presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school).
- The curriculum of the school must be considered high school level, commencing with grade 9 and terminating with grade 12.
- Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of the American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest.
- High school students that graduate early during the school year are eligible to compete if they are not enrolled in a college, university, trade school or other institution of higher level at the time of the department finals contest.
- The three finalists of the National contest are ineligible for further participation at any level.

Oration

The Prepared Oration

Contestants must prepare and present an original oration from memory on a phase of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government.

The prepared oration cannot be less than eight minutes or more than ten minutes.

Note: The same subject and oration used at the state contest must be used at the National level.

Assigned Topic Oration

The purpose of the Assigned Topics is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of his/her research, and the ability to discuss the assigned topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution.

The Assigned Topic Oration cannot be less than three minutes or more than five minutes.

Note: All contestants, at each contest level, speak on the same Assigned Topic.

Oratorical Contest

The American Legion National Oratorical Contest is a multi-level competition:



Awards



Department of Florida Winners Receive:

- ★ **1st Place - \$2,500** Scholarship and entry to the National Contest
- ★ **2nd Place- \$1,500** Scholarship (Runner-up)
- ★ **3rd Place - \$1,000** Scholarship
- ★ **4th - 6th Place - \$500** Scholarship

National Winners Receive:

- ★ **1st Place - \$25,000** Scholarship
- ★ **2nd Place - \$22,500** Scholarship
- ★ **3rd Place - \$20,000** Scholarship

Awards



Department of Florida Recommended Post, District, and Area Awards

| | <u>1st Place</u> | <u>2nd Place</u> | <u>3rd Place</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Post Level</u> | \$75.00 | \$50.00 | \$25.00 |
| <u>District Level</u> | \$100.00 | \$75.00 | \$50.00 |
| <u>Area Level</u> | \$125.00 | \$100.00 | \$75.00 |

- The monetary awards and certificates should be presented to the students at the contest.
- These students put in a lot of time and effort into preparing these speeches and participating in these contests.

Key Contest Dates

POST

December 1, 2025 - January 18, 2026

DISTRICT

January 19 - February 8, 2026

AREA

February 8 - February 22, 2026

DEPARTMENT

March 14, 2026

NATIONAL

May 15-17, 2026

Finding Candidates

- High Schools
- Home schooled students
- ROTC
- Honor Society
- Key Club
- FBLA
- Debate Club
- History, Social Science, & Civics Teachers
- English Teachers, Creative Writing Teachers

Promote and Advertise

- Guidance Counselors
- History, Government, & Civics Teachers
- English & Creative Writing Teachers
- Local Radio Stations
- Advertise in your local newspaper
- Post Website/Facebook Page/Instagram/Twitter

10 Tips to Improve Your Public Speaking

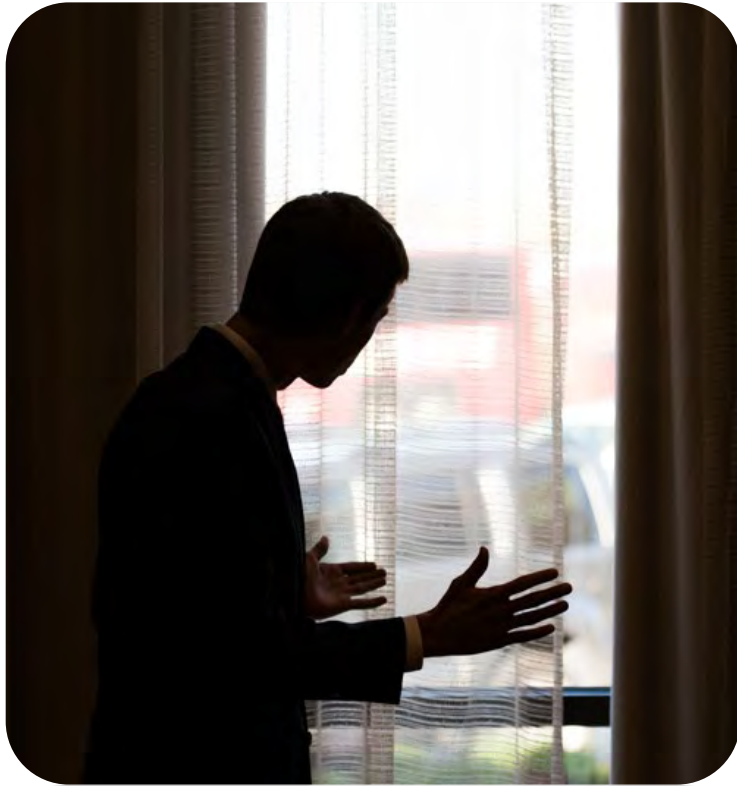
1. Know your audience.
2. Practice, practice, practice.
3. Record yourself speaking.
4. Use feedback to your advantage.
5. Calm your nerves.
6. Make it your own.
7. Connect with a personal story.
8. Make eye contact.
9. Use the stage to your advantage.
10. Make a lasting impression with a strong conclusion.



Additional Ways to Help Your Students

1. Toastmasters International.
2. Join a public speaking support group.
3. Attend public speaking events.
4. Watch videos of effective public speaking.
5. Take public speaking classes.

Practice, Practice, Practice. Rehearse, Rehearse, Rehearse.



Points of Contact

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Questions?

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THANK YOU



Please leave feedback.