



# Contest Instructions Script

## 2025-26 District 26 Toastmasters Contest District International Speech Contest Script

The left column is the script. The right column are general instructions in *italic* for corresponding script.

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

Highlighted text should be reviewed for the contest level

### Sergeant at Arms:

<p>Welcome Toastmasters, Guests, and Contestants to the District International Speech Contests!</p> <p>My name is _____ and I will be your Sergeant at Arms for these contests.</p> <p>Before we begin, please take a moment to <b>silence your cell phones, smart watches, and any electronic devices</b>, including vibration mode. This helps ensure a distraction-free environment for our contestants and judges.</p> <p>A reminder that <b>Per the Toastmasters Contest Rulebook: The taking of photographs during the speeches is not permitted. And per District 26 policy, no video or audio is allowed unless prior written permission has been granted with the appropriate forms signed by all parties.</b></p>	<p><i>SAA: Call the meeting to Order.</i></p> <p><i>General Introduction, no personal info, keep to script</i></p>
<p>Please help me welcome our Contest Toastmaster James Bishop</p>	<p><i>Introduce the Contest Toastmaster, handoff.</i></p>

## Toastmaster

<p>Thank you, Madam/Mister Sergeant at Arms. Welcome to the <b>&lt;Club/Area/Division&gt;</b> Table Topics Contest! <b>&lt;Today/Tonight&gt;</b> we will have our Table Topics Contest, followed by a break for <b>&lt;food&gt;</b>, followed by our International Speech Contest, followed by contestant interviews. At the end we will announce winners of <b>&lt;all/both&gt;</b> contests. It is my pleasure to serve as your Toastmaster for these Speech Contests.</p> <p>Speech Contests are an important part of the Toastmasters International educational program. The Speech Contest enables members to practice public speaking and content development in a competitive setting.</p> <p>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. Some of the content may be personal in nature and contain language, ideas, or beliefs that some audiences may consider sensitive.</p>	<p><i>Contest Chair/Toastmaster: General Introduction, no personal info, keep to script</i></p> <p><i>Provide the speaking order to the audience</i></p>
<p>The 2025-2026 Toastmaster Table Topics contest rules have been reviewed with the chief judge and contestants. The contestants have been informed of timing protocols. In this contest, each contestant will be given the question and have 1 to 2 minutes to answer.</p> <p>Since each contestant will answer the same question, all contestants except the first will leave the room before the contest begins</p>	<p><i>Inform the audience, per the 2025-26 TI speech contest rule book</i></p>
<p>Ladies and gentlemen, to ensure fairness for all contestants, You may applaud only while the contestant is walking to the stage and again after they finish speaking.</p> <p>As the Contest Toastmaster, I will invite each contestant to the stage and ask you the audience to join me in a rousing round of applause for each. Following applause for each, I will state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Contestant's name</li><li>● Topics question</li><li>● Topics question</li><li>● Contestant's Name</li></ul> <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.</p>	<p><i>Testing of Contestant audio/visual</i></p> <p><i>Do not make remarks about any speaker or the subject of their speech. Introduce each contestant slowly and clearly.</i></p>

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<p>By random drawing, the contestants will speak in the following order:</p> <p>Contestant #1: Contestant #2</p>	
<p>We will observe one (1) minute of silence after each contestant answers, during which voting judges and the tiebreaking judge will mark their ballots.</p> <p>When the last contestant finishes speaking, I will ask for unlimited time for silence until the ballot counters have collected all ballots. The Sergeant at Arms will make an announcement when we may proceed.</p>	<p><i>CHIEF JUDGE: notify CTM when ballots are collected after each</i></p> <p><i>CHIEF JUDGE: make an announcement or signal to the CTM that they may proceed.</i></p>
<p>Chief Judge, have the contestants, judges, timers, and ballot counters been briefed?</p>	<p><i>Getting Started</i></p>

**Chief Judge:**

<p>“Yes, they have been briefed. The contest may now begin!”</p>	<p><i>Chief Judge: Confirm that all contestants and functionaries have been briefed before contest begins</i></p>
<p><b>Toastmaster/Contest Chair:</b></p> <p><b>1. INVITING THE CONTESTANT</b></p> <p><b>CTM:</b></p> <p><b>“Please welcome our first or next contestant...”</b></p> <p><b>STAGE DIRECTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CTM gestures toward contestant.</b></li> <li>• <b>CTM leads audience in applause with confident energy.</b></li> <li>• <b>Contestant walks to the speaking area.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Introduction of contestants</i></p> <p><b>TOASTMASTER:</b></p> <p><b>Names need to be coordinated beforehand, ideally at the contestant briefing so that correct name pronunciation is also obtained.</b></p> <p><i>TIMER: keep time of 1 minute of silence and</i></p>

<p><b>2. ONCE THE CONTESTANT REACHES THE STAGE</b></p> <p><b>STAGE DIRECTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applause stops naturally as contestant arrives.</li> <li>• CTM stands slightly to the side of the contestant.</li> </ul> <p><b>CTM (FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT):</b></p> <p><u>For Table Topics contestant:</u></p> <p>“[Contestant Name].</p> <p>Here is your question:</p> <p>[Read the Table Topics question once.]</p> <p>[Read the Table Topics question a second time.]</p> <p>[Contestant Name].”</p> <p>&lt;&lt;ONCE SPEECH IS FINISHED&gt;&gt;</p> <p>We will now observe one minute of silence.</p> <p>Please welcome our second contestant &lt;&lt;Repeat as needed&gt;&gt;</p> <p>=====</p>	<p><i>signal Toastmaster when time has elapsed</i></p> <p><i>Do not make remarks about any speaker or the subject of their speech, or mention the name or location of the speaker’s club or place of residence. Introduce each contestant slowly and clearly. Stick to the script</i></p>
<p>Ladies and Gentlemen, please remain silent until the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have received all ballots. Thank you. &lt;&lt; Continue with the next Area/Division Contest(s) and use above protocols for each. Then when the last Area Contest is over, you may state &gt;&gt;</p> <p>The &lt;Club/Area/Division&gt; Table Topics Speech Contest is now complete.</p>	<p><i>CHIEF JUDGE: notify CTM when ballots are collected after each</i></p> <p><i>CHIEF JUDGE: make an announcement or signal to the CTM that they may proceed.</i></p>

**Sergeant at Arms or CTM:**

<p>Thank you, Madam/Mister Toastmaster, the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have left the room. <b>We will now break for 15 minutes. Please grab some food. You can continue to eat quietly during our next contest. Timer, please give us a one minute warning at 14 minutes.</b></p>	
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**Toastmaster/Contest Chair: introduce Sergeant-at-Arms to make following announcement:**

Welcome back Toastmasters, Guests, and Contestants to the **<Club/Area/Division>** International Speech Contests! A reminder: **Per the Toastmasters Contest Rulebook: The taking of photographs during the speeches is not permitted. And per District 26 policy, no video or audio is allowed unless prior written permission has been granted with the appropriate forms signed by all parties.**

**Contest Chair/Toastmaster:**

<p>Please welcome back our Contest Toastmaster <b>&lt;Toastmaster Name&gt;</b></p> <p>Remember to please take a moment to <b>silence your cell phones, smart watches, and any electronic devices</b>, including vibration mode if they were turned on during the break.</p> <p>Thank you, Madam/Mister Sergeant at Arms. Welcome back to the <b>&lt;Club/Area/Division&gt;</b> Toastmasters Contests!</p>	<p><i>Contest Chair/Toastmaster: General Introduction, no personal info, keep to script</i></p>
<p>The 2025-2026 Toastmaster International speech contest rules have been reviewed with the chief judge and contestants. The contestants have been informed of timing protocols. In this contest, we will hear an original speech from each contestant. Some of the content may be personal in nature and contain language, ideas, or beliefs that some audiences may consider sensitive.</p>	<p><i>Inform the audience, per the 2025-26 TI speech contest rule book</i></p>

<p>Ladies and gentlemen, to ensure fairness for all contestants, You may applaud only while the contestant is walking to the stage and again after they finish speaking.</p> <p>As the Contest Toastmaster, I will invite each contestant to the stage and ask you the audience to join me in a rousing round of applause for each.</p> <p>For the International Speech Contest:</p> <p>I will then introduce each speaker by announcing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contestant's name</li> <li>● Speech Title</li> <li>● Speech Title,</li> <li>● Contestant's Name</li> </ul> <p>The Contestant will respond by saying 'thank you' to the Contest Toastmaster. The contestant will then begin his speech.</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.</p>	<p><i>Testing of Contestant audio/visual</i></p> <p><i>Do not make remarks about any speaker or the subject of their speech. Introduce each contestant slowly and clearly.</i></p>
<p>By random drawing, the contestants will speak in the following order:</p> <p>Contestant #1:</p> <p>Contestant #2</p>	
<p>We will observe one (1) minute of silence between contestant speeches, during which voting judges and the tiebreaking judge will mark their ballots.</p> <p>When the last contestant finishes speaking, I will ask for unlimited time for silence until the ballot counters have collected all ballots. The Sergeant at Arms will make an announcement when we may proceed.</p>	<p><i>CHIEF JUDGE: notify CTM when ballots are collected after each</i></p> <p><i>CHIEF JUDGE: make an announcement or signal to the CTM that they may proceed.</i></p>
<p>Chief Judge, have the contestants, judges, timers, and ballot counters been briefed?</p>	<p><i>Getting Started</i></p>

**Chief Judge:**

“Yes, they have been briefed. The contest may now begin!”

*Chief Judge: Confirm  
that all contestants  
and functionaries have  
been briefed before  
contest begins*

## INVITING THE CONTESTANT

CTM: "Please welcome our first or next contestant..."

### STAGE DIRECTION:

- CTM gestures toward contestant.
- CTM leads audience in applause with confident energy.
- Contestant walks to the speaking area.

## 2. ONCE THE CONTESTANT REACHES THE STAGE

### STAGE DIRECTION:

- Applause stops naturally as contestant arrives.
- CTM stands slightly to the side of the contestant.

### CTM (FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT):

*Contestant Name;*

*Speech Title;*

*Speech Title;*

*Contestant Name*

### MICROPHONE CHECK

#### STAGE DIRECTION:

- The contestant faces the audience.
- CTM remains on stage until mic check is complete.

### CONTESTANT:

"Thank you, Contest Toastmaster."

#### STAGE DIRECTION:

- CTM may shake the contestant's hand.
- CTM exits the stage promptly.

## 4. CONTESTANT BEGINS SPEAKING

*Introduction of contestants*

**TOASTMASTER:**  
*Names and speech titles need to be coordinated beforehand, ideally at the contestant briefing so that correct name pronunciation is also obtained.*

**TIMER:** *keep time of 1 minute of silence and signal Toastmaster when time has elapsed*

*Do not make remarks about any speaker or the subject of their speech, or mention the name or location of the speaker's club or place of residence. Introduce each contestant slowly and clearly. Stick to the script*

<p><b>STAGE DIRECTION:</b>  <b>• No applause.</b></p> <p>&lt;&lt;ONCE SPEECH IS FINISHED, return to stage leading audience in applause&gt;&gt;</p> <p>We will now observe one minute of silence.</p> <p>Please welcome our second contestant &lt;&lt;Repeat protocol above as needed&gt;&gt;</p> <p>=====</p> <p>Ladies and Gentlemen, please remain silent until the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have received all ballots. Thank you. &lt;&lt;If there are more Area contests, follow above procedures until all contests are completed.&gt;&gt; The &lt;Club/Area/Division&gt; International Speech Contest is now complete.</p> <p>&lt;&lt;ONCE DONE&gt;&gt;</p>	<p>CHIEF JUDGE: notify CTM when ballots are collected after each</p> <p>CHIEF JUDGE: make an announcement or signal to the CTM that they may proceed.</p>
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**Toastmaster/Contest Chair:**

<p>Thank you everyone! This is your chance to give all our contestants a big round of applause!</p>	<p><i>Thank Contestants – Ad lib as necessary</i></p>
<p>While the ballots are being counted, let’s meet our contestants! I will interview each of you in the order that you spoke.</p>	<p><i>Meet the Contestants</i></p>

<p>Tell us how long you’ve been in Toastmasters and what club you are representing today.</p> <p>&lt;&lt;End each interview with a statement similar to the following:&gt;&gt;</p> <p>“As recognition of your contest participation, here is a Certificate of hard work, signed by our contest chair. Great job!”</p>	<p><i>Most Toastmasters will look at the contestants’ profile sheet to arrive at specific questions for each contestant.</i></p> <p><i>Be careful to limit responses to 1 minute or so. No need for another speech from them, just a little time to get to know each contestant.</i></p> <p><i>(If you become aware that the judges are dealing with a protest, you will have to interview for a longer period,</i></p> <p><i>Some additional questions to ask: What prompted you to enter the speech contest?</i></p>
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	<i>What advice do you have for someone who is thinking of entering a contest? Is there anyone you wish to recognize or thank?)</i>
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<<After Chief Judge has completed tally, please notify the SAA and return to contest room>>

**Toastmaster/Contest Chair:**

Before the results are announced, I'd like to say congratulations to all of our contestants for competing! Let's give them another round of applause	<i>Announcing the Results:</i>
<p>Thank you everyone for a wonderful contest. It was a great pleasure and privilege to be your Toastmaster and Contest Chair! Special thanks to all the contest participants, judges, and functionaries, without whom this contest would not have been possible.</p> <p>I'd now like to bring up the contest chair(s). Please help me welcome our contest chair(s) <b>&lt;insert chair names&gt;</b></p> <p>&lt;&lt;If contest chair is same person as Toastmaster, then the Contest Toastmaster returns conduct of meeting to himself/herself as the Contest Chair&gt;&gt;</p>	<i>Decide before the contest who will announce results. Per contest rule book, the contest chair announces the winners of the contest, but this may be the Toastmaster. If same person, use Chief Judge</i>

<p><b>Contest Chair or Chief Judge:</b></p> <p>Thank you, Madam/Mister Toastmaster!</p> <p>I would like to recognize all of the District 26 Leaders Past and Present that are in attendance today.</p> <p>&lt;&lt;Use</p> <p><a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XgX3IUmO7ijUx8eXBgLZiUr0BPRReWBjF/view">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XgX3IUmO7ijUx8eXBgLZiUr0BPRReWBjF/view</a></p> <p>&gt;&gt;</p> <p>Now let's welcome a few of our Leaders to say a few words before moving on to results</p> <p><b>Invite in the following order - skipping any that may be missing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Division Director - &lt;Fill in&gt;</b></li> <li>● <b>District Leadership Representative (Area &amp; Division contest only)</b></li> <li>● <b>Club Growth Director - Anoop Kumar</b></li> <li>● <b>Program Quality Director Kim Angell</b></li> <li>● <b>District Director Ruth Prentice</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Put the dignitary list at the sign in desk and have dignitaries mark it off as they arrive and or ask for help on who to announce</i></p>
<p>Now onto the results!</p> <p>There was a disqualification due to time</p> <p>&lt;&lt;OR&gt;&gt;</p> <p>There were no time disqualifications.</p>	<p><i>State if there were any Time Disqualifications. Do not name them or give times. Per the rule book, the chief judge may discuss the matter privately with the disqualified contestant(s).</i></p>

Now I would like to present the contest results:

The 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner is \_\_\_\_\_

The 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner is \_\_\_\_\_

The Winner of the Contest is \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations!

<<For Area, present a first place trophy to the winner; for Division Contests, present 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> place trophies.>>

The contest Champions will next compete at the Division/District contest in **<insert Date>**.

Thank you all for coming to our contest!! We are now adjourned

*Always check you are reading the 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner first. The 1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner name is the last name you read*

*If you would like to read individual names to thank, please do not name judges.*