

OHIO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY COMMISSION STATEWIDE ORATORICAL CONTEST

– RULES & REGULATIONS –

RULES:

I. Time Limitations

A. PRIMARY DIVISION (Grades kindergarten to 2nd)

A time limit of two minutes will be permitted for orations.

B. INTERMEDIATE DIVISION (Grades 3rd to 5th)

A time limit of three minutes will be permitted for orations.

C. JUNIOR DIVISION (Grades 6th to 8th)

A time limit of four minutes will be permitted for orations.

D. SENIOR DIVISION (Grades 9th to 12th)

A time limit of five minutes will be permitted for orations.

Note: Statewide competition division assignment is dependent on contestant grade at the time of regional competition. Independently registered contestant who had no regional competition available will compete in division based on grade at the time of registration date.

II. Presentation of Oration

A. Contestant will deliver oration from memory

Notes on 3 x 5 index cards (*optional*).

B. Contestant will introduce himself/herself by stating in complete sentences:

“Judges, Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is...”

1. Name (first and last names)
2. Age and grade
3. School
4. City
5. Topic (Time begins when topic is stated.)

III. Summary of Oration

Timekeeper will indicate wrap-up time one minute before time expires.

Commemorating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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REGULATIONS:

- I. Contestant must submit an electronic copy of the composition (*i.e.*, PDF, Word, etc.), typewritten, and double-spaced to MLK Holiday Commission by March 3, 2023.

NOTE: Compositions should be emailed to mlk@das.ohio.gov or faxed to 614-466-7949. All requests to return hard-copies of compositions must be submitted with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

- A. Cover sheet for composition should include the following information:

1. Contestant's name
2. Age and grade
3. School
4. City
5. Date
6. Topic
7. Statewide Oratorical Contest
8. Ambition
9. Coach/parent's name

- B. Penalty of five points will be subtracted from contestant or possible disqualification for failure to submit composition postmarked by March 3, 2023.

- C. Notes on 3 x 5 index cards may be used in contest (*optional*).

- II. Contestant should provide a photo when submitting a copy of their composition to MLK Holiday Commission by March 3, 2023 (high resolution jpg).

NOTE: All requests to return photos must be submitted with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

- III. The coach/parent is permitted to assist the contestant during the composition of the speech and is requested to accompany the contestant at the contest. (The absence of the coach/parent will not affect the status of the contestant.) However, coaches/parents must remain a part of the audience. They may remain in view of contestant but must refrain from offering prompts and assistance in the delivery of the speech.

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- IV. Contestants will be evaluated on the following criteria:
- A. Aplomb (poise, self-confidence, audience appeal)
 - B. Voice quality (audibility, articulation, inflection of voice, moderation of pitch)
 - C. Physical dynamics (proper use of gestures)
 - D. Observance of time limit
 - E. Creativity and relevant content (poetic and/or musical interpretation is welcome)
 - F. Posture
 - G. Accuracy of content
 - H. Composition (punctuation, spelling, grammar, logic, appearance)
- V. Each regional oratorical contest will send **ONLY** the first, second and third place winners to the statewide level competition.
- VI. The decision of the judges is final.
- VII. All contest materials and photos are the property of the MLK Holiday Commission.

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Any student who competed in any previous Statewide Oratorical Contest **must** prepare a new oration. All orations must be an original piece.

Creativity in selecting topics is encouraged. Below is a list of suggested topics. However, contestants' choice of topic is not limited to the following:

– SUGGESTED TOPICS –

- 2023 MLK Holiday Commission theme:
 - “Bridging the Divide: Daring to Dream Again”
- The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Relate one’s own commitment to Dr. King’s philosophy of nonviolence, peaceful protest and respect.
- “What Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life means to me...” (Expound on what this means to you.)
- “The 21st century depends upon me...” (Expound on what this means to you in terms of Dr. King or Kingian Principles in the 21st Century.)
- Research major events in Dr. King’s life:
 - End War in Vietnam Campaign
 - Letter from Birmingham Jail
 - March from Selma, Ala., to Montgomery
 - March on Washington, D.C.
 - Nobel Peace Prize
 - Pilgrimage to Nonviolence (Stride Toward Freedom)
 - Poor Peoples Campaign

NOTE: Oration topics shall not promote or call for violence or otherwise present themes that would oppose Dr. King’s legacy or principles of nonviolence. The MLK Holiday Commission reserves the right to select or not select any contest winner for participation in the commemorative celebration based on what the MLK Holiday Commission deems appropriate for the event.

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