

## Table Topics and International Speech Contest Script

The following is a suggested script for the Area-level Table Topics and International Speech contests. For Division contests, change Area references to Division. Clubs may also use this as a template.

The script's purpose is to ensure that contest rules such as speaker introductions and timing are adhered to. As long as you cover items outlined in the current Speech Contest Rulebook, you may modify the script – but do consider time carefully if you add any additional content.

Sergeant at Arms	<p><b>Call contest to order</b></p> <p><i>Welcome fellow Toastmasters and honored guests to Parker Toastmasters Table Topics and International Speech Contests for 20__.</i></p> <p><i>Here is some logistical information: (as applicable to your venue)</i></p> <p><i>Restrooms are located _____.</i></p> <p><i>Please try to take advantage of the break to use the restrooms. During speeches, the audience is requested not to leave their seats.</i></p> <p><i>Please do not walk around any other areas of the building, for security reasons.</i></p> <p><i>Do not take photographs or video recordings during any contestant speeches. Video recording is allowed only for people who have received advanced approval from the Contest Chair.</i></p> <p><i>Please take a moment now to turn off or silence cell phones and any other devices that may make noise during the contest.</i></p> <p><b>Introduce Host Area Director</b></p>
Area Director	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p><i>Before we begin, I want to recognize the dignitaries who have joined us today.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use current protocol list. If not available, announce in following order: Current International Directors, Current District Officers from other Districts, Current District Top 26 &amp; Immediate Past District Governor, Host Division Director, Other Current Division Directors, Current Administration Manager/Finance Manager/Logistics Manager/Parliamentarian, Current Area Directors, Past International Directors, Past District 26 Governors, Past District Governors of other Districts (no other past dignitaries)</li> </ul> <p><i>Speech contests are an important part of the Toastmasters educational program. They provide an opportunity for Toastmasters to gain speaking experience, as well as an opportunity for other Toastmasters to learn by observing proficient speakers.</i></p> <p><i>Today's Table Topics and International Speech Contest winners will progress to the Division M contests, which will take place on April _____. Those winners will continue on to represent Division M at the District 26 contests, which will take place</i></p>

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	<p>during the Spring Conference on <b>May __, 20__</b> . If an area or division contest winner is unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance.</p> <p><b>Introduce Table Topics Contest Toastmaster</b></p>
<p>Table Topics Contest Toastmaster</p>	<p>Thank you _____.</p> <p><b>Welcome, Contest Procedures</b></p> <p><i>Welcome everyone. I will begin with an overview of the Table Topics contest procedures, for the benefit of our guests and newer members.</i></p> <p><i>Table Topics are short impromptu speeches, in response to a question or topic, which test the ability to speak on a given subject without advanced notice.</i></p> <p><i>All contestants will receive the same topic, and the judges will choose the winning Table Topics speech.</i></p> <p><i>When the contest begins, the Sergeant-at-Arms will escort all contestants except the first from the room. Once the other contestants are in a designated area where they cannot hear the proceedings, I will introduce the first contestant. I will read the topic to the first contestant, repeat it again, and the contestant will speak on that topic for one to two minutes.</i></p> <p><i>After each contestant has finished, the Sergeant-at-Arms will retrieve the next contestant. After delivering their speech, contestants may stay in the room. No one else will be allowed in or out of the room during the Table Topics speeches.</i></p> <p><i>There will be one minute of silence after each contestant for the judges to mark their ballots. After the final contestant, I will ask for silence until the judges are finished ranking the contestants and the counters have collected all the ballots.</i></p> <p><i>The contestants have agreed upon the following speaking area:</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>To eliminate any perception of bias, I will introduce each contestant in the same way: Contestant Number, Name, Topic, Topic, and Name again</i></p> <p><i>Drawing lots have chosen the speaking order randomly, and I'll announce the order now. You may want to mark your program with the contestant numbers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read speaking order and say each contestant's name the same way. Be sure to pause after each to provide audience time to mark program.</li> </ul> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p>

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	<p>5. _____</p> <p>6. _____</p> <p><i>I will now introduce our Chief Judge to review some of the contest rules:</i></p> <p>_____</p>
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<p>Table Topics Contest Chief Judge</p>	<p>Thank you _____.</p> <p><b>(Consider not reading all the eligibility rules but rather stating that the Chief Judge and Contest Chair has verified that all the contestants and judges met the eligibility rules. Jump to "other rules")</b></p> <p><i>To be eligible, each contestant must be a member in good standing of the club they are representing, and the club must also be good standing. That is, their membership dues are current with Toastmasters International.</i></p> <p><i>The following members are not eligible to compete:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <i>Any current International or District officer (such as Area Director or District Finance Manager) and any announced candidates for International or District office next term.</i></li><li>● <i>A member serving as a judge at any level for a contest in which the member is still competing.</i></li></ul> <p><i>Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club contest. However, if they win more than one club Table Topics contest, they can represent only one of those clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area speech contest of a given type, even if the two areas are in different divisions or districts.</i></p> <p><i>It has been confirmed that all contestants are eligible.</i></p> <p><b>Other Rules</b></p> <p><i>All contestants will receive the same question, which will be of a general nature. The topic shall be of reasonable length, shall not require a detailed knowledge and shall lead to an opinion or conclusion. Contestants will receive no advance knowledge of the topic until the moment they are introduced by the Toastmaster. Contestants may not use digital devices during the contest to gain an unfair advantage.</i></p> <p><i>The time of the Table Topics Speech is 1 to 2 minutes, with a 30 second grace period at the end. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is less than one minute or more than 2 minutes 30 seconds.</i></p> <p><i>Timing will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other form of communication.</i></p> <p><i>The timing signals are visible from the speaker area, and will be activated as follows (ensure the timekeepers activate the lights/cards as you indicate time):</i></p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Green at 1 minute,</i></li> <li>● <i>Amber at 1 minutes and 30 seconds,</i></li> <li>● <i>Red at 2 minutes. The red signal will be displayed until the contestant has finished speaking. No notice will be given if a contestant speaks past the grace period.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.</i></p> <p><i>Prior to announcing results, the chair will announce if time disqualifications occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.</i></p> <p><i>Judges have been instructed not to consider time in their ranking of the contestants.</i></p> <p><i>There are ___ judges and a secret tie breaker judge known only to me.</i></p> <p><i>All judges at area, division, and district speech contests shall have been a Toastmasters member in good standing since the previous July 1 and have completed at least six Competent Communication manual projects.</i></p> <p><i>Protests based on eligibility may be entered only by the contestants or judges to either the Chief Judge or Contest Chair _____.</i></p> <p><i>Once the results have been announced, all decisions are final.</i></p> <p><i>The judges, timers, and ballot counters have all been briefed and are qualified to fulfill their roles.</i></p> <p><i>Are there any questions?</i></p> <p><b>Reintroduce Toastmaster</b></p>
<p>Table Topics Contest Toastmaster</p>	<p><i>It is time to begin the contest! Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort all the Table Topics contestants, except the first, out of the room.</i></p> <p><b>Introduce Contestants</b></p> <p>(Contestant number, contestant name, topic, topic, contestant name)</p> <p>Contestant 1, _____, Read topic, Read topic again, _____</p> <p><i>One minute of silence for the judges to mark their ballots.</i></p> <p>(timing light red during silence, off at end of 1 minute)</p> <p>Contestant 2, _____, Read topic, Read topic again, _____</p> <p><i>One minute of silence for the judges to mark their ballots.</i></p> <p>(timing light red during silence, off at end of 1 minute)</p> <p>Contestant 3, _____, Read topic, Read topic again, _____</p>

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	<p><i>One minute of silence for the judges to mark their ballots.</i> (timing light red during silence, off at end of 1 minute) Contestant 4 , _____, Read topic, Read topic again, _____</p> <p><i>One minute of silence for the judges to mark their ballots.</i> (timing light red during silence, off at end of 1 minute) Contestant 5, _____, Read topic, Read topic again, _____</p> <p><i>One minute of silence for the judges to mark their ballots.</i> (timing light red during silence, off at end of 1 minute) Contestant 6, _____, Read topic, Read topic again, _____</p> <p><i>One minute of silence for the judges to mark their ballots.</i> (timing light red during silence, off at end of 1 minute)</p>
<p>Table Topics Contest Toastmaster</p>	<p><b>Tally and Collect Ballots</b></p> <p><i>Please remain silent until the judges have completed their ballots, and the counters have left the room with the ballots. Judges: raise your ballots when you are finished.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Silence will be painful, but don't rush the judges!</li> <li>● Confirm that all ballots have been collected before you proceed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Certificates of Participation</b></p> <p>After all ballots have left the room - Call up each contestant up and award certificate of participation. Ask each contestant the name of their club and how long they have been a Toastmaster.</p> <p><b>Call for Break</b></p>
	<p>Break 10-15 minutes as appropriate. Timer will call time at one minute till end of break and then at the end of break.</p>
<p>Sergeant at Arms</p>	<p><b>Call contest to order. Welcome back. Reminders:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Please turn off or silence cell phones and any other devices that you may have used during the break.</i></li> <li>- <i>Do not take photographs or video recordings during any contestant speeches. Video recording is allowed only for people who have received advanced approval from the Contest Chair.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Introduce International Speech Toastmaster</b></p>

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International Speech Contest Toastmaster	<p><i>Thank you _____ .</i></p> <p><b>Welcome, Contest Procedures</b></p> <p><i>Welcome everyone. I will begin with an overview of the International Speech contest procedures, for the benefit of our guests and newer members.</i></p> <p><i>In this contest, we will hear an original speech from each Contestant. After proceeding through the area, division, district levels like other Toastmasters contests, this is the only contest where District winners have the opportunity to compete in the semifinals at the Toastmasters International Convention in August, and then the semifinal winners compete become the World Champion of Public Speaking!</i></p> <p><i>There will be one minute of silence after each contestant for the judges to mark their ballots. After the final contestant, I will ask for silence until the judges are finished ranking the contestants and the counters have collected all the ballots.</i></p> <p><i>The contestants have agreed upon the following speaking area:</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>To eliminate any perception of bias, I will introduce each contestant in the same way: Contestant Number, Name, Speech Title, Title, Name</i></p> <p><i>Drawing lots have chosen the speaking order randomly, and I'll announce the order now. You may want to mark your program with the contestant numbers.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Read speaking order and say each contestant's name the same way. Be sure to pause after each to provide audience time to mark program.</li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. _____</li><li>2. _____</li><li>3. _____</li><li>4. _____</li><li>5. _____</li><li>6. _____</li></ol> <p><i>I will now introduce our Chief Judge to review some of the contest rules:</i></p> <hr/>
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<p>International Speech Contest Chief Judge</p>	<p><b>Thank you _____.</b></p> <p><b>Eligibility (Consider not reading all the eligibility rules but rather stating that the Chief Judge and Contest Chair have verified that all the contestants and judges met the eligibility rules. Jump to "other rules")</b></p> <p><i>To be eligible, each contestant must be a member in good standing of the club they are representing, and the club must also be good standing. That is, their membership dues are current with Toastmasters International.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, to be eligible to compete in the International Speech Contest, a member must have completed at least six speech projects in the Competent Communication manual prior to the club contest. However, a charter member of a new club chartered less than one year before the club contest is permitted to compete without having completed this requirement. The club must have officially chartered before the area contest.</i></p> <p><i>The following members are not eligible to compete:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <i>Any current International or District officer (such as Area Director or District Finance Manager) and any announced candidates for International or District office next term.</i></li><li>● <i>A member serving as a judge at any level for a contest in which the member is still competing.</i></li></ul> <p><i>Toastmasters who are members in more than one club and who meet all other eligibility requirements are permitted to compete in each club contest. However, if they win more than one club International Speech contest, they can represent only one of those clubs at the area level. No contestant can compete in more than one area speech contest of a given type, even if the two areas are in different divisions or districts.</i></p> <p><i>It has been confirmed that all contestants are eligible.</i></p> <p><b>Other Rules</b></p> <p><i>The subject for the International speech is selected by the contestant.</i></p> <p><i>All speeches are to be substantially original: any quoted material must be so identified during the speech presentation.</i></p> <p><i>Contestants are permitted to remain in the room throughout the duration of the contest.</i></p> <p><i>Contestants will set up any props or visual aids in the one minute of silence before their introduction. Upon being introduced, the contestant will proceed immediately to the speaking position.</i></p>
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*The time of the International Speech is 5 to 7 minutes with 30 second grace periods. Any speaker speaking less than 4 minutes 30 seconds or more than 7 minutes 30 seconds will be disqualified.*

*Timing will begin with the contestant's first definite verbal or nonverbal communication with the audience. This usually will be the first word uttered by the contestant, but would include any other communication such as sound effects, a staged act by another person, etc.*

*The timing signals are visible from the speaker area, and will be activated as follows (ensure the timekeepers activate the lights/cards as you indicate time):*

- *Green at 5 minutes,*
- *Amber at 6 seconds,*
- *Red at 7 minutes. The red signal will be displayed until the contestant has finished speaking. No notice will be given if a contestant speaks past the grace period.*

*In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.*

*Prior to announcing results, the chair will announce if time disqualifications occurred, but not name the contestant(s) involved.*

*Judges have been instructed not to consider time in their ranking of the contestants.*

*There are \_\_\_ judges and a secret tie breaker judge known only to me.*

*All judges at area, division, and district speech contests shall have been a Toastmasters member in good standing since the previous July 1 and have completed at least six Competent Communication manual projects.*

*Protests based on eligibility or speech originality may be entered by the contestants or judges to either the Chief Judge or Contest Chair*

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*Once the results have been announced, all decisions are final.*

*The judges, timers, and ballot counters have all been briefed and are qualified to fulfill their roles.*

*Are there any questions?*

**Reintroduce Toastmaster**

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International Speech Contest Toastmaster	<i>It is time to begin the contest!</i> <b>Introduce Contestants</b> <i>Contestant Number, Contestant Name, Speech Title, Speech Title, Name</i>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title (Twice)</b>	<b>Name</b>
Contestant 1		
Request one minute of silence (timing light red during silence, off at end of one minute)		
Contestant 2		
Request one minute of silence (timing light red during silence, off at end of one minute)		
Contestant 3		
Request one minute of silence (timing light red during silence, off at end of one minute)		
Contestant 4		
Request one minute of silence (timing light red during silence, off at end of one minute)		
Contestant 5		
Request one minute of silence (timing light red during silence, off at end of one minute)		
Contestant 6		
Request one minute of silence (timing light red during silence, off at end of one minute)		
International Speech Contest	<b>Tally and Collect Ballots</b> <i>Please remain silent until the judges have completed their ballots, and the counters</i>	

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<p>Toastmaster</p>	<p><i>have left the room with the ballots. Judges: raise your ballots when you are finished.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Silence will be painful, but don't rush the judges!</li> <li>● Confirm that all ballots have been collected before you proceed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Certificates of Participation</b></p> <p>After all ballots have left the room - Call up each contestant up and award certificate of participation. Ask each contestant the name of their club and how long they have been a Toastmaster. If time permits, ask another "interview" question related to biographical information or speech topic.</p> <p><b>Reintroduce Area Director/Contest Chair</b></p>
<p>Area Director or Contest Chair</p>	<p><b>Announce any Opportunity Drawing winners</b></p> <p><b>Certificates of Appreciation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Informational, do not read aloud: By this time, everyone is ready to go home. Keep acknowledgements brief. It's suggested that you only call up the Toastmasters, Chief Judges, and Contest Chair for certificates. Mention the other chairs by name and let them know that their certificates along with those for the many people who supported the contest will be available afterwards.</li> </ul> <p><i>Let me remind you that today's Table Topics and International Speech Contest winners will progress to the Division M contests, which will take place on April _____. Those winners will continue on to represent Division M at the District 26 contests, which will take place during the Spring Conference on May __, 20___. If an area or division contest winner is unable to participate in the next contest level, the highest placed available contestant will advance.</i></p> <p><i>Now please help me welcome _____ to present the awards.</i></p>
<p>District /Division Dignitary and Area Director</p>	<p><b>Presentation of Awards</b></p> <p>Rules details, do not read aloud:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prior to announcing results, announce if time disqualification(s) occurred but not name the contestant(s) involved. The Chief Judge may discuss the matter privately with the disqualified contestant(s).</li> <li>● In contests with five or more participants, announce third place winner (if wanted), second place winner and first place winner. In contests with four participants or less, announce second place winner and first place winner.</li> <li>● Announcement of contest winners is final unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters or timers may immediately interrupt to correct the error.</li> </ul> <p><b>Congratulations, Request winners and runners up stay to fill out paperwork</b></p>

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	<b>Thank you for coming, Close</b>
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