



BUCHAREST JUNIOR PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

26 January 2019

The competition is aimed at students aged 8-11 who want to improve their speaking and presentation skills and their ability to think analytically on their feet, while enhancing their speech writing skills. The competition also helps to develop confidence in its participants.

1. DATES

The competition will take place on **January 26, 2019** at the **International British School of Bucharest** (21 Agricultori Street, District 2, Bucharest, www.ibsb.ro).

Registration is open between **January 14 - January 18** and is made online at <http://www.esu.ro/public-speaking-competition/junior-public-speaking-competition.html>

The online registration form will become available on January 14.

2. TOPIC

The topic of the Competition is: *"Don't worry about staring into space, it is an excellent thing to do"* (My Name is Mina, David Almond)

3. COMPETITION RULES

3.1 REGISTRATION

Registration is open between **January 14 - January 18**. There will be online registrations only. The online registration form should be filled in by a teacher from the school and should contain the students' names, ages, grade, and coordinating teacher. The online registration form will be available at www.esu.ro during the registration period.

3.2 ELIGIBILITY

Only six (6) students per school are eligible to enter the competition.

Participants must be students aged between 8-11. In case there are more than 6 students that wish to participate a school heat must be organised to select only 6 students to participate in the competition.



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3.3 TOPIC

Participants must write and deliver a speech, the title and content of which are connected with the topic for the competition. Participants may interpret the topic in any way they wish, but may not use the topic as the title of their speech. While the topic represents a quote from a book it is not mandatory to have read the book to participate in the competition or link the speech to the book.

This year's topic is *"Don't worry about staring into space, it is an excellent thing to do"*

4. CONDUCT OF COMPETITION

Participants speak in a random order (determined by organisers).

Participants deliver a **two-minute prepared speech** (which must be connected with the theme for the competition).

The speech is immediately followed by a **2 minute question period**.

Questions may come from members of the audience or members of the adjudication panel and participants should respond to each question individually. Audience members who are connected with a participant (e.g. a family member or an accompanying guest) may not ask questions of that participant.

NO VISUAL AIDS OR PROPS MAY BE USED.

Schools are kindly asked to also nominate a teacher to be part of the adjudication panel.

5. GUIDANCE FOR SPEAKERS

Speakers should consider the following when choosing a topic:

Am I interested in the topic? – Speakers should never write a speech on a topic or subject area that they are not interested in. Enthusiasm is difficult to fabricate and without it speakers can't hope to maximise their marks under Expression and Delivery.

Will my topic capture the interest of the audience? – The audience and the adjudicators do not necessarily have to be interested in the speaker's topic to be persuaded by the speech. Speakers should try to make their speech more engaging by demonstrating the relevance of their arguments to the audience and the adjudicators

Will I be able to discuss my topic in the limited time available? – Some topics or subject areas are particularly obscure or otherwise unfamiliar and would require a significant amount of explanation to make the information accessible to the audience and the adjudicators. Any background, contextual or technical information required should not take up more than a few sentences of the speech. If such information requires elaborate explanation, speakers should consider refining their topic.



Key Elements

Expression and Delivery

What is the purpose of the speech?

In a competitive context, speakers should always approach their task of speech writing with a clear purpose in mind. Good speeches should attempt to do all four – persuade, inform, inspire and entertain the audience and the adjudicators.

Make an impact from the start!

First impressions are important. The audience and the adjudicators are at their most attentive at the very beginning of the speech. It is crucial to grab their attention from the very start with a confident and flawless opening.

Similar emphasis should be put on the conclusion of the speech. It should link back to the opening of the speech (e.g. the problems that were identified, the questions that were posed etc.).

Verbal skills

Speakers should remember that delivering a speech is not like reading an essay. When giving a public speech, it is imperative that speakers speak slowly, clearly and loudly. This will help to ensure that the audience and the adjudicators hear every word, and can comprehend what is being said as they are listening. Speakers should also attempt to vary their pitch and tone of voice, as well as the pace of their speech (where appropriate). These variations help to keep the audience and the adjudicators alert, and help the speaker to maintain their attention for the full five minutes of the speech.

Non-verbal skills

Much of a speaker's communication is non-verbal. For that reason, public speakers must be conscious of their body language if they are to engage the audience and the adjudicators. 'Open' gestures (which help to engage the audience) include facing the audience, and using hands and arms freely to demonstrate, emphasise or otherwise support the words being spoken. By contrast, 'closed' gestures (which often disengage the audience) include the speaker folding their arms, facing away from the audience or hanging their head.

Confidence and style

Confidence and style are at the core of effective expression and delivery.

The following are a few additional tips to enhance confidence and style: speakers should (1) know the opening lines of their speech off by heart, (2) take a few deep breaths before they speak, (3) avoid wearing uncomfortable or distracting clothing or jewellery, (4) take a drink of water before they start to speak and have a glass or bottle of water with them during their speech and (5) remain calm if they slip or stumble over a word or lose their position in their speech – pause, take a drink of water and continue.



A note on notes

Rather than writing out their speech in full and learning it by heart, speakers are advised only to write out the structure of their speech (see the section on structure below). Speakers should know their introduction and conclusion very well (i.e. learnt by heart), and should know the progression of the points in the main body of the speech well (but not learnt by heart).

Reasoning and Evidence

Statement of intent

Providing the audience and the adjudicators with a statement of intent at the start of the speech lets them know what the speaker is trying to achieve with their speech, what the targets are etc. The statement of intent also gives the audience and the adjudicators a glimpse of the content or subject matter of each section of the speech.

Using examples

An argument does not always have to be supported by facts, figures, quotations etc. Arguments can also be supported by examples of things which people know to be true, without reference to statistics or quotations from credible sources to demonstrate or prove the truth of the example.

Organisation and Prioritisation

Why structure is important

An audience is made up of people. An adjudication panel is made up of people. Most people have relatively short attention spans. For that reason, if a speaker stands up, starts speaking and continues to speak constantly for five minutes, most people (including audiences and adjudicators) will tune out after about 2 minutes. Public speakers' use structure to help maintain their listeners' attention.

The outline of a typical speech

Introduction – The speaker should tell the audience who they are, what they are speaking about, why,

and what they want to have achieved or proven by the end of the speech. A map of the main points in the speech should be provided. Each point should be given a label (see above) and perhaps a brief explanation of what will be analysed.

Main Arguments – The speaker should then move onto to the main points of the speech, remembering to deal with each point in order of priority (in the same order they were listed in the introduction), and remembering to signal to the audience when they are moving from one point to the next (this is signposting or flagging).

Conclusion – The speaker should tie together all the main points of the speech at the end, remembering to refer back to the introduction (in particular, to any specific targets or goals that the speaker intended to achieve or prove). The conclusion should not be a simple re-statement of the speech; rather, it should be a comprehensive but succinct summary of all the main strands of the speech in support of the overall thesis of the speech.



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NB: The outline described above is just one way of structuring a speech. Speakers will not lose marks under Organisation or Prioritisation just because they structure their speech or organise their points in a slightly different manner to the one presented above.

Listening and Response

Answering Questions

The question period after the speech is designed to test the speaker's knowledge of the surrounding issues, as well as their ability to listen and respond to questions, justifying the position they have taken in their speech.

When answering questions, speakers should avoid re-stating sections of their speech verbatim. The question period is a great opportunity for speakers to demonstrate extra knowledge (perhaps an extra piece of evidence that there wasn't room to include in the speech). However, answers should always be relevant to the question asked and ultimately support the position taken in the speech.