



THE AMERICAN LEGION
High School Oratorical
Scholarship Program

“A Constitutional Speech Contest”

2025 Contest Information

(for Washington State students)

For additional information please visit:

<http://www.WAConstitutionalSpeechContest.org>

<http://www.legion.org/oratorical>



Contest Purpose

To instill a better knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States in high school students.

Development of leadership qualities, the ability to think and speak clearly, and the preparation of acceptance of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

To assist students in paying the high cost of a college education.

Eligibility

Contestants must either live within or attend an educational institution within the State of Washington

Contestants must be sponsored by an American Legion Post, Auxiliary Unit, SAL Squadron, Riders Chapter or District in the State of Washington

Contestants must be bona fide students who are presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school) in which the curriculum of said school is considered to be of high school level, commencing with grade nine (9) and terminating with grade twelve (12). Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of the contest.

Contestants must be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States.

So, what do I have to do during the contest?

- During the contest you will have to speak twice
 - The Prepared Oration
 - 8-10 minutes long
 - Cover some aspect of the Constitution of the United States
 - Emphasize the duties and obligations of a citizen to our government
 - Must be original work of the contestant
 - Must be memorized and delivered in English
 - The “Assigned Topic” Speech
 - 3-5 minutes long
 - One of four Assigned Topics will be drawn at random during the contest
 - Each contestant is given 5 minutes to prepare prior to delivery of speech
 - You should be prepared in advance to speak on all 4 topics!

“Assigned Topics” for 2025

Amendment 1

- Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment 4

- The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment 13

- 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.
- 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment 21

- 1. The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.
- 2. The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.
- 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

The Contest

- A drawing is held to determine speaking order of the contestants immediately before the contest
- Your presentations will be done before an audience
 - No podium or lectern
 - No microphone
 - No notes
 - No props
 - No help or prompting from the audience
- Your presentations will be timed
- Your presentations will be judged

How is the contest judged?

A. CONTENT			
1. Originality, freshness, directness, application of knowledge on topic. 16 points	Prepared Oration	12 points	
	Assigned Topic	4 points	
2. Skill in selecting examples, description, analogies, specific data. 16 points	Prepared Oration	12 points	
	Assigned Topic	4 points	
3. Logic (correctness of inference). 16 points	Prepared Oration	12 points	
	Assigned Topic	4 points	
4. Comprehensiveness of knowledge, knows the subject matter. 22 points	Prepared Oration	16 points	
	Assigned Topic	6 points	
B. SPEAKING SKILLS			
1. Voice and diction. 10 points	Prepared Oration	6 points	
	Assigned Topic	4 points	
2. Style: language, use, word arrangement transition, word selection. 10 points	Prepared Oration	6 points	
	Assigned Topic	4 points	
3. Body actions: poise, eye contact, posture, gestures. 10 points	Prepared Oration	6 points	
	Assigned Topic	4 points	
	First Totals		
PENALTIES: 1 point for each minute or fraction thereof over or under allotted time.	Prepared Oration		
	Assigned Topic		
1-10 points for failure to speak on the Constitution			
	Final Total Points		

Where and When is the Contest?

All contests will be held at Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake the weekend of March 28-29, 2025. A mandatory pre-contest orientation for all contestants is held on Friday evening, March 28th. (lodging arrangements & mileage allowance provided to contestants)

Scholarships totaling \$5,000 will be awarded to the 1st thru 4th place students taking part in the State Finals contest. The State winner will receive a \$2,000 scholarship, plus an expenses paid trip to Hillsdale, Michigan, to compete in the National Finals Contest for a part of the \$203,000 national scholarship pool.

The National Finals Contest will be held the weekend of May 16-18, 2025. You are expected to be there all 3 days.

How do I sign up?

Complete the application – at the end of this presentation.

Locate an American Legion Post to sponsor you. Visit the website link below and scroll over the county where you reside to determine and email the District chairman who will help you find a local sponsor.

<https://walegion.org/find-local-post/>

Contact Information:

Department Chairman:

Carol Reed

Email: cmreed98058@hotmail.com

Phone: (206) 683-5950





The American Legion High School Oratorical Program
“A Constitutional Speech Contest”
APPLICATION

(To be completed by student with sponsorship of an American Legion Post/Unit/Squadron/District)

Contestant Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Are you a United States Citizen? Yes No If no, are you a resident alien? Yes No

Parent’s Name: _____ Phone: _____

Parent’s E-Mail: _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION:

High School: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Faculty Contact: _____ E-Mail: _____

How did you learn about the oratorical contest?

I will abide by all the rules of the Department of Washington and The National High School Oratorical Contest Committee and follow the instructions of contest sponsors and chairman. I hereby attest that my Prepared Oration and Assigned Topic presentations are my original work.

Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Sponsored by American Legion <input type="checkbox"/> Post <input type="checkbox"/> Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Squadron <input type="checkbox"/> District # _____	
Chair/Officer Name: _____	Date: _____
Phone: _____	E-Mail: _____

Sponsor must submit this application with **\$150.00 fee** by February 5th
Please make checks payable to **American Legion, Department of Washington.**

Mail Application to: **THE AMERICAN LEGION**
Department Oratorical Contest
13017 SE 171st PL
Renton, WA 98058