

# National Oratorical Contest For High School Students

## A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST

**"Essentials" for Naperville Contest Level on Jan. 6, 2024**

Neal Kemp, Contest Chairman for Naperville Post 43, 630-204-6658

### NATIONAL ORATORICAL CONTEST FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS A Constitutional Speech Contest

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**Part 1:** Draft in writing a "**Prepared Oration**" on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with emphasis on a citizen's duties and obligations to our government. It must have a title. It must be a speech that you create. Quotations must always be indicated as such, and the author's name must be given in the speech manuscript and cited orally. The speech must be given in no less than 8 minutes, and no more than 10 minutes. It does not have to be recited verbatim, but contestants must adhere closely to their manuscript. Because no podium, no microphone, no notes or other aids are permitted, it is suggested that contestants memorize the beginning, the ending and an outline of their speech.

Practice with a teacher or parent who will check timing and give constructive comments. Common mistakes are (1) speaking too fast, and (2) not giving good word separation, especially for names, titles and words the judges may not recognize. There is a big difference between being heard and being understood by the judges and the audience. Because of the time requirements, and because one may speak at a different rate as you become more familiar with your speech by repetition, it is good to plan a 9-minute speech. Time warning signs will appear at the 8-, 9- and 10-minute marks. Use a timer when practicing. You do not want to see the 10-minute warning! That results in a penalty!

Have a pleasant friendly facial expression. Do not be a statue. Be your natural self, but use expression and emphasis like good speakers do. It is suggested to clearly state your title at the beginning, work it into your speech several times in the middle, and state your title in your ending. That repetition should help the judges remember you. Attach a bibliography sheet to your manuscript to show where your speech information was obtained. You **must** bring a copy of your speech manuscript to each contest level.

**Part 2.** The "**Assigned Topic**" will be a part of the U.S. Constitution. It will be chosen at

contest time from one of the four topics that are listed below. One or more of the four may fit into part of your Prepared Oration in Part 1 above. You must speak no less than 3 minutes, and no more than 5 minutes, on the Assigned Topic chosen at contest time. Time warning signs will appear at the 3-, 4-, and 5-minute marks. You do not want to see the 5-minute warning that results in a penalty!

#### **Four “Assigned Topics” from U.S. Constitution for 2024 Oratorical Contest**

- A. Amendment II, A well-regulated Militia, being necessary etc.
- B. Amendment XXIII, The District constituting the seat of Government etc.
- C. Amendment XXV, Section 3, Whenever the President transmits etc.
- D. Amendment V, No person shall be held to answer for a capital etc.

For the complete text of each of above Assigned Topics see: <https://www.legion.org> under links for Programs, Oratorical Contest, Assigned Topics, or contact the Contest Chairman above.

3. In early December 2023, a Parent or School Representative is requested to confirm to the Contest Chairman mentioned above and below (1) the name, (2) phone number and (3) High School of the contestant that will appear and compete at the 2024 contest on Jan. 6th. Earlier confirmations are appreciated. This information is needed for determining contest staff and setups. To be eligible, an applicant must be a bona fide high school student in a grade 9 thru 12, a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident, and under the age of 20 years at the time of the National contest starting April 20, 2024.

4. Appear in business attire with a parent or teacher or chaperone. Bring a written copy of your "Prepared Oration" manuscript which must have a title. "Sign In" at the American Legion Hall, 10 W. Chicago Ave., 2nd Floor, Naperville, on Saturday, January 6, 2024, at 1:30 PM. The District Contest will be Sunday January 7 at Cantigny Park from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM; the Division Contest will probably be another Sunday, the State Contest will be 2 March in Springfield, IL, and the National Contest will be 20-21 April, 2024 in Indianapolis, IN.

5. The order of speaking will be determined by lot at contest time. A contestant will not hear speeches of other contestants, but parents, teachers and guests may attend and hear all speeches of all contestants. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Winners and Prizes will be announced the same afternoon. The 1st Place Winner earns the right to compete at the next contest level. Lately, other contestants have been invited to fill vacancies at higher contest levels in the order they are ranked by the speech judges. We have been successful in the recent past in having our Post contestants fill vacancies at the State Contest level.

When facts or figures are used, have good back-up sources and references for them in your bibliography sheet. It would be cause for disqualification if a speech contained erroneous facts or figures.

6. The purpose of this annual national contest, started in 1938, is to instill in high school students a better knowledge and appreciation of the U.S. Constitution. Other objectives include the development of leadership and speaking qualities. The Illinois State Champion will compete against contestants from the other 49 States in the National Contest. In addition to cash prizes at local contest levels, State college tuition awards of \$13,000 are spread among State contestants. National college tuition awards of about \$128,000 are spread among National contestants with \$25,000, \$22,500 and \$20,000 going to the three national finalists. Post 43 will pay the \$125 application fee for the State Contest. Hotel rooms are provided for contestants and parents at State and National contests.

This is not an easy contest. It is a challenge that thousands of good students have been able to perform since its inception in 1938. See a partial Naperville list below. Are you a good student?

**7. For answers to questions, please contact Neal Kemp, Contest Chairman for Naperville Post 43 of American Legion, 630-204-6658 or email [Kemp1112@aol.com](mailto:Kemp1112@aol.com)**

**PAST WINNERS at NAPERVILLE CONTEST LEVEL Since 2000**

- 2000 - 63rd Annual 1st Place Andrew Mondì, Naperville North HS, Senior
- 2001 - 64th Annual 1st Place Ian Holzhauer, Naperville North HS, Senior
- 2002 - 65th Annual 1st Place Jennifer L. Dierdorff, Naperville Central HS, Senior
- 2003 - 66th Annual 1st Place Scott Musial, Benet Academy, Senior  
2nd Place Alexis Maxwell, Naperville North, Senior  
3rd Place Jessica Garvert, Benet Academy, Sophomore
- 2004 - 67th Annual 1st Place Serena Raheja, Naperville North HS, Senior  
2nd Place Melissa Entzminger, Home School, Junior  
3rd Place Michael S. Leen, Benet Academy, Senior
- 2005 - 68th Annual 1st Place Melissa Entzminger, Home School, Senior  
2nd Place Casey Verkamp, Naperville North HS, Junior  
3rd Place Jennifer Cota, Naperville Central HS, Senior
- 2006 - 69th Annual 1st Place Casey Verkamp, Naperville North HS, Senior (\*)  
2nd Place Danielle Gewurz, Neuqua Valley HS, Senior
- 2007 - 70th Annual 1st Place Jared Canfield, Home School, Junior (\*\*)
- 2008 - 71st Annual 1st Place Matthew Schuhriemen, a Home School Sophomore  
2nd Place Kristin Hwu, a Naperville North HS Senior  
3rd Place Sunameeka Panigrahy, a Naperville Central HS Junior
- 2009 - 72nd Annual 1st Place Miriam Canfield, a Home School Junior  
2nd Place Matthew Schuhriemen, a Home School Junior  
3rd Place Thomas Schuhriemen, a Home School Senior
- 2010 - 73rd Annual 1st Place Matthew Schuhriemen, a Home School Senior (\*)  
2nd Place Katherine Rudolph, a Naperville Central HS Senior  
3rd Place Micah Colbert, a Home School Senior  
4th Place Ryan Macwan, a Home School Sophomore  
5th Place Alyssa J. Peterson, a Benet Academy Senior
- 2011 - 74th Annual 1st Place Anagha Sundararajan, Waubonsee Valley HS Senior  
2nd Place Ryan Macwan, a Home School Junior  
3rd Place Rianka Macwan, a Home School Sophomore  
4th Place Jonathan Hogue, a Metea Valley Junior
- 2012 - 75th Annual 1st Place Rianka Macwan, a Home School Junior  
2nd Place Kirthi Bellamkonda, a Naperville Central HS Junior  
3rd Place Ryan Macwan, a Home School Senior
- 2013 - 76th Annual 1st Place Steven Harrison, a Waubonsie Valley HS Junior  
2nd Place Rianka Macwan, a Home School Senior  
3rd Place Sarvasva Raghuvanshi, a Neuqua Valley HS Freshman
- 2014 - 77th Annual 1st Place Sarvasva Raghuvanshi, a Neuqua Valley HS Sophomore (\*)  
2nd Place Samantha Xu, a Naperville Central HS Sophomore  
3rd Place Steven Harrison, a Waubonsie Valley HS Senior
- 2015 - 78th Annual 1st Place Sarvasva Raghuvanshi, a Neuqua Valley HS Junior  
2nd Place Rowan Macwan, a Home HS Junior (\*\*)  
3rd Place Samantha XU, a Naperville Central HS Junior
- 2016 - 79th Annual 1st Place Regan Macwan, a Home School Freshman  
2nd Place Abinaya Ramakrishnan, IL Science & Math Academy Sophomore
- 2017 - 80th Annual 1st Place Ryan Park, a Naperville Central HS Junior (\*)  
2nd Place Regan Macwan, a Home School Sophomore

3rd Place Nicole Tong, a Naperville North HS Freshman  
2018 - 81st Annual 1st Place Nicole Tong, a Naperville North HS Sophomore  
2nd Place Regan Macwan, a Home School Junior  
3rd Place Andy Wang, a Neuqua Valley HS Senior  
2019 – 82nd Annual 1st Place Kate Li, a Naperville Central HS Sophomore  
2nd Place Nicole Tong, a Naperville North HS Junior  
3rd Place Aparna Ramakrishnan, a Naperville Central HS Freshman  
2020 – 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual 1<sup>st</sup> Place Aparna Ramakrishnan, a Naperville Central HS Sophomore  
2021 – 84th Annual 1<sup>st</sup> Place Aparna Ramakrishnan, a Naperville Central HS Junior  
2022 - 85<sup>th</sup> Annual 1<sup>st</sup> Place Yashas Sardesai, a Neuqua Valley Senior (\*)  
2023 – 86<sup>th</sup> Annual 1<sup>st</sup> Place April Zhang, a Neuqua Valley Junior (\*)

(\*) Also won State Contest and qualified to compete in Nationals

(\*\*) Also won State Contest and was one of three finalists at Nationals

NOTE: Jared Canfield won 3rd Place in 2007 National Contest

Rowan Macwan won 2nd Place in 2015 National Contest