



Guidelines for holding a virtual Optimist Oratorical contest

1. Zoom is the preferred platform as you can easily have multiple people signed in. To access Zoom --which is free--go to <https://zoom.us> and click on Host a Meeting at the top. Follow the instructions. It will ask you to list invitees and this is where you list all of the contestants and judges who will be involved.
2. Schedule contestants 10-12 minutes apart and have them sign into the meeting at their appointed time. This will make it easier to manage and will avoid having too many people on at one time. Judges should sign in but should keep their video off and should mute their microphones. The oratorical chair should be on and monitor as if it is a live contest.
3. Prior to the student speaking, have someone pan the room to make sure that (a) there is not a second computer or teleprompter of any kind with the speech written on it and (b) that there are at least 2-3 people in the "audience" so that the student has someone to talk to and the speech looks more natural. Contestants should find a room that is as quiet as possible away from outside noises.
4. Check the microphone level and make sure that camera shows the student's entire body. Check with judges by having them unmute to indicate readiness and then remute. Switch to record mode just in case there are any problems and a judge needs to see the video. Give the signal to start and unmute the chair's microphone and camera so that the only thing on the screen is the contestant. Other participants will be listed by name at the top of the screen.
5. At the conclusion of the speech, stop the record function and ask the student to leave the meeting. There is a button on the bottom right to click on. Make sure that the student has left before beginning the next contestant.
6. Have the judges score as usual and then relay their scores to the chair to record on the record sheet, tally and then have all of the students join in the call to learn the winners. You should allow at least 20 minutes after the conclusion of the last speech for contestants to rejoin. An agenda with the time schedule should be sent to the contestants and judges prior to the contest.
7. Test the system with the judges and students prior to the day of the contest.

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Direct any questions to programs@optimist.org.