

The Rumbaugh Oration Contest:

Some Questions & Answers

1. What is an oration?

An oration is a carefully prepared formal speech written in advance (and given to the contest judges in advance), committed to memory, and delivered word for word without notes. In this case, a speech of at least five minutes in length but not more than six.

2. What topics can the oration be about?

Oration topics should be about a Revolutionary War event (e.g.: The Battle of King's Mountain or the Boston Tea Party), a document (e.g.: Declaration of Independence or the Bill of Rights), or a personality (e.g.: Benjamin Franklin or Sir William Howe), showing the relationship it bears to America today. For example, the 2005 winning oration was about the separation of church and state as provided in the Bill of Rights and its implications for religious activities in schools and other public places.

3. Who can participate in the Rumbaugh Oration Contest?

Any high school student, public, private, or home-schooled, in grades 9-12 at the time of the contest.

4. When and where is the contest?

The state (FLSSAR) competition will be held at the winter Board of Management meeting on January 30, 2009. Therefore, local chapter level competitions should be held before that time. Probably most local chapters hold their contest in the November-December time frame. The national (NSSAR) competition will be held at the 119th Annual NSSAR Congress in Marietta, Georgia, on July 4-8. All state organizations will send at state expense one winner and a companion (e.g.: parent, coach) to the national contest. The last Florida winner was in 1997.

5. What are the prizes for the contest?

- a. Local chapter level prizes will be determined by each local chapter. Many local chapters provide a first prize of \$50, a second prize of \$25, and a third prize of \$15, since they may be reimbursed by the ETF for those amounts. The local chapter will also need to make reservations and provide for transportation and expenses (hotel room, dinner) for the winner and a companion (parent, coach) to the Winter Board of Management meeting. Such expenses may be reimbursable. The contest usually takes place in the late morning or early afternoon of the first meeting day and the results announced at the Friday evening banquet.
- b. State level (FLSSAR) prizes are as follows:
 - First Place: \$1000.
 - Second Place: \$500.
 - Third Place: \$250
 - All Others: \$100
- c. National level prizes are:
 - First Place: \$3000.
 - Second Place: \$2000.
 - Third Place: \$1000.
 - All other finalists: \$300.
 - All other contestants: \$200.

5. How will the competition be judged?

At the state level the three judges, who must be given a copy of the oration in advance, will use the following criteria:

- a. Composition (organization, vocabulary, logic) 20 points
- b. Delivery (voice, body movement, gestures) 40 points
- c. History (research, accuracy, American Revolution based) 20 points
- d. Significance (relation to current issues) 20 points

In addition, penalty points will be deducted for orations violating the at least 5 minutes but not more than 6 minutes time limits for delivery, and for deviations from the copy of the oration given to the judges.

6. How can the local chapter recruit students to enter the contest?

Designate at least one person in the chapter to contact local public and private schools as well as home-schooled students. Who to contact will vary locally, of course, but many public school systems have English or Language Arts Coordinators or Supervisors who are in charge of providing curriculum materials and textbook adoptions. These professionals are in an excellent position to advise you as to how to proceed or who to contact.

Otherwise, the next best course would be to contact the Superintendent's office and/or building Principals for guidance as to what English teachers to contact. The Superintendent's office should also be able to provide the names of students being home schooled.

Additionally, it's good to keep in mind that most senior high schools are divided into departments and the Chair of the English Department may turn out to be the most helpful person of all. Often one or two English teachers will be most interested in speech and/or debate and may even supervise extra-curricular activities such as a Debate Club.

8. How does the local chapter enter its winner in the FLSSAR contest?

First, go to the NSSAR website (www.sar.org), click on Rumbaugh Oration under Education/Youth at the top, and print out: (1) Procedures, (2) Contest Rules, (3) Chapter Entry Form, (4) Judging Sheet, (5) State and National Entry Forms, A&B. Send in the Chapter Entry Form and State and National Entry Forms (Forms A&B) along with a picture of the orator and 4 copies of the oration to: TBD, by not later than January 12, 2010.

9. In case I have further questions about the Rumbaugh Oration Contest, who do I contact?

The FLSSAR committee conducting the next state contest is as follows:

- a. TBD
- b. TBD
- c. TBD
- d. TBD
- e. TBD

-, Chairman