

Guidelines for a Successful Speech

The purpose for this informational sheet is to guide you as you craft a speech that will give you the best chance of winning our contest. Best of luck to all of you!

Contest topic: *Blazing Trails: Forts of the Texas Frontier*

Contestants will be asked to select one of the forts shown on the List of Suggested "Frontier Forts of Texas" (see the back of Description of Topic) and deliver an oration about that fort, including but not limited to the reasons for locating a particular fort, the way it was built, who commanded it, who served there, what daily life was like, how women and children survived the loneliness and isolation and what became of the post when the soldiers left.

Things to consider when writing your speech:

As you proceed with your own research, explore the reasons why your chosen fort was important, the interesting people who lived there and notable activities that happened there. Your audience will enjoy hearing about these forts and what life was like while living and working on them. In writing your 10 to 12 minute speech, you will need to uncover interesting and perhaps lesser-known facts so that the judges and the audience will find your speech to be extraordinary.

Unlike UIL speech tournaments, our winning contestant will deliver his or her speech as the keynote speaker at the annual Battle of Flowers® Association's Luncheon during the city's Fiesta celebration in April. This luncheon honors all that we have accomplished as a charitable organization during the year and is held in anticipation of our city-wide parade the following day. It is a patriotic and festive occasion with an audience of over 500 people, and the keynote address is intended to give Battle of Flowers members and guests an inspiring, in-depth look into an interesting chapter in our state's history. Therefore, please consider the appropriateness of the content of your speech to this audience and the type of event it is intended to complement. For a better understanding of our events and to see last year's winning speech, go to the Oratorical Contest page on our website at www.battleofflowers.org and view our videos of the contest day, subsequent benefits for the winner and the 2016 keynote luncheon address.

Finally, the Battle of Flowers® Association is looking for a fact-filled and entertaining speech that enlightens rather than persuades an audience that is already well-versed in Texas history. It is important to prepare a speech that emphasizes historical facts and stays on topic. The oratorical judges utilize guidelines at our contest that enable them to select the winning speech best suited to be delivered at our luncheon in April. In summary, prepare a speech that will educate and entertain the audience at both events about your chosen "Frontier Forts of Texas."