



## TABLE TOPICS & INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTESTS SCRIPT

*For the Contest Chair and Sergeant at Arms*

**Note to the Contest Chair.** Please read the instructions below and the entire script before performing your roles. You may need to modify the flow of the script as appropriate for a multi-Area event. Since some contestants are in both the Table Topics and International Speech contests, it is important that contestant interviews take place only after the last speech contest of the event.

**Instructions to the Contest Chair.** At the Contestants Briefing learn how to pronounce all the contestants' names. There is space provided within the text of this script to write in the speaking order and notes on pronunciation. You will also be given the biography sheet for each contestant to aid you in performing the contestant Interviews. Make sure contestants are not wearing name badges or designation pins. Determine a Table Topics question that will be asked each contestant individually.

**Instructions to the Sergeant at Arms.** Except for the first speaker who will remain in the room, you will escort the remaining Table Topics contestants to an outside waiting area. After the first speaker has answered the Table Topics question, retrieve the next contestant and have them in a ready position to the side of the speaking area until they are called by the Chair to answer the Table Topics question.

**Instructions to the Sergeant at Arms if there are two SAA.** Except for the first speaker who will remain in the room, **SAA 1** will escort the remaining Table Topics contestants to an outside waiting area and remain with the contestants during the contest. After the first speaker has answered the Table Topics question, during the 1 minute of silence for judges, **SAA 2** will retrieve the next contestant and have them in a ready position to the side of the speaking area until they are called by the Chair to answer the Table Topics question. **SAA 2** will repeat this procedure for each contestant.

## TABLE TOPICS CONTEST SCRIPT

### SERGEANT AT ARMS

1. Call the meeting to order.
2. Provide invocation/opening thought.
3. Introduce the Contest Chair

### CONTEST CHAIR

1. Welcome all to the contest.
2. Recognize dignitaries (District/Division/Area Officers) in the audience.
3. *Open with brief remarks or a story. This is the time to be charming, funny, and work up the crowd. During the contest, please be business-like and follow the script to the letter.*
4. **State:** “We will have two contests: The Table Topics Contest and the International Speech Contest. The first contest will be the Table Topics Contest. When that contest is finished, we will have a short break and then we will conduct the International Speech Contest. Winners of both contests will be announced at the end.

The contestants, judges, timers, ballot counters, and Sergeant at Arms have all been briefed about the contest rules and procedures. The contestants have been informed of the location of the timing lights.

The following announcements are made in the interest of having a distraction-free environment for our contestants.

- a. Please place all cell phones or other devices that make audible noises either in the off position or on silent.

- b. No photography of the contestants is allowed during the contest. There will be photo opportunities after the contest. Videotaping is allowed only if the contestant and the Contest Chair have given their approval in advance.
  - c. Once the contest has begun, members of the audience are asked to refrain from leaving and/or re-entering the room. If you must leave, please do so during the times of silence between contestant presentations. The Sergeant at Arms will not allow anyone to enter the room during a contestant’s speech.
  - d. There will be 1 minute of silence between contestants during which judges will mark their ballots. After all contestants have spoken, the judges will be given all the time they need to complete their ballots.
3. “The speaking order for the contest was determined earlier by having our contestants draw for position. The order for the contest will be:

Contestant No.1 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.2 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.3 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.4 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.5 \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any questions from the contestants or the officials before we get started?

“We will now begin the Table Topics contest.

Sergeant at Arms, except for the first contestant, please escort the Table Topics Contestants out of the room.”

[Allow time for the other Table Topics contestants to leave the room.]

4. [Introduce each contestant by stating their name, the Table Topics question, the Table Topics question followed by their name. **SAY NOTHING ELSE**, as your words or tone can appear to show bias for or against the contestant.

State the Table Topics question with the same words and manner for each contestant. Reading to get it right is perfect acceptable.]

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_.”

[Follow this procedure for the remaining Table Topics contestants.]

5.

(First contestant answers the Table Topics question)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots. Sergeant at Arms, please prepare the next contestant.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant and for Sergeant at Arms to bring in next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_.”

(Second contestant answers the Table Topics question.)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots. Sergeant at Arms, please prepare the next contestant.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant and for Sergeant at Arms to bring in next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_.”

(Third contestant answers the Table Topics question.)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots. Sergeant at Arms, please prepare the next contestant.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant and for Sergeant at Arms to bring in next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_.”

(Fourth contestant answers the Table Topics question.)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots. Sergeant at Arms, please prepare the next contestant.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant and for Sergeant at Arms to bring in next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

Table Topics Question \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_.”

(Fifth contestant answers the Table Topics question.)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots. Sergeant at Arms, please prepare the next contestant.”

AFTER LAST CONTESTANT SPEAKS, ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING:

6. **After last Table Topics question, State:** “Everyone, please remain silent while the judges complete their ballots and they are collected by the ballot counters.”

Ballot counters collect ballots and Chief Judge collects the timer’s report and the Tie-Breaking Judge’s ballot. Chief Judge leaves room with ballot counters to tabulate results.

(Lead applause when Chief Judge and Ballot Counters make their exit).

7. **State:** “While we are waiting for the votes to be counted, we will hear from \_\_\_\_\_, who will give us all the exciting details of the upcoming \_\_\_\_\_ [appropriate contest or District Conference].” (Lead applause)

8. **State:** “Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_. We will now have a short break. Please enjoy the refreshments; we will resume our contest in 10 minutes.”

## **INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST SCRIPT**

### **CONTEST CHAIR**

1. **Announce:** “Welcome back and please be seated. We will now conduct the International Speech Contest.

If you used your cellphone during the break, please ensure that it is now off or in silent mode. Once the contest has begun, the Sergeant at Arms will secure the doors.

Members of the audience are asked to refrain from leaving or entering the room during the contest. Again, no photography of the contestants is allowed during the contest. After the contest, please do not leave the room until it is determined that all ballots have been collected.

The contestants, judges, timers, ballot counters, and Sergeant at Arms have all been briefed about the contest rules and procedures. The contestants have been informed of the location of the timing lights.”

There will be one minute of silence before the first contestant and between each contestant. Time Keepers, when I advise you to do so, please signal me with the green light when one minute is up. After all contestants have spoken, the judges will be given all the time they need to complete their ballots.”

2. **State:** “The speaking order for the International Speech contest was determined earlier by having our contestants draw for position. The speaking order for the International Speech contest will be:

Contestant No.1 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.2 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.3 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.4 \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant No.5 \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Ask:** “Are there any questions from the contestants or the officials before we get started?”

**State:** “We will now begin the International Speech Contest.

Announce each contestant with their name, speech title, speech title, name.  
**SAY NOTHING ELSE**, because your words or tone can be interpreted as bias for or against the contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Speech Title) \_\_\_\_\_

(Repeat the Speech Title) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_”

(First contestant will speak)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Speech Title X 2) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_”

(Second contestant will speak)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant.



“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Speech Title X 2) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_”

(Third contestant will speak)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Speech Title X 2) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_”

(Fourth contestant will speak)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Speech Title X 2) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_”

(Fifth contestant will speak)

“May we have one minute of silence (signal timer) while the judges mark their ballots.”

Wait for one minute of silence before announcing next contestant.

“(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Speech Title X 2) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_”

AFTER LAST CONTESTANT, ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING:

- 4. Announce:** “Everyone please remain silent while the judges complete their ballots and have them collected by the Ballot Counters.”

**ASK:** “Are there any ballots not yet picked up?”

Ballot counters collect ballots and Chief Judge collects the timer’s report and the Tie-Breaking Judge’s ballot. Chief Judge leaves room with ballot counters to tabulate results.

(Lead applause when Chief Judge and ballot counters make their exit).

- 5. Announce:** “While we are waiting for the votes to be counted, let’s get to know our contestants. We will interview the Table Topics Contestants first.

Please join me for a brief interview.”

Lead applause. Wait for all the contestants to line up in the order they spoke.

Repeat the following for each contestant. Ask each question and wait for reply before asking next question. Shorten number of questions asked based on time constraints of contest

How long have you been in TM? \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) \_\_\_\_\_  
What club are you representing? \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) \_\_\_\_\_  
What is your Toastmasters education level? \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) \_\_\_\_\_

(Interview question, using biographical form for material – VERY BRIEF)

Ask question:

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Thank the contestant, present certificate, shake hands and lead the applause

Repeat process for each contestant

After all contestants are interviewed, contestants return to their seats.

6. “Now we will interview the International Speech Contestants at this time. Please join me for a brief interview.”

Lead applause. Wait for all the contestants to line up in the order they spoke.

Repeat the following for each contestant. Ask each question and wait for reply before asking next question. Shorten number of questions asked based on time constraints (ie: when you need to finish contest/leave building)

“ \_\_\_\_\_ (Contestant’s name)

How long have you been in TM? \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) \_\_\_\_\_  
What club are you representing? \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) \_\_\_\_\_  
What is your Toastmasters education level? \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) \_\_\_\_\_

(Interview question, using biographical form for material – VERY BRIEF)

Ask question:

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Thank each contestant, present certificate, shake hands and lead the applause.  
Repeat process for each contestant  
After all contestants are interviewed, contestants return to their seats

7. **Recognize:** Acknowledge everyone who assisted with the contest, including timers, ballot counters, caterers, the venue, chief judge, contest chair and the anonymous judges. Do this BEFORE the winners are announced, which is the highlight of the evening and the high note on which to complete the contest.
8. **Announce:** “And now the moment we have all been waiting for ... the announcement of the winners. . .”

The Area Director, Division Director and District Representative should come to the stage to present awards to winners. (If necessary, prompt them to do so.) Give them time to move onto the stage.

READ THE WINNER INFORMATION EXACTLY AS PRINTED ON FORM. No more announcements or comments will follow announcement of winners. State the contest is adjourned immediately following announcement of winners. If there are only 4 contestants, then only announce the 2<sup>nd</sup> place and the 1<sup>st</sup> place winners.

**State:** “First, we’ll announce the winners of the Table Topics contest.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Place winner is \_\_\_\_\_.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Place winner is \_\_\_\_\_.

The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner of the Table Topics Contest will represent

(the Club at the Area contest on \_\_\_\_\_) or

(the Area at the Division contest on \_\_\_\_\_) or

(the Division at the District contest on \_\_\_\_\_)

is \_\_\_\_\_.

Next, we will announce the winners of the International Speech Contest.

**State:**

“The 3<sup>rd</sup> Place winner is \_\_\_\_\_.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Place winner is \_\_\_\_\_.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Place winner of the International Speech Contest will represent

(the Club at the Area contest on \_\_\_\_\_) or

(the Area at the Division contest on \_\_\_\_\_) or

(the Division at the District contest on \_\_\_\_\_)

Is \_\_\_\_\_.

**11. Announce:** “This contest is adjourned!”

Ask contestants and winners to stay for photos.