

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF THE SOUTH

Presents

ANNUAL ORATORICAL CONTEST



Dr. Walter L. Parrish, II
ABCOTS Executive Minister

Mrs. Alice Morgan Grant
ABCOTS President

Dr. Lacey Speight Alford
ABCOTS Regional Oratorical Coordinator

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PREFACE

Or•a•to•ry

n.

1. The art of publicspeaking.
2. Eloquence or skill in makingspeeches to the public.
3. Public speaking marked by theuse of forceful rhetoric.

The oratorical contest is of inestimable value in enhancing the spiritual development and communication skills of our youth. It is the desire of the ABCOTS office that all areas are consistent in carrying out the oratorical program. Therefore, this manual was compiled to assist local church sponsors in preparing their youth for the oratorical program.

The Oratorical Contest Manual was originally compiled by Rev. Brenda Summerset, who served faithfully as Oratorical Coordinator for several years. The revised version of the Oratorical Manual was developed in collaboration with the Executive Minister, Dr. Walter L. Parrish, II, Area Coordinators/Regional Oratorical Committee, ABCOTS President, Mrs. Alice Grant and Mrs. Trumilla McDowell, Congress of Christian Education, General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. It is designed to assist you in planning and executing the oratorical program with excellence.

Please read this document carefully. If you have questions or need clarification about any of the information included, please contact your area coordinator.

Oratorical Contest Information for Coordinators

The contestants for the Oratorical Contest for each Area in the Region will be classified according to the following divisions:

Division I	Middle School (Grades 6 - 8)
Division II	High School (Grades 9 – 11)
Division III	High School (Grade 12 – Graduating high school seniors)

Responsibilities of the Area Coordinator

The Area Coordinator is responsible for organizing and implementing all aspects of the Area Oratorical Contest, including the following specific tasks:

1. Recruit other persons in the Area to assist
2. Mail to each of the Area churches the information on the Oratorical Contest to include the oratorical topics; the date, time, and place of the contest for the area; and the guidelines as contained in the Regional Oratorical Contest Manual.
3. Receive contest applications and copies of speeches from winners at the local church or cluster level.
4. Secure the judges for the contest and hold an orientation session with them prior to the contest judging.
5. Arrange for interviews of participants prior to the contest.
6. See that the site for the oratorical contest is set-up as needed (podium, microphone, etc.)
7. Arrange for the purchase/preparation of certificates, trophies and/or other prizes.
8. Arrange for an appropriate token of appreciation for judges.
9. Send the Winner's Form to the Regional Oratorical Contest Coordinator within one week of the contest.

Submit names of the winners to the Area Moderator and the Program Board so that the Treasurer or assigned person can make arrangements for the winners to attend the Regional Oratorical Contest.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHURCH SPONSORS

The primary responsibility of the local church sponsor is to provide contestants to compete at the Area Annual Oratorical Contest. To meet this goal, the contest sponsor should do the following:

1. Familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations governing the oratorical program of the American Baptist Churches of the South (ABCOTS).
2. Plan an oratorical competition event at the local church, using the guidelines developed for the ABCOTS Region oratorical program.
3. Recruit young people from your church to compete in the three contest divisions.
4. Review all the rules, guidelines, and forms with the contestants.
5. Recruit persons to listen to them and provide pointers as they practice their oration.
6. Recruit at least three judges from outside your church before conducting the oratorical competition.
7. Conduct an oratorical competition event at your local church.
8. Make sure that the youth oratorical contestants adhere to all deadlines in submitting the required materials for the Area competition.
9. Enter the first and second place winners in each division in the Area competition.
10. Post the names and pictures of your winners somewhere in the church, so that the church family can pray for and encourage them.
11. Make transportation and lodging arrangements for the contestants to attend the Area meeting.
12. Invite the contestants' parents and members of the church to attend the Area competition.
13. Make sure that the contestants arrive at the site of the competition at the designated time.

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COMMITMENT FORM

**Count on me to be part of the TEAM for the Annual Oratorical Contest.
I am willing to help in the following way(s):**

◇ **I will serve as contest sponsor for my local church.**

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

◇ I cannot be a sponsor at this time, but I have recruited/recommended the following person to represent my local church.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Contact Information: _____

◇ I will help in the contest by serving on the planning committee checked below:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Contact Information: _____

◇ JUDGES: recommend, recruit, select persons to listen to contestants deliver their orations and determine winners in each category.

◇ PROGRAM: plan program for the contest evening; have printed program produced.

◇ AWARDS: select, purchase, solicit trophies, prizes and awards and other expressions of recognition and appreciation

◇ ARRANGEMENTS: plan, arrange, set-up space for contest; provide escorts for contestant groups, judges, program participants, etc.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN FORM BY MAIL OR FAX NO LATER THAN

2010-2011 ORATORICAL TOPICS

The oratorical topics listed below are based on the **41st** Annual Session
Theme: **“Celebrate God’s Glory, God’s Power, God’s Way.”**

Scripture: Isaiah 35

DIVISION I

(6th, 7th, 8th grade)

God’s Power Unfolds In My Life
The Benefits of Living God’s Way
Be Strong: We Shall Overcome

DIVISION II

(9th, 10th, 11th grade)

How The Glory of God Shines Through Me
The Challenges and the Benefits of Living God’s Way
The Joy in Knowing God’s Glory

DIVISION III

(Graduating Seniors)

The Power and the Glory of God in My daily Walk
Is God in this Broken Society?
God’s Excellency in My Life

ORATORICAL CONTEST GUIDELINES

*The following rules and regulations will be adhered to strictly.
No exceptions will be made.*

CONTEST ELIGIBILITY

1. Contestants for the Oratorical Contest must be members of an ABCOTS church that is in good standing.
2. The contestants for Division I must be middle school students in grades 6, 7, or 8.
3. The contestants for Division II must be high school students in grades 9, 10, 11.
4. The contestants for Division III must be high school students in grade 12, with plans to enter a college, university or community college in August/September 2010.

CONTEST REQUIREMENTS

5. The contest components consist of a completed application form, an original essay on the designated topic, an interview, and the formal delivery of the oration from the prepared essay.
6. Contestants must submit, via U.S. mail, an application form along with a copy of a typewritten, double-spaced original essay on the designated topic, no later than the announced due date.
7. A cover page containing the contestant's name and church should be stapled to the essay. No identifying information, i.e. the contestant's name, church, etc. should be included in the essay.
8. Contestants will deliver a memorized speech on the selected topic as follows:
Division I: 3 - 5 minutes, Division II: 5 – 6 minutes, Division III: 5 – 6 minutes.
9. An official timekeeper will signal when the time has expired. Contestants will be penalized 10 points for exceeding the time limit.

CONTEST JUDGING

The speech will be judged in the following categories:

1. Personal Qualities 15 points
 - Dresses appropriately for the occasion
 - Displays self-confidence

 2. Material Organization 30 points
 - The introduction is relevant to the body of the speech
 - There are smooth transitions between the introduction and the body, the body and the conclusion
 - The conclusion brings the speech to a logical end
 - A unified theme on the topic is maintained throughout the speech

 3. Delivery and Presentation 30 points
 - Speaks clearly and distinctly
 - Effectively modulates the voice
 - Maintains eye contact with the audience
 - Uses appropriate gestures

 4. Overall Effectiveness 15 points
 - Maintains interest of audience
 - Achieves the purpose of the speech

 5. Interview 10 points
 - Evidences academic achievement
 - Demonstrates involvement in church activities and knowledge of ABCOTS
- The total score from each judge will be added and then divided by the number of judges in order to get a final score.

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES IS FINAL!

CONTEST WINNERS/PRIZES

The first and second place winners in the local church or cluster contest will compete at the Area meeting; the first place winners in the Area contest will compete at the ABCOTS Region meeting.

The first place winners in each division of the Area Oratorical Contest will receive a trophy and an all-expense paid trip to the ABCOTS Regional Meeting. These expenses will be paid by the Area.

The Area second place winner in each division will be the alternate to the ABCOTS Regional Meeting.

The Area second and third place winners will receive a trophy and a prize determined by the contest committee.

Each first place winner in Divisions I, II, III from the Areas of ABCOTS will present his/her essay during the ABCOTS Regional Meeting.

The first place winner of Division III, will receive a scholarship and a trophy. The second place winner in Division I and II will receive a monetary award, a certificate and a trophy given by the Regional office.

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF THE SOUTH

5124 Greenwich Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21229-2314

(410) 947-0100, Fax (410) 947-7927

Internet: www.abcots.org Email: wlparrish@abcots.org

Dr. W. L. Parrish, II, Executive Minister

ANNUAL ORATORICAL CONTEST CONTESTANT APPLICATION FORM

Date Submitted: _____ Date Received: _____

Personal Data

Name of Contestant: _____ M F

Please Print legibly

Name of School _____ Your Grade as of August 2010 _____

Address: _____

City, _____ State, _____ Zip _____ Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Topic: _____

Division: _____

Church Data

Church Name: _____

Area _____ City, _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Telephone Number: _____

Pastor: _____

PLEASE MAIL APPLICATION & A COPY OF SPEECH TO:
Dr. Lacey S. Alford • 3595 Revere Road, S.W. • Atlanta, GA 30331

Phone: 404.344.5946 Email: eugenealford@comcast.net

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 1, 2011

TIPS FOR ORATORICAL CONTESTANTS

1. **POSTURE** is important in public speaking. Walk confidently to the podium. Walk and speak with vitality.
2. **If you need to adjust the microphone, please do so when you get to the podium.**
3. **GREETINGS:** Contestants must begin the speech with the following phrase, which is included in the speech time – “To the presiding officer; _____ honorable judges, ladies and gentlemen, my subject is _____.”
4. No identifying information, i.e., the contestant’s, church’s, or pastor’s name should be included in the speech.
5. **The opening remarks catch your audience’s attention.** A quotation may be used as your opening statement. It should be lively and relate to your topic. Your introduction should make your listener sit up and think; “this is going to be good.” It is good to say something startling as an opening sentence.
6. As you develop your speech, **you may refer to the Bible** for scriptures that will support your topic. Your points to be discussed may be numbered – strong points first, and then stronger ones and the strongest points listed as a high point of the speech. Transition words such as “to begin with”, and to “conclude” give continuity and organization to the development of your speech.
7. Contestants should use a natural and comfortable delivery style. Clear and strong enunciation, pronunciation and delivery are important.
8. **Do not race through your talk.** Speak distinctly. Speak with sincere feelings. Be careful about the volume. If your words are too low to reach the ears of the audience, all of your speech labors will have been to no avail.
9. **The conclusion of your speech should sum up what has been said.** It may include answers to questions such as “Where do we go from here?” Gestures should flow naturally. Too much action takes away from words. The right amount of gesturing lends emphasis and relieves monotony.
10. **Remember that you only have one chance to make a good impression. Consider ending your speech with a challenge, a question, a poem, a quotation or an anecdote.**

11. ALL SPEECHES MUST BE MEMORIZED!

12. An interview will be conducted prior to the Area Oratorical Contest. Contestants will be assigned an interview time and should report to the location at least 15 minutes in advance.

13. The three topics for the interview questions are (1) academic and extracurricular activities; (2) church activities; and (3) American Baptist Churches of the South.

14. Contestants must arrive at the contest site at least thirty minutes prior to the start of the contest. Any contestant who reports late will be disqualified.

COVER SHEET FOR SPEECHES
(Complete and return attached to speech)
PLEASE PRINT

Contestant's Name _____

Topic of Speech _____

Division _____

Area _____

Number of Pages _____

Point of Contact for questions and/or clarification:

Name _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Address _____

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ESSAY EVALUATION CHECKLIST

When you have completed your essay, use the following checklist for revising and editing. Consider each of the questions below.

FIRST READING

- * Are my thoughts clearly stated?
- * Are my thoughts centered on one major idea or thesis?
- * Did I have to slow up my reading because of poor handwriting and/or faulty mechanics, usage?

SECOND READING

Introduction

- * Have I made introductory comments that are likely to capture the reader's attention?
- * Have I included my opinion on the topic (thesis) or stated a central idea?
- * Have I implied or stated how I plan to develop the thesis or central idea?

Body

- * Does each paragraph relate to the thesis or central idea?
- * Does each paragraph contain one main idea only?
- * Do the ideas in each paragraph hang together (coherence)?
- * Are the topic sentences for each paragraph supported with facts or examples?

Conclusion

- * Do I begin my conclusion with a separate paragraph?
- * Do the beginning words of my concluding paragraph effectively signal that my discussion has ended?
- * Do I refocus on the major emphasis of my paper?

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SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- * What do you consider your most significant academic accomplishment(s)?
- * Have you identified a career field of interest?
- * What extracurricular or community activities have you been involved in over the last 12 months?

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

- * How has your current participation in church activities helped you in your spiritual development?
- * Has preparing for this oratorical contest helped you in any way? Explain.
- * Has your participation in this year's oratorical contest motivated you to participate next year or to encourage other youth at your church to participate? Explain.

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- * What do the letters ABCOTS stand for? (Answer: American Baptist Churches of the South)
- * ABCOTS held its first annual session in 1971 in Richmond, Virginia.
- * What was the name of the Executive Minister at that time? (Dr. E.B. Hicks)
- * Who is the person who currently serves as ABCOTS Executive Minister? (Answer: Dr. Walter L. Parrish, II)
- * ABCOTS is organized into seven different Areas. In what Area is your church located?
- * What is the name of the person who currently serves as your Area Moderator?

Hints and Tips for Effective Public Speaking

Here are just a few hints, public speaking tips and techniques to help you develop your skills and become far more effective as a public speaker.

Mistakes

Mistakes are alright
Recovering from mistakes makes you appear more human
Good recovery puts your audience at ease – they identify with you more

Humor

Tell jokes if you are good at telling jokes
If you aren't good, it may be best to leave the jokes behind
There's nothing worse than a punchline that has no punch
Gentle humor is good in place of jokes
Self-deprecation is good, but try not to lay it on too thick

Tell Stories

Stories make you a real person, not just a deliverer of information
Use personal experiences to bring your material to life
No matter how dry your material is, you can always find a way to humanize it.

How to use the public speaking environment

Try not to get stuck in one place
Use all the space that is available to you
Move around
One way to do this is to leave your notes in one place and move to another
If your space is confined (say, a meeting room or even presenting at a table), use stronger body language to convey your message

You can learn to enjoy public speaking and become far more effective at standing in front of a group of people and delivering a potent message.

When it comes to improving your public speaking skills, we have three words

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!!

SPEECH DELIVERY TIPS

- Make sure that your appearance is well presented.
- Speak clearly, and adjust your voice so that everyone can hear you. Do not shout for the sake of being loud.
- It is common to speak rapidly when nervous. Try to take your time speaking.
- Effectively used, a pause in your speech can be used to emphasize a point, or to allow the audience to react to a fact, anecdote or joke.
- Make eye contact with your audience. This helps to build trust and a relationship between the speaker and the listeners.
- Do not fidget or make other nervous gestures with your hands. Do not keep your hands in your pockets. Do use hand gestures effectively.
- Be yourself by allowing your own personality to come across in your speech!

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Oratorical Rating Sheet

Topic: _____
 Contestant Number: _____ Division: _____

POINTS TO CONSIDER	POSSIBLE POINTS	ACTUAL SCORE	COMMENTS
PERSONAL QUALITIES	15 points		
Appearance Poise Personality			
MATERIAL ORGANIZATION	30 points		
Introduces topic in an interesting manner Covers topic adequately Presents information clearly and logically Uses examples appropriately			
DELIVERY AND PRESENTATION	30 points		
Speaks clearly and distinctly Voice- quality and variety of expression i.e. rate, inflection, volume Eye Contact Gestures Tone- sincerity Summarizes creatively and clearly the main points			
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	15 points		
Maintains interest of audience Achieves the purpose of the speech			
Interview	10 points		
Scholastic Achievement Church Involvement Knowledge of ABCOTS			
Total Score	100 points		
Time: Start: _____ End: _____	Total Minutes		
Judge's Signature: _____	Date: _____		

