

Theodore Gibson Information

The Theodore Gibson Oratorical Project is dedicated to exposing school children to the wide breadth of writings about the Black experience throughout the Diaspora.

The Project seeks to provide an opportunity for school children to discover and refine public speaking skills through a comprehensive and challenging level of learning and competition.

*Inquiries about the Annual Theodore Gibson Project should be addressed to:
Miami-Dade College, North Campus*



Rules for Theodore Gibson Oratorical Project

- Participating schools may enter a team of no more than 3 (three) students, each reciting different selections, in the regional competitions. Except K-8 Centers or Elementary schools that have a 6th grade. These schools can enter teams in both the Elementary (K-5) and Middle School (6-8) Competitions.
- Intra-school competitions must be held by November 30th to determine the students who will represent each school at the respective regional competition.
- All selections must adhere to the 1 to 3 minutes time restriction. All high school participants (9-12) must write and perform original pieces written by them.
- All selections must be memorized, and must not be a "retired" selection.
- In all categories, scripts, props and costumes are not allowed. Language that may be considered offensive and/or derogatory are also not allowed. Afro-centric attire is acceptable, however school uniforms are encouraged, and recitations are to be in English.
- Teacher/Sponsor should give preference to selecting pieces written by authors of African descent, however, any selection relating to the African experience and/or civil and human rights are acceptable.
- Teacher/Sponsor is responsible for making all transportation and field trip arrangements for their students. Students should arrive prepared and on time for competition. Field trip arrangements should be made well in advance of the events, including parent's permission. At the regional and final competitions, each sponsor is responsible for making lunch arrangements for his/her students.
- At the conclusion of all regional competitions, the results are posted on the website. **ONLY THE STUDENTS WITH THE HIGHEST SCORE WILL BE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FINAL COMPETITION.**
- Once a student is confirmed, changes will not be made.
- Teacher/Sponsor must complete the student registration forms; including the name and author of the selections. Incomplete forms will NOT be processed, and will be returned.
- Teacher/Sponsor will receive confirmation of participants' entries prior to the date of competition.
- Student may choose to recite a medley of short poems/prose (no more than 3 poems by the same author); however, he/she must introduce the performance as an author's medley and proceed through the rendition without introducing each piece during transitions. -- EXAMPLE: I will recite a Langston Hughes medley. The student cannot introduce each poem. They must recite each selection with only a brief pause between poems. If the student introduces the names of the selections, it will be considered more than one selection and that competitor will be immediately disqualified. The medley must be within the appropriate time limit.
- A student will not be judged if: Within the presentation he/she stops and starts over from the beginning, leaves the stage before completing the selection, and/or arrives late or after name has been called to recite.
- Any alteration to the student's appearance will be considered a costume (e.g. rolled up pant. leg or shirt sleeves, messy hair, parts below waist, etc. Halter tops and/or excessively short skirts are prohibited. Also, any articles of clothing worn and is a significant part of the student's selection is considered a costume (e.g. a piece is about wearing a hat and the student is wearing a hat).

There are no breaks in the competition to use the restroom or attend to personal concerns before the competition begins. Please note the room may be colder than usual, so bring a jacket or sweater. Avoid movement by members of the audience when the students are on stage performing.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Selection

- **Intellectual Understanding:** Is the structure of the selection conducive to interpretation? Does the performer demonstrate emotional and aesthetic merit?
- **Historical/Creative Significance:** Does the selection represent a thoughtful review of the breadth of African-American, Afro-Caribbean, African, human/civil rights experience, or creativity?

Diction

- **Vocal Variety/Contrast:** Does the voice show variations in rate, speed mood? Were transitions smooth and in keeping with total message?
- **Tempo:** Were time, pauses and hesitations used properly? Were emphasis and sub-climaxes acknowledged with associated "speed-up" speech? Was the pace set in keeping with the author's intent?

Articulation:

- **Voice:** Was there clearness, correctness, and effectiveness in choice and expression of words?
- **Vocabulary:** Did performer demonstrate a full command of the language in the piece and master complexities of vocabulary, pronunciation and context?

Projection / Presentation:

- **Stage Presence:** Does performer manipulate floor space appropriately to dispense the full effect of the selections? Does performer appear comfortable and well adapted to the space?
- **Animation:** Is the presentation performed appropriately to the tone of selection? Was animation appropriate or over dramatized?
- **Bodily Actions:** Were gestures, stance and facial expression supportive and emphasize the verbal content of the speech, or did these detract and call undue attention.
- **Overall Effectiveness:** Overall presentation of piece, effectiveness, articulation and stage presence.

The following selections have been retired from competition and should not be assigned to students to perform:

- "Mother to Son" by: Langston Hughes
- "Negro Mother" by: Langston Hughes
- "Freedom Train" by: Langston Hughes
- "Dreams" by: Langston Hughes
- "The Reason I Like Chocolate" by: Nikki Giovanni
- "The Creation" by: James Weldon Johnson
- "Justice in America" by: Gigi Watson
- "Honey, I Can be Whatever I Want to Be" by: Gigi Watson
- "Last Will and Testament" by: Mary McLeod Bethune
- "Little Soul Sister" by: Useni Eugene Perkins
- "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." by: Lucille H. Gilles & Useni Eugene Perkins
- "Honey, I Love" by: Eloise Greenfield
- "Way Down in the Music" by: Eloise Greenfield
- "Harriet Tubman" by: Eloise Greenfield
- "I Have a Dream" by: Martin Luther King
- "Phenomenal Woman" by: Maya Angelou
- "Midway" by: Naomi Long Madgett
- "Essence 25" by: Kephra Burns
- "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou
- "Daddy's Little Girl" by Linda Michelle Baron
- "Equality" by Maya Angelou
- "Ain't that Bad?" by Maya Angelou
- "Ego Trip" by Nikki Giovanni
- "To the Forlorn Black Child of the 21st Century" by Aimée Pringle
- "Fire" by Langston Hughes "Just Like Job" by Maya Angelou
- "My Poem" by Nikki Giovanni "Lord,
- "Why Did You Make Me Black" by RuNett Nia Ebo
- "I am Somebody" by Gigi Watson
- "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks
- "I Too" by Langston Hughes
- "Ain't I A Woman" by Sojourner Truth
- "Life Is Fine" by Langston Hughes
- "Booker T. and WEB" by: Dudley Randall
- "We Wear the Mask" by: Paul Laurence Dunbar
- "I Have a Dream" by: Dr. Martin Luther King
- "To Be Young Gifted and Black" by: Weldon Irving
- "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" by: Maya Angelou
- "Equality" by: Maya Angelou
- "Alone" by: Maya Angelou
- "I, Too sing America" by: Langston Hughes
- "Still, I Rise" by Maya Angelou
- "Dreams" by: Langston Hughes

ORATORICAL WORKSHOP

This is a one day comprehensive student workshop designed to develop - via feedback and discussion - presentation/public speaking skills in preparation for the competitions. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in this workshop as are the teacher-sponsors. This workshop is three hours (9:00 am to 12:00 pm) in length, and will be conducted as noted on the Activity Calendar. Each Sponsor is responsible for making lunch arrangements for his or her students.

Workshop Objectives:

- To provide feedback and strategies to address the following oral presentation skills:
 - Voice projection
 - Enunciation, pronunciation, and articulation
 - Body language
 - Eye contact
 - Hand gestures
 - Posture
 - Impromptu presentations
 - Extemporaneous presentations
 - Dramatic techniques