

2019-2020 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Oratorical Contest  
*“Where Would We Be? Where Will We Be?”*

**RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**RULES**

**1. TIME LIMITATIONS**

- a. **PRIMARY DIVISION** (Grades K - 2nd) – A time limit of two minutes will be permitted for orations.
- b. **INTERMEDIATE DIVISION** (Grades 3rd - 5th) – A time limit of three minutes will be permitted for orations.
- c. **JUNIOR DIVISION** (Grades 6th - 8th) – A time limit of four minutes will be permitted for orations.
- d. **SENIOR DIVISION** (Grades 9th - 12th) – A time limit of five minutes will be permitted for orations.

***Note:** Timekeeper will indicate wrap-up time one minute before time expires.*

**2. PRESENTATION OF ORATION**

- a. Contestants will deliver oration from memory. Note cards (3x5 index cards) can be used to nudge the memory. However, reading, any or all, of the oration directly from note cards will result in a deduction of up to five (5) points from final score.
- b. Contestants will introduce himself/herself by stating in complete sentences: “Judges, Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is...”
  1. Name (first and last names)
  2. Age and grade
  3. School Name
  4. Topic (time begins when the topic is stated.)

### 3. JUDGING CRITERIA

- Aplomb – poise, self-confidence, audience appeal
- Voice Quality – audibility, articulation, inflection of voice, moderation of pitch
- Physical Dynamics – proper use of gestures
- Observance of Time Limit – contestants should not go over nor under time limit
- Creativity and Relevant Content – poetic and/or musical interpretation welcome
- Posture
- Accuracy of Content
- Composition – punctuation, spelling, grammar, logic

## REGULATIONS

### 1. SUBMISSIONS – Contestants must provide

- a. A typewritten, double spaced composition of his/her oration on 8 1/2 x 11 paper (standard margins) and send via email (Word or PDF format) or address noted.
- b. Completed Registration Form
- c. Cover sheet for composition should include the following information:
  - Contestant's Name
  - Contestant's age and grade
  - City
  - Date
  - Topic or title of oration
  - Contestant's ambition (career goal)
  - Name of coach or parent

### 2. COMPOSITION

- a. Any student who competed in The City of Columbus 2018-2019 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Oratorical Contest **MUST** prepare a new oration.
- b. All orations must be an **original** piece created by the student.
- c. Creativity in selecting topics is encouraged.

Below is a list of suggested topics. However, contestants' choice of topic is **not** limited to the following:

- Share the meaning and relevance of The City of Columbus 2019-2020 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Oratorical Contest theme: ***"Where Would We Be? Where Will We Be?"***
  - In the speech "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence", Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. calls for "an all-embracing and unconditional love for all a all in embracing and unconditional love for all mankind" which is "an absolute necessity for the survival of man." He explained that this type of love is the "force which all of the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of life."

- Relate one’s own commitment to Dr. King’s philosophy of non-violence, peaceful acceptance and respect.
- What did Dr. King’s life mean to you (the contestant)?
- Research major events in Dr. King’s life:
  - a. March from Selma to Montgomery
  - b. March on Washington
  - c. Letter from Birmingham Jail
  - d. Nobel Peace Prize
  - e. The legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**3. RIGHT OF REFUSAL**

The City of Columbus Department of Neighborhood staff has the right to refuse an orator’s submission and admission into the contest due to the number of contestants, content of written oration, etc. The orator and their coach and/or parent will be notified of their inability to participate via a written response prior to the contest.

**4. STUDENT COACH/PARENT**

The coach or parent is permitted to minimally assist the contestant and is requested to accompany the contestant at the contest. He/she may remain in view of the contestant, but must refrain from offering prompts and assistance in the delivery of the speech. However, the absence of a coach or parent will not affect the status of the contestant.

**5. WINNERS**

The City of Columbus 2019-2020 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Oratorical Contest will send **ONLY** the first, second, and third place winners of each division to the statewide level competition, which takes place in April 2020.

**6. ATTIRE** – All contestants must dress as follows:

- a. Boys – Black or navy pants, white shirts, and dark ties. Jackets are not necessary.
- b. Girls – Black or navy slacks, or skirts, white shirts, blouses, tops or turtlenecks.

**QUESTIONS**

Contact Julia Carter, Event Manager at [JLCarter@columbus.gov](mailto:JLCarter@columbus.gov) or (614) 645-8622

**SUBMIT APPLICATION & ORATION BY**  
**Friday, November 29, 2019**  
 (no later than 5:00 p.m.)