



# Black History Oratory Competition Guidelines

## WHAT IS THE ORATORY COMPETITION?

The Black History Oratory Competition is a fun and creative opportunity for middle and high school students to learn African American history and connect the past to today's issues in a verbal format.

## COMPETITION THEME: "Why is Black History relevant today, and how does it impact me and/or my generation?"

We invite you to explore African American arts, culture, contributions and history to compose your entry. Research African Americans' struggles and triumphs, highlight Black Iowans or other Black historical places or people and consider how we as a country or as individuals arrived at this moment in time and how this history has made an impact on you and/or others.

## IMPORTANT DATES

Sign up for a virtual time slot at [www.worldiniowa.com](http://www.worldiniowa.com) by 5 PM Friday, February 19.

To reserve a time, when you register **provide three times that you are available to present** via Zoom. Time slots are in 15-minute increments .

Example: 1) Tuesday, February 23, 3:15 PM; 2) Wednesday, February 24, 3:30 PM; 3) Wednesday, February 24, 5:15 PM

**You will only present once.** Your assigned Zoom date and time, as well as Zoom link information, will be sent by Monday, Feb 22.

**Oratory presentations:** Tuesday & Wednesday, February 23 & 24, 1 pm – 6 pm

**Winners announced:** Friday, February 26, 2021 at Virtual IMMAWII Education Day

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- All Iowa middle and high school students (homeschool included)
- Individuals only (no teams)

## WHAT ARE THE PRIZES?

Cash prizes will be awarded in both the middle and high school categories: **\$200–1st Place, \$100–2nd Place and \$50–3rd Place.**

Winning presentations will be featured on the IMMAWII 2021 webpage and Education Day Dashboard!

## GUIDELINES

- Presentations should be **no less than 4 and no more than 5 minutes long (approximately 750 words)**. Short or long speeches will be penalized.
- Entries will be judged based on the **content, quality of the presentation, use of research sources, and timing.**
- **Your speech should be prepared (typed) ahead of time (no ad lib)**, but you will not lose points for diverging slightly from the typed copy.
- You will need to **provide 1 copy of your speech** at the time of the presentation. There are no format requirements.
- The speech does not need to be memorized; **you may use notes.**
- **Dress modestly and professionally.**
- **Your presentation must be original.** Avoid anything that is read or performed that has been previously written by another author (a short story, a poem, etc.). However, you may include quotes if attribution is included.
- **No copyrighted speeches** shall be used in the contest.
- **The judges' decision is final.**

## BRAIN STARTERS: SPEECH TOPICS

Choose a topic that is relevant to today, and interesting to you. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Communication:** How did, and does, Black America get its news, and why is that important?
- **Heroes:** Chose one or more Iowa African American history makers and share how their life and legacy impacts you today.
- **Activism in Iowa then and now:** What do you want to see change? Who in Iowa Black history tried to make a similar change? What did you learn? What can you do?
- **Access and firsts:** What do you want to be or do in your adult life? Who are some African Americans in that field? What barriers and/or opportunities for them? What was their life like? How is this relevant to your life?

**TIPS:** Make sure your speech has a clear organization, logical transition between thoughts, and keep it smooth (watch the "ums" and "uhs").

**PRACTICE AND HAVE FUN!** Questions? Contact **Dedric Doolin** at [dedricdoolin@gmail.com](mailto:dedricdoolin@gmail.com)