**2022 Frederick Douglass Oratorical Contest Guidelines**

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will develop their own oratorical skills while learning about history through the powerful messages delivered by Frederick Douglass.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Students, ages 6-18

**GUIDELINES:** For the 2022 contest, four Douglass speeches have been selected for this year’s contest, representing the four different places where Douglass lived: Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, and Washington, D.C. These speeches are available online at [Oratorical Contest Guidelines - Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)](https://www.nps.gov/frdo/learn/kidsyouth/oratorical-contest-guidelines.htm). **Participants must choose one of these four speeches** for their oration for this year’s contest:

* “Freedom in the West Indies”, delivered at College Grove, College Hill in Poughkeepsie, NY on August 2, 1858
* “A Friendly Word to Maryland”, delivered at Bethel Church in Baltimore, MD on November 17, 1864
* “What the Black Man Wants”, delivered to the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in Boston, MA in April 1865
* “The Race Problem”, delivered to the Bethel Literary and Historical Society at Metropolitan AME Church in Washington, D.C. on October 21, 1890

Contestants must choose and memorize a selection from one of the above speeches based on the time requirement outlined for their age group/division. To make a speech flow better for the performance, it is acceptable to take introductory lines from the speech, so it does not sound as though you are jumping into the middle of the speech and then jump to a dramatic section or story from the middle of the speech for your presentation. You can also cut out a paragraph in the middle of the section of speech you want to give to make the length and message of the speech fit the time limit for your age group—just be careful not to change the meaning of the speech. This kind of editing is acceptable to make your speech flow well and have good dramatics while sticking to the length required. You may not change Douglass’ words from the speech nor add your own words to the speech, and you need to make sure that your version of the speech still matches the meaning or message that Douglass is trying to covey.

**LENGTH OF PRESENTATION:**

Division Ages\* Time

Elementary 6 - 8 2-4 minutes

Junior 9 - 11 4-6 minutes

Junior High 12-14 6-8 minutes

Senior High 15 - 18 8-10 minutes

\**Use the age that you will be the 1st of December*

**This year there will be two contests,** one held on-line, and one held in person. Students may only compete in one of the two contest options—not both. Contestants in both contests will be notified by email once they are selected for the contest. This email will include further contest information, time slots for their presentation, and any other details they will need to know in order to participate.

**On-Line Contest:** Students will deliver their oration over the computer platform Microsoft Teams, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST on the following dates:

• Wednesday, December 7, 2022 (Elementary & Junior Division)

• Thursday, December 8, 2022 (Junior High & High School Divisions)

*Frederick Douglass NHS reserves the right to adjust this schedule based on the number of applications we receive in each Division. So, for example if we fill the application slots for Wednesday and have additional slots for Thursday, we will give applicants in the Elementary and Junior Divisions an opportunity to perform their speeches on Thursday to fill any available slots.*

We will be accepting ~ 14 students per division for the on-line contest.

**In Person Contest:** Due to the temporary closure of the Douglass site for a renovation project, the contest will be held nearby at the Anacostia Arts Center located at 1231 Good Hope Road, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20020. The contest will be held between the hours of 10:00 am and 5:00 pm

• Friday, December 9, 2022

• Saturday, December 10, 2022

It is common for siblings to participate in the contest, and we have sometimes had contingents from areas outside of D.C. such as Rochester, NY that brought a small contingent of students to participate in the contest, so because of transportation issues we have not established certain time slots for divisions to perform and we have made every effort to schedule groups together for convenience of the parent or other administrators transporting contestants to the site to compete.

For the in-person contest, ~ 12 students per division.

**Application Requirements: Applications will be accepted** on a first come, first selected basis beginning October 7th until each category is filled or until November 14th, whichever comes first. The Park will also maintain a wait list in the event that someone changes their mind about participating. This year’s application is an online form that will be on the website [www.nps.gov/frdo](http://www.nps.gov/frdo) beginning October 7th.

**Contest Sponsors:** The Frederick Douglass Housing Corporation and Valley Place Arts Collaborative *a program of ARCH Development, Inc.*