

RULES: VAN HUYSSTEENS ORATORICAL FESTIVAL 2026

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. Details of the **Van Huyssteens Oratorical Festival** ("Oratorical Festival") is available on the website. Follow the link: www.vanhuyssteens.co.za.
- 1.2. The **Oratorical Festival** will only be for **unprepared** speeches.
- 1.3. **During the festival, learners may participate in 2 (TWO) items on the condition that they must be on 2 (TWO) different days.**
- 1.4. Trials should be held at the relevant schools.
- 1.5. **Subject to paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 schools may enter 2 (TWO) teams and 2 (TWO) individuals per grade and per category (including Bilingual).**
- 1.6. **Note: Afrikaans Schools may only enter 1 (ONE) team per grade in the English Category.**
- 1.7. **Note: English Schools may enter 2 (TWO) teams per grade in the English Category, on condition that a further team also participate in the Bilingual Category.**
- 1.8. All communication and information regarding the **Oratorical Festival** will be provided via e-mail.
- 1.9. All learners must study the rules available on the website.
- 1.10. Rules regarding the **Oratorical Festival** are in the sole and absolute discretion of Van Huyssteens Commercial Attorneys Inc. (hereinafter referred to as "**VHS**").
- 1.11. Changes to the planned program, rules etc. will only be made by **VHS**.
- 1.12. Maximum participation of 20 (twenty) teams and 30 (thirty) individuals per grade and per language.
- 1.13. The first 3 (three) teams and 3 (three) best individuals per grade and per language (bilingual included) will be invited to participate in the final.
- 1.14. Announcement of the final participants will be made after participation and will also be published on the firm's website the following day.
- 1.15. All points previously awarded will fall away and learners will participate for a first place in the final.
- 1.16. **The closing date for entries is 13 March 2026.**
- 1.17. Each headmaster will undertake and declare on the entry form that all participating learners have been informed of the Rules of the competition and will follow the rules strictly. The undertaking goes further in that all learners and teachers are also aware of the fact that immediate disqualification may be effected if rules are not obeyed.

2. DATES AND VENUE

- 2.1. The **2026 Oratorical Festival** will be hosted at **Hoërskool Waterkloof** from **17**

March 2026 to 23 March 2026. The entire school is available to ensure that learners do not frustrate each other during preparation and presentations.

2.2. Herewith the dates for each category:

- 2.2.1. **Tuesday 17 March 2026 – English;**
- 2.2.2. **Wednesday 18 March 2026 – Afrikaans;**
- 2.2.3. **Thursday 19 March 2026 – Bilingual;** and
- 2.2.4. **Monday 23 March 2026 – The Final and Gala Evening.**

2.3. The prize giving will take place after participation in the evening during the Gala event.

3. TIME SCHEDULES

- 3.1. Entries open on **14 January 2026.**
- 3.2. The competition will commence daily at **16:00** for **teams** and **16:30** for **individuals** and the aim is to finish no later than 21:15 each evening.
- 3.3. Preparation time will begin before the start of the program, and it is important to be at **Hoërskool Waterkloof 30 (thirty) min** before the topic is drawn.
- 3.4. **Preparation time for unprepared speeches:**
 - 3.4.1. **1 (one) hour** for **teams**; and
 - 3.4.2. **45 (forty-five) min** for **individuals.**
- 3.5. **Take note of the schedules** on the website.
- 3.6. **PS** – Learners will receive topics as per the timetable / schedule made available on the website.
- 3.7. **Teams** are not allowed to **speak for less than 8 (EIGHT) minutes and longer than 11 (ELEVEN) minutes.** If time is exceeded, they will be stopped.
- 3.8. **Individuals** are not allowed to **speak for less than 3 (THREE) minutes and longer than 5 (FIVE) minutes.** If time is exceeded, they will be stopped.
- 3.9. The **Penalty** for speaking less, or more than the required above is 10 (ten) points per minute or part thereof in the individual category and 50 (fifty) points per minute or part thereof for teams.
- 3.10. **NOTE:** A full time speech will give the adjudicators only 1 (one) minute before the next appearance to finalise the points achieved, therefore, they have no choice but to strictly adhere to the maximum time limit.
- 3.11. When entries open on **14 January 2026**, schools must forward the completed entry forms with the names of learners and proof of payment via e-mail to commercial@vanhuyssteens.co.za.
- 3.12. Scheduling when the team / individual will participate, will be done in the sole discretion of **VHS** and published on the website www.vanhuysssteens.co.za.

- 3.13. **Topics are chosen at Hoërskool Waterkloof in the School Hall as per the schedule.**
- 3.14. **NOTE:** If a learner who received a topic arrives more than 1 (one) minute late at the classroom where he / she has to do his / her speech, he / she may be disqualified. It is advisable to locate the classroom where participation will take place before the topic is drawn at **Hoërskool Waterkloof's** School Hall. This will ensure more time for preparation.

3.15. **Timing Indications –**

- 3.15.1. The adjudicator will hold up cards to show the time left:
- 3.15.1.1. **Green card – minimum time lapsed;**
- 3.15.1.2. **Yellow card – 1 (one);** and
- 3.15.1.3. **Red card – time has lapsed stop immediately.**

4. **USE OF RESOURCES**

NOTE THE NEW RULES APPLICABLE TO RESOURCES

- 4.1. **Learners are NOT permitted to use ANY ELECTRONIC DEVICES**, including tablets, smart phones, laptop's with internet connection etc. (no smart watches are allowed in the preparation venues but are permitted while speaking for time keeping purposes only).
- 4.2. **Learners are allowed to use any non-electronic resources of their choice.**
This includes books, newspapers, old speeches etc.
- 4.3. The IT Centers at **Hoërskool Waterkloof** **will not** be made available.
- 4.4. Speeches must be without other resources (i.e. projector, poster etc.). Key word cards may be used but may not exceed an A5 page in size.
- 4.5. No assistance by third parties (parents, educators etc.) will be allowed. Notwithstanding this rule, Grade 8 learners (individual and teams) will be allowed **1 (one)** senior learner from the same school to give assistance during preparation. The information of such senior learner must be included in the entry form for the Grade 8 learner(s). The senior learner may only assist in research, preparation, coaching etc. and may not be a speaker.
- 4.6. Should a member of **VHS** find any team or individual receiving assistance from a third party (parents, teachers, other learners, etc.) the **whole school will be disqualified** from participation. Any team or individual breaking the rules herein will be disqualified.

5. **RULES OF UNPREPARED SPEECHES – TEAMS AND INDIVIDUALS**

- 5.1. Withdrawals must be made 24 (twenty-four) hours before the start of a session.
- 5.2. Speeches must be discursive and persuasive.
- 5.3. At least 2 (two) to 3 (three) points of reasoning must be made.

- 5.4. Proper introduction and conclusion are essential.
- 5.5. Structure your speech and use research material.
- 5.6. The aim of the **Oratorical Festival** is research and gathering information, in a relative short period of time, and the communication thereof in a convincing manner.
- 5.7. Facts researched must be organized into a well-constructed speech by the learner or the team.
- 5.8. An additional aim of the **Oratorical Festival** is to enable the learner to over time / years develop to a stage where he / she can express himself / herself competently and confidently in public.
- 5.9. We understand that educators, learners and parents can be competitive – keep it clean – it remains only a competition.
- 5.10. Topics will be placed in an envelope and learners will draw 1 (one) topic paper containing 2 (two) topics.
- 5.11. The name / names of the participants, school, grade, language of participation, category, e-mail address and cell phone number must be written on the topic paper.
- 5.12. The learners will then leave the room and immediately commence with preparation.
- 5.13. The topic paper with the selected topic will then be handed to the adjudicator.

5.14. The topics are a combination of:

- 5.14.1. Contemporary;
- 5.14.2. Philosophical; and
- 5.14.3. Actuality (news reports / events).
- 5.15. Unprepared topics are in the sole discretion of **VHS**.
- 5.16. Learners must provide their own research, paper, key cards, pens, pencils etc.
- 5.17. Topics must be addressed in an argumentative manner, based on yes or no, true or false.
- 5.18. Learners who do not address the chosen topic will be penalised.
- 5.19. Do not mix language - keep it either Afrikaans or English. This includes the bilingual speeches. For avoidance of doubt - When speaking English do not "**gooi**" in some Afrikaans and *vice versa*. Do not use "slang" or colloquial language.
- 5.20. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, it is acceptable when using a quote in a specific language to use it in the original context and language - do not translate same.
- 5.21. The use of quotes by third parties (industry leaders, academics, etc.) is essential and must be used (not too many a maximum of 2 or 3).
- 5.22. Learners own opinions and thoughts are of paramount importance.
- 5.23. The source used in quotes is as important as the quote itself. The Internet, world wide web, Google or ChatGPT is not a source and may not be used.
- 5.24. On the topic form, to be handed to the adjudicators, on the day of participation the

learner or team **MUST** provide the source(s) used for their quotes and / or information. Should it be established that a learner or team provided false information (such as making up imaginary source[s]), such a learner or team will be disqualified.

- 5.25. Apart from the aforementioned and other information required (i.e. learner name, school, grade and topic choice), the learners must also provide their cell numbers and email addresses to enable the organisers to get hold of such a learner or team, should they qualify for the final.

6. TEAM SECTIONS

- 6.1. A team must consist of 4 (four) team members who logically develop a topic.
- 6.2. All 4 (four) team members must participate in the speeches. Notwithstanding this, there is no time restriction or requirement on how long any of the members may or must speak individually.
- 6.3. The given topic must be kept in mind throughout.
- 6.4. The structure is left to the discretion of the team, and they can follow their own initiative. This for example, can obviously be practiced at length beforehand.
- 6.5. A good example for the younger participants is as follows:
- 6.5.1. Chairperson: Announces the topic, introduces the other members and functions as the link between each speaker and concludes with a final summary;
- 6.5.2. First speaker: Discusses one aspect of the theme;
- 6.5.3. Second speaker: Expands on the above or discusses another aspect; and
- 6.5.4. Third speaker: Approaches another aspect, or expands on the main theme.
- 6.6. The team must attempt to develop a theme and not merely provide information.
- 6.7. Note the balance between providing information and reasoning.
- 6.8. Points will be deducted if the topic is not reasoned and persuasive.
- 6.9. Each team must provide the adjudicator with the following information on the topic paper:
- 6.9.1. Name of school;
- 6.9.2. Theme / Topic;
- 6.9.3. Grade;
- 6.9.4. Individual / Team;
- 6.9.5. Language of participation;
- 6.9.6. Names of team members in order of speaking;
- 6.9.7. Sources used (refer par 4.2).

7. ADJUDICATION

- 7.1. The decision of the adjudicators is final and no discussion regarding this will be allowed.
- 7.2. Participants / family members / coaches / educators may not in any way communicate

with the adjudicator(s) before, during or directly after adjudication.

- 7.3. Time limits must not be exceeded as you will be stopped and adjudicated only on what was reasoned up to that time.
- 7.4. Adjudicators will not disclose percentages, marks or score sheets, neither will there be any feedback.
- 7.5. In the final, percentages will be used (not disclosed) to determine the ranking (i.e. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place) in order to announce the 3 (three) team winners and 3 (three) individual winners.
- 7.6. Adjudicators will be obliged to keep all score sheets and hand them in at the **VHS** counter next to the hall at **Hoërskool Waterkloof**.
- 7.7. Adjudicators will not hand the score sheets to learners or other third parties.
- 7.8. Adjudicators will inform **VHS** at the counter next to the hall at **Hoërskool Waterkloof** which learners (teams and individuals) are the 3 (three) participants / winners for the final.
- 7.9. Adjudicators will align their thoughts before starting the adjudication.
- 7.10. Note that notwithstanding the fact that one adjudicator may adjudicate a much higher mark than the other, consistency is the major factor to be considered.
- 7.11. **Hoërskool Waterkloof** will assign learners from its student council per classroom to assist adjudicators.
- 7.12. Note that the symbols to be awarded will not be reflected on the score sheets.

8. CERTIFICATES

- 8.1. After participation ensure that learners collect their certificates for participation at the **VHS** counter next to the hall at **Hoërskool Waterkloof**.
- 8.2. **No** certificates will be issued other than on the evening.
- 8.3. Certificates will indicate the name and surname of the learner. Symbols will not appear on the certificates.

9. FINAL

- 9.1. The top 3 (three) teams and top 3 (three) individual speakers per grade and per language (including Bilingual) shall be invited to participate.
- 9.2. The above will be finalised every evening at the end of that day's competition. Although winners are announced, the programs will only be available at 13:00 the day of the final. This is due to learners participating in multiple events. All winners must report to **Hoërskool Waterkloof** at 14:30 on the day of the final.
- 9.3. Schools will be informed of the 3 (three) winning teams / individuals per grade and per language on the firms website, Instagram- and Facebook- page the morning after participation.
- 9.4. Educators / parents / learners must keep in mind that high symbols may just mean a

place in the final – do not make other appointments for the Monday afternoon and evening.

- 9.5. Previous marks awarded will fall away and the participants will compete afresh for first place.
- 9.6. Rules and timeframes of speeches remain the same.
- 9.7. Only the winning team or individual per language (including Bilingual) and per grade will be announced and receive trophies during the Gala evening.

10. GALA EVENING

- 10.1. On the evening of the final, a Gala event will also be held (Monday evening, **23 March 2026** at **Hoërskool Waterkloof's School Hall**). This is the prestigious culmination of the **Oratorical Festival**.
- 10.2. Grade 11 Bilingual Teams are the only finalists (only three teams) who will be performing at the prizegiving during the Gala evening. They will perform in front of an audience and their performance will be adjudicated by a panel of adjudicators. The program contains further details.
- 10.3. Participants at the Gala evening in the hall will receive 1 (one) topic. The time of topic distribution will be announced. The participants will have a minimum of 2 (two) hours for preparation.
- 10.4. **All parents / educators / adjudicators / learners and friends are welcome to attend the Gala evening.**