



CONTEST DESCRIPTION

Competition Date	March 26, 2026
Competition Location	Holland College Waterfront Campus Room 56
Trade Number	#85
Trade Name	Public Speaking
Level	Secondary

1. Purpose of the Challenge

The Conference Board of Canada has identified the skills needed to enter and progress in the world of work—whether it is self-employment or working as a part of a team. One such skill area is effective oral and written communication including the ability to do the following:

- Write and speak so others pay attention and understand
- Listen and respond to questions
- Share information
- Use technological knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas.

The Public Speaking competition is designed to encourage and enhance the development of these skills in making career choices. The challenge provides the opportunity for competitors to prepare and present a speech, conduct research and to construct answers to related questions in a clear and concise manner.

2. Skills and Knowledge to be tested

- Present original thoughts in a clear, coherent, and well-constructed format on the assigned topic.
- Capture and hold the attention of the audience within the 5 to 7-minute timeframe.
- Deliver a clear message (main idea, argument, opinion, or position).
- Speak easily, with confidence.
- Use non-verbal skills (body language and gestures) to assist in expression.
- Be expressive by varying voice in pitch, tone, tempo, and volume.
- Think quickly and answer unseen questions clearly.
- Reflect upon research, make observations, and share experiences through prompted response.



3. Competition Schedule

8:00am – 8:45am	Competitor Registration
9:00 – 10:15am	Competition
10:15 – 10:30am	Break
10:30 – 11:30am	Competition
11:30 – 12:15pm	Lunch (provided for competitors)
12:15 – 2:00pm	Competition
2:00 – 2:15pm	Break
2:15 – 4:00pm	Competition

- ï **Note: a brief orientation/welcome will be provided to each participant prior to the beginning of their speech - please ensure you add an extra five minutes onto your schedule for this prior to the commencement of your speech.**

4. Criteria

Each competitor will speak on the following prompt:

“Apprenticeships open the door to exciting, hands-on careers in the Skilled Trades and Technologies! They let you learn valuable skills, gain real experience, and get paid while you train for your future. So, how can we spark more interest and encourage students to see apprenticeship as a great path to success?”

Competitors will write original speeches that reflect creatively on the topic, ensuring they maintain a focus and consider the content implied by the topic. Students are expected to express themselves clearly while capturing the attention of their listening audience.

- ï Competitors will also speak on an impromptu topic that will be revealed before the designated time.
- ï By 11:00 PM Monday, March 23, 2026, students must submit their speeches as a double-spaced, justified, Arial 14-point PDF document to the following email address: Gcarragher14@bellaliant.net. If you have not received confirmation within 24 hours that your speech has been received, please call Gaylene Carragher at (902) 626.7432 and resubmit. **Students who do not submit speeches by the above deadline will receive a 10 point deduction as indicated in the Evaluation and Judging Criteria.**



- ï Competitors will have a brief orientation/welcome prior to the commencement time of their speech please ensure you add an extra five minutes onto your schedule for this.
- ï Prior to the competition, the competitors will become familiar with the variety of skilled trades and technology careers. The intent of this awareness is to support the response to the impromptu topic. The order of presentations will be determined through a random selection process.
- ï Each competitor will present a prepared speech in a formal public setting and answer one (1) question based upon the submitted speech. The order of presentations will be determined through a random selection process.

5. Time Requirements

- I. Length of Impromptu Speech
Competitors will be given a prompt based upon their awareness of the skilled trades and technology contests. They will have a maximum of 2 minutes to prepare and 3 minutes to respond. Timecards will be shown at 2 minutes, 1 minute, and 15 seconds to indicate time remaining during response.
- II. Length of Prepared Speech
The speech shall be at least 5 minutes long and shall not exceed 7 minutes. There will not be a warning light, sound, or timecards to indicate the time allotment. Competitors should develop the skill to monitor the length of their presentations.
- III. Length of Response to Question
Competitors will be asked one question based on the content of their submitted speeches. They will have a maximum of 1 minute and 30 seconds to respond to the question. A timecard will indicate 15 seconds remaining.

I. Number of Stations/Allocations

The competition has a maximum of 10 competitors.

6. Skills & Knowledge to be Tested

- Present original thoughts in a clear, coherent, and well-constructed format on the assigned topic.
- Capture and hold the attention of the audience within the 5 to 7-minute timeframe
- Deliver a clear message (main idea, argument, opinion, or position)



- Speak easily, with confidence
- Use non-verbal skills (body language and gestures) to assist in expression.
- Be expressive by varying voice in pitch, tone, tempo, and volume
- Think quickly and answer unseen questions clearly
- Reflect upon research, make observations, and share experiences through prompted response.

7. Prerequisites

None.

8. Equipment & Clothing

- Lectern will be available (optional use for each competitor).
- Audio/Video recording of speeches is permitted but will not be provided.
- Optional: Use of cue cards/notes.
- Competitors should be dressed appropriately for a business presentation.

9. Evaluation & Judging Criteria

Conventions	Total value (10)	Score
Regulations	(10)	
Impromptu speech delivered within required time specifications	2	
Prepared speech delivered within time required time specifications	2	
Impromptu speech question response delivered within time specifications	2	
Prepared speech question response delivered within time required time specifications	2	
Professional Attire	2	
Impromptu Speech	Total value (15)	Score
Content	(5)	
Response addresses the prompt	3	
Choose ideas that clearly demonstrate understanding of the prompt	2	
Organization	(4)	
Uses effective introduction	1	
Focuses and presents ideas in a logical order	2	
Concludes effectively	1	



<i>Delivery</i>	(6)	
Effectiveness: uses convincing, coherent language	2	
Voice: expression, tempo, volume, tone	1	
Eye contact: engages with audience	1	
Non-verbal: gestures, mannerisms, body language	1	
Professional dress	1	
Prepared Speech	Total value (70)	Score
<i>Content</i>	(25)	
Response addresses the topic	15	
Choose ideas that demonstrate understanding of the topic	10	
<i>Organization</i>	(25)	
Uses effective introduction	10	
Focuses and presents ideas in a logical order	5	
Concludes effectively	10	
<i>Delivery</i>	(20)	
Effectiveness: uses convincing, coherent language	5	
Voice: expression, tempo, volume, tone	5	
Eye contact: engages with audience	5	
Non-verbal: gestures, mannerisms, body language	5	
Prepared Speech Question Response	Total Value (5)	
Addresses the question	1	
Demonstrates knowledge of topic	1	
Develops ideas adequately	1	
Organizes ideas logically	1	
Demonstrates clarity and conviction	1	
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE		



10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tie (No ties are allowed)

Tiebreaker #1: The competitor with the highest score in the Delivery criteria of the Prepared Speech will be declared the winner.

Tiebreaker #2: The competitor with the higher mark in the Content section of the Prepared Speech will be declared the winner.

Tiebreaker #3: The student with the highest overall score in the Impromptu Speech will be declared the winner.

11. CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Email address
Gaylene Carragher Competition Chair	Gcarragher14@bellaliant.net
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