



**Soroptimist  
International**  
Republic of Ireland  
Girls' Public Speaking  
Competition

Sponsored by



**Women inspiring action,  
*transforming lives***

## OVERVIEW OF THE COMPETITION:

Soroptimist International is a worldwide volunteer service organisation for business and professional women.

In 1981, Soroptimists in Ireland introduced a Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition for second level school girls and it has been held each year since then. It is a 3-tier competition, held at Local, Regional and National level.

There is a choice of topics for the competition (see enclosed). Each contestant chooses one topic and she carries this topic through to the Regional Heat and National Final, if she qualifies for either or both.

All clubs hold their Local Heat before Christmas. Two girls in each club qualify to represent their clubs in the Regional Heat. The Regional Heat is held on a Saturday or Sunday in January or February. Two girls qualify at each of the four Regional Heats to go forward to the National Final. The National Final is held in March. The outright winner's club hosts the National Final the following year and decides on the date and venue.

### AIMS:

1. To encourage girls to play a more prominent part in public life.
2. To improve the art of communication.
3. To encourage girls to develop the skills to speak effectively and to articulate with clarity and conviction.
4. To develop self-confidence and personality.

### ENTRY:

Participants should be in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year in a second level school.

Entry form and Parental/Guardian consent form to be returned to the local Public Speaking Competition Organiser. Closing date for entries is 31<sup>st</sup> October.

### TIME:

Prepared speeches must be **NO LESS** than 4 minutes, nor exceed 6 minutes, otherwise, a penalty may be incurred.

## AWARDS

### LOCAL HEATS:

- Certificates and gifts will be awarded to all participants at the Local Heat. Teachers will also receive a gift.
- Two qualifying speakers from the Local Heat will each receive a Regional Qualifier's Certificate and a prize.
- A third speaker will be selected as a reserve.

### REGIONAL HEATS:

- Certificates will be awarded to all participants at the Regional Heat.
- Two qualifying speakers from each of the four Regional Heats will each receive a National Qualifier's Certificate and a prize.
- A third speaker will be selected as a reserve.

### NATIONAL FINAL:

- National Finalist Certificate and gift will be awarded to each finalist.

### OUTRIGHT WINNER:

- Perpetual Mildred O'Brien Trophy.
- Apple iPad and Winner's Certificate. Teachers will also receive a gift.
- Prize to the value of €1,000 also awarded to winner's school.

## QUOTES FROM NATIONAL WINNERS:

“The Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition was one of the most empowering and positive experiences of my life. In a world which needs empowered, thoughtful female voices, I cannot recommend this very well-run competition highly enough.”

***Nuala Murtagh (1987/1988)***

“Never underestimate your ability to speak publicly; you give others a voice who may not be in a position to speak at all.”

***Jacqui Lacey (1994/1995)***

“I can't recommend participation in the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition highly enough - it instills confidence and provides a platform for young women to challenge themselves, to voice their opinions, to speak their minds, to be heard and to feel empowered.”

***Róisín Curneen (2004/2005)***

“The Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition not only helped build my confidence and instil within me an ambition to achieve, it also introduced me to a welcoming progressive community.”

***Rebecca Ross (2014/2015)***

“The competition was a truly life changing experience for me, with friends and memories made for life.”

***Emily Moore (2017/2018)***

## ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES:

There will be three Adjudicators:

1. A Soroptimist Member
2. Speaker of Merit
3. One other

### JUDGING:

In allocating marks, judges will assess speeches under:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| ■ Style of delivery, projection, contact with audience, use of pause, facial expression, posture, body language, appearance and confidence in what they are saying. | 35 Marks |
| ■ Knowledge and research of subject, relevance to the topic and quality of argument.  | 30 Marks |
| ■ Presentation, introduction, development of subject, logical arrangement of arguments, conclusion.   | 25 Marks |
| ■ Speaking without undue use of notes.  | 10 Marks |

*Deduct 10 marks for substantial deviation from the time limit.  
Use of "Props" not allowed.*

### IMPROMPTU SPEECH:

Required at Regional Heat and National Final.

Optional at Local Heat.

Competitors will be expected to speak for a maximum of 2 minutes on a given subject, which requires no research. Each competitor will get 2 minutes to prepare. All competitors will speak on the same subject.

### TIME KEEPER:

Should ring a bell at the 4 minute stage and again at the 6 minute stage. An announcement should be made before the competition to this effect.

### RESERVE:

A reserve is selected at both the Local and Regional Heat.

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