

Guidelines for Levels I & II of the Declamation Contest

Two judges are present during the entire timing of the contest (10am until 12:30pm).

Students arrive (most of the students come at the beginning of the event, but there are usually a few near the end).

Participants volunteer to present their poems. Each participant will give the judges a white slip with their name, their school's name, and the name of their teacher, which should be handed to the German Day coordinator after the contest. The judges will use this sheet to write all participant names on their score sheets, paying close attention to the spelling of names, in order to avoid confusion among high school teachers. The participants should also give their "passports" to one of the judges to be stamped in the correct box (entitled "Declamation Contest I & II"). This provides proof that they participated in the contest, and is confirmation of participation for their German teachers. Sometimes small prizes are given to each participant after recitation, e.g. a sticker or bookmark.

The rating sheets for the judges have three categories: a) presentation/quality of recitation, b) ability to remember all parts of the poem, and c) quality of pronunciation. Each of these components is marked on a 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) scale and the score for each category is noted on the sheet next to the participant's name. The judges add up the total from all three categories and write this in a fourth column.

At the end of the event, the judges compare their highest scores. As in any situation in which oral skills are rated by more than one judge, some explanation and/or compromise is needed to determine the first, second, and third prize winners. **Because negotiation about the winners and the winners' scores occurs every year, the judges are urged to make all marks on the score sheet in pencil.** There have been years where *one* honorable mention is given. The judges circle the names of the prize awardees on each sheet and return them to the German Day coordinator.