

Project & Conference Reports

Introducing JOESC: Japan Online English Speech Contest. Brought to you by JALT Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG.

In the following Question and Answer article, Dawn Kobayashi, introduces an online speech contest that the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG will be hosting next year.

What is JOESC?

JOESC (pronounced Joe's C) stands for Japan Online English Speech Contest. It's a new English speech contest that is being set up by the Speech, Drama, and Debate SIG (SDD SIG) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching. The very first competition will be held in the fall of 2014.

Why did SDD decide to set up the contest?

Although there are a number of successful speech contests held in Japan, participation is difficult for those who do not live in the immediate vicinity or within easy travelling distance of the venue. This means that students who live in outlying areas often miss out on taking part in these kinds of events. With this in mind, the SDD SIG has decided to establish the national Japan Online English Speech Contest (JOESC). By choosing to hold the contest in the virtual world, students can compete from anywhere in Japan: all that is needed is a good speech and access to an Internet connection. The contest will merge two very important areas for young people in Japan: an ability to communicate in English, and the skill to use information technology effectively. These skills will continue to grow in importance for young people entering the job market.

Who will be eligible?

The rules are very simple. To enter you must be resident in Japan. There will be three sections: one for high school students, one for university students, and one for adults. The only stipulations are that you must not have English as either a first or second language, have lived in an English speaking country for more than 2 years in total, or have either a parent or guardian who is a native speaker of English.

How can people enter the contest?

The Japan Online English Speech Contest is still in its planning stage, but our plan is for participants to first make a video recording of their speech, and then to submit it through our contest website. After initial screening to check that the speech complies with contest rules, the video files will be sent to judges for the selection of winners. The winners will be announced at a later date on the JOESC website. Please check the website regularly as more developments are announced there.

How can people get involved?

There are a number of ways that you can get involved. Firstly, we are looking for volunteers to join our planning committee and help to implement this project and also to act as judges. Secondly, we are looking for suitable sponsors,. If you think that your institution or one of your contacts might be interested in supporting this contest, then we would be grateful if you could put us in touch with them. Lastly, we would also like to ask members to start spreading the word about this contest. There is a poster that can be freely downloaded from the JOESC website and it would be a big help to us if you could assist in promoting the contest within your institution by displaying the poster. If you would like to get involved and support us or would like some more details, then please get in touch by sending an email to the address below.

Make sure to regularly check the JOESC website (and the SDD SIG Facebook page if you are a a SDD SIG member) as we will be making announcements and updates about this new contest as details become finalized in the coming months. We look forward to your support of this exciting, new project!

JOESC website: <<https://sites.google.com/site/japanonlinespeechcontest/home>>

JOESC email: joesc2014@gmail.com