

New Plymouth Competitions Society

Speech & Drama Competitions

Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd August 2026

To be held at

Highlands Intermediate School Hall

Coronation Ave, New Plymouth

Entries open 1st May 2026
Entries close 31st May 2026

Adjudicator: **Jennifer Wicks - Rotorua**

Convenor: Corinne Davies
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Welcome

We look forward to welcoming you to the NPCS Speech and Drama competitions in August 2026.

This is a fun, family-friendly event, designed to encourage our young performers and speakers to take to the stage and share their talents in front of friends and family.

Whether it's a speech, a poem, a character sketch, or a group play extract, there's a wide range of classes to enter. No stage experience is required, just bring your enthusiasm!

This year we return to Highlands Intermediate Hall. This venue gives us more flexibility in timing and pacing of the days, with plenty of space outside for competitors and family members to take a break. We won't be using any backstage spaces, so all competitors will enter the stage from the front stage steps (as we've done in previous years).

We can't wait to see all of our amazing competitors on the weekend of 1st/2nd August!

Please contact me with any queries: corinnedavies@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Corinne Davies - Speech and Drama Convenor

Adjudicator: Jennifer Wicks



Jennifer's passion in life is the performing arts and teaching. She began studying Speech and Drama through both Trinity Guildhall London and Speech New Zealand at the age of 10 and continued to do so until she finished high school.

Upon graduating high school, Jennifer studied at the National Academy of Singing and Dramatic Arts in Christchurch. She then completed a Bachelor of Teaching and Learning through the University of Canterbury and moved back to Rotorua to receive her Speech New Zealand Licentiate Diploma in Speech and Drama teaching.

Jennifer has taught Drama both as a curricular and co-curricular subject and has directed a number of successful productions and charity showcases. She is an accredited performance examiner with Speech New Zealand, has adjudicated numerous Speech and Drama competitions around the country, and enjoys performing in local plays and play readings when her schedule allows.

Jennifer is a qualified primary teacher with experience teaching both primary and secondary school, and 16 years experience teaching both Speech NZ and Trinity College London syllabi. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (BTchLn) from the University of Canterbury and a Licentiate Diploma in the Teaching of Speech and Drama (LSB). She is a Registered Teacher with Educators in Performance and Communication NZ (Reg. EPC NZ) and an accredited Performance Examiner with Speech New Zealand.

Entering the competition

Registration:

- Registration is via the NPCS Speech and Drama app. The link for this will be released on the 1st May 2026 on the NPCS Facebook page and website.
- If you have any trouble using the app, please contact the convenor: corinnedavies@gmail.com.

Entries and payment:

- Entries are made through the app above, following the registration step.
- No late entries will be accepted after the closing date, 31st May 2026.
- Payment is also made via the app above. Entries are not finalised until payment is made.
- Fees are non-refundable.
- Competitors may only enter once in each class, with the exception of Play Extract classes.

Programme:

- The programme will be released two weeks before the competition date.
- Printed programmes are not provided. We recommend you use the NPCS Speech and Drama app, or print your own copy of the programme from the PDF supplied in the app.
- Please note that while we try to avoid it, there may be late changes to the programme, so this may adjust the order or timing of sections on the day.

Rules

Please read these rules carefully. Breach of these rules may result in disqualification of a competitor from a class or these competitions.

Contact the convenor (corinnedavies@gmail.com) if you have any questions or would like clarification on any of the following points.

Age limits:

- The competitor's age is to be taken as at 1st June in the year of the competition.

Competitors:

- All classes are for amateur performers. This means that competitors do not derive substantial income from Speech and Drama or related performances. Prize money does not affect amateur status.

Restricted classes:

- Restricted classes are open to competitors who have not won a first prize placement in a similar class at any similar competition or festival in New Zealand.

Time limits:

- Time limits are provided for each class in the tables below.

Chosen pieces and printed copies:

- The following rules apply to all classes **except** Prepared Speech, Sight Reading, Test Poem, Impromptu, Play Extract, Quick Study, and Storytelling.
- A hard copy of each piece (printed or photocopied) must be provided to the convenor on the day, upon arrival to the venue.
- Please label each piece with the competitor's name and class number.
- For Character Sketch and Play Extract classes, a short introduction of up to 100

words shall be provided to the convenor. All Character Sketches and Play Extracts will be introduced by an appointed person, using the introduction supplied.

Original Poem Classes (14J, 16J, or 21J):

- Compositions must be performed by the author, at the time scheduled. Entries will be adjudicated on quality of composition and performance.
- Competitors must submit a clear copy of their composition to the convenor Corinne Davies (corinnedavies@gmail.com) by 1 July 2026. These will be forwarded to the adjudicator, prior to the start of the competitions.

Sight Reading, Test Poem, Quick Study, Storytelling, and Improvisation classes:

- Competitors will be asked to leave the room and wait together in a separate space until it is their turn to perform. After their performance they may return to sit in the audience.

Conduct:

- All competitors, teachers, family and audience members are expected to behave respectfully to others, and especially to current competitors. We ask for the audience to refrain from talking during performances, and to only enter or exit the venue between performances.

Prompting and interruptions:

- No prompting is allowed, except by the adjudicator or secretary.
- Once the adjudicator has indicated a competitor to start their piece (via a bell), no interruptions from parents, teachers, or audience members are allowed, **for any reason**.
- Interruptions from the family or teacher of a competitor may result in disqualification of the competitor from the class. Only the adjudicator, secretary, or convenor may interrupt a performance.

Taking photos and recording videos:

- Taking photos and videos of your own child is permitted, provided it does not interfere with the performance, or visibility for the adjudicator.

Adjudicators:

- The convenor reserves the right to replace any advertised adjudicator if necessary.
- Any adjudicator may decline to make an award if items are not deemed to be of sufficient merit.
- The decision of the adjudicator shall be final in all classes.
- No competitor, their teacher, family members, or any other interested parties shall communicate with the adjudicator on the subject of the competitor prior to or during the festival. The committee may disqualify a competitor for any breach of this rule.
- No competitor who has been taught or coached by the adjudicator during the last two years will be allowed to compete.
- No close family member of the adjudicator will be allowed to compete.

Cups, Trophies and Prizes:

- Trophies are the property of NPCS and may be held by the winner for the year up until the next competitions.
- The competitor is responsible for replacement or repair of trophies if damage or loss occurs.
- Engraving is the responsibility of the competitor.
- Please take care of your trophies and return them, cleaned, to the convenor (or via your teacher) the following year, at least one month before the competition date.
- Cash prizes must be signed for before the competitor leaves the venue.

Classes

The following classes will be offered in 2026. Note that classes may be removed or merged depending on the number of entries received.

Under 8 years

Class	Class name	Details	Time limit
8A	Poem	Perform a poem	3 min
8B	Poem in costume	Perform a poem, in costume.	3 min

Under 10 years

Class	Class name	Details	Time limit
10A	Poem	Perform a poem.	3 min
10B	Test poem	'The Painting Lesson' by Trevor Harvey, provided below. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
10C	Character Sketch	Perform a character sketch in costume, props are optional.	3 min
10D	Sight Reading	Read a piece provided by the adjudicator, 30 seconds prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
10E	Memorised Prose	Perform a piece of memorised prose, no costumes or props.	3 min
10F	Light Verse	Perform a light hearted or humorous poem.	3 min
10G	Poem - New Zealand Author	Perform a poem by a New Zealand Author.	3 min
10H	Restricted class - Poem	Perform a poem. This class is for competitors that have not won a 'first place' in a similar class before.	3 min
10I	Improvisation - individual	Improvise a scene based on the topic provided by the adjudicator. 1 minute prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min

Under 12 years

Class	Class name	Details	Time limit
12A	Poem	Perform a poem.	3 min
12B	Test poem	'Moa' by John Gadsby, provided below. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
12C	Character Sketch	Perform a character sketch in costume, props are optional.	3 min
12D	Sight Reading	Read a piece provided by the adjudicator, 30 seconds prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
12E	Memorised Prose	Perform a piece of memorised prose, no costumes or props.	3 min
12F	Light Verse	Perform a light hearted or humorous poem.	3 min
12G	Poem - New Zealand Author	Perform a poem by a New Zealand Author.	3 min
12H	Restricted class - Poem	Perform a poem. This class is for competitors that have not won a 'first place' in a similar class before.	3 min
12I	Improvisation - individual	Improvise a scene based on the topic provided by the adjudicator. 1 minute prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min

Under 14 years

Class	Class name	Details	Time limit
14A	Poem	Perform a poem.	3 min
14B	Test poem	'Huia' by Bill Manhire, provided below. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
14C	Character Sketch	Perform a character sketch in costume, props are optional.	3 min
14D	Sight Reading	Read a piece provided by the adjudicator, 30 seconds prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
14E	Memorised Prose	Perform a piece of memorised prose, no costumes or props.	3 min
14F	Light Verse	Perform a light hearted or humorous poem.	3 min

14G	Poem - New Zealand Author	Perform a poem by a New Zealand Author.	3 min
14H	Restricted class - Poem	Perform a poem. This class is for competitors that have not won a 'first place' in a similar class before.	3 min
14I	Improvisation - individual	Improvise a scene based on the topic provided by the adjudicator. 1 minute prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	3 min
14J	Original Poem	Perform an original poem that you have written. Must be performed by the author.	3 min
14M	Play extract (2+ people)	2 or more people perform a short extract from a play. Costumes and props are optional.	10 min
14S	Prepared Speech	Perform a speech you have written. Must be performed by the author.	3 min
14T	Storytelling	Tell a story of your own choice.	3 min

Under 16 years

Class	Class name	Details	Time limit
16A	Poem	Perform a poem.	4 min
16B	Test poem	'Gallipoli Peninsula' by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell, provided below. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	4 min
16C	Character Sketch	Perform a character sketch in costume, props are optional.	4 min
16D	Sight Reading	Read a piece provided by the adjudicator, 30 seconds prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	4 min
16E	Memorised Prose	Perform a piece of memorised prose, no costumes or props.	4 min
16F	Light Verse	Perform a light hearted or humorous poem.	4 min
16G	Poem - New Zealand Author	Perform a poem by a New Zealand Author.	4 min
16J	Original Poem	Perform an original poem that you have written. Must be performed by the author.	4 min
16K	Scripture Reading	Read a piece of scripture of your choice. A lectern will be provided.	4 min
16L	Lyric Poem	Perform a piece of lyric poetry.	4 min

16M	Play extract (2+ people)	2 or more people perform a short extract from a play. Costumes and props are optional.	10 min
16S	Prepared Speech	Perform a speech you have written. Must be performed by the author.	4 min

Open - 16 years and over, under 21 years

Class	Class name	Details	Time limit
21A	Poem	Perform a poem.	4 min
21B	Test poem	'from Brand New Ancients' by Kae Tempest, provided below. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	4 min
21C	Character Sketch	Perform a character sketch in costume, props are optional.	4 min
21D	Sight Reading	Read a piece provided by the adjudicator, 30 seconds prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	4 min
21E	Memorised Prose	Perform a piece of memorised prose, no costumes or props.	4 min
21F	Light Verse	Perform a light hearted or humorous poem.	4 min
21G	Poem - New Zealand Author	Perform a poem by a New Zealand Author.	4 min
21J	Original Poem	Perform an original poem that you have written. Must be performed by the author.	4 min
21K	Scripture Reading	Read a piece of scripture of your choice. A lectern will be provided.	4 min
21L	Lyric Poem	Perform a piece of lyric poetry.	4 min
21M	Play extract (2+ people)	2 or more people perform a short extract from a play. Costumes and props are optional.	10 min
21N	Quick Study Poem	Perform a poem provided by the adjudicator. 30 seconds prep time. Competitors leave the room until their turn to perform.	4 min
21S	Prepared Speech	Perform a speech you have written. Must be performed by the author.	4 min

Scholarships

All scholarships are awarded for the highest aggregate marks for the classes listed.

Any competitors who have entered all the necessary classes will automatically be entered for these awards.

Supreme Award

Winner and Runner Up

To the competitor awarded the highest aggregate marks, over all the following age group classes:

Under 10 years: Classes 10A, 10B, 10C, 10D, 10E, 10F, 10G

Under 12 years: Classes 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D, 12E, 12F, 12G

Under 14 years: Classes 14A, 14B, 14C, 14D, 14E, 14F, 14G

Under 16 years: Classes 16A, 16B, 16C, 16D, 16E, 16F, 16G

Open: Classes 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D, 21E, 21F, 21G

Under 10 years

Winner and Runner Up

Under 10 Years: Classes 10A, 10B, 10C, 10D & 10E

Under 12 years

Winner and Runner Up

Under 12 Years: Classes 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D & 12E

Under 14 years

Winner and Runner Up

Under 14 Years: Classes 14A, 14B, 14 C, 14D & 14E

Under 16 years

Winner and Runner Up

Under 16 Years: Classes 16A, 16B, 16C, 16D & 16E

Open Under 21 years

Winner and Runner Up

Open Classes: 21A, 21B, 21C, 21D & 21E

We are looking for sponsors for 2026!

Would your family or business like to sponsor an award for 2026? Award sponsorships range from \$20 to \$100, with prize money going directly to our competitors on your behalf.

It's a simple, meaningful way to support creativity and confidence in our young performers. Contact convenor Corinne Davies to arrange:

corinnedavies@gmail.com 0272727555

Trophies

Amelia Allen Cup	Winner Class 10F - Light verse Under 10 years
Anne Hunter Challenge Cup	Winner Class 21C - Character sketch - Open
Baird Challenge Cup	Highest aggregate marks in Classes 14E and 14F or 16E and 16F
Carla Brown Challenge Cup	Most sincere interpretation of a character from Classes 16C or 21C
Catherine Murphy Challenge Trophy	Winner Class 16C - Character Sketch - Under 16
Coster Challenge Trophy	Winner Class 8A - Poem - Under 8 Years
Dorne Arthur Trophy	Highest aggregate marks over Classes 16A, 16C and 21A, 21C
Duthie Trophy	Highest mark for Improvisation - Classes 10I, 12I or 14I
Firth Industries Challenge Cup	Highest aggregate marks in Classes 21E, 21G and 21N
Gunatunga Trophy	Winner Class 16E - Memorised Prose - Under 16
Healy Challenge Cup	Highest mark in any solo class other than Oratory or Sight Reading
Holyoake Cup	Winner Class 16M - Play extract (2+ people)
Janet Coote Cup	Highest aggregate marks in Classes 16A, 16B, 16C, 16D & 16F
Lafferty Challenge Trophy	Winner Class 16K - Scripture reading - Under 16
Lyn Stansfield Cup	Winner Class 14S - Prepared speech Under 14
Michelle Leuthart Cup	Winner Class 16G - Poem by a NZ Author - Under 16
NorHayati Abdullah Scholarship	Winner Class 12C - Character Sketch - Under 12
NP Toastmasters Challenge Cup	Winner Class 16S - Prepared Speech over 14 years
Powell Trophy	In recognition of competitive spirit - any age group - not necessarily a winner
Ross Hunter Trophy	Most promising boy - 12 Years & Under 21 Years - Must have entered Poem (A), Prose (E) and Sight Reading (D) in their respective age groups
St Joseph's Choir Challenge Trophy	Winner Class 21K - Scripture Reading - Open
Tasman Dental Laboratory Trophy	Winner Class 21G - Poem NZ Author - Open

Touche Ross Cup	Most promising boy - Must have entered Poem & Light Verse in their respective age groups - Classes 10A and 10F or 12A and 12F
Valentine Challenge Cup	Winner Class 14C - Character Sketch - Under 14
Victoria Holyoake Cup	Winner Class 10E - Memorised Prose - Under 10
Wall Challenge Cup	Most sensitive interpretation of a verse work - Adjudicators decision
Wadsworths Book Centre Cup	Winner Class 16L - Lyric Poem - Under 16
Yarrow Family Trophy	Highest mark in a restricted class
Zoe Holyoake Challenge Cup	Highest Aggregate mark in classes 10A and 10B

Test Poems

Under 10

The Painting Lesson by Trevor Harvey

'What's THAT, dear?'
asked the new teacher.

'It's Mummy,' I replied.

'But Mums aren't green and orange!
You really haven't TRIED.
You don't just paint in SPLODGES –
You're old enough to know
You need to THINK before you work . . .
Now – have another go.'

She helped me draw two arms and legs,
A face with sickly smile,
A rounded body, dark brown hair,
A hat – and in a while,
She stood back (with her face bright pink):
'That's SO much better – don't you think?'

But she turned pale
When, at ten to three,
An orange-green blob
Collected me.
'Hi, Mum!'

Under 12

Moa by John Gadsby

The moa was not the brightest bird
And couldn't fly, which sounds absurd
So wingless, this condition led
The moa to grow huge legs instead

But evolution must have frowned
On birds with both feet on the ground
For no one told him that those feet
Were not designed for bogs and peat

So when in fright the moa would stomp
Off recklessly into some swamp
Without the simple common sense
To figure out the consequence

Disaster came faster
The moa got slower
The mire rose higher
The moa sank lower

He thought he'd be like goose or duck
But moas are moas – and moas get stuck
While time and tide marched undelayed
The moa was stuck – and stuck he stayed

He'd never really thought you know
And that's why he got caught you know
He hadn't even thinked you see
And that's why he's extinct you see.

Under 14

Huia by Bill Manhire

I was the first of birds to sing
I sang to signal rain
the one I loved was singing
and singing once again

My wings were made of sunlight
my tail was made of frost
my song was now a warning
and now a song of love

I sang upon a postage stamp
I sang upon your coins
but money courted beauty
you could not see the joins

Where are you when you vanish?
Where are you when you're found?
I'm made of greed and anguish
a feather on the ground

+

I lived among you once
and now I can't be found
I'm made of things that vanish
a feather on the ground

Under 16

Gallipoli Peninsula by Alistair Te Ariki Campbell

It was magical when flowers
appeared on the upper reaches –
not that we saw much of the upper reaches.
But when we did,
we were reminded of home
when spring clothed the hills with flowers.
The dead lying among them
seemed to be asleep.
I can never forget the early mornings,
before the killings started up,
when the sea was like a mirror
under little wisps of cloud
breathing on its surface, so dazzling
it hurt the eye.
and the ships, so many of them,
they darkened the sea.
But the evenings too were magical,
with such hues in the sky
over Macedonia,
so many colours, gold bars,
green, red, and yellow.
We noticed these things,
when the firing stopped and we had respite.
It was good to feel,
during such moments,
that we were human beings once more,
delighting in little things,
in just being human.

Under 21

from Brand New Ancients by Kae Tempest

In the old days,
the myths were the stories we used to explain ourselves
but how can we explain the way we hate ourselves,
the things we've made ourselves into,
the way we break ourselves in two,
the way we overcomplicate ourselves?

But we are still mythical.

We are still permanently trapped somewhere between the heroic and the pitiful.
We are still godly;
that's what makes us so monstrous.
But it just feels like we've forgotten we're much more than the sum of all
the things that belong to us.

The empty skies rise
over the benches where the old men sit –
They are desolate
and friendless
and the young men spit;
inside they are delicate, but outside they're reckless and I reckon
that these are our heroes,
these are our legends.

Every single person has a purpose in them burning.
Look again, and allow yourself to see them.

Millions of characters
Each with their own epic narratives
Singing, 'it's hard to be an angel
Until you've been a demon'.

The sky is so perfect it looks like a painting
but the air is so thick that we feel like we're fainting
Still
the myths in this city have always said the same thing -
about how all we need is a place to belong;
how all we need is to know what's right from what's wrong and
how all we need is to struggle to find out for ourselves
which side we are on.