

HSBC/BC Mandarin Speaking Competition 2016/17

Guidelines for Students

Before the Competition

- Please read the Terms & Conditions (a copy can be found on our website and includes the Competition format and rules, <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/schools/support-for-languages/partnerships-courses-resources/chinese-speaking-competition> and please look at the dates of the Competition to ensure that you can take part. Please note specifically that if there is a clash between the Winner's Trip dates (11th-19th April) and any family or religious holidays you may have planned, that you raise this immediately with your teacher and ask them to contact the [Competition Team](#). Please note that attendance on the Winner's trip is compulsory if you win and the dates of the trip cannot be changed or amended. If you are part of a group performance, failure to attend the trip will result in the entire group being disqualified, therefore you must alert your teacher as soon as possible and it is your responsibility to do so before the heats.

During the Competition

Individual Language Ability

- In the individual language ability sections the judges are looking for real communication and presentation, not a rehearsed performance. The winner of each category will be someone who has really got to grips with the Mandarin language appropriate to their level of learning.
- There are three categories in the Individual Language Ability section – Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced.
- In all categories you will be assessed in the following elements: presentation and translation. In the advanced category there is additional element which is the impromptu speech test.

Presentation: you will give a two minute presentation in Mandarin on a prepared topic from the National Curriculum, e.g. family and friends, school, home and pets, leisure time, festivals etc. The choice of topic should be appropriate to your level of learning. If you receive additional classes in Mandarin outside of normal school hours or travel frequently to a country where Mandarin or another similar language is spoken, you will need to raise this with the [Competition Team](#), please contact them directly.

You will then be asked two questions in Mandarin relating to your presentation to ensure understanding and to verify that the presentation has not been rehearsed. You are allowed to have brief, bullet-pointed notes (up to a maximum of 25 words in English) but only at the appropriate level. You must show these to the MC British Council staff member and to the Judging Panel at the start of the day. No one is allowed to use notes during their performance at the final.

You must prepare your presentation yourself; your teacher is only allowed to guide and make corrections for you.

Judges will assess communication, fluency, usage of vocabulary and pronunciation, therefore please make sure that you focus on all of those elements in your preparation.

One of the Judges will ask you follow-up questions in order to check that you understand and can talk about what you have covered in your presentation and have not merely learnt it by heart.

Please note that if the Judges feel that you have been placed in the incorrect category level and if your level of Mandarin is judged to be too advanced for the level, further investigation and questions may be asked to ascertain your background and how much additional tuition outside of normal class hours that you may have received. The Judges reserve the right to disqualify candidates who are incorrectly placed and their decision will be final. This is why we ask you to raise this with the [Competition Team](#) before the heats take place (see above).

Translation: you will translate 3 sentences from English into Mandarin Chinese. You will receive points not only for correct translation of the whole sentence but you can also gain scores for

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translating individual words correctly. Please try your best to say any words you know, even if the structure is not accurate. The Judges want to encourage you and want you to do the best you can on the day.

Impromptu speech in Mandarin (only for advanced category students): you will be given a sentence or phrase in Mandarin and will be asked to give a short impromptu speech starting with the sentence or phrase.

Group Performance

- In the group performance section judges are looking for a group drama performance which has all the participants joining in and using the language.
- The group performance can involve a short song in Chinese (No English is allowed), a dance or martial arts display within the drama (and should relate to the context of what is happening in the story and should form a small part of the performance as a whole).
- The group performance should include “Cohesion” – which looks at the way in which the performance is structured and balanced and makes sure that all members of the group have contributed in equal proportions to the performance.
- Groups must give a drama performance in Mandarin Chinese.
- Groups can use one piece of recorded music to play during their performance and one PowerPoint slide to be shown behind them during their performance. The music should not contain lyrics which would make it difficult for judging panel to hear the song performed by competitors. It is also not permitted to have elements of sung or spoken English during the performance.
- Teachers cannot be involved in the on-stage performance.
- Students are allowed to have props written in English but only at the heats. No one is allowed to use notes during their performance at the final.

Performances must be devised by you and your group with only teacher corrections.

Marks will only be awarded for your performance, not for the PowerPoint, recorded music or costumes/props. The Judges will assess communication, pronunciation, usage of the language, cultural content and cohesion during the performance. Your teacher should talk you through all these elements of the performance and ensure that you are aware and understand the rules, Terms and Conditions.

On the day of the Competition

- Please stay with your school group and report to your teacher. Do not wander off on your own.
- Make sure you arrive on time for the registration with your group and then change into your clothing if required for your group performance.
- Please ensure that you remain quiet during other schools' performances. It is distracting and unfair for the other groups if you talk, whisper or move around during a performance, therefore please respect those from other schools and keep noise to a minimum.
- Should you wish to go to the toilet or leave the room during the heats or finals, please leave after a performance has finished and before the next one starts.
- After each performance, the Judges will take time to mark what they have seen. Please be quiet or keep talking to a minimum to allow them to concentrate.

Further explanation of the Competition's rules can be found in the Terms & Conditions and Judging Criteria documents. Please read them carefully and get in touch with the [Competition Team](#) if you have any queries.