

## Basic Description of the 2010 Foreign Language Skills Contest

**Building representatives: Please distribute to participating teachers at your earliest convenience.**

### Component 1

As in previous years, there will be a Reading Comprehension test. Students at each level of each language will be assigned one classroom or group of classrooms where they will be allowed 45 minutes to complete it. This additional time is to allow component 2 to take place simultaneously.

### Component 2

At various times during the Reading Comprehension test, successive pairs of students will be asked to turn over any unfinished tests and come to an adjacent room where they will act out 1 of 4 possible situations which we have selected from the *Oregon Benchmark IV Practice Situations* published by COFLT in September, 2000.

The 4 situations that we select for each of the contest languages—French, German, and Spanish—are as follows.

#### French :

Level 1—Situations 6, 17, 25, 32  
Level 3—Situations 50, 51, 55, 56

Level 2—Situations 9, 11, 22, 30  
Level 4—Situations 57, 59, 61, 64

#### German :

Level 1—Situations 3, 9, 26, 82  
Level 3—Situations 40, 71, 94, 95

Level 2—Situations 15, 47, 57, 82  
Level 4—Situations 46, 62, 69, 101

#### Spanish :

Level 1—Situations 24, 25, 26, 63  
Level 3—Situations 1, 8, 15, 31

Level 2—Situations 20, 80, 82, 87  
Level 4—Situations 3, 18, 48, 81

**(Please note: In situations referring to an “interviewer” you should substitute the word “partner”.)**

In each “situation room” will be at least two educated native speakers and/or teachers of the target language who will rate the performances. It is critical that the students act out their situations in 3 minutes or less so that we can get through all the contestants in the allotted time.. After each level is finished, the judges will forward the names of the first, second, and third place winners to the Skills Contest coordinators who will publish the results.

The evaluation of performances will be based on the following.

Levels 1 and 2 (same as the Scoring Guide for the CIM, Novice High)

Vocabulary: Uses at least 10 vocabulary words related to topic and enough support vocabulary/cultural fillers to maintain a conversation  
Content: Carries out the situation  
Structure: Complete sentences with s/v agreement more than half the time  
Precision: Errors do not interfere with communication  
Questions: Asks at least three questions related to topic  
Fluency: Comprehensible with reasonable wait time

Levels 3 and 4 (same as the Scoring Guide for the CIM, Intermediate Low)

Vocabulary: Uses at least 20 vocabulary words related to topic and enough support vocabulary/cultural fillers to maintain a conversation  
Content: Carries out the situation  
Structure: Complete sentences with s/v agreement in present time  
Precision: Errors do not interfere with communication  
Questions: Asks at least three conversation extending questions related to topic  
Fluency: Comprehensible with reasonable wait time

Since these were designed as minimal criteria for assessing students with Benchmark Level III or IV proficiency, they will be used by our judges only as guidelines for things to look for and as minimal requirements to screen for top candidates. Naturally the top performances will exceed these levels. Once these top performances have been identified, the judge will decide the winners according to such factors as verisimilitude, creativity and cultural appropriateness.

We will strive to find judges who are unfamiliar with any of your students and who will agree to recuse themselves in cases where they do know someone.

If you need a copy of the *Practice Situations* or any other information about the workings of the Foreign Language Skills Contest please contact

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Answers to FAQ's:

Yes, any level (1-4) can compete.

No, no native speakers of a given language or heritage speakers (those raised in homes where that language was regularly spoken by natives) may compete in that language.

Yes, they can act out the situation with a partner from their school with whom they have already practiced.

If someone doesn't have a partner, we will pair him or her with another student of the same level. If all else fails, one of the judges will serve as the student's partner.

They can take either the Reading Comprehension portion of the test, the Situation Skit, or both.

Prizes will be awarded separately.

Please note: This year the foreign language portion of the Skills Contest will take place over 4 hours, with each hour dedicated to the same level of all three languages as follows.

9:00 AM      Level 1—French, Spanish, German

10:00AM     Level 2—French, Spanish, German

11:00 AM    Level 3—French, Spanish, German

12:00 Noon   Level 4—French, Spanish, German