

2025-26 Arabic Speaking Competition

Competition Guidelines

Introduction

The Qatar Foundation International, LLC (“**QFI**”) invites students to showcase their skills in the Arabic language by taking part in the 2025-26 Arabic Speaking Competition (ASC). This international competition continues its mission of nurturing the learning of the Arabic language among students while also celebrating their linguistic achievements and creativity. This competition is an inspiring and inclusive event that encourages young learners to become confident speakers of and advocates for the Arabic language by:

- Increasing students’ motivation for learning Arabic
- Engaging with Arabic outside of the classroom and beyond their immediate community
- Using language skills authentically in a formal speaking context
- Applying speaking skills commonly used in formal assessments (including GCSEs, OPIs, and other proficiency tests)
- Celebrating the skills of young people who are studying the Arabic language

QFI invites teachers to facilitate submissions for their Arabic students in secondary school and encourage their students to participate.

Competition winners will be announced in March and recognized at a virtual Arabic Speaking Celebration Event in late Spring.

Competition Format

The 2025-26 Arabic Speaking Competition consists of two rounds. During Round 1, students will record a video or audio of their original presentation. Following the submission window, judges will score the video/audio entries and select students to advance to the next round. During Round 2, students will deliver their presentation directly to a panel of judges through a live call.

Round 1 – Video Submissions

Each entrant will create and record a 2-minute oral presentation in Arabic in response to one of the themes listed in the Prompt. Presentations should be the student’s original work. If an entrant is concerned about privacy, they may submit an audio recording of their presentation instead of a video. Judges will apply the same grading criteria to video and audio-only submissions.

Teachers should assist students with completing their recordings. Recordings should begin with a short introduction, which should include the student saying their name, age, school, city and country, how long they have been learning Arabic, and the title of their oral submission followed by their spoken presentation. When the student has completed their presentation, their teacher should ask them a few follow-up questions. More details are available under Prompt.

Each entrant will complete an accompanying entry form explaining their motivations for learning Arabic and their preparation process.

Instructions for submitting recordings and entry forms are available in the [Teacher Companion Guide](#).

Round 2 – Live Submissions

After the first round of judging is complete, selected entrants will deliver their presentation directly to a panel of judges through a live call. Entrants should use the same presentation topic that they submitted during Round 1, but they may make changes between rounds.

Judges will have an opportunity to ask entrants questions, so students should be prepared to answer questions and hold a conversation about their presentation topic. Entrants who advance to this round will receive additional information in January 2026.

Themes/Prompt

Students should prepare an original presentation based on **ONE** of the following 9 themes:

- Family/community
- An important person or place in your life
- Hobbies/Likes and Dislikes
- A day in my life
- Travel
- Music
- Environment
- Celebrations
- Education

Once the entrant finishes their presentation of up to 2 minutes, the supervising teacher should ask the student a few questions (in Arabic) related to the information presented. Teachers should ask 1-3 questions depending on the student's language level and complexity of the question.

All participants should use Arabic throughout the Arabic Speaking Competition, but it is up to the student and their teacher to decide on the variety of Arabic. QFI recognizes all forms of communicative Arabic for the purposes of the ASC. Students preparing for MSA-only exams may wish to exclusively use MSA so that their entry is a component to their exam preparation. Students who are preparing for more flexible exams or working on a particular dialect may wish to focus more heavily on dialect usage.

Eligibility

Secondary students (approx. ages 11-18) currently enrolled in Arabic classes in countries in which QFI currently works (Canada, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States) are eligible to participate. This includes students at private/tuition-based, public/state-funded, and supplementary/weekend schools.

Schools are limited to 10 entries and are responsible for selecting a maximum of 10 submissions that showcase a range of backgrounds and skill levels in a manner that is representative of the school’s Arabic program.

Categories

Entries will be judged based on language background, language skill level, and age. Language background and skill level will be determined through questions on the entry form.

Timeline

October 1, 2025	Competition entry window opens
October & November 2025	Schools/teachers conduct competition, shortlist entries, submit recordings and student information sheets
December 10, 2025	Deadline to submit entries
December 2025-January 2026	Round 1 Judging period
February 1, 2026	All participants notified of status
Mid January-February 2026	Interactive Round 2 with judging panel
Spring 2026	Winners announced
Spring 2026	Virtual Ceremony & Prizes shipped

How to Enter

Teachers should submit students’ entries on their behalf through SM Apply: https://qfi.smapply.org/prog/asc_2025. All entries must go through a teacher, tutor, or administrator; no student should submit their own entry. Step-by-step instructions for submitting entries are available in the [Teacher Companion Guide](#).

Judges & Scoring Criteria

The Competition will be judged by fluent Arabic speakers who are experienced in grading Arabic coursework and working with different proficiency levels and language backgrounds.

The judges are looking for organic communication rather than a memorized performance. Successful entrants must be able to discuss their topic in Arabic using language appropriate to their level of learning.

Each entry will be scored in the following six categories: Creativity, Organization, Vocabulary & Pronunciation, Grammar & Usage, Delivery, and Q&A. The full rubric is available [here](#).

Resources

The following resources are available to help teachers and students prepare their entries:

- Competition Guidelines (this document)
- Entry Form – [Letter](#) | [A4](#)
- [Rubric](#)
- [Teacher Companion Guide](#)
- [Student Companion Guide](#)

Please contact Abby at arabic@qfi.org with any questions.

Child Protection & Safeguarding

The supervising teacher must adhere to their own school's child protection, behavioral standards, safeguarding, and IT regulations when overseeing student participation in the competition.

Terms and Conditions for Entering the Competition

General Terms and Conditions

Eligibility

Schools are responsible for checking the eligibility of all students. The supervising teacher also agrees that to the best of their knowledge, the category placement questions are answered truthfully. If it transpires that inaccurate information has been provided that changes a student's eligibility, then said student may be disqualified. QFI reserves the right to make further inquiries into the language experience/background of the candidate if questions arise regarding their eligibility or placement.

Entry Deadline

Entries must be submitted by the closing date, December 10, 2025. Entries that do not meet this deadline will not be accepted.

Originality

By entering the Competition, the supervising teacher confirms that the work is that of the student(s). Performances must be original and should not include any elements of AI or machine translation. Plagiarism will not be accepted.

Incomplete or Incorrect Entries

Entries that are incomplete, submitted incorrectly, corrupted, or otherwise not fully received within the deadlines listed above will not be accepted.

Prizes

All entrants will receive a certificate of participation from QFI. Category winners will be recognized at a virtual ceremony during Spring 2026 and receive a prize to commemorate their achievements.

Privacy Notice and Consent

QFI is organizing and conducting the Arabic Speaking Competition event and will process your information, including that of the participant, their parent/guardian/representative, judges and coordinating teachers. The legal basis for processing your personal data will either be consent or performance of a contract consent.

Any personal data that you provide to QFI in connection with the Arabic Speaking Competition will be processed by QFI as a data controller and in accordance with its privacy policy which is available on its website or [here](#). Before you get involved with the Arabic Speaking Competition and provide us with your data, we strongly recommend you review our privacy policy, especially the sections on how QFI will process your personal in connection with its “Annual Arabic Speaking Competitions”.

QFI complies with the EU’s and UK’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018, the US’s Children’s Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA), and individual US state data privacy laws. Arabic Speaking Competition participants can exercise their rights over their personal data held by QFI, ask us to correct any inaccuracies in that information or withdraw their consent to the processing of their personal data by referring to QFI’s privacy policy referred to above or by calling us at 001-888-400-4904, emailing us [at privacy@qfi.org](mailto:privacy@qfi.org) or by mail at Qatar Foundation International, LLC, 1225 New York Ave NW, Washington, DC 20005. If you have concerns about how we have used your personal information, you also have the right to complain to a privacy regulator. We will keep your information for a period of 2 years from the time of collection.

If you do not agree to the intended use of your videos and/or photos you are free to decide not to participate. If you are not a US resident and under 18 years of age, your parents or other legal guardians must agree to your participation. If you are a US resident and under 13 years of age, your parents or other legal guardians must agree to your participation. QFI will not accept any submissions without the required consent form.

If you wish to participate in the Arabic Speaking Competition event;

- a. You must confirm that you have read and understood the contents of QFI's privacy policy; and
- b. You must complete and deliver the Competition Consent Form to QFI by submitting it at <https://form.jotform.com/qfi/competition-consent>.

You can withdraw your consent at any time. Please note that the withdrawal is only effective for the future and you may not be able to continue with your participation in the Arabic Speaking Competition event.