



Children's Character Festival: True Tales of Gratitude 21-22 March 2026

Rules and Regulations for All Events

Enrolments

1. Participants may enter through their school, learning centre, or as an individual. One application is required per participant. Application should be made through the relevant school or learning centre or online at www.characterfestival.org.
2. There are two event streams: one in English and one in Cantonese.
3. Each participant may enter in one English-speaking event or one Cantonese-speaking event or both (total two events) for the relevant age group.
4. The events are only open to the ages specified. The **age is determined as at 22 March 2026**. Participants are required to bring a copy of their birth certificate, Hong Kong identity card, passport, or student identity card to the event to confirm age upon request.
5. **Deadline for applications is Sunday, 18 January 2026, 11:59pm**. Late applications may be rejected, and if accepted, be subject to a surcharge of 50% in addition to the event fee.
6. Changes may not be made to allocated event dates, times, names and information about participants, unless under exceptional circumstances. Please apply by email with supporting documentation to hello@characterfestival.org if a change to date/time is requested. Note that a \$200 administration charge will be levied for successful changes.
7. **All participants must provide a valid email address as communication will be via email**. The organisers will not be responsible for non-receipt of emails.
8. All event fees, surcharges, and any other expenses incurred by participants are non-refundable under any circumstances.
9. Substitution of participants, and/or changing of names and/or events, is not permitted after the submission of applications.
10. Participants who do not attend an event for any reason will be considered disqualified.
11. Should the event be affected by external Force Majeure events, including but not limited to pandemic or government announcements, the organisers reserve the right to change the event to a video or other format with notice to participants.

Events and performances

1. Events are available by age and theme according to the following table:

Theme: True Tales of Gratitude

Age	Theme	Length of true story (words)	Length of true story (time)
3	Gratitude for Family	50 – 100 words	0.5 minutes
4	Gratitude for Friends	80 – 120 words	1 minute
5	Gratitude for Teachers	120 – 180 words	1.5 minutes
6	Gratitude for Community Helpers	180 – 280 words	2 minutes
7-8	Gratitude for Everyday Things	280 – 380 words	2.5 minutes
9-10	Gratitude for Challenges	380 – 480 words	3 minutes

2. Participants must perform their true story as specified for each event, and may be disqualified if the story or its delivery does not comply with the theme, length, or any other requirement as listed according to these rules and regulations. Story themes and other instructions are also available on www.characterfestival.org.
3. **Stories must be spoken in the language of the selected event stream: English or Cantonese only.**
4. **Stories must be true and non-fiction** and comply with the specified theme and other rules and regulations of the event. Any performed stories which are obviously fiction will still be eligible for a certificate of participation but will not receive a final mark or comments from the adjudicator.
5. All stories must be the original work of the participant and not have been previously performed at or submitted to other competitions. The parent (or other responsible supervisor, eg guardian, teacher) of each participant is required to certify this when enrolling. Any story found to be plagiarised or previously performed or published will result in disqualification of the participant.
6. **Optional resources** are provided in the form of story planners for participants to brainstorm ideas. These are to be used entirely at the choice of participants and are not compulsory.
7. Stories performed should be recited in spoken format, without melody.
8. Participants may deliver their stories from memory OR may read them from **only one cue card of no larger than A5-size**, held in the hand. The method of story delivery will not be taken into consideration by adjudicators when awarding marks; however, clarity of voice and expression in words and face are important to effective storytelling, and any accompanying cue card should not hide the participant's face or distract from the story itself.
9. No other props, accompanying pictures, or other resources are allowed.
10. Participants may perform in costume, school uniform, or other clothing of their choice, but this will not be taken into consideration by adjudicators when awarding marks.

11. All participants who comply with competition rules will receive a certificate of participation showing comments and marks awarded from the Children's Character Festival and its organisers. Champion, 1st Runner-Up, and 2nd Runner-Up for each event will receive a trophy. Where there are fewer than 6 performers in an event, only one trophy will be awarded.
12. Trophies and certificates, if uncollected after an event, will incur a courier fee for delivery. After 31 May 2026, the organisers reserve the right to dispose of uncollected trophies/certificates.
13. Judging criteria will be based on the overall performance, including story structure, clarity of speech, expressive interpretation, and communication with the audience. (See specific criteria below.) The adjudicators' decisions are final, and no discussion related to marks or trophies awarded or comments given will be entered into under any circumstances.
14. Participants are required to arrive at the venue at least 15 minutes before their competition time and latecomers may be disqualified.

Judging criteria

Judging criteria will be based on the overall performance with weighting given as follows:

Relevance and Interpretation 50%

- Content of the true story and relevance to the specified theme
- Originality of storytelling performance
- Individual performing style and voice
- Enjoyment shown in delivery of the story

Speech Mechanics 30%

- Clarity of voice, projection, and speech patterns
- Understanding of story structure, organisation, phrasing, and meaning
- Use of vocal colour, including volume, pace, pitch, emphasis
- Accuracy of grammar and language

Engagement 20%

- Use of natural facial expression and physical gesture (artificial gesture should be avoided)
- Ability to maintain the audience's interest
- Overall impact on the audience

Total 100%

Note that adjudicators are seeking natural authentic storytelling performances that reflect the child's age and understanding. Artificial recitals which appear to be beyond the child's daily reference will not be as successful.

Participants with specific needs

We are committed to creating inclusion in our events, and we welcome participation from participants of all abilities who meet the participant age criteria and storytelling **in English**. Participants with specific needs or extenuating personal circumstances may be entitled to reasonable adjustment without compromising the integrity of the event requirements or content. Please email hello@characterfestival.org for further information.

Waivers

1. The organisers reserve the right to vary the dates, physical or digital platform, and/or procedures, as well as reschedule, modify, and/or cancel any of the events, dates, times, and/or venues with no compensation payable to participants, and reserve the absolute right of final decision on all matters related to the Children's Character Festival.
2. All participants agree that they grant to the organisers the use of their personal data, including their name, image, photographs, video and audio recording, and story content in any form, and waive any and all claims, including but not limited to remuneration, that they may have against the organisers, and give the organisers unrestricted right and permission to use, produce, reproduce, publish, adapt, and modify the data.
3. All participants agree to waive any and all claims that they may have against the organisers and their directors, officers, employees, consultants, agents, and representatives, and release them from any and all liability for any loss, damage, expense, or injury including fatality that they may suffer by participating in the Children's Character Festival.
4. Where there may be discrepancy between the rules in English and Chinese, the English rules shall prevail.

Enquiries

Enquiries should be addressed to hello@characterfestival.org.