

OniMa Scoring Guide 2025



This year's Finals will be held in two stages.

General

- All topics used in ONiMa this year will be new, and they will be revealed to the players at the start of the game. Sample topics will be published, serving as a guideline for practice.
- Players will randomly pick topics for their speech.
- Once the topic is revealed, the Player will have up to 30 seconds to think about the topic before beginning their 1 minute.
- For all age groups, Prelims and Semi-Finals will be held on Day 1. Finals will be held on Day 2.
- Budatalu will play buzzer-free rounds throughout the game.
- Sisindreelu & Chirutalu will play preliminary rounds and semi-finals with no buzzer.
- Final rounds for Sisindreelu & Chirutalu will be buzzer-based.
- For all levels of games, a panel consisting of 2 judges supported by one scorer and timekeeper will judge each speech.

Prelims, Semi Finals, Finals for Budatalu & Sisindreelu, and Prelims, Semi Finals for Chirutalu

- Each player gets a separate topic that is randomly picked by the player. Then, each player speaks for 1 minute without interruptions.
- Judges will score the speakers using the 5 criteria below.
- From the Prelims stage, 10-12 players will advance to the next level.
- Semi-finals will also follow the same rubric, administered by a panel of judges.
- 6 people will advance to the finals. We are still considering whether to carry forward a certain percentage of the prelims score for finals.
- **Only Sisindreelu and Chirutalu players will challenge each other with a buzzer in the finals round.**

See 2025 Judges' Scoring Rubric for All Rounds

Sisindreelu & Chirutalu Finals

The top 5 to 6 players in this age group will compete in a **buzzer-based Finals round**. A panel of judges will score each round of each player out of **100 points** based on the quality of their speech. Players can get up to 90 points based on **how long they speak**.
Players earn automatic points by:

- **Challenging another player (by pressing buzzer), and “taking away the mic” until he/she is challenged again.**
- **Speaking without being challenged** by others.

The primary goal of the buzzer round is to encourage **active listening** and **attentive participation**.

Buzzer Round Rules

A panel of judges will evaluate each speech using the criteria outlined above, with a maximum of 100 points for each round.

Game Flow

1. **Starting the Speech:**
Each player will begin their topic and start to speak for up to **1 minute**.
2. **Points for the time spoken**
 - a. The speaker would earn X points for speaking X seconds (after a minimum of 5 seconds) no matter how many times the speaker is interrupted. Ex: Speaker A starts to speak. After 5 seconds another speaker B challenges A. Speaker A loses his/her chance. After 10 seconds speaker A challenges B and gets to speak again. After 10 seconds speaker C challenges A and finishes the minute. A spoke for 15 seconds, B for 10 seconds, C for 35 seconds. They receive 15, 10 and 35 points respectively.
3. **Challenging a Speaker:**
Players may press the **buzzer** to challenge another player's speech. Judges will determine whether the challenge is valid. **Judges' decisions are final.**
4. **Invalid Challenge:**
 - a. If the challenge is **invalid**, the challenger will **lose 3 points**, and the original speaker continues until another valid challenge is made or 60 seconds elapse. **Judges' decisions are final.**
5. **Bonus Points for being the last speaker of topic in a buzzer round:**

Speaker for the	Bonus Points
Last 60 seconds	30
Last 1 to 60 seconds (last 59 seconds)	20
Last 30 to 60 seconds (last 30 seconds)	10
Last 45 to 60 seconds (last 15 seconds)	5

6. **Next Round:**
The next player picks a new topic, and steps 2 to 5 repeat.
7. **Winning Criteria:**
Judges score each speaker of each round based on the criteria outlined in this document. Judges score each round separately out of 100. Judges' will consider the length of time a speaker spoke, yet their score is not proportional to the length of time a player spoke. Judges' scores will be added to the buzzer score. After all players have had a turn to select a topic, the **player with the highest score is declared the winner**. Players with the second and third highest scores will be the **runners-up**.
8. **Valid Objections:** Refer to the section titled “**Valid Objections**” at the following link:
https://telugumaatlaata.com/index.html#onima_semis_rules



Round-Robin Scenarios



Turn 1 – Player A Starts

Time Elapsed	Player	Action	Time Spoken	Buzzer?	Valid?	Notes
0s–20s	A	Starts topic	20 sec	Buzzer by C @20s	✓	A receives 20 points
20s–55s	C	Continues	35 sec	Buzzer by D @55s	✓	C receives 35 time points,
55s–60s	D	Finishes	5 sec	None	-	D spoke <10s → 0 pts, but gets +5 bonus pts for finishing the round.



Turn 2 – Player B Starts

Time Elapsed	Player	Action	Time Spoken	Buzzer ?	Valid?	Notes
0s–60s	B	Speaks uninterrupted	60 sec	None	-	B gets +60 time pts, +30 bonus pts



Turn 3 – Player C Starts

Time Elapsed	Player	Action	Time Spoken	Buzzer?	Valid?	Notes
0s–10s	C	Starts topic	10 sec	Buzzer by D @10s	✗ Invalid	C continues, D loses 3 points
10s–60s	C	Continues	50 sec	None	-	C completes uninterrupted 60 sec → +60 time pts, +30 bonus pts



Turn 4 – Player D Starts

Time Elapsed	Player	Action	Time Spoken	Buzzer?	Valid?	Notes
0s–8s	D	Starts topic	8 sec	Buzzer by A @8s	✓	D spoke <10s → 0 pts
8s–60s	A	Finishes round	52 sec	None	-	A earns +52 time pts, +20 bonus pts



Final Score Summary

Player	Time Spoken (sec)	Time Points	Bonus Points	Deductions	Judges Score	Total
A	52 + 20	72	20	0	75+25	172
B	60	60	30	0	90	180
C	35+60	90	30	0	20+70	185
D	0	0	5 pts	-3	20	22



Final Standings



1st Place – Player C – 185 Points



2nd Place – Player B – 180 Points



3rd Place – Player A – 172 Points



4th Place – Player D – 22 Points

Challenging Other Players with Buzzer

What are Valid Challenges?

- Use of Non-telugu words: Players should only use Telugu words unless Telugu equivalents do not exist. For example, “daddy” is used for “నాన్న”. President of America = అమెరికా అధ్యక్షుడు , President of India = భారత రాష్ట్రపతి
- Dialects (మాండలికాలు) and accents (యాసలు) are perfectly acceptable.
- Pause for a noticeable period of time (e.g. 3 seconds or more)
- Going off topic: If the speaker tries to speak off-topic for 2 or more sentences. Ex: “పర్యావరణాన్ని రక్షించేలాగా దీపావళి పండుగ ఎలా జరుపుకోవాలి?” Talking about how the player celebrated దీపావళి is off-topic.
- Reciting Prepared Content: If speaker simply recites prepared content. E.g. పద్యాలు, ఏకపాత్రాభినయాలు, సినిమా dialogues, పాటలు సంస్కృత శ్లోకాలు etc. These are just examples; any similar prepared content can be considered a valid objection. Judges may stop a player for using more than one line of పద్యం, పాట, సినిమా సంభాషణ. The next player in the sequence will get the chance.
- **Repetition:** If a player keeps saying the same thing over and over without adding new information, another player can challenge that player. For example, if a speaker talks about an animal and keeps repeating that it has four legs, without sharing anything new, you can

challenge that speaker. Similarly, if you get the chance and you say the same thing again without giving extra details, you can be challenged.

- Word for word translations are wrong, because proper nouns should not be translated. Ex: Mother's Day should not be translated as అమ్మ దినం. అమ్మ నాలిక, లిబర్టీ స్టూపం are incorrect translations and **participants are encouraged** to challenge these words.
- Standard pronunciation of telugu/sanskrit words should be used: Ex: దీపావళి, not దీవాలి
- Errors in Telugu Grammar: Grammatical flaws beyond the areas listed below are not considered for Budatalu. **For Sisindreelu and Chirutalu, more strict rules will be observed.**
 - **Budatalu**
 - Gender / లింగాలు: E.g.; "కమల పాట పాడాడు".
 - Singular-Plural / వచనాలు: E.g.; "చాలా తేనెటీగ ఉన్నాయి"
 - Tenses / కాలాలు: E.g.; "మేము నిన్న ఆడుకుంటున్నాము"
 - Prepositions/విభక్తులు: "నేను ఆదివారం మీద వచ్చాను (I came on Sunday)"
 - **Sisindreelu, Chirutalu**
 - కృష్ణా తలమీద ఈ ఉంటుంది. . కృష్ణుడి తలమీద ఈ ఉంటుంది. (డు, ము, వు, లు) తెలుగులో రాముడు, కృష్ణుడు, శివుడు, హనుమంతుడు (హనుమాన్ కాదు) అనాలి.
 - నా అమ్మ పేరు లలిత తప్పు. మా అమ్మ పేరు లలిత.

Invalid Challenges (3 Points deducted for these challenges)

- Commonly-used Telugu words borrowed from other languages (e.g. సకిలీ, ఖర్చు, ఫైసలు, ఓటు, కబురు, పేక) are perfectly acceptable. **Do not press the buzzer if these words are used by another player.** Your challenge will be deemed invalid and you will lose 3 points. It is impossible to give the entire list [here](#).

Tips to prepare

- See the Participant & Parent Guide for ఒనిమా document.