2025-26 Opening Ceremony Script

Estimated Full Length: 30 minutes

**Opening Ceremony Script Instructions:**

This script has been written to include all the information you need to host your opening ceremony at your event. Please utilize the sections that are useful for your event. It is recommended that the emcee summarize key components of each section of dialogue on a notecard instead of reading directly from this script to improve and personalize delivery and flow.

**Scoring System Automation:**

* This script is provided for reference, but events are strongly encouraged to learn to use the built-in script in the scoring system.
* The scoring system will auto-populate known information.
* This script is available when logged into the Emcee role in the scoring system.

**Videos:**

* Video assets can be downloaded from [Google Drive](https://ftc-resources.firstinspires.org/ftc/event/videos) (public access).
* You must play the RTX welcome video if you have video playing capabilities at your event.

**Alumni Recognition:**

If any speakers are also *FIRST* Alumni, include that in their introduction.

**Key:**

**[Green Highlight]** – If using the scoring system script feature, data will automatically be filled in

**[Yellow Highlight]** – User must fill-in data based on their event information

**(Action)** – Indicates an action or non-verbal interaction

**(Blue Highlight)** – This indicates a transition from between Ceremony and Matches

| **Speaker** | **Dialogue** | **Blocking Notes** |
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| Program Delivery Partner or Event Director | Good morning ***[Insert name of locale]****!* Welcome to the ***[Insert name of Event]*** I’m the ***[insert FIRST® Tech Challenge title here]*** *and my name is* ***[insert name]****.*  *[If Program Delivery Partner or Event Director is not speaking at the start of your event, Game Announcer or another volunteer introduce Emcee]*  Good morning ***[Insert name of locale]****!* Please welcome your Emcee, ***[insert name]***  ***[****Emcee then delivers the dialogue below].* | Program Delivery Partner or Event Director comes to stage. |
| Program Delivery Partner or Event Director | Welcome to DECODE presented by RTX, part of the *FIRST* AGE season presented by Qualcomm.  ***[local remarks]***  *FIRST* is a global robotics community preparing young people for the future. *FIRST* engages students in grades pre-K through 12 in our suite of STEM programs, *FIRST* LEGO League, *FIRST* Robotics Competition, and of course, *FIRST* Tech Challenge.  *FIRST* Tech Challenge started in 2005 and we’ve grown to more than 8,000 teams in more than 55 countries. By joining us today, you are a part of this movement! All of you are helping make this program possible for the next generation of innovators. Thank you! |  |
| Emcee | Thank you so much, ***[insert name]***! We’re in for such a fun day together. I can’t wait to see how everything comes together—these ***[XX]*** teams have been working so hard to design and build their robots for this year’s challenge: DECODE.  We are so excited to have you here. Let’s welcome all of the students we have competing here today: ***[local roll call if relevant: shout out different events teams qualified from, regions, districts, states, or countries if relevant]*** | Emcee comes forward from off stage |

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| Emcee | This season, students will step into the world of archaeology—uncovering stories hidden in artifacts, tools, and discoveries. Our students will dig deeper using STEM skills and creativity as they design, build, program, and drive their robots. Together, they’ll take on thrilling head-to-head challenges inspired by the science of discovery. |  |
| Emcee | And of course, a huge shout-out to our season sponsor, RTX. They’ve put together a special welcome message for all of you, so let’s check it out!  ***(RTX Video)***  Thank you, RTX, for your support of *FIRST* Tech Challenge this season! | Play <RTX Event Welcome Video>, 2:31 minutes |
| Emcee | Being part of *FIRST* doesn’t end when you graduate. As alumni, you’ll always have a place in this community—with chances to volunteer, make new friends, connect with professionals, and keep shaping the future. Volunteering at events, any *FIRST* event, is a great way to stay involved after high school! There are ***[X]*** *FIRST* Tech Challenge events in our region each year that can always use more volunteers!  Let’s take a moment to recognize the *FIRST* Alumni who are here today, giving back as volunteers and mentors. Please stand or wave so we can thank you! Learn more about all of the ways to make the most of your *FIRST* experience at firstinspires.org/alumni. | Lead applause |
| Emcee | For some of you, DECODE may be your final season as a student in *FIRST*. For those of you in your final year of high school, you’re becoming *FIRST* Alumni, and we can’t wait to see how you’ll stay connected and inspire the next generation.  All of our students in their final season, please also stand to be recognized. | Emcee leads applause |

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| Emcee | **(OPTIONAL: If distributing ALUMNI HANDBOOKS and/or ALUMNI PINS)**  To help you on the next steps in your journey, please visit **[*insert pit admin or other location where ALUMNI HANDBOOKS and/or ALUMNI PINS are being held*]**  to collect your alumni handbook full of information and tips on leveraging your *FIRST* experience on your career journey. |  |
| Emcee | **(OPTIONAL:Future Alumni photo details)**  If you are graduating this year, please join us to take a future *FIRST* Alumni group photo at **[*time and location of the group picture, pick a time teams will be available like lunch*]** | If you have alumni consent, share photo on social media and tag *FIRST* Headquarters (@ftcteams, @FIRSTofficial) |
| Emcee | I want to take a moment to recognize and thank all the parents, coaches, mentors and volunteers who help make this event possible. Students, please make it loud for everyone who supported your journey here!  We also ask all of you today to honor the *FIRST* ethos, *Gracious Professionalism®*. This means doing your best work, and at the same time, respecting and valuing the other students, teams and volunteers here.  And who better to help explain this core value of *FIRST*, than our program leaders, *FIRST* Alumni Rachel Moore and Collin Fultz.  ***(Play GP Video)*** | Lead applause  Play <GP Video>, 2:53 minutes |
| Emcee | **(OPTIONAL: *Guest Speakers*)**  Before we dig into our matches today, we have a few guests who’d like to share a message with you. Please give a warm *FIRST* Tech Challenge welcome to ***[insert Guest Speaker, title and name]****.* |  |
| Guest Speaker | ***[Guest Speaker comments]*** | Guest Speaker comes forward. |
| Emcee | Next, it’s my pleasure to introduce ***[insert Guest Speaker title and name]****.* | Guest Speaker comes forward as previous speaker returns to seat. |
| Guest Speaker | ***[Guest Speaker comments]*** |  |
| Emcee | Each year, *FIRST* Tech Challenge creates a new and challenging game for teams to learn and compete in. Teams will investigate the power of the world’s artifacts and unlock mysteries in the 2025-2026 DECODE presented by RTX season!  If you’re watching DECODE for the first time, here’s a quick summary of how our game works:  ***(Play DECODE Game Animation)*** | Play <DECODE Game Animation>, 3:39 minutes |
| Emcee | **(OPTIONAL, Judges are not often available at this time)**  Now I’d like to recognize some volunteers who helped make today happen.  First, let’s recognize our Judges. These individuals have the difficult job of singling out the best of the best from today’s teams. They’ve already been busy this morning, interviewing teams and reviewing team information. They’ll be in the pits, watching matches and then deliberating later today.  We look forward to seeing the outcome of their hard work at the Playoff and Awards Ceremony this afternoon. Let’s give them a big round of applause for their dedication! | Enter Judges/or Judges wave  Applause  Exit Judges |
| Emcee | Next, I’d like to introduce you to the *FIRST* Technical Advisors, or FTAs, Control System Advisors, and Robot Inspectors.  Our technical volunteers know the ins-and-outs of the robot control system we use to run this competition and are key to keeping the event moving smoothly. They ensure the robots are running properly on the field. Thank you! | Enter technical volunteers/or technical volunteers wave  Applause  Exit technical volunteers |
| Emcee | And finally, I’d like to introduce our Referees.  Our Referees have the difficult job of ensuring everyone is playing by the rules. As in all sports, their rulings are final and there will be no re-runs or video re-plays. Please help us stick to the schedule by respecting their decisions and directing questions to the question box, which is located ***[insert location of question box]****.* Thank you Referees! | Enter Referees  Applause  Exit Referees |

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| Emcee | Speaking of *Gracious Professionalism*, we’re excited to celebrate and announce our Compass Award nominees today at our welcome ceremony. We’ll celebrate the winner of the Compass Award during our Playoffs and Award Ceremony.  Congratulations to all of the adult coaches and mentors nominated by their teams. | **Optional** -Compass Award  Show slide of Compass Award nominees from scoring system |
| Emcee | **(OPTIONAL) Dean’s List Semi-Finalists**  *FIRST* Dean’s List Finalists are outstanding student leaders whose passion for and effectiveness at embodying *FIRST* ideals is exemplary. These students were nominated by their teams for their direct contributions and impact on others. Congratulations to all of the Dean’s List Semi-Finalists here nominated by their teams.  *FIRST* Dean’s List Semi-Finalists, recognized here today, will be considered within their state/region for the two spots as Dean’s List Finalists.  Please stand or wave to be recognized. Congratulations:  ***[insert Dean’s List nominations***] | **Optional** - If an event has Dean’s List Semi-Finalists, recognize them with the following  Show slide of Dean’s List Award nominees from scoring system |
| Emcee | ***(Please adjust the following schedule wording to apply to your event)***  Here’s how today will roll out: In just a few moments, qualification matches kick off! After that, we’ll head into alliance selection, where our top-ranked teams will choose their partners for this afternoon’s playoffs.  During the playoffs, we’ll also celebrate with awards—wrapping up with our Event Winner Awards and, of course, the Inspire Award! It’s going to be an exciting day from start to finish. |  |
| Emcee | Before we get started, let’s all take a moment to be mindful about safety. I want to draw attention to the emergency exits ***(point to exits and add any other venue features, like tornado shelters)****.* If you hear an alarm, please evacuate to your nearest emergency exit. Make a plan with your team about what you’ll do and where you’ll regroup in case of an emergency.  Fire extinguishers are located at ***(describe location)*** and the first aid station is located **[*insert location, and call out AED location if available]****.*  Keeping us safe is everyone’s responsibility, so during the course of this event please help us keep walkways and exits clear and if you see something unsafe, like a tripping hazard or a spill, please correct the issue immediately or ask Pit Admin located [***insert location]*** for help.  In addition to physical safety, let’s also talk about emotional or psychological safety. Everyone here deserves to have a safe, nurturing, and fun experience.  We are a community who looks out for each other so if you see someone who might be struggling, please check in with them and see how you can help.  Thank you for helping us make this a safe and enjoyable event for all! | Identify the location of exists and other safety elements before presenting. |
| Emcee | **(Optional)**  Before we begin the matches, please rise for the playing/singing of our National Anthem. | **Optional:** Play National Anthem |
| Emcee | Teams, are you ready to dig in to DECODE?  Teams in the first match, please take the field as we get ready to start the day with match number one of the 2025-2026 *FIRST* Tech Challenge season here in ***[insert name of locale]****.*  Good luck to all the day’s competitors! | Play music to keep energy up while teams set up on the field and team introductions begin. |
| Emcee | ***(if using a Game Announcer, introduce him/her before beginning first introduction)***  The other voice you’ll be hearing today is our Game Announcer, please welcome **[Insert Name]**. | Applause |
| Emcee / GA | Okay, let’s meet the Teams…  ***(Emcee and Game Announcer begin Team introduction and start of Match play protocol)*** |  |