



4KA-04PO  
Kentucky 4-H Communications Program

# 4-H Speeches



## Preparing you for your future!

Do you like to speak in front of a group? Have you ever had to make a speech in your classroom? Would you like to learn the skills and gain the confidence to be an outstanding public speaker? Then you should participate in the Kentucky 4-H Communications Program! 4-H members can learn how to prepare and present a speech on any topic they feel passionate about.

### What is a speech?

A **speech** or talk is 3 to 5 minutes long for junior 4-H members (9-13 years old) and 5 to 7 minutes for senior 4-H members (14-18 years old). No visual aids may be used.

### Preparation

The following steps will help you prepare to give a speech or demonstration.

- **Choose a topic.** Find a subject that you know something about or that is of interest to you. Make sure your topic is not too broad.
- **Select a Title.** Think of a title that relates to the subject and is catchy, original and short. It should suggest the subject without telling the whole story.
- **Collect information.** Think about what you already know about your topic. What examples do you know that will illustrate your speech or demonstration? Is there a poem, a song, or a joke that you can use to make a point clear? Why is the topic important?
- **Organize materials.** Separate your materials and ideas into three parts: introduction, body and conclusion. Use the **4-H Speech Guide** at the end of this publication.
  - **Introduction.** Get the attention of your audience, make them want to listen, inform them of your subject and show them how the subject concerns you. Tell a story or joke or read a quote. Tell the audience what you are going to talk about and why that topic is important to them.
  - **Body.** Select two or three main points and explain each point. Use accurate and up-to-date information. Arrange key points in logical order.

# When using gestures, try to be natural and relaxed.

- **Conclusion.** Briefly restate your main ideas. Leave your audience with an attention-grabbing statement, question or wrap-up thought.
- **Make note cards.** Do not write your entire speech on cards. Have only the main points and key words written down. Note cards should help you organize your speech but should not be a distraction.
- **Practice!** Give your speech in front of a mirror and in front of friends and family.



## Delivery

- **Eye Contact.** Look directly into the eyes of your audience during your speech. Look at people in various parts of the audience.
  - **Posture.** Stand in a comfortable position with your feet several inches apart and your back straight.
  - **Voice.** Speak loudly and clearly enough for all to hear. Try to sound conversational. Do not yell or talk too softly.
  - **Gesture.** When using gestures, try to be natural and relaxed.
  - **Emphasis.** Pause just before and after an important point. You may also change your tone of voice or step closer to the audience.
  - **Quotations.** Give full credit to your source and pause before and after so the audience knows where the quote begins and ends.
- **Notes.** Do not write your entire speech on cards. Do not read from your note cards! Refer to your cards for the main points you want to make.
  - **Attire.** Dress appropriately for your audience and topic. Costumes are *not* allowed for speeches.

## Practice, Practice, Practice!

As you practice your speech or demonstration, ask your leader, teacher or family to evaluate it using the checklist below.

- ✓ Dress clean, neat and appropriate
- ✓ Posture erect but not stiff
  - Gestures poised, and natural
  - Voice easily heard
- ✓ Voice expressive
- ✓ Introduction interesting, brief and gives purpose.
  
- ✓ Body of speech well organized in logical order
- ✓ Eye contact with the audience
- ✓ Correct grammar and vocabulary
- ✓ Notes do not distract
- ✓ Talk flows smoothly from one point to the next
- ✓ Subject matter accurate and up to date
- ✓ Suitable for age

Contact your County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development for more information on the 4-H Communications Program!



## **GENERAL RULES- State Communications Day**

1. This event includes Speeches, Demonstrations (Team and Individual) and Illustrated talks.
2. Participants can participate in one speech and one demonstration category per year.
3. State Champions may participate only in categories in which they have NOT previously won.
4. It is suggested that the speech or demonstration given by the 4-H'er be a new topic from previous years.
5. The contestant will be introduced by name and title by the room host. There will be no penalty if name and subject or title is used during the presentation.
6. A penalty of three points will be subtracted from the participant's total overall score for time errors (under/over time). The time requirement penalty will apply to the state contest, but not necessarily to county or area events. Participants will be eligible for champion placement.
7. The decisions of the judges are FINAL.

## **SPEECH SPECIFIC RULES**

1. Any youth age 9-19 (must have passed their 9th birthday but have not passed their 19th birthday as of January 1 of the current program year) may participate in the 4-H Public Speaking (Talk Program) on a county basis. SENIORS must have passed their 14th birthday but not their 19th birthday as of January 1 of the current year.
2. NOTE: AGE REQUIREMENTS: We understand that programming areas may host their event in the Fall which falls before January 1st of the current year for the State Communication's event. Please keep this in mind when certifying age on the registration form for the State Event. (i.e. youth may be age 15 in November, however, state event is not until Spring of next year, youth has a birthday Dec. 1, and is now age 16 for the state event, he/she cannot be the area representative for the 15 age category).
3. Speeches by Senior youth (14-19 age youth) must be between 5 to 7 minutes long. Speeches by Junior youth (9-13 age youth) must be between 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Senior Level: Because this is an educational learning experience, the Senior 4-H'er is expected to choose a topic, research and write their own speech. A participant may have help with practicing the speech. Junior Level: The 4-H'er may have assistance in writing and preparation based on age level.
5. No visual aids will be used in speech competitions. Costumes (special outfits) and/or electronic equipment are considered visual aids. Speakers using visual aids will receive a ribbon but will not be considered for champion placement.
6. The use of note cards/electronic notes is optional. Points will not be added or subtracted for the use of notes unless the speaker uses them in a distracting manner.
7. Dramatic readings, dramatic monologues and recitation of poems (as the entire speech) including web-based information will not be accepted. Excessive or distracting body or hand gestures are unacceptable. These distractions will be counted against participant in the scoring section

## **OBJECTIVES OF 4-H TALK PROGRAM**

The ability to speak publicly, whether a committee report or a formal speech, is essential to every 4-H members development and future.

The Kentucky Talk Meet Program is designed:

- A. To provide a practical experience which will help youth develop into capable, confident adults who can contribute constructively to their society.
  - a. To help the 4-H participant develop poise and self-confidence.
  - b. To develop understanding of the relationship of good posture and appropriate dress to acceptance of oneself by others.
  - c. To learn to identify and correct personal mannerisms which detract from effectiveness in dealing with others.
- B. To provide experiences in which 4-H participants will learn to use their voices effectively.
  - a. To develop skill in using voice properly (pitch, tone, volume, range).
  - b. To improve enunciation.
  - c. To develop skill in talking in public.
- C. To provide an opportunity for 4-H participants to develop skills in listening to, analyzing, and evaluating both their own and others spoken messages.
  - a. To develop skill in selecting and judging suitability of a message for a specific audience.
  - b. To develop skill in organizing, or in analyzing the organization of a talk.
  - c. To develop skill in summarizing ideas and arguments for maximum effectiveness.
  - d. To develop skill in introducing, developing, closing, and summarizing an idea within a fixed time limit.
  - e. To develop skill in objective listening, weighing, and evaluating their own and others' talks.

### **LIFE SKILLS**

- \*Planning/organizing
- \*Communication
- \*Sharing
- \*Critical thinking
- \*Self-motivation
- \*Self-responsibility
- \*Self-discipline



## POINTERS FOR GIVING A SPEECH

The following basic steps are most practical in developing your speech:

1. Select a subject that interests you. If you are interested in what you are talking about, your talk will be much more effective.
2. Investigate and gather necessary materials on your topic. This will help you write your talk.
3. Organize the material into an outline with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
4. After you have prepared the outline, you can begin writing the speech. It is best to write your talk word-for-word so that you know exactly what you are going to say.
5. Be sure your talk has the following ingredients:
  - a. Introduction - this part of your talk is of great importance because it determines whether the audience decides to listen or not. Introductions have these purposes:
    - i. To establish contact
    - ii. To arouse interest
    - iii. to state the subject
  - b. Body - this section of the talk contains the main part of your speech. Your basic message is found here, developed to fit the specific statement given in your introduction.
  - c. Conclusion - Performs two functions in your speech:
    - i. It summarizes.
    - ii. It brings your speech to a close.

In preparing your conclusion, make a summary of the major points in the body of your talk, and then give an appropriate closing statement.

## DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH

How you deliver your talk to the audience is very important. Here are a few helpful hints to remember.

1. Rate - how fast or slow you talk. Be sure that the audience can follow you, but don't go so slow that the audience will lose interest.
2. Intensity - refers to how loud or soft you speak. Your voice should be loud enough to be heard easily by everyone. At the same time, be careful not to shout. Remember the size of the room and how many people are in the room.
3. Fluency - talk smoothly. Know what you are going to say and avoid the use of "ah", "er", and "uh". The best way to do this is to practice.
4. Voice Expression - how you express your voice. You can say the words "beautiful", "Spring" and "exciting" *SO* that they sound that way. Use your voice to give extra meaning to key words.
5. Movement – move only when it helps your talk. Do not walk around when giving your talk. This will distract the audience. A step forward or a step backward may be used effectively.

6. Gestures - how you use your hands when speaking. These gestures should be used as aids in your talk. As with movement, the gesture should be easy, have a purpose and yet be spontaneous.
7. Facial Expression - your facial expression should reflect what you are saying in your Talk. If you are talking about something happy, look happy.
8. Eye Contact - look at your audience as a whole. Do not look at the floor or ceiling.

### THE SPEAKER AS A PERSON

The audience's opinion of you as a speaker has a profound influence on whether or not they believe what you say. Some things to remember are:

1. Stand Tall - Don't slump, or stand on one foot. Stand on both feet.
2. Dress Appropriately - your dress should be in good taste and appropriate to the occasion.
3. Physical Appearance - look neat and clean before your audience. If you present a good appearance before the audience, you have won most of the battle.





## ❁ 4-H Speech Score Sheet ❁

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CATEGORY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Write the appropriate rating in the "Score" column. Make comments to help participants identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	SCORE	COMMENTS
<b>APPEARANCE:</b> 1. Neat, well-groomed, dressed appropriately.	5	4	3	2	1		
<b>AUDIBILITY:</b> 1. Pitch, volume, speed, tone, rhythm.	5	4	3	2	1		
2. Clear pronunciation.	5	4	3	2	1		
3. Clearly heard and easy to understand.	5	4	3	2	1		
4. Enthusiastic, personality shows through.	5	4	3	2	1		
5. Speaker captures and retains audience attention.	5	4	3	2	1		
<b>EYE CONTACT AND POISE:</b> 1. Eye contact with audience.	5	4	3	2	1		
2. Gestures natural (contribute to talk).	5	4	3	2	1		
3. Posture (erect but not stiff).	5	4	3	2	1		
4. Body language exhibited by contestant desirable.	5	4	3	2	1		
5. Effective use of notes (if used; displays confidence & composure).	5	4	3	2	1		
<b>ORGANIZATION OF MATERIAL:</b> 1. Introduction gets audience attention & introduces subject.	5	4	3	2	1		
2. Main points organized.	5	4	3	2	1		
3. Flow of speech (smooth with no unnecessary pauses).	5	4	3	2	1		
4. Conclusion (short, interesting, and final).	5	4	3	2	1		
<b>GENERAL:</b> 1. Originality.	5	4	3	2	1		
2. Use of correct grammar and vocabulary.	5	4	3	2	1		
3. Information age appropriate.	5	4	3	2	1		
4. Speaker understands the content of the speech.	5	4	3	2	1		
5. Subject matter accurate and up to date.	5	4	3	2	1		

**TIME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TIME PENALTY: YES/NO** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME:** SENIOR: 5-7 min; JUNIOR: 3-5 min. Participants going over/under time will be assessed a one-time penalty of 3 points from the final, averaged score and WILL BE ELIGIBLE for a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> placing.

**SCORING:**

BLUE 100 - 80  
RED 60-79  
WHITE 59 AND BELOW

**RIBBON:**

\_\_\_\_\_ BLUE  
\_\_\_\_\_ RED  
\_\_\_\_\_ WHITE

**PLACE**

\_\_\_\_\_ CHAMPION  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>ND</sup>  
\_\_\_\_\_ 3<sup>RD</sup>

SCORE 1	
SCORE 2	
AVERAGE	
TIME PENALTY	
FINAL SCORE	

**JUDGE SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

