

# 4-H Public Speaking

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The shakers and movers of this world are the adults and youth who get their ideas across convincingly. We communicate for the purpose of sharing and exchanging thoughts, ideas, facts and impressions. This publication contains many tips to help 4-H members develop public speaking skills.

## Definitions

**Demonstration:** A presentation that shows how to complete a task. A hands-on, step-by-step, presentation which prepares the audience to complete a task. This is a "how to" presentation.

**Team Demonstration:** Two persons working together to deliver the presentation. Each person must share equally in the verbal and visual parts of the presentation.

**Illustrated Talk:** A communication which transfers information with the use of visual items and illustrations.

**Speech:** A communication in which only the spoken word and gestures are used. (No props or posters are used in 4-H public speaking contests.)

**Impromptu Speech:** An oral communication which the presenter composes and delivers without previous preparation. Only the spoken word and gestures are used.

## Developing the Speech

There are many methods people use to communicate. The following material deals with the prepared and impromptu speech.

### Selection of Topic

Many times, choosing a topic is the most difficult part of preparing a speech. These questions may help you choose a topic.

- What is the purpose of the presentation? What is the occasion?
- What are you interested in? Personal curiosity about a topic provides important energy and enthusiasm for the speaker and the audience.

- What might interest the audience? What do people talk about? How do people spend their time? What events are featured in the newspaper? Current topics are of general interest to most audiences. Keep in mind that the audience is also interested in the speaker. Try to include some personal comments on the topic to add an extra interesting touch.
- How much can you find out about the topic? It is important to choose a topic which has enough information available. Find as many facts as possible. Select the best points from a large volume of information.
- What would you like to learn about? Choose a challenging topic to explore a new area. Dig up new information. Use this opportunity to grow.
- What can you say about the topic? Write and present an original speech. If using someone else's ideas, be sure to give them credit.

### **Gathering Information**

Secure as much information on a subject as possible to make it interesting, exciting and valid. Try some of the following sources:

- newspapers
- magazines
- textbooks
- encyclopedias
- government publications
- quotations from literature
- special dictionaries
- interviews with experts in the field
- your own ideas and beliefs
- local library

### **Organizing the Speech**

Just as drivers use road maps, speakers must map out and organize their thoughts so the audience can follow topic development. This is standard design for a speech:

#### **Introduction**

First you must get the attention of the listener. Use a quote, a question, a fact or an idea. In addition, the introduction should give the audience a preview of what is to follow and the purpose of the presentation.

#### **Body**

The middle section of a speech should contain the main points of the presentation. Often this section is divided into three parts. Arrange the main points in a logical order. Support each of these main points with facts. The body builds to achieve the purposes of the speech.

The body of the speech should take approximately two-thirds of the time allotted for the presentation. The rest of the time should be divided about equally between the introduction and the summary.

## **Summary**

The final part of the speech reviews where the speaker has taken the audience in the flow of the speech. Don't present new information in the summary. The purpose of the summary is to restate the main points and then leave a memorable impression with the audience.

Write the body of the speech first. Next, write the summary. Finally write the introduction. If that sounds backwards, consider how much easier it will be to write an introduction if the body of the speech has been completed.

## **Delivery**

**Ready!** Your appearance makes an impression upon the listeners. Be well-groomed and neatly dressed. Do not wear distracting apparel. This is a time to dress your best.

**Set!** Try to look relaxed and pleasant while waiting to speak. Of course it is difficult to feel relaxed, but try to give that impression. Look at and listen to the master of ceremonies and the other speakers. Respond to what they say – laugh at their jokes and applaud their speeches. Don't use this as a time to study your notes. Don't smile at or have a private conversation with friends and family in the audience. Make a good impression on the audience; look courteous and intelligent!

**Go!** When called upon to speak, nod and smile as an acknowledgement to the master of ceremonies. Walk quickly to the speaker's stand. Pause for a moment and look at the audience. Begin the speech. Don't give the title-just begin. The master of ceremonies' introduction will have told the audience what your subject is.

## **Suggestions on Delivery**

**Eye Contact:** Look directly into the eyes of members of the audience. Don't look over their heads. Look at people in various parts of the audience.

**Posture:** Stand in a comfortable position with feet fairly close together. Don't lean on the speaker's stand, sway or be too rigid. Most of the time your hands should be relaxed at your side. Don't stick them in your pockets. Your knees will be shaking, but don't worry-the audience will never know.

**Voice:** Speak loudly enough for all to hear. This is a bit louder than usual conversation. Remember to speak a little more slowly if there is a large audience. Speak in a natural tone of voice; try to sound conversational.

**Gestures:** Don't plan a particular gesture for a particular time in the speech. It will look artificial and stilted. Instead, feel free to use gestures to emphasize main points.

**Public Address System:** If a public address system is provided, use it. If possible, practice using the microphone beforehand. If not, watch how far the other speakers are from the microphone. Speak in a conversational voice-not loudly. Stay the same distance from the microphone throughout your speech.

**Emphasis:** Some ideas and words (main ideas, names and dates) in the speech are more important than others. To emphasize these words, pause just before and after giving them, change the volume of your voice or step closer to the audience.

**The Audience:** Pay attention to the audience. If someone is straining to hear, speak more loudly. Speak directly to the audience and smile. (They want you to do a good job.)

**Notes:** Use a few note cards only if they are necessary for a more effective speech. Don't write the entire speech on cards. Write just the main ideas and key words. Hold the cards in your hands or put them on the speaker's stand. Don't attempt to hide them from the audience.

**Winding Up:** After completing the summary, stop. Don't talk about stopping-stop. However, stop naturally; don't stop abruptly. Pause at the end of the speech. Look at the audience. Give them a chance to soak up your last words. Don't say, "Thank you." The audience should thank you, the speaker. Be ready for questions after presentation. Since people cannot always hear the question asked, repeat the question for everyone. If unable to answer the question, just say so.

Smile, then turn and walk to your seat.

**Practice:** Don't let all of your hard work and preparation go to waste by poorly presenting a well researched and prepared speech. Write the speech in sufficient time for lots of practice. Try practicing in some of the following ways:

- Give the speech to family members
- Give the speech to friends
- Practice the speech in front of a mirror
- Give the speech to a tape recorder then listen to it
- Have someone videotape the speech and then review it

- Practice with a microphone

## Contest Presentation

A communication contest is an opportunity to have your presentation evaluated and to be part of a larger group of 4-H members striving to develop their best presentation skills. Presentations at contests assist 4-H members in developing some of the following life-long skills:

- Fostering positive self-concept
- Learning decision-making and responsibility for choices
- Developing an inquiring mind
- Relating to self and others
- Acquiring a concern for communities, both local and global. The results of the contest give you a measuring tool to help make improvements in future presentations. Contests also designate high achievement and lower achievement. It is important for all contestants to recognize this before entering a contest and to learn to gracefully accept winning as well as losing. Both are equally valuable learning experiences.

### 4-H Contest Time Limits

8 – 10 years old	3 – 5 minutes
11 – 13 years old	5 – 7 minutes
14 & over (by January 1)	5 – 7 minutes
	1 ½ - 3 minutes impromptu

### Impromptu Speech

The impromptu speech prepares contestants to think on their feet. Immediately following the prepared speech, contestants 14 years and older will receive a topic to review for three minutes. Following this preparation time, they will present an impromptu speech of 1 1/2-3 minutes. All contestants will receive the same impromptu topic.

All 4-H Congress Public Speaking contestants will give an impromptu speech. Participants are encouraged to keep abreast of current affairs in preparation for the impromptu speech.

### Time Scoring

Point deductions of 2 points for each 30 second interval over or under the target length will be made on the prepared speeches. Point deductions of 1 point for each 15 second interval over or under will be deducted for impromptu speeches. (See time scoring chart in Appendix A.)

### Review Evaluation Sheet

As part of the preparation for the contest, review the rules and the evaluation sheet which will be used. Find out what the judging criteria will be, and plan to meet that criteria. The 4- H public speaking evaluation form is found in Appendix B and C of this publication.

### **A Word From the Judges**

A judge has a great deal to absorb and evaluate while watching an oral presentation. The judge will be asked to give a placing as well as comments on both the strengths and suggested improvements for your presentation. Use the judge's comments to help improve your speech the next time you present it.

A judge is a volunteer who has consented to evaluate the presentations. Always keep in mind that each judge comes with a slightly different background and judges' comments and opinions may vary slightly. View this as a positive factor. It is this judgment factor that allows the 4-H member to be creative and innovative in oral presentations. If there was only one right and wrong way and all judges scored exactly the same we would soon lose the element of enjoyment created by this opportunity.

### **You're a Winner**

Everyone who gives a presentation is a winner; Regardless of the final determination of ribbon placing, those who give an oral presentation learn to find information and organize ideas, appear before groups with confidence, tell others what has been learned, and have fun interacting with other 4- H members, leaders and friends.

## Appendix A

### Time Scoring Chart

Prepared Speech 3 – 5 Minutes		Prepared Speech 5 – 7 Minutes		Impromptu Speech 1 ½ - 3 Minutes	
<i>Time</i>	<i>Deduct</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Deduct</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Deduct</i>
1:30 – 1:59	-6	3:30 – 3:59	-6	0:45 – 0:59	-3
2:00 – 2:29	-4	4:00 – 4:29	-4	1:00 – 1:14	-2
2:30 – 2:59	-2	4:30 – 4:59	-2	1:15 – 1:29	-1
3:00 – 5:00	0	5:00 – 7:00	0	1:30 – 3:00	0
5:01 – 5:30	-2	7:01 – 7:30	-2	3:01 – 3:15	-1
5:31 – 6:00	-4	7:31 – 8:00	-4	3:16 – 3:30	-2
6:01 – 6:30	-6	8:01 – 8:30	-6	3:31 – 3:45	-3

### Using the Evaluation Forms

This booklet includes two evaluation forms for 4-H public speaking contests—one for prepared speeches and one for impromptu presentations. Those under the age of 14 years are only asked to give a prepared presentation and judges should use only the form in Appendix B for scoring.

However, those 14 years and older are asked to also give a 1 ½ to 3 minute impromptu presentation. Judges use the evaluation form in Appendix C for evaluating and scoring this part of the contest.

Judges are asked to combine the scores on both cards, weighting the prepared speech as 70 percent of the final score while the impromptu presentation receives a weighting of 30 percent. Thus, the following formula should be used:

$$\left( \frac{\text{prepared points}}{\text{prepared points}} - \frac{\text{time penalty}}{\text{time penalty}} \right) \times .7 + \left( \frac{\text{impromptu points}}{\text{impromptu points}} - \frac{\text{time penalty}}{\text{time penalty}} \right) \times .3 = \text{Total Score}$$

# 2008 Montana 4-H Congress Public Speaking Contest

## PURPOSE:

To demonstrate the ability to portray confidence and effectiveness in prepared and impromptu speaking.

## RULES:

Member must have received a blue ribbon rating at the county level. Counties may nominate any number of participants. There will be more than one platform, depending upon the number of contestants. Each platform will have 8 to 10 speakers and will be judged by 2 to 3 judges. Each judge will evaluate independently and the scores from the 2 to 3 judges will be totaled for a final score. Talks should be of original material prepared by the contestant.

PREPARED SPEECH - Contestants will present a prepared speech from 5 to 7 minutes in length. This speech is timed and a penalty of 4 points will be deducted for going over or under.

IMPROMPTU SPEECH - Immediately following the prepared speech, the contestant will receive a topic to review for 3 minutes and will then present an impromptu speech of 2 to 3 minutes. This speech is timed and a penalty of 2 points will be deducted for going over or under the time.

VALUE - In scoring, the PREPARED speech will be worth 70% and the IMPROMPTU worth 30%.

Notes may be used if desired, but not over used. THERE WILL BE NO PROPS, POSTERS, OR VISUAL AIDS OF ANY TYPE USED IN THIS CONTEST!

FINALISTS - The top 2 to 4 contestants from each platform will participate in the final run-off. Names of these finalists will be posted following the morning competition. Finalists will follow the same speech format with a new set of judges. All finalists will be judged by the same judges.

There will be an orientation period for contestants so that they understand the basic rules such as timing, evaluations, etc.

When selecting a topic, consider the following:

Does it fit my capabilities, knowledge, experience, and intelligence? Can the topic be covered properly within the time allocated? Is it really me? Get all the necessary facts. Select a topic in which you are interested. Draw on your 4-H experience.

## AWARDS:

The top two winners selected from final run-off will be eligible for a trip to National 4-H Congress. Partial funding will be available for the trip. Delegates who previously received a trip to National 4-H Congress may participate in the contest, but will not receive a second trip to National 4-H Congress.

# 2008 Montana 4-H Congress Public Speaking Contest

## SCORE SHEET - Prepared Speech

Speaker \_\_\_\_\_ Ranking: Blue  Red  White

County \_\_\_\_\_ # of previous contests \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs in 4-H \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared Title \_\_\_\_\_ Time (minutes) \_\_\_\_\_ Time Penalty \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Catches audience attention  
Effective & interesting  
Establishes central idea of topic

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**Body (30)** \_\_\_\_\_/30

Material supports central idea of topic  
Ideas clearly and logically presented  
Accurate, up-to-date information  
Originality

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**Summary (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Main points of central idea summarized  
Brief and conclusive

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**Voice (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Spoke clearly and projected to audience  
Effective rate of delivery

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**Language (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Effective sentence structure, easy to understand  
Words pronounced correctly, enunciated clearly

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**Poise (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Friendly & natural  
Not dependent on notes  
Good posture, confidence exhibited

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**Stage Presence (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Effective eye contact  
Good use of gestures  
Pleasing facial expressions

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**Effect of Delivery (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Did speaker motivate a change, teach a concept?  
Kept audience interest

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Judge's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points \_\_\_\_\_/100

# 2008 Montana 4-H Congress Public Speaking Contest

## SCORE SHEET - Impromptu Speech

Impromptu Title \_\_\_\_\_ Time (minutes) \_\_\_\_\_ Time Penalty \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Catches audience attention  
Effective & interesting  
Establishes central idea of topic

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**Body (30)** \_\_\_\_\_/30

Material supports central idea of topic  
Ideas clearly and logically presented  
Accurate, up-to-date information  
Originality

---

**Summary (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Main points of central idea summarized  
Brief and conclusive

---

**Voice (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Spoke clearly and projected to audience  
Effective rate of delivery

---

**Language (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Effective sentence structure, easy to understand  
Words pronounced correctly, enunciated clearly

---

**Poise (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Friendly & natural  
Not dependent on notes  
Good posture, confidence exhibited

---

**Stage Presence (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Effective eye contact  
Good use of gestures  
Pleasing facial expressions

---

**Effect of Delivery (10)** \_\_\_\_\_/10

Did speaker motivate a change, teach a concept?  
Kept audience interest

---

Judge's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points \_\_\_\_\_/100

**Formula for calculation of total score (for those over 14 years of age)**

( \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ) x .7 + ( \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ ) x .3 = \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared Points    Time Penalty    Impromptu Points    Time Penalty    Total Score    Placing \_\_\_\_\_