



PUBLIC SPEAKING

Organizer's Guide

Reviewed 2022



CANADA
4-H Alberta

The 4-H Motto

“Learn to Do By Doing”

The 4-H Pledge

I pledge:

My **head** to clearer thinking,
My **heart** to greater loyalty,
My **hands** to larger service,
My **health** to better living,
For my club, my community,
my country, and my world.

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If you have not already done so, please order or download copies of the **Judge’s Orientation Package** from the 4-H Alberta website (<http://www.4hab.com> for each of your judges. You will also need a supply of comment, score, timer and teller sheets.

Good luck with your Communication Competition

Organizer's Checklist

Beginning of the 4-H Year:

- Select a committee and appoint a chairperson.
- Set a date that is at least 2 weeks before the next level of competition.
- Choose and confirm a facility with at least one alternate.
- Obtain Judge's Orientation Packages, Comment, Score, Placing, Time and Teller Sheets from the Provincial 4-H Office or 4-H Alberta website.

6 Weeks Before The Competition:

- Select and contact judges for prepared speeches and impromptu.
- Recruit officials and helpers.
- Recruit greeters (perhaps members) to welcome guests, distribute programs and direct speakers and judges.
- Arrange for people to set-up and clean up the event.
- Promote the event.
- Obtain 'thank-you' items.
- Ensure access to P.A. system, microphones, podium and tables.
- If providing food, arrange applicable details.

2 Weeks Before the Competition:

- Determine the speaking order and make a program.
- Prepare materials. (Judge's Packages, etc.)
- Make extra comment, score, placing, time and teller sheets.
- Confirm facility and attendance with judges, officials, helpers and greeters.

1 Week Before the Competition:

- Gather materials for the event: notepads, pencils, erasers, stop watches, calculators, water jugs (for judges), drinking glasses and tables.

Day of the Event:

- Meet with judges before the event to clarify procedures.
- Meet with speakers, emcee and timers to relay speaking order.
- Thank sponsors, judges, emcee and officials.

After the Event:

- Prepare and distribute a news release.
- Inform winners about the details of the next level of competition.

Supply List:

- ✓ Pens, Pencils and Erasers
- ✓ Calculators and Stopwatches
- ✓ Scrap Paper/Notepads
- ✓ Time Cards
- ✓ Nametags
- ✓ Food Related (napkins, forks)
- ✓ Water Jugs and Glasses
- ✓ Camera and Film
- ✓ Tables, Chairs and Podium
- ✓ Required A/V Equipment
- ✓ 4-H Resources and Materials
- ✓ Thank-You Cards/Gifts

Introduction

Welcome to the 4-H Alberta Public Speaking Organizer's Guide. This book will help you to take all the necessary steps to make your Public Speaking Competition a success. In the subsequent pages you will find the following detailed information:

- Committee Roles and Responsibilities including an activity guide that outlines responsibilities before, during and after the event and how to deal appropriately with rule violations.
- Please refer to the Public Speaking Rules and Guidelines - [Website - Resources>Downloads>- 4-H Alberta Public Speaking Rules and Guidelines](#).
- Judge's Package. Includes information on procedures members are taught, how to properly score speeches and other judging information.

Committee Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to your organizing committee every level of competition needs an adult non-member "ruling" committee (comprised of more than one person) that has authority over the competition. The committee is responsible to the club or council that empowers it, and must be familiar with 4-H public speaking procedures so that it can properly administer the competition and enforce the published rules. **It is extremely important that the committee has a thorough understanding of competition procedures and rules and situations that may arise, and act impartially and appropriately in all situations.**

The objective of 4-H public speaking is to encourage members to present in front of an audience and gain confidence and communication skills, not to come out on top. The main goal of the organizing committee is to make the contest enjoyable for everyone.

Below is an organizer's checklist to help with your planning and administration process. Please read it carefully, divide responsibilities amongst committee members and decide when each task will be completed by.

1. Select Date and Facility

The competition date and facility should be selected no less than two months in advance.

- Set the date of the competition, keeping in mind that the competitions should take place 1-2 weeks ahead of the date of the next level competition. Your club, district or regional program plan may already have a date established.
- Choose a facility suitable for the number of speakers and the anticipated audience. School gyms, libraries, churches or town halls often work well.
- Establish or obtain the event budget.
- Find out when and where the next level of competition will be held and who the contact person is.

2. Select Judges

District and regional competition organizers should select judges no less than six weeks before the competition to ensure the most qualified and experienced judges are used. Club competitions should arrange judges no less than four weeks in advance.

- Choose judges from a variety of backgrounds based on their knowledge, attitude, interests, appropriate experience, willingness to help out and ability.
- Each competition must have at least three, or multiple of three, judges. If you have more than ten speakers, select six judges (three for prepared and three for impromptu). If you have a very large club, nine judges will be needed (three for juniors, three for intermediates and three for seniors). An example program will be added (in the appendix) to clarify how judges can be configured.
- Judges must remain consistent throughout the event. For example, a judge judging a senior member's prepared speech must judge all senior prepared speeches. Different judges may be used for prepared and impromptu speeches.
- A judge may only judge any given member's prepared or impromptu speech at any level once in the same year. Judges must be impartial and should not be a member of the immediate family (including aunts, uncles and grandparents) of any of the speakers they are judging.
- Send each judge the **Judges Orientation Package** (available on the website 4hab.com or through the club order form) two weeks before the competition to ensure they are familiar with rules and guidelines as well as procedures members are taught.
- Judges must not be a member of the immediate family of any of the speakers they are judging.

3. Recruit Officials and Helpers

All officials and helpers should be arranged at least three weeks prior to the competition.

- Select the Emcee (possible candidates are past winners, senior members, or Alumni) and recruit Timers, Tellers and the Impromptu Coordinator.
- Provide officials with their "Roles and Responsibilities" sheets (provided in the book).
- Recruit people to set-up tables, chairs and equipment. Arrange for a key to be available for the person who will open the facility.
- Arrange people to provide and serve refreshments (optional).
- Recruit greeters (perhaps members) to welcome guests, distribute programs and nametags, and direct judges and speakers to competition organizers.
- Recruit a clean-up crew.

4. Promote the Event

Promote the event in the two weeks prior to the competition.

- Inform 4-H members and parents about the details of the contest.
- Write a brief press release for the newspaper in advance of the contest and ask if a reporter or photographer can attend.
- Put up posters in local stores etc.

5. Determine the speaking order

Establish the speaking order at least one week before competition to allow enough time for material preparation.

- At club contests, speakers can draw numbers at the start of the contest. For all other levels, the speaking order should be pre-determined.
- Avoid putting a speaker's prepared and impromptu speeches close together.
- If using six judges, alternating prepared and impromptu speeches can save time and will help the program run without long breaks.

6. Prepare Materials

Ensure all materials are in place in the week prior to the competition.

- Prepare and photocopy the programs. Printed programs are not necessary at club contests.
- Print or type the speakers' names and speech titles on score sheets, timer sheets and teller sheets in the order in which they will speak, and in the same order on all sheets. Speaking resources are available on the 4-H website 4hab.com to download. Resource section>public speaking
- Complete name tags (optional).
- Prepare packages containing score sheets, comment sheets, notepapers, pencils, erasers and calculators for judges. Ensure timers and tellers have correct forms. Have extra score, comment timer and teller sheets available at the competition.
- Acquire equipment and supplies such as a PA system, podium, time cards, stopwatches, pens, index cards and calculators.
- Obtain certificates and gifts if you plan on awarding these at the end of the competition.

7. Complete Competition Procedures

- Meet with judges before the competition to clarify procedures and answer questions.
- Meet with speakers, Emcee and timers to determine speaking order if it has not been pre arranged as well as which speakers wish to use time cards and microphone/podium. At this time speakers may test the P.A. system prior to the competition starting.
- Ensure judges and all officials have necessary materials and supplies.
- Enforce all rules. If a speaker is to be disqualified, wait until the end of the competition and advise the judges not to rank that speaker. Speakers should be told privately and in a professional manner that they have been disqualified, and given the reason why. Committee representatives that have a close relationship with a member or members who are participating in the competition should abstain from delivering the decision.
- Destroy score, placing and teller sheets after the competition. They should not be shown to anyone. Keep the names of the top four contestants in case the top speaker(s) is/are unable to compete at the next competition level.

8. Recognition

- Thank sponsors, judges, Emcee and officials; an inexpensive gift is optional, but appreciated. A club member should present the gift.
- Congratulate participants. An appropriate item (e.g. a certificate) can be given to recognize participation. Expensive or elaborate awards are not required. An overemphasis on "placing" might give the impression that "winning" is valued over participating.

9. Wrap up Details

Complete within one week following the competition so no details are overlooked.

- Prepare and distribute news release.
- Inform winners of the time, date and place of the next level of competition.
- Give winners' names and title of prepared and impromptu speeches to the organizers of the next level of competition. They need this information to prepare for their competition.
- Write an evaluation for next year's committee including what did and did not work, and your suggestions.

4-H Club Leaders – Responsibilities

- Ensure that a committee is selected to plan and be responsible for the competition.
- Explain the purpose of 4-H speech training to the club and organizing committee.
- Discuss the competition rules and speaker’s responsibilities with members and review organizers guide with competition organizers.
- Discuss special procedures members are taught (found in public speaking judges package). This will ensure members are familiar with the criteria they are judged on.
- Encourage speakers to select topics based on their interests, experience and knowledge level. At the senior level, members should write and deliver speeches that involve research and convey an opinion or stance on a particular issue.
- Encourage members to set personal goals and evaluate themselves against their own past performances.
- Order the necessary public speaking materials and give them to the organizing committee. All Public Speaking materials are on the website - 4hab.com

Public speaking is an individual development experience. The speaker’s own growth, measured against their own previous experience and accomplishments is the most important feature of the program.

Although the 4-H structure does identify “winners” in the competition, the primary objective is to develop strong communication skills in individual members. Confident, responsible self-expression is a goal of the communication program. Public Speaking helps members to organize and present ideas, opinions and information, in a logical and persuasive manner. They are building confidence in self-expression. They are taking responsibility for the most important skill of adult life - communication. Be sure to emphasize this point when preparing for public speaking competitions.

Note: The general club leader does not personally have to do all of this, but should ensure it is suitably delegated and covered each club year.

Speakers – Responsibilities

- Refer to **'Speaking Your Way to Success'**: A step-by-step guide to preparing speeches and presentations.
- Review competition details, and familiarize yourself with the current competition rules and judging criteria (visit www.4h.ab.ca or ask your leader for a copy of this information). Any speaker who has not followed the published rules will be disqualified.
- Select a topic based on your interests, experience and level of knowledge. You will be judged on presentation and content.
- Prepare your own speech. Copying a speech from another person, a book, or magazine is unfair and illegal. This is called plagiarism and means that you are stealing someone else's ideas and work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated at any time.
- Total quotes used must not exceed 75 actual words, not word count of a computer program. **Write down all quotes that you use and hand in prior to the competition. Credit must be given when quoting another person's work.**
 - If using quotes, it is important to inform the audience of when the quotation starts by using "quote" and ends by using "unquote". Short or well-known quotations do not need an end quote, but it is recommended for longer quotations.
- A new speech is to be written each year. It is acceptable to use a speech that you prepared for school or another organization.
- Speakers are encouraged to improve their speeches after each presentation and may write a completely different speech for each level of competition.
- Members belonging to more than one club;
 1. can do a different communications activity (i.e: speech and presentation) for each club;
 2. can do a different prepared speech in each club;
 3. can do the same prepared speech in each club BUT can only be placed and advance in the club competition that is held first. Note: the member must deliver their prepared speech in the other club's competition but will not be placed.
- No visual aids or gimmicks are to be used by speakers in competitive 4-H public speaking. Gestures are acceptable.
- A gimmick is any device or stunt used to distract the audience, such as clothing, costumes, props, singing a song, music in the background, or leading a cheer or chant.
- A gesture is a subtle, physical action that is meant to highlight or support a verbal message. It should not distract the audience.
- Audience prompting is not tolerated. Be sure to practice speaking ahead of time so that you are comfortable and confident in your delivery.
- Arrive early at the competition so you can meet with the Emcee and organizers.
- Tell the Emcee if you wish to use the podium, microphone and time cards.
- If the situation arises that you draw an impromptu topic similar to your prepared speech, avoid choosing the topic as it may lead to mark deductions.
- Thank those involved in planning the event (committee, leaders, sponsors and judges).

Master of Ceremonies – Responsibilities

- Dress appropriately for the occasion (i.e. dress pants, slacks, collared shirt, dress, etc).
- Be familiar with the public speaking rules and responsibilities of officials and speakers.
- Find out which speakers want to use the podium and microphone (if available). Move the equipment as necessary during the competition.
- Find out which speakers wish to use time cards and inform the timers.
- In your opening statement, express your appreciation for being invited. Smile, be friendly, enthusiastic, confident and poised.
- Inform and guide the audience through the program. Maintain a smooth and comfortable pace for the program.
- Introduce the officials, guests, judges and sponsors.
 - Ensure you know how to correctly pronounce the names of the people you will introduce.
 - Provide information on where each person is from and one or two interesting facts about them.
- Introduce each speaker and the speech title.
 - Introduction should be as follows: Name of speaker, speech title, name of speaker. For example, your introduction may be: “Ladies and Gentlemen, I present John Smith whose speech title is A United Country, A United Country, John Smith”.
- Watch the judges to see if they need assistance or more time.
- You may be called on to announce the winners, present awards, welcome judges to the microphone for their comments and give words and/or gifts of appreciation.

Impromptu Coordinator – Responsibilities

Prepare impromptu topics:

- Have lots of variety in the topics. Many organizers select three categories and create topics under each category. Examples of categories are: current events, 4-H, humor, pop culture (TV, books and movies) or objects.
- Ensure you have enough topics so that every competitor has a choice of three, plus a few extras.
- Topics should be matched to the age levels and competence of speakers.
- Choose topics that differ from those used in previous years.
- If coordinating topics for a competition, obtain impromptu topics from previous competitions and ensure there are no repeats.
- Eliminate any impromptu topics that duplicate prepared speeches.
- Gather all necessary supplies such as topics, blank cards, pencils and a stopwatch.
- Time the selection and preparation time for the speaker. Allow the speaker 15 seconds to choose the topic and one minute to prepare the speech.
- Inform the Emcee of the topic which the member has chosen.
- Show the audience the three choices and selected topic (optional).

If you are having trouble thinking of topics:

- Check newspapers and on-line news sources for topics on current events and popular culture.
- Ask each member and leader for two or three topics at the beginning of the year.

A suggestion for organizing impromptus:

Group three topics together on a half sheet of paper and have each member select one sheet. Use three categories to create topics from. This allows you to make sure that each member selects topics of equal difficulty. With individual slips, it is possible for members to find out what topics remain from previous speakers. Also, by the end of the competition, only the “hard” topics remain.

Timers – Responsibilities

- Ensure you have all necessary supplies such as, time cards, time sheets, stop watches and pencils prior to the start of the competition.
- Time the speeches. Start timing at the speaker’s first word.

Level	Prepared Speeches (minutes)	Impromptu Speeches (minutes)
Junior and Intermediate	3 - 5	1 - 2
Senior	4 - 6	2-3*

***1 to 2 minutes at the club level if voted on by your club**

- Use time cards as instructed (time cards should be 8x10 inches or larger). The Emcee should tell you which speakers want to use time cards. If the speaker chooses to use time cards, indicate the amount of time remaining in a speech as follows:
 - Prepared: 2 minutes, 1 minute, 30 seconds, stop.
 - Impromptu: 1 minute, 30 seconds, stop.
- Remain seated and hold the card in front of your chest for five seconds. This is to minimize any distraction to the speaker. Speakers must have the option to see their time faults.
- If possible, avoid showing time cards to judges as it may influence their scoring.
- Record times and any faults on time sheets.
- **Seniors/Intermediates** - deduct two points for every five seconds over or under the time limit (up to a maximum of 14 points for prepared and six points for impromptu). **Junior** – deduct one point for every five seconds over or under the time limit (up to a maximum of seven points for prepared and three points for impromptu). Notify judges of any time faults at the end of the competition.

Seconds Over/Under Time Limit	Prepared (points deducted)		Impromptu (points deducted)	
	Junior	Intermediate / Senior	Junior	Intermediate / Senior
1-5	1 total	2 total	1 total	2 total
6-10	2 total	4 total	2 total	4 total
11-15	3 total	6 total	3 total	6 total
16-20	4 total	8 total	3 total	6 total
21-25	5 total	10 total	3 total	6 total
26-30	6 total	12 total	3 total	6 total
31 +	7 total	14 total	3 total	6 total

- Notify judges of any time faults at the end of the competition. Judges must deduct the faults before speakers are scored and ranked.

Tellers – Responsibilities

- **Collect only the placing sheets from each judge** and ensure that they have ranked all speakers. Judges must break their own ties before tellers receive placing sheets.
- Find a quiet place to work. Two tellers should work together so they can check each other’s work.
- Calculate the final placing using the 4-H Public Speaking Teller Sheet.
- Return teller sheets to the organizing committee who will dispose of them at the end of the competition. All information on the sheets is confidential - do not discuss the results with others.

Procedure when there are three judges:

- Add the placings of the three judges together. The speaker with the **lowest total** is the first place winner.

Example: If the judges rank Kathy as 1, 5 and 2, her total rank is 8. If the judges rank Peter 2, 1 and 3, his total rank is 6. Peter will place 1st.

Speaker’s Name	Speaker’s Rankings				Total	Placing (lowest total is winner)
	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3	Total		
Kathy	1	5	2	8	2 nd	
Peter	2	1	3	6	1 st	

Procedure when there are six judges (three for the prepared, three for impromptu):

- Add the prepared speech ranks and multiply the total by three. This will give the prepared speeches three times the weighting of impromptus.
- Total the impromptu speech ranks.
- Add the prepared speech-ranking total (A) to the impromptu speech ranking total (B) to get the final rank. The speaker with the lowest final rank is the first place winner.

Example:

Speaker’s Name	Prepared Speeches					Impromptu Speeches				Final Rank (A + B)	Placing (lowest is winner)
	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3	Total	X 3 (A)	Judge #4	Judge #5	Judge #6	Total (B)		
Kathy	1	5	2	8	24	3	7	5	15	39	2 nd
Peter	2	1	3	6	18	4	5	2	11	29	1 st

4-H Public Speaking Teller Sheet

3 Judges

Speaker's Name	Speaker's Rankings				Placing (lowest is winner)
	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3	Total	

4-H Public Speaking Teller Sheet

6 Judges (3 Prepared & 3 Impromptu)

Speaker's Name	Prepared Rank					Impromptu Rank				Final Rank (A + B)	Placing (lowest is winner)
	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3	Total	X 3 (A)	Judge #4	Judge #5	Judge #6	Total (B)		

Note: When using six judges, multiply the total prepared score by three in order to properly weight the prepared speeches as they are worth 75% (150 out of 200 possible points) of each speaker's overall score.

Judge's Roles and Responsibilities

Prepare for the Competition

Read the entire **Judge's Orientation Package** to ensure you are familiar with the special procedures members are taught. Please keep in mind that these special procedures are not rules, but offer general information of what is expected. Contact a member of the organizing committee if you have questions (See the information letter on the front of the package for the name of the contact person).

- Bring a pencil, eraser and calculator to the competition. The organizing committee should provide these, but it is good to be prepared in case they don't.
- Arrive early at the competition so that you can meet with the organizers and other judges to clarify procedures.

Please note, a judge may only judge any given member's prepared or impromptu speech at any level once in the same year. For example, a judge may judge junior at the club level and intermediates at the district level, but may not judge intermediates at both the club and district levels, providing that the club is in that particular district.

Scoring and Ranking Guidelines

Competition organizers will provide 4-H score sheets for you (a sample has been included in this booklet). Each speaker gives one prepared speech and one impromptu speech. The prepared speech is marked out of a possible 150 points. The impromptu is out of a possible 50 points. The total maximum score is 200. The scores are to help you rank the speakers (first place, second place and so on). Below are some general guidelines to help you score the competitors:

- Base decisions on facts and material presented and not your own personal opinion. Be impartial.
- Evaluate each speech using the following points:
 - Did I listen? Why?
 - Did I lose my train of thought? Why?
 - Was I convinced? Why?
 - Will I remember this speech? Why?
- Use the 4-H score sheet to score and rank each speaker. The score sheet is a guide to help you evaluate each speaker and does not have to be filled in completely if you choose not to do so.
- Deduct any time faults that the timer gives you at the end of the competition. You must deduct these time faults before totaling the scores and ranking the speakers.
- Notify competition officials of any concerns you may have before you tally your scores.
- Break your own ties in ranking. (For example, you cannot have two speakers tied for third place. You must decide between the two competitors and place one as third place and one as fourth place).
- Double-check your addition and place rankings on the placing sheet. Give only your placing sheet to the tellers. Destroy your score sheet(s) and give them to the competition organizer.
- Do not converse with other judges.

4-H Public Speaking Score Sheet

Judge #

Prepared Speeches	Max Points						
Content • Topic was appropriate	5						
• Speaker included a personal viewpoint • Speech was delivered with an introduction, body and conclusion • Introduction gained attention and led into the speech • Conclusion ended the speech appropriately	30						
• Main points were clearly stated • Speaker had specifics to support or explain main points • Proper use of language	40						
Delivery • Correct pronunciation • Clear enunciation • Words easily understood • Vocal variety and emphasis • Voice natural with sincere enthusiasm, clearly heard	30						
• Maintained eye contact • Body language (gestures, expressions, body positioning) supported • Comfortable stance and movement, not distraction to the audience	30						
• Speaker maintained audience interest • Overall impression, neat in appearance • Speaker was confident, natural and relaxed	15						
Prepared Score	150						
Minus Time Faults							
Prepared Total	150						

Impromptu Speeches

Content	25						
Delivery	25						
Impromptu Score	50						
Minus time Faults							
Impromptu Total	50						

GRAND TOTAL	200						
RANKING (Judges must break their own ties)	1st, 2nd etc.						

Note: This sheet is a guide to help you with the judging process and does not have to be filled out completely. However, you must rank all the rankings onto the placing sheet. Give only the placings sheet to the teller and destroy your scoresheet **"DO NOT SHOW THIS SHEET TO ANYONE"**

4-H Public Speaking Comment Sheet

Prepared/Impromptu

(Circle one)

Name of Speaker: John Adams

Speech Title: Home on the Range

Judging Criteria	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Comments
Content					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic was appropriate 	✓				* Impressive example of how you got your entire school involved!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included a personal viewpoint • Speech was delivered with an introduction, body, and conclusion • Introduction gained attention and led into the speech • Conclusion ended the speech appropriately 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Well developed speech with a logical flow * Opening with your example as the introduction was an effective way to get the audience's attention. Well Done! * Avoid slang words unless they are required to get your point across.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main points were clearly stated • Used specifics to support or explain main points • Proper use of language 	✓	✓	✓		
Delivery:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct pronunciation • Clear enunciation • Words easily understood • Vocal variety and emphasis • Voice natural with sincere enthusiasm, clearly heard 	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Try to make each word you say obvious. Some of your words ran together when you spoke quickly. * Your voice sounds natural and confident.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained eye contact • Body language (gestures, expressions, body positioning, etc) supported points • Comfortable stance and movement, not distracting to audience • Used notes appropriately 	✓ ✓ ✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Strong voice projection to all audience members and judge's panel. *The giant green ring on your cards was distracting; both the colour and that it kept popping open. *Your sincere interest in this topic was reflected to the audience and through your speaking skills.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained audience's interest • Overall impression, neat in appearance • Confident, natural and relaxed 	✓ ✓ ✓				

Judge's Signature: Janell Fossie

Date: Jan. 1 2014



**4-H COMMUNICATION
EVENT
QUOTE/REFERENCE
SHEET**
(HAND IN AT TIME OF EVENT)

SPEAKER NAME: _____

SPEECH /PRESENTATION TITLE: _____

SPEAKER LEVEL: _____ **JR. (9-11) INT. (12-14) SR (15+)**

CLUB NAME: _____

DISTRICT:

*** QUOTES (no more than 75 words total): (must be noted here and in speech/presentation)**

REFERENCES AND SOURCES: (all must be noted here but are not necessary in speech/presentation)

SHORT DESCRIPTION & LENGTH OF EACH AUDIO/VIDEO CLIP USED (Max 30 seconds)

4-H Alberta Public Speaking Rules and Guidelines

(Reviewed September 2023)

Please note: These rules supersede the Public Speaking Organizer’s Guide and any other Public Speaking publication. Please read the following carefully. Organizing committees at each level will have an adult non-member ruling committee to ensure rules, deductions and disqualifications are adhered to.

SPEAKERS

1. Speakers must be registered 4-H members and in good standing as per 4-H Alberta.
2. Age categories (as of January 1 of the club year) are as follows:

Level	Ages	Highest Level of Competition
Junior	9-11	District or regional (depending on the region)
Intermediate	12-14	Regional
Senior	15+	Provincial

3. Each speaker must prepare a new and original (defined as having done their own research, scripting and presenting) speech each year. Speakers may modify their speech or prepare a completely different one for each level of competition.
4. Members may compete and advance in public speaking and presentations within the same club.
5. Members belonging to more than one club;
 - a. can do a different communications activity (i.e: speech and presentation) for each club;
 - b. can do a different prepared speech in each club;
 - c. can do the same prepared speech in each club BUT can only be placed and advance in the club competition that is held first. Note: the member must deliver their prepared speech in the other club's competition but will not be placed
6. If competitors wish to leave a competition early, they must receive permission from the organizing committee prior to the date of the competition. The committee’s decision as to whether they will be allowed to leave early is final.
7. Speakers must progress through each competition made available to them (e.g. club → zone/areas district → regional → provincial) before advancing to the next level. If there is no formal club competition, the speaker must still speak in front of an audience and receive feedback before advancing
8. All facts and figures used in speeches and impromptus are to be accurate.
9. If available, speakers can choose if they want to use a podium, microphone and/or time cards (use is not mandatory).
10. If using electronic cue cards, the device must be switched to “airplane mode” and not connected to Wi-Fi

TIMING

11. Speeches are timed from the first word spoken to the last word spoken. Members have the option to see their time faults on the day of the competition.

Time Limits are:

Level	Prepared Speeches (minutes)	Impromptu Speeches (minutes)
Junior and Intermediate	3-5	1-2
Senior	4-6	2-3*

***1 to 2 minutes at the club level if voted on by your club**

12. **Juniors** = 1 point will be deducted for every 5 second range over or under the time limit. A maximum of 7 points will be deducted for a prepared speech and 3 for an impromptu.
Intermediates/Seniors = 2 points will be deducted for every 5 second range over or under the time limit. A maximum of 14 points will be deducted for a prepared speech and 7 for an impromptu speech.

Seconds Over/Under Time Limit	Prepared (points deducted)		Impromptu (points deducted)	
	Junior	Intermediate / Senior	Junior	Intermediate / Senior
1-5	1 total	2 total	1 total	2 total
6-10	2 total	4 total	2 total	4 total
11-15	3 total	6 total	3 total	6 total
16-20	4 total	8 total	3 total	6 total
21-25	5 total	10 total	3 total	6 total
26-30	6 total	12 total	3 total	6 total
31 +	7 total	14 total	3 total	6 total

13. Impromptu speeches: Speakers have 15 seconds to select a topic from three choices and 1 minute to prepare. A member will not be allowed to choose a topic or prepare until the previous member has finished speaking. Organizers will request prepared speech topics so impromptus that appear similar can be removed.
14. For prepared speeches, speakers will have the option of having time cards shown at 2 minutes remaining, 1 minute remaining, 30 seconds remaining and stop. For impromptu speeches, speakers will have the option of having time cards shown at 1 minute remaining, 30 seconds remaining and stop.

JUDGING

15. Each speaker will be judged by 3 or 6 judges at a competition.
16. A judge may only judge any speaker's prepared or impromptu speech once at any level in the same year. Judges must be impartial to all speakers.
17. Judges will give speakers unbiased and constructive feedback on 4-H comment sheets.
18. Judges shall not converse during the speech/impromptu or scoring process.
19. Judges will receive the speech/impromptu time faults and penalties at the end of the competition and must record

them on their sheet. Judges will then write their placing on the ranking sheet. Judges must break their own ties prior to giving their ranking sheet to the tellers. Only the ranking sheets will be given to the teller.

20. If the tallied results end up in a tie, an impromptu speak off will be held. The tied competitors will speak on the same impromptu topic, chosen ahead of time by the organizing committee, and wait outside the speaking area until it is time for them to prepare their impromptu. This is only necessary if it affects the top four placings.
21. Judges, and/or officials should not be a member of the immediate family (including aunts, uncles and grandparents) of any of the competing speakers. If circumstances warrant the use of a family member for the role of teller, timer or impromptu coordinator it is recommended that two officials be used in that role.

DEDUCTIONS and DISQUALIFICATIONS

22. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in **disqualification**. If it is discovered at a later time that a speech is copied, the speaker(s) will forfeit any award(s) received and awarded to the next speaker
23. Speakers may not use visual aids or gimmicks. A gimmick is any device or stunt used to distract the audience, such as clothing, costumes, props, singing a song, using taped music in the background, or leading a cheer or chant (e.g. quoting a nursery rhyme or song is acceptable). Gestures are acceptable and are defined as a subtle, physical action that is meant to highlight or support a verbal message. It should not distract the audience and at no time should there be audience participation.
Deduct 3 points.
24. Prompting of any kind during the speech or impromptu will NOT be tolerated and will result in a **5 point deduction**.
25. Speakers may not give an impromptu speech on the same topic as their prepared or another member's speech who has already spoken in that competition. If one of the impromptu topics is similar they should either choose one of the alternatives, or inform the ruling committee. If a speaker speaks on the same topic, they will be required to re-do their impromptu using a single topic selected by the ruling committee.
26. Sources and/or references must be acknowledged in the 4-H Communications Event Quote/Reference Sheet. It is NOT necessary to note them in the context of your speech. A Quote/Reference Sheet must be handed in at every level of communication events. Not handing in the quote sheet will result in a **5 point deduction**.
27. Total quotes used must not exceed 75 actual words not, word count of a computer program and need to be noted on the 4-H Communications Event Quote/Reference Sheet. Quotes must also be recognized in the context of the speech. If quotes exceed the maximum length the ruling committee will result in a **3 point deduction**.
28. Complaints regarding rule violations must be directed to the ruling committee. It will be up to the committee to make decisions regarding penalties and disqualifications. If a speaker is to be disqualified, a representative of the presentations organizing committee will advise the tellers not to place the speaker once all the speeches are given.

A disqualified individual(s) will be notified in private, accompanied by their parent(s), of the decision and provided with the reason(s). If a parent is not present then a guardian or club official must be present in their place. Disqualification should only be used as a last resort and discretion in doing so is a must. It is strongly suggested the word 'disqualification' be softened when talking to members.

4-H Alberta Provincial Communication Event (Senior Level Only)

- ❖ Finalists must prepare a new speech. Speakers will be given a general subject one to two weeks prior to the competition (emailed to them and/or posted online). Speakers must then choose a specific topic related to the general subject and write a new prepared speech.
- ❖ Speakers are required to give a 2 to 3 minute impromptu speech at the Provincial Level Competition.
- ❖ The top speaker at the 4-H Alberta Public Speaking Finals may no longer compete in any future 4-H Alberta Public Speaking Competitions; however, this person is still responsible for completing a communications activity each club year.

Appendix: A

Program Scheduling and Judging Requirements

Your program and judging requirements may vary depending on what your speakers plan on doing.

Speeches are still the most popular, but presentations are becoming more common. Adjust your program to be as efficient as possible for your judges, speakers and audience. Having an attentive emcee (i.e. watching the judges as well as lining up the next speakers) will help keep the competition moving smoothly.

Most combinations will work, as long as you maintain a multiple of 3 for your judging panel. If your competition reflects an abundance of a particular age group, factor that in for your judging requirements.

Please note that not all competitions host speeches and presentations at the same time. Therefore, disregard the need for judges that don't apply to your situation.

Prepared = Prepared Speeches

Impromptu = Impromptu Speeches

Presentations = Illustrated Talks and Demonstrations.

Small Group (Under 10 participants):

- 3 judges for prepared, impromptu and presentations (junior, intermediate and senior). OR
- 3 judges for prepared and impromptu (junior, intermediate and senior) and 3 judges for presentations (junior, intermediate and senior).

Medium Sized Group (10 to 20 participants):

- 3 judges for prepared (junior, intermediate and senior), 3 judges for impromptu (junior, intermediate and senior), 3 judges for presentations (junior, intermediate and senior).

OR

- 3 judges for prepared and impromptu (junior and intermediate), 3 judges for prepared and impromptu (senior), 3 judges for presentations.

OR

- 3 judges for prepared, impromptu and presentations (junior), 3 judges for prepared, impromptu and presentations (intermediate), 3 judges for prepared, impromptu and presentations (senior).

Large Groups (20+ participants):

- 3 judges for prepared and impromptu (junior), 3 judges for prepared and impromptu (intermediate) and 3 judges for prepared and impromptu (senior), 3 judges for presentation.

