



Virginia 4-H Contest Guide- Extemporaneous Speaking

Description of Contest

Extemporaneous Speaking challenges contestants to think quickly and prepare a speech on an assigned topic with little preparation. Participants will draw three possible topics, choose one, prepare for 15-30 minutes, and then deliver a 2-5 minute speech response.

Levels of Competition

Unit (county), District, State

Age categories are as follows, using September 30th of the 4-H year as the determining date. The exception is for national contests, in which January 1 or another date may be used. It is the contestant's responsibility to check national rules for age deadlines.

Juniors (ages 9-11)

Intermediates (ages 12-13)

Seniors (ages 14-18)

Awards to be Earned

The Danish awards system will be used at all levels of competition. Blue ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 90-100 points; red ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 75-89 points; white ribbons will be awarded to competitors earning 74 points or less.

Certain Extension districts award a purple ribbon to the highest scoring youth in the category. At the state contest, the highest scoring youth will be awarded a project medal. Youth who win the state project medal are ineligible to compete in that category in future years.

Rules for this Contest

1. Contestants will draw three topics and choose one on which to speak. The questions will be based on 4-H and life skill experiences and will not require any research.
2. Juniors and intermediates will deliver a speech response 2-3 minutes in length after up to 30 minutes of preparation. Seniors' speeches must be 3-5 minutes in length, and seniors may have up to 15 minutes to prepare their speech.
3. A room chair/facilitator will introduce each contestant. The introduction should not be part of the contestant's speech.
4. The facilitator will show at the appropriate time cards of:

- a. “1 Minute” indicating one minute of time is remaining for the maximum allowed time
 - b. “30 Seconds” indicating 30 seconds of time remaining for the maximum allowed time
 - c. “Stop” indicating time is complete and the speaker must stop speaking
5. Blank note cards, pencils, and a stopwatch will be provided by the contest facilitator. Contestants may not bring any other materials.
 6. Contestants should dress in business casual or professional attire. No costumes or props are allowed.
 7. Judges may ask questions of contestants after their speech.

Educational Resources to Help Prepare for this Contest

“Making Your Point”, University of Missouri Extension, Available:
<http://4h.missouri.edu/projects/curriculum/Y2440.pdf>

Score Sheets for this Contest

VCE Publication 380-024 (4H-259NP), “4-H Extemporaneous Speaking Score Sheet”. Available:
<http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/380/380-024/380-024.html>

Other Guidelines, Suggestions, or Pertinent Information

Each contest coordinator will determine the topics available for the contest. Sample topics include:

- What 4-H project has had the most impact on your life?
- If you were selected as President of the United States for one day, what would you do?
- Describe how your 4-H club has provided community service in your area.

Sample YouTube Videos of 4-H Youth in This Contest

None available at this time, but this is a goal for Virginia 4-H! If you are interested in creating a how-to video or posting a sample of your work, please contact your unit Extension staff who will work with the State 4-H Office.

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