
Public Speaking



District & State 4-H O-Rama
Junior & Senior 4-H'ers



According to the National Institute of Health, public speaking is the number one fear for adult Americans.¹ For youth, the opportunity to develop and master the skill of communicating effectively is valuable. “A child who can effectively communicate orally with peers or an audience is likely to be viewed in a more positive light by others and develop a stronger sense of self-worth.”²

OBJECTIVES

Participants in public speaking should gain self-esteem, enhance character development; as well as improving their critical thinking and communications skills. In addition, studies by the North Carolina State University and the Statesman Debate Institute indicate that youth engage in public speaking activities: improve academic performance; increase listening skills, gain courage to voice opinions and influence others for good; are empowered to overcome fear; and are stronger prepared for the future.³

ELIGIBILITY

Each county may enter the junior and senior county 4-H winner at the District 4-H O-Rama's. Each participant must have made at least one presentation before a major group such as civic clubs, school, or church groups, etc. The top seven (7) seniors from each District 4-H O-Rama will be eligible to compete at the Arkansas 4-H O-Rama.

OVERVIEW

Types of Speeches/Topics

Participants may speak on any topic of interest to them. Participants should select a topic that is appropriate to the standards of a 4-H event and appropriate for all ages. The speech must be an original work, written by the person giving the speech. Speeches can be informative, persuasive, or motivational.

¹ 2016 National Institute of Health Study, cited by Sherry Fishcischweiger, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, <https://currituck.ces.ncsu.edu/2018/03/public-speaking-a-vital-skill-for-all-youth/> 2018.

² Fishcischweiger, Sherry, “Public Speaking: A Vital Skill for All Youth”, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, <https://currituck.ces.ncsu.edu/2018/03/public-speaking-a-vital-skill-for-all-youth/>, 2018.

- Informative: Tells information and facts on a subject
- Persuasive: Used to change a listeners' way of thinking or to persuade that the speaker's opinion is best
- Motivational: Encourages people to join an activity, initiate a program or take some type of action

Participants should not state their name and club at the beginning of their speech, and must not elicit any questions at the end of the speech.

Research

Participants are expected to do research for their speeches, and speeches should include references to such factual information, along with personal opinion or personal experiences.

Resources

For the Public Speaking Activity, you should refer to the following publications: BU8156: Communications Express Yourself Picking Up The Pieces, BU8157: Communications Express Yourself Putting It Together Level 2 and BU8158: Communications Express Yourself The Perfect Fit Level 3.

Props

Participants are NOT allowed to use props and visual aids, including posters, power points, dry erase boards, and chalk boards.

Notes and Podium

Participants may use notes and podiums during their speeches. It should be noted that participants' use of note cards should be limited as a guide and should not be used to read their speeches.

Time Requirements

Juniors will be allowed from 2 to 5 minutes. Seniors will be allowed from 5 to 8 minutes for their speeches. A penalty of 5 points from the overall score will be assessed against participants who go under or over the required length of time.

THE RATING SHEET

Each participant is judged using the 4-H PUBLIC SPEAKING RATING SHEET, (CES-611). This form has been revised to reflect a 1-5 scale for participants -- 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest for a total possible score of 50 points. Space has also been given by each performance area for comments by the judges.

AWARDS

District 4-H O-Rama: First place junior and senior winners will receive a trophy. Second-, third-, fourth- and fifth-place winners will receive ribbons.

Arkansas 4-H O-Rama: First place winner will receive a trophy. Second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-place winners will receive ribbons.

PREPARED BY

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Note: Participation in the county and district public speaking activity may be reported in your 4-H Record Book under public speaking, citizenship, leadership, etc.

4 - H Public Speaking Score Sheet

Name of Participant _____ County _____

Scores: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Good, 3 = Fair, 2 = Poor, 1 = Weak

Composition & Organization		
CATEGORY	RATING (Circle one)	JUDGE COMMENTS
Introduction (Attention-getting, led into topic, purpose stated)	1 2 3 4 5	
Content (Main points logically sequenced, easy to follow)	1 2 3 4 5	
Comprehension (Knowledge & understanding of topic, reliable sources cited)	1 2 3 4 5	
Conclusion (Logical, supported by content, effective)	1 2 3 4 5	
Delivery & Expression		
Appearance (Grooming, dress, good posture)	1 2 3 4 5	
Voice (Appropriate vocal dynamics, clear)	1 2 3 4 5	
Eye Contact & Poise (Eye contact, body language, gestures, display confidence)	1 2 3 4 5	
Communication (Good pronunciation, grammar)	1 2 3 4 5	
Presentation (If notes used, not distracting, naturally spoken, relaxed delivery)	1 2 3 4 5	
Audience Impact (Effect on audience)	1 2 3 4 5	

<p>TIME REQUIREMENT Junior – 2 to 5 minutes 5 pts deducted from overall score, if over/under Senior – 5 to 8 minutes</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Participant Actual Time: _____</p>
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Judge: _____

Total Score: _____