

Kentucky 4-H State Communication Contest

Speech and Demonstration Contest Rules and Categories

General Rules

1. This event includes speeches and demonstrations (individual and team).
2. The age of a young person participating in the State Communication Contest is the age they are on January 1 of the program year in which the state contest is held. Age divisions include: Junior: 9-13 years old; Senior: 14-18 years old.
3. Each Area Grouping can send one participant per category.
4. The state standard is that State Communication Contest participants earn a blue ribbon at the Area Grouping level to qualify for the State Communication Contest event.
5. Participants can participate in one speech and one demonstration category per year.
6. State champions may participate only in categories in which they have NOT previously won.
7. It is suggested that the speech or demonstration given by the 4-Her be a new topic from previous years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. The decisions of the judges are FINAL.

Speech Specific Rules

11. Speeches by Senior level 4-H members must be between 5 to 7 minutes long. Speeches by Junior level 4-H members must be between 3 to 5 minutes.
12. Senior level: Because this is an educational learning experience, the Senior 4-Her 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-Her may have assistance in writing and preparation based on age level.
13. 4-H members should dress in business attire (such as dress shirt, blouse, slacks, dress pants, skirt, dress). Business attire refers to clothing to be worn in professional settings.
14. No visual aids will be used in speech competitions. Custom costumes* and/or electronic equipment (with the exception of electronic notes, see #15) are considered visual aids. Speakers using visual aids will receive a ribbon but will not be considered for champion placement. *If a 4-Her would not wear the item on a daily basis, then the item is considered a costume item and is not allowed.
15. 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. *Electronic devices such as smart phones and tablets may be used in place of notecards for any category, however, laptops are not permitted.
16. 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 will be counted against participants in the scoring section.

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Demonstration Specific Rules

17. Demonstrations should be between 5-15 minutes.
18. Participants can receive assistance while practicing their demonstration, which may involve rehearsing in front of peers, club leaders, and others. However, at the Senior level, 4-H members are expected to showcase their own original work. This includes selecting a topic, conducting research, and writing their own speech or demonstration. While the internet can be used for reference, it should not be relied upon for non-original content.
19. A participant may have help setting up their demonstration but may not have another person helping during the demonstration. Only team demonstrations may have more than one person participating. Assistance from the audience is not permitted.
20. Team demonstrations are permitted at the state level. They will follow the same rules and regulations of the single participant demonstrations. Two 4-H members will comprise a team. Each person must have a significant speaking and presentation portion. Team demonstrations will be placed in a Junior Category or a Senior Category regardless of topic. All team members must be in the same age category.
21. Weapons of any sort cannot be brought into the building or on the grounds of school or university property. This includes firearms, bullets, bows and arrows. Mockups, models, and charts must be used instead. Models cannot look like an actual gun, bow, or other firearm.
22. The use of computers and presentation equipment is only permitted in the Digital Media Presentation Demonstration Category. The use of computers or presentation equipment is not allowed in any other category. *Electronic devices such as smart phones and tablets may be used in place of notecards for any category, however, laptops are not permitted except in the Digital Media Presentation Demonstration Category.
23. Demonstrations must have a posterboard or tri-fold poster as aids during their demonstration with the exception of the Digital Media Presentation Demonstration Category.
24. Videos may not be used during presentations in any category with the exception of the Digital Media Presentation Demonstration Category.
25. Special attire or costumes are permitted when used as visual aids during demonstrations. Otherwise, 4-H members are encouraged to dress in business attire (such as dress shirt, blouse, slacks, dress pants, skirt, dress). Business attire refers to clothing to be worn in professional settings.
26. NO LIVE ANIMALS of any size are permitted.
27. Youth may participate in the individual demonstrations or choose to participate in the team demonstration category. They may NOT do both.

*Notes for State Contest:

- If judges for the same 4-H member are not within 20 points of one another's score, judges must meet and discuss scores.
- If there is a tie in a category and the judges are not able to come to a consensus, the room host will determine the winner for that category.

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Speech Categories

9-Year-Old
10-Year-Old
11-Year-Old
12-Year-Old
13-Year-Old
14-Year-Old
15-Year-Old
16-Year-Old
17–18-Year-Old

Demonstration Categories

Junior (9-13) and Senior (14-18) -Category selection should be based on the primary purpose of the demonstration. It is suggested that demonstrations that do not clearly fit into one category be modified to include information and material relative to the selected category.

CORE: AGRICULTURE

Agriculture – to include information on agriculture business and economics, aquaculture, permaculture, horticulture, and plant and soil sciences (e.g. crops, agronomy, gardening).

Animal Science – to include information on selection, care and feeding of animals, financial records, operations, and animal products for small or large animals. This also includes companion animals. (Demonstrations on horses or horse related topics can be included in this category, however, it does not qualify the participant for the State Horse Contests as this is a different event).

CORE: EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Visual Arts – to include drawing, painting, mixed media, decoupage, candle making, macramé, scrap booking, embroidery, quilting, silk screen, batik, block print, corn-shuck flowers, ceramics, jewelry making and similar topics. This category also includes demonstrations related to photography such as picture taking, composition, framing or scrapbooking.

Performing Arts – all demonstrations related to the performing arts including theatre, dance, musical instruments, and musical performance.

CORE: FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

Clothing & Textiles – to include construction, techniques, wardrobe selection and planning (color, design accessories, appropriate dress for various occasions) selection, use or care of clothing related equipment, care of clothing, posture as it relates to fit, fibers, fabrics, and textile related topics.

Family & Consumer Sciences – to include information on childcare, consumer and financial education, family life, and home environment. **THIS CATEGORY EXCLUDES CLOTHING & TEXTILES AND FOODS. THESE ARE SEPARATE CATEGORIES.**

Foods – to include preparation skills and creativity in using foods for meals and snacks (including breads). Please submit a copy of the recipe on the day of the event.

Cooperative Extension Service

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

CORE: HEALTH

Health – to include information on physical activity, bullying, substance abuse, personal development, and safety.

CORE: LEADERSHIP

Team Demonstrations – any demonstration (regardless of topic) conducted by two (2) 4-H members of the same age category (i.e. either juniors or both seniors). Each participant must have a significant speaking AND presentation role in the demonstration. Youth may participate in either the individual demonstrations OR the team demonstration category. They may NOT do both.

CORE: NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources– includes Entomology, Environment, Geology, Forestry, Soils, Water and Wildlife. This category can include science-fair type experiments related to these topics.

Shooting Sports – includes proper care and cleaning of equipment, safety, sighting alignment and shooting techniques, selecting equipment and ammunition. Weapons of any sort cannot be brought into the building or on the grounds of school or university property. This includes firearms, bullets, bows and arrows. Mockups, models, and charts must be used instead. Models cannot look like an actual gun, bow or other firearm.

CORE: SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

Science, Engineering and Technology – to include information on ATV safety, aerospace/rocketry, biotechnology, bicycle, energy, GPS/GIS, robotics, general science, and computer sciences [may NOT use computer projection equipment in place of posters]. This category can include science-fair type experiments related to these topics.

Digital Media Presentation – must include a hands-on demonstration with the use of presentation software (i.e. PowerPoint, Prezi) regardless of topic. Slides are used in lieu of poster boards. Please bring the presentation on media that can be transferred to another computer (i.e. portable drive).

Revised September 2024.

