



2026 SUPER SATURDAY

SPEECH/DEMO CONTEST Rules

Saturday, May 2nd 2026

Contest starts at 9 AM

Registration Deadline: **Sunday, April 26th**

Registration is on 4Honline: <https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in>

Sign in under the member's name and register under Events.

1. General Rules

1. Junior contestants are 8-10 years of age. Intermediate contestants are 11-13 years of age. Senior contestants must have passed their 14th birthday and must not have reached age 19 as of December 31 of the previous year.
2. The top three winners from each age division and class can compete at the state contest.
3. Exhibitor must be enrolled in 4HOnline.
4. Presentations must be directly related to 4-H projects or activities that members are enrolled in. 4-H members are asked to be sensitive to the diverse audience that attends. All materials to be presented are subject to review by the county extension office. Materials which are deemed inappropriate by the county will not be allowed to represent the county at the state contest.
5. Contest materials, including writing, must be the member's own work. If the work was not created by the 4-H member or if it was submitted as a representation of the member's work without proper acknowledgement that it was created by another, then it is considered plagiarism. **Sources must be cited. Plagiarism will result in disqualification. Direct quotes may be used and should be cited.**
6. Members may use their 4-H dogs, cats, or pocket pals that are identified in 4-H Online in their presentations. We are not able to accommodate larger animals, such as livestock or horses.
7. The only public presentation division that allows teams is Demonstration & Illustrated talk. A team shall consist of two 4-H members. Both team members may be from the same age division. If they are not, they must compete in the division of the oldest member.

Time limits are event specific. Please check the rules for each division for more details. For Demonstration and Illustrated Talks, an additional five minutes is allowed for set-up and take down.

1. Each individual and team will be expected to provide their own visual aids, props, or special equipment. The contest will provide a table, projector, screen, microphone, and easel. If contestants need more than one easel, they should bring the second easel. A podium will not be provided. A laptop will be present for presenters to use with the projector. Participants should bring their presentation on a flash drive, but are encouraged to bring their own computer to present with (along with any special adaptors) as a backup. **If you have additional special needs, please email the contest superintendent.** Early arrival on the contest day is suggested for setting up any equipment.

Cloverbuds:

Cloverbuds (5-7) may participate in the Speech and Demonstration Contest. Some examples would be to do a Speech, Poem, or even Jokes. The time limit would be **1-5 minutes**. It will be non-competitive for their division. They will receive participation ribbons.

Demonstrations & Illustrated Talk Division Rules (state fair)

Each individual and team will be expected to provide their own equipment. General equipment and supplies, such as tables, chairs will be furnished. Special equipment such as LDC projects, easels, laptops may be available but need to be requested in advance.

Each Demonstration and Illustrated Talk will be timed. All demonstrations and Illustrated Talks are limited. Juniors (8-10) 4 to 6 minutes, Intermediate (11-13) 6 to 8 minutes and Seniors (14-18) 8 to 10 minutes. An additional five minutes is allowed for set-up and take down.

Horse Demonstrations: (state conference Sr.)

Junior and Intermediate horse demonstration contestants are judged with all other demonstration contestants of their age group and follow the regular demonstration/illustrated talk rules.

Senior winners (14-18) from each county are eligible to compete at the State 4-H Conference. The subject matter must pertain to the horse industry. Demonstrations or presentations not appropriately related to the horse industry can be disqualified at the discretion of the judge. Presentations may be either of demonstration or illustrated talk format. No live animals may be used. Contestants may use notes. However, excessive use of notes may be counted against the contestant. This will be at the discretion of the judge. Creative audio-visual aids may be used, but the contestants must be involved in making or designing them.

Presentations should be **8-10 minutes** in length. One point will be deducted from the total score for each minute or fraction of a minute under 8 minutes or over 10 minutes. The time will start once the contestant(s) begin(s) to speak. Contestants should cite their major reference materials at the end of the presentation. This time will not be counted in the allotted time.

Interpretive Reading Division Rules: (state fair)

Members deliver a rendition of a piece of pre-written material. The pre-written material should be a selection from a book, poem, story, etc., and should be 4-H appropriate (See General Rules). This area is not intended for presentation of original material written by the presenter. Members may choose which selection or multiple portions of a text to present but may not change the content. Content should be cohesive and transition smoothly from one portion to the next.

During the beginning of the reading, the speaker should introduce their piece and explain the significance of the material.

Costumes and small props can be used but they need to be simple and minimal, not detracting from the strength of the presenter. Everyone will be expected to provide their own equipment. General equipment and supplies such as tables and chairs will be furnished when requested in advance of competition.

Each Interpretive Reading will be timed. Senior readings must be between 6-8 minutes in duration. Intermediate readings must be between 4-6 minutes in duration. Junior readings must be between 3-5 minutes in duration. Two points will be deducted for each 30 second over or under the time limit. Participants will be given a 30-second warning before end of time period.

Public Speaking - Prepared Speeches: (state conference)

Juniors (8 – 10) 3 to 5 minutes, Intermediates (11 – 13) 4 to 6 minutes may give a talk, recite a poem, or tell a story without visuals. Juniors and Intermediates may use notes as necessary.

Seniors (14 – 18) are to give an original speech on 4-H (6 – 8 minutes) without excessive use of notes. Excessive use of notes is determined by the judges. Seniors will have two points deducted for each 30 seconds over or under the time limit. No contestant in prepared speeches may use costumes, posters, visual aids, or props for their presentation. Contestants are not allowed to present any items to the judge. This year the top two seniors from (Douglas) are eligible to compete at State 4-H Conference.

Horse Prepared Speech: (sr. state conference)

Junior and Intermediate horse speech contestants are judged with all other speech contestants of their age group and follow the regular prepared speech rules.

Only the senior horse contestants are judged separately. The subject matter must pertain to the horse industry. Speeches not appropriately related to the horse industry can be disqualified at the discretion of the judge. No visual aids may be used, including the use of handouts such as bibliographies and pamphlets. Contestants will be disqualified for using any visual aid, including handouts, prior to, during and after the speech. Contestants may use notes. However, excessive use of notes may be counted against the contestant. This will be at the discretion of the judge.

Speeches should be **8-10 minutes** in length. One point will be deducted from the total score for each minute or fraction of a minute under 7 minutes or over 10 minutes. The time will start once the contestant begins to speak. Contestants should cite their major reference materials at the end of the competition. This time will not be counted in the allotted time.

Public Speaking - Impromptu Speaking: (state conference)

Juniors (8 – 10), Intermediates (11 – 13), and Seniors (14 – 18) will select a topic question and have 10 minutes to prepare a speech. Topic areas include personal issues, youth issues, 4-H promotion, leadership or current events. Contestants receive a pencil and note card to prepare notes. The note card is the only prop allowed during the speech.

Junior speeches are 2 to 4 minutes, Intermediate speeches are 3 to 5 minutes and Senior speeches are 3 – 5 minutes.

Seniors will have two points deducted for each 30 seconds over or under the time limit. Excessive use of notes may be counted against senior contestants and this will be at the discretion of the judges. All contestants receive a thirty-second warning before their time is up. The top two Seniors are eligible to compete at State 4-H Conference.

PRESENTATION TIP SHEET

INTRODUCTION TIPS

The introduction is a very important part of your presentation. It is your time to capture the audience's attention, and familiarize them with your topic. The introduction helps set the tone for the rest of your presentation. To help plan your introduction, you should write a purpose statement about what you want the audience to learn from your speech. You can then use this information to help you plan an appropriate introduction.

There are many ways to start a speech. Here are a few options:

- **Ask your audience a question.** This will get the audience to start thinking about your topic.
- **Tell a story.** Begin with a personal or fictional story to gain audience interest.
- **Use a starter.** Get your audience's attention by using a louder voice or making a quick move.
- **Use a quote.** Select a quote from an author, songwriter, poet, or other individual that relates to your subject.

CONCLUSION TIPS

The conclusion is your opportunity to review what you presented with the audience. Here are some tips for effective conclusions:

- Go back over the main points of your speech. Example: "Today I have told you how to _____, _____ and _____."
- No new material should be introduced at this time.
- Be brief and give the audience the feeling you are wrapping it up.
- Think about tying your conclusion to any stories, quotes, or examples you used in your introduction.
- You can challenge your audience to do something in your conclusion. Example: "I have told you about how I have picked up trash on the highway, collected recycled materials, and worked at our local homeless shelter. I challenge everyone in the audience to get involved in community service to make our community a better place to live."

GENERAL DELIVERY TIPS

Delivery is the way you use your voice and your body to present your speech. It includes things like your facial expression, appearance, voice, eye contact, gestures, and body movement. Here are some tips to help with your general delivery:

- Volume is how loud or soft your voice is. Be sure to speak at a loud enough volume so that everyone in the room can hear you.
- Pitch is your voice on a musical level, or simply the highness or lowness of your voice. Vary your pitch throughout the speech to emphasize points and add interest.
- Rate of speech, or pace, is how fast or how slow you talk. Talking at a moderate or slow pace will help the audience to better understand your presentation. You can slow down and speed up your speech to emphasize various points and phrases. Remember that nerves usually cause speakers to speed up their rate of speech on contest day. Try to combat the urge to speed through your presentation!
- Avoid using filler words such as “like” “well” “er” “ah” “um” and “you know”.
- When pronouncing words, be sure you are correct and clear.
- Gestures are movements of your body, especially your hands and head, which help express meaning. Gestures should be used to add emphasis to important parts of your speech, and should appear natural and not be distracting.
- Eye contact is an important part of connecting with your audience. Try to make eye contact with the judge, as well as people in all parts of the room.
- Use of a podium is discouraged. Instead, think about using the space you have to help advance your speech. You can use movement to show the progression of your speech. For example, you can start in the middle for your introduction, then move a few steps to the right for your first point, to the middle for your next point, and so on. Remember not to just pace the room aimlessly. Movement should have purpose and should not take away from your speech.

GENERAL APPEARANCE TIPS

Your appearance plays an important role in how you seem to the audience. Keep these tips in mind:

- Wear clothing that is clean, neat, and appropriate for your speech and age.
- Make sure your clothing and accessories are not distracting. Clothes should generally not have writing on them, and should fit you in such a way that they are not getting in the way of your hands while you present.
- Style your hair so that it will stay out of your face during your presentation.

OVERALL TIPS

- It's important to show that both you and your speech have a direction. To do this, define your purpose and keep it in mind throughout your speech.
- If your event permits visual aids, make sure they are simple, clear, and sized appropriately so that everyone in the room can read them.
- You can use notes for your event, but memorization is encouraged. If you do choose to use notes, use them minimally and unobtrusively.
- The audience must believe in you and you must believe in yourself. Confidence shows and sells.
- Remember that mistakes happen. It's okay to make a mistake. Try not to get flustered, take a deep breath, collect yourself and go right on with your presentation.