

County Public Speaking Contest



Youth will deliver a timed, prepared speech to a panel of judges.

All 1st Place winners will be eligible to advance to the Western Regional Competition (Grades 9 - 12) or the Southwest Area Sub-Regional Competition (Grades 4 - 8).

Date: January 28, 2027 @ 6pm

PRE-REGISTER BY: January 22, 2026

LOCATION: UT-TSU Shelby County Extension Office

CHECK-IN: 5pm - 5:45pm

Guidelines:

Speeches are made up of three parts: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion.

Introduction— start your speech with a question or a catchy phrase. Tell your audience what you will be speaking about.

Body— this contains the different points you'd like to talk about. You should include at least 3 points.

Conclusion— end your speech with a poem, neat fact, catchy phrase again or a related joke. Don't forget to remind them of the purpose of your speech's main topic

Rules:

Notecards may be used, but **NO** visuals of any type.

Speakers will be expected to dress **appropriately**.

Girls: Suit, dress, nice top, modest skirt or pants, hair should be pulled away from face.

Boys: Suit, khaki or dark dress slacks, button collared shirt (Polo or full button-down), tie (optional)



COUNTY PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST CONT.

4th - 8th Grade

You may choose your own topic.
Examples - "My favorite _____",
"A person you admire.", "A subject
or topic you are learning about in
school."

9th - 12th Grade

All speeches must relate in some
way to the youth's experience in
4-H as well as something learned.
It should also promote 4-H.

11th - 12th Grade

In addition to the regular 4-H
speech, 11th and 12th graders will
be expected to deliver an
extemporaneous or impromptu
speech.

TIME GUIDELINES

4th Grade: 1 - 2 minutes

5th Grade: 2 - 3 minutes

6th Grade: 3 - 4 minutes

7th + 8th Grade: 4 - 5 minutes

9th - 12th Grade: 5 - 7 minutes

Time Penalties: 5 points will be deducted for being under the minimum
time. 1 point will be deducted for every 30 seconds a speech exceeds
the maximum time limit.

Tie Breaker: To break a tie, the "Use of Language" score from the score
card will be used

COUNTY PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST CONT.

Explanation of Judging Criteria and Points

Appearance (1 – 10 points):

As the speaker approaches the lectern and throughout the presentation, is their posture good: do they stand solidly on the floor; are their clothes (does not matter whether or not they are new or fashionable) clean and pressed? Does the speaker sway from one foot to another; lean on the lectern or table; slump and show poor grooming? A perfect score for this category is 10 points.

Language (0 – 20 points):

Is it understandable, pleasing, meaningful, vivid and properly announced with proper grammar? Scores may range from 0 to 20.

Projection / Voice (0 – 10 points):

Do they make eye contact with the audience? Does the presentation have sufficient volume? Is it clear, distinct and presented with expression and enthusiasm? Does the speaker instead present a memorized or read report? Scores may range from 0 to 10.

Preparation (0 – 15 points):

Whether or not the speaker occasionally refers to notes, do they seem to be well prepared? Do they read the speech, stumble over words or thoughts, or lack preparation (whether notes or memory) to carry through the presentation? Scores may vary between 0 and 15.

Subject Matter and Composition

Organization (0 – 10 points): Does the speech stay focused on a clear theme, with ideas presented in a logical order that's easy to follow? Or does it feel scattered, with unrelated or off-topic points?

Sources (0 – 10 points): Is the information accurate, up to date, and specific enough for the time given? Has the speaker shown preparation through research or personal experience, ideally within 4-H?

Introduction, Summary and Conclusion (0 – 10 points): Does the introduction engage the audience and clearly present the topic (without formal greetings)? Does the conclusion effectively summarize key points and leave a lasting impression? Half of the score is for the intro, half for the conclusion.