

UConn 4-H Public Speaking Contest

Guidelines & General Rules

Contest Objectives:

- To acquire skills, confidence and poise in speaking to groups by the use of interesting and familiar topic areas.
- To expand topic based knowledge.
- To learn skills necessary to properly research and compile information on a specific topic.
- To learn organizational skills and ways to effectively express ideas in a logical and concise manner to a diverse audience whether in person or through electronic means.
- To evaluate skills and recognize accomplishment in a positive competitive atmosphere.
- To encourage the sharing of ideas through the use of assorted presentation tools.

Contest Age Brackets:

- **Senior** – any youth 13-18 years of age as of January 1
- **Junior** – any youth 9-12 years of age as of January 1
- **Novice** – any youth 7-8 years of age as of January 1
 - Participation only available at local/county level
 - No Novice bracket at state level contests
- **Explorer** – any youth 5-6 years of age as of January 1
 - Participation only available at local/county level
 - No Explorer bracket at state level contests
 - “Show and Tell” only – not scored or compete against others

Contest Presentation Categories:

- **Speech**
 - **Note Cards Only** – involves educating on a topic of interest without the use of visual aids, props or additional materials
- **Visual Presentation**
 - **Demonstration** – involves doing something (*making, creating, finishing, etc.*) while educating the audience through explanation of the steps being performed
 - **Illustrated Talk** – involves speaking to the audience with the aid of an illustration such as a diagram, chart, model, photo, etc.
 - **Electronic Media** – A demonstration or illustrated talk incorporating the use of electronic content such as PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.
- **Team Presentation**
 - Must compete through use of a **Visual Presentation** (*see above*) and not **Speech**
 - All members of the groups must be meaningfully involved in the presentation
 - If move onto level II (*virtual presentation*) all team members must all be in the same physical location to deliver presentation to virtual audience
 - Consult with county educator for group size limits

- All group members must be in the same age bracket to qualify beyond local/county level
 - Any mixed aged team at local/county level must compete in bracket of highest aged member of team
 - No novice/junior or junior/senior teams at level II or above

Contest Time Requirements:

- **Senior (13-18 years)** – presentation should be 5-8 minutes in length
- **Junior (9-12 years)** – presentation should be 3-5 minutes in length
- **Novice (7-8 years)** – presentation should be 3-5 minutes in length

Contest Levels

- **Level I – Local/County Contests**
 - Held through live events at the county level.
 - Coordinated by the county educator(s). Can consist of one county or include a group of counties offering a contest in partnership as a regional event.
 - All materials necessary for completion of contest should be coordinated by the local/county contest facilitator.
 - Should take place from late January to the end of February.
 - Any speaker/presenter/team 9 yrs or older who achieves a blue ribbon at the county level is invited to participate in the level II virtual state qualifier to take place in March.
 - Individuals have the option to move forward or choose not to compete further
 - List of all qualifying county level blue ribbon recipients should be submitted to the state public speaking contest team no later than March 1.
 - Blank spreadsheet will be provided to county contest facilitators.
- **Level II – State Qualifier Contest (Virtual)**
 - To take place in a **Virtual** contest via digital meeting portal (*Zoom, WebEx, etc.*)
 - Level II contests will take place in early March during the week in the evening.
 - Night 1 – Visual Presentation
 - Night 2 – Speech
 - Qualified presenters will be invited to participate by direct email invitation by members of the state public speaking contest team.
 - All virtual contests will be facilitated by members of the state public speaking contest team or their designees.
 - A waiting room will be in effect for all virtual contests
 - Participants will be invited to arrive in the waiting room 5-10 minutes prior to their assigned presentation time.
 - Presenters will be admitted to the room as it is their turn to present.
 - In the room will be the presenter, judges, room host/contest facilitator and one parent/coach who will be allowed to view the presentation
- **Level III – State Finals Contest**
 - Scheduled to take place live on the last Saturday in March in the W.B. Young Building on the UConn Storrs campus.

- The **top four** scorers from each division of the Level II contest will qualify to compete at the Level III contest.
- Individual divisions will run simultaneously in assigned rooms throughout the building.
- Opening and closing ceremonies will consist of all participants and invited guests.
- State finals winners will be invited to participate in the Northeast Presentation Festival which takes place each fall. This contest incorporates states from Maine to West Virginia.

Other Information of Importance

- The same scoring rubric will be utilized at all levels of competition. Scoring rubrics will be provided by the state public speaking contest team to all local/county contest facilitators.
- A Google spreadsheet will be provided to all local/county contest facilitators to accurately record all those moving onto greater levels of competition.
- Judges are normally the only individuals allowed to ask follow up questions during a public speaking contest at any level.
- The judges' decisions are final for all public speaking contests.
- All contest related questions should be directed to the local/county contest facilitator or state public speaking contest team.

Important Dates

- **March 15** – Visual Presentation Level II Contest
- **March 16** – Speech Level II Contest
- **March 17** – Team Level II Contest
- **March 25** – Level III State Finals at UConn Storrs campus