



## Speak-Up Alabama

Informative Public Speaking  
& Persuasive Public Speaking

Do you want to stand up for what you believe? Do you want to be able to inspire or educate people on important issues? Well, the two **Speak-Up Alabama** events are the 4-H events for you!

**Speak-Up Alabama** helps build your leadership, citizenship and communications skills. 4-H public speaking events have had a powerful impact on dozens of Alabama's civic and business leaders – lawyers, corporate presidents, ministers, political leaders and Extension staff.

- **Persuasive Public Speaking** is all about trying to change your audience's attitudes and ways of thinking. If you want youth to start exercising more, then you persuade them. If you want your community to build a skate park, then you'll need to persuade people.
- **Informative Public Speaking** is about the facts. If you think that Rosa Parks was an interesting person, then tell your audience about her. If you think that technology is changing Alabama, inform your audience about those changes.

**Speak-Up Alabama** lets you:

- Build your skills as an impressive public speaker.
- Express yourself clearly and persuasively.
- Become more aware of challenges and opportunities facing young people, families and communities.

**What You Will Learn:**

- How to choose a topic that fits your audience.
- How to research a timely and interesting subject.
- How to write an effective speech.
- How to deliver your speech before a live audience.

**Who Can Participate**

Any Alabama young person may participate in **Speak-Up Alabama** or any 4-H competitive event. However, you must be a member of an Alabama 4-H Club. It's easy and quick to join – just call or e-mail your county Alabama Cooperative Extension System Office for information (for contact information, go to [www.aces.edu/counties](http://www.aces.edu/counties)).

If you and your friends are interested, you might wish to start a 4-H Project Club that focuses on developing your public speaking and communication skills, or it might be a club that focuses on public service or building leadership skills. For more information, see **Starting a 4-H Club** ([www.Alabama4H.com](http://www.Alabama4H.com)).

**Speak-Up Alabama** is a 4-H Event. Your local Extension Office has information on local and regional **Speak-Up Alabama** events, as well as other 4-H activities.

## Levels of Competition

Look at **General Event Policy for eligibility.**

[http://www.aces.edu/fourh/docs/programs/General\\_Contest\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.aces.edu/fourh/docs/programs/General_Contest_Policy.pdf)

Check the **Alabama 4-H Age and Eligibility Chart to determine the divisions of 4-H Membership.**

[http://www.aces.edu/fourh/docs/programs/Eligibility\\_Chart.pdf](http://www.aces.edu/fourh/docs/programs/Eligibility_Chart.pdf)

## Rules for Speak Up Alabama

- Individual Entry Only. Teams are not appropriate.
- Your speech must be new and original. You cannot copy it directly from an existing speech, news article or anything that someone else has written or that you have written prior to the current 4-H year.
- Visual aids, costumes and props are not allowed.
- Speech should be age appropriate.
- Junior /Intermediate speeches must be between 3 and 5 minutes.
- Senior speeches must be between 5 and 8 minutes.
- **Participants will present the facilitator of the event 3 copies of their speech with name and county listed.**
- You may use notes, but you may not read your speech.
- Your topic must explore the challenges and opportunities of youth, family, and society.
- When you win *Persuasive Speaking* at Senior Level I, you can't compete in Level I *Persuasive Speaking* again. You can compete in *Informative Speaking* at that level.
- When you win at Senior Level II in *Persuasive Speaking*, you can't compete in *Persuasive Speaking* again. You can compete in *Informative Speaking*.
- When you win Informative Speaking at Senior Level I, you can't compete in Level I *Informative Speaking* again. You can compete in *Persuasive Speaking* at that level.
- When you win Informative Speaking at Senior Level II, you can't compete in Informative Speaking again. You can compete in *Persuasive Speaking*.

## Parents' and Volunteers' Guide

Like all 4-H projects, this activity is just for young people. It is expected that the young person create an original presentation. The role of the adult helper is to support and encourage youth in their efforts, to ask and answer questions about the project, and to help youth learn specific techniques (such as gestures and voice control) that they might use in their project.



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## **Judging Standards and Hints for Facilitators and Speakers**

Parents and adult volunteers are encouraged to assist or coach the 4-H member with the speech, but they must not write or research the speech for them.

### **Judging Standards**

Speeches will be judged on content, subject matter and presentation.

#### **A. Content:**

- How well has the speech been researched?
- Is it clear?
- Has correct grammar been used?
- Is it well organized?

#### **B. Subject Matter**

4-H'ers must speak on a topic that explores the challenges and opportunities of youth, families, and society. It must be a topic of importance and interest to an audience that includes both young people and adults from rural communities or cities and different backgrounds.

#### **C. Presentation:**

- Was your voice strong and clear?
- Have you used correct grammar and correct pronunciation?
- Did you do a good job of emphasizing words and ideas?
- Did you reference someone else's quotes or printed word?
- Did you have good posture?
- Did you display confidence in yourself and in your presentation?
- Was your speech within the time limits?

You may use notes, but you may not read your speech.

- Junior/Intermediate speeches must be between 3 and 5 minutes.
- Senior speeches must be between 5 and 8 minutes.

Three points will be taken off for every 30 seconds that you are under or over the time limit.

**4-H Regional/Area Awards** will be determined by the planning committee for that event. Notice will be sent to each county involved.

### **State Competition and Awards**

Each county may register one Senior Level I and one Senior Level II individual in each event that is offered.

On the state level, ribbons will be awarded to 50% of the participants in a contest using ordinal rankings up to a tenth place ranking. Example: If there are 10 participants, first place will receive the Alabama State Trophy and a first place ribbon; placing ribbons will be awarded for the next four ranked participants for placing of second through fifth. The other five participants will receive honorable mention ribbons.

#### **Identification of Entry**

Name(s), county and level of participation should be displayed with each entry. Information can be contained in the introduction to the speech.

#### **Disqualifications for Speak Up Alabama**

>Using props, visual aids or costumes

#### **Deductions**

>Exceeding the time limit of 3-5 minutes for Juniors/Intermediates and 5-8 minutes for Seniors.

>Not providing 3 copies of the speech.



For anyone who is in the **Operation Military Kid** this project would be an ideal way to share their experience. Choose from the cultural and heritage that your family has experienced. This can be in another state or on the other side of the world. Tell your story in an interesting and fun way. If you need suggestions, please contact the OMK Coordinator, Charlene Hines, 334-844-2294. All 4-H projects and events are open to OMK youth. For more information [www.Alabama4H.com](http://www.Alabama4H.com).

## Suggestions for 4-H'ers

### Selecting a Topic

Don't wait until the last minute to decide on a topic. Start early so that you can get ideas from books, the Internet, newspapers, and magazines. Talk over ideas with other people.

Make a list of topics you are considering. Give them the following test:

- Does the topic explore a challenge or opportunity faced by youth, families, and society?
- Am I really interested in it?
- Will I be able to find information on it?
- Can the topic be well covered in the time allowed?

Select the topic you feel will work best and begin to organize your thoughts. Limit the scope of your talk so that it can be covered in the time available.

### Organization

Your Presentation should Include:

#### **A. Introduction**

The introduction has two objectives:

- to gain your audience's attention
- to inform the audience of the purpose of your speech and let them know why they should be concerned about the subject.

To gain attention and interest, you might begin by:

- Challenging your audience with a question.
- Giving a startling statement, but not something offensive.
- Recounting a personal experience or telling a story.
- Using an appropriate poem or quote.

Be sure your opening relates to the audience and to what you are going to say.

Good speakers don't begin with "Good morning. My name is. . ." because that's not interesting. Your introduction sets the stage for the speech, so you may want to write this section last. Your introduction should take up about one-tenth of the total time of your speech.

#### **B. Body**

The body is where you support your main points, so it needs to be well organized. Limit yourself to three to five main points.

The material supporting main points may be classified into four general types: testimony, statistics, examples, and analogies.

- **Testimony:** The expression of an opinion on a topic by any person. (*John Smith says that walking an hour a day has made him healthier, happier and smarter.*)
- **Statistics:** Factual numbers provided by a university, government agency, or other reliable source (*According to the 2004 National Kids Count Data Book, Alabama ranks 47<sup>th</sup> out of the fifty states in overall child well-being.*)
- **Examples:** include personal experiences, interviews with knowledgeable people, and library resources. (*During my interview with Mayor Jones, the mayor stated that bike paths have significantly reduced traffic jams in our town.*)
- **Analogy:** A type of reasoning that suggests that if two things are alike in ways that you know about, they are probably alike in a way that you don't recognize. (*Catfish and chicken are very tasty and are good sources of protein, therefore they can both produce agricultural income.*)

#### **C. Conclusion**

The conclusion is the part that the audience will remember most. It should be no longer than your introduction (about ten percent of the total speech). It summarizes your main points and gives your audience one more chance to hear what you have to say. Your conclusion may motivate your audience to action or just provide a smooth ending. Remember that you want your speech to come to an obvious conclusion, instead of leaving the audience wondering if you have finished.

### Outline

A written outline helps you organize your thoughts. Here is a simple outline that you can change to fit your needs.

#### I. Introduction

- A. Opening phrases to get audience's attention.
- B. State subject or purpose and why the audience should be concerned.

#### II. Body

- A. Main point
- B. Main point
- C. Main point

##### 1. sub-point

- a. detail
- b. detail

##### 2. sub-point

#### III. Conclusion

- A. Summary of main points
- B. Closing statement

### Organization

Four common ways of organizing your speech are: logical, topical, spatial, and chronological.

**A. Logical:** You give the problem and then present possible solutions. (*Problem: Methamphetamine use in Alabama is destroying lives. Solution: Reduce access to some over-the-counter cold medicines used in making the drug.*)

**B. Topical:** Divide the speech into general areas which become main headings. (*The 4-H Clover represents head, hands, heart and health. Each leaf represents a personal characteristic that is important in 4-H.*)

**C. Spatial:** Use this plan when your subject involves places or objects that fit into a physical arrangement. (*When visiting the Guggenheim Museum, you are awed by the great circling stairway. Off the stairs are a series of exhibit rooms....*)

**D. Chronological:** The time order in which events took place. (*The first man in space was Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin. The first American in space was Alan Shepherd....*)

### Tips for Writing Your Speech

- Use your own words; if your speech sounds the way you normally talk, then your speech sounds more natural.
- Try not to use long sentences. They are harder to follow.
- Simplify main points so that the audience can understand and remember them.
- Use examples, stories, dialogue, or anything to help your audience visualize what you are telling them.
- Avoid phrases that are used all the time ("good as gold", "big as a house", "red as a beet") and words that are hard to pronounce.

### Before You Speak

- The audience will notice you as soon as you start to walk to the front.
- Be well-groomed and appropriately dressed.
- Be an attentive listener until it is your turn to speak.
- Rise and walk naturally to the front of the room.
- Establish eye contact with your audience and smile. Let them know that you have a friendly feeling toward them.
- Remember to breathe.
- Pause before beginning to speak. Don't hurry, and be confident.
- Still remember to breathe.
- If right-handed, stand with your right foot about one inch ahead of your left, with your feet two to four inches apart. If left-handed, reverse. This allows you to step forward easily, and keeps you steady.
- Stand straight with your arms at your sides until you are ready to gesture.
- Use good posture at all times.

## **Delivery**

Delivery is important. It includes how well you use your voice and your body.

### **A. Vocal Expression**

- **Voice Quality:** clear, steady, rich and full.
- **Force of Speaking:** volume and intensity. Your voice should vary according to what you are saying to avoid monotony. It should be pleasant and loud enough to be heard.
- **Rate of Speech:** speed at which you speak. Your rate will change with the effect you want to give. By slowing down, you can think ahead and give the audience a chance to absorb what you are saying. Pauses can be used effectively. But don't let them appear to be memory problems.
- **Enthusiasm:** You believe in your topic and you are interested in what you have to say.

### **B. Enunciation and Articulation**

- Pronounce all words so that the audience hears them.
- Look up words if you are not sure of their pronunciation.
- Most of us have a tendency to slur words together, but over-precision is undesirable, too.

### **C. Breathing**

Relax. Breathe deeply and evenly and you can overcome a little of your nervousness and feel more comfortable.

### **D. Gestures**

Your body actions tell your thoughts almost as effectively as words. How you feel is always communicated to the audience through your body language. To convey your ideas, use your whole body. Use facial expressions and direct eye contact.

You should feel that a gesture, such as a pointed finger or a clenched fist, is necessary to express your idea. Work toward a natural look as you make gestures and movements to emphasize points.

### **E. Stage Fright**

It is only natural to be fearful. You care what the audience thinks of you and everyone is looking at you. Stage fright is a physical and mental fear that causes your heart to quicken because you are breathing faster. Relax – your audience wishes you well and wants you to do a good job!

Breathe slowly and deeply, and let your muscles relax. Even professional actors worry if they are not a little nervous before going on stage. They use this tension to their advantage so they won't sound dull and listless.

You can overcome your "butterflies" by:

- **Practice! Practice! Practice!**
- **Pause before your start**
- **Be self-confident!**

As you gain experience, you will gain self-confidence. It will become easier to speak because you know that you can handle it.

### **F. Use of Notes**

Using notes is allowed, but not encouraged. If you feel you need notes, try putting your outline on a card. You can then refer to it, but not read it. Do not gesture with your cards, but don't try to hide them either. If you forget what you wanted to say next, you can refer to the main points and easily recover. Don't read from a manuscript.

### **G. Using a Microphone**

When speaking to a very large audience, you may need a microphone.

- Before the speech, check the microphone by talking into it to see if the height and volume are correct.
- Speak directly into the "mike" (About four to eight inches away is usually best) but do not lean toward it or away from it.
- Use a lapel mike if possible. This allows you to move around more.
- Don't rustle papers. Sounds will be magnified.

### **H. Acknowledging Your Sources**

When using materials written or spoken by someone else, be sure you acknowledge the source. For instance, a poem, quote, or passage from a book can be used as long as you tell who the author is. Using someone else's exact words and pretending that they are your own is called *plagiarism*.

You should also be able to back up what you say. If you state that there are 150,000 mockingbirds in Alabama, you should tell the source of your information. You want to be believable, a person to be trusted for accurate information. One of the most common faults is failing to acknowledge sources or to make statements of fact without proper evidence of research.

## Career Connections

Skills that are developed through this project have direct connections to a number of exciting and rewarding careers. Think of all the people who speak in public: Business and political leaders are often called upon to make public presentations; Educators talk in front of the classroom; Attorneys speak before the court. Entertainers, such as actors and athletes, speak before cameras or before live audiences. Extension staff speak before youth and adult audience all of the time.

## **Above and Beyond**

All 4-H projects should be taken “above and beyond” just being a short-term activity. Awards and recognition throughout Alabama 4-H are not based on how well you do in competitive events; they are based on your all-round community service, leadership, and project work.

Here are a few ideas for taking your interest in Public Speaking to a level where you can both grow as a person and have an impact on the lives of others:

- Evaluate sermons or other speeches that you hear. Keep a record of what kept you interested, what the strong points were, and what could have been improved.
- Video tape yourself presenting your speech. Discuss with your adult helper the strengths and weaknesses of your speech.
- Prepare a speech to present to a city council or community administrator requesting local funding to support the 4-H program.
- Write a catchy jingle or public service announcement for your local radio station to promote 4-H.
- Make a list of the things you can do to make a good first impression.
- Keep a record in your journal of interactions you have with other people. Did you use good eye contact? Did you listen well or interrupt? Did you smile?

- Ask someone to provide you with instructions on how to get somewhere or how to complete a task. Don't ask questions. Using only the information provided, complete the task or follow the directions. What words or phrases helped you or kept you from completing the task?
- Investigate the different types of speeches. Select one and prepare a speech to present to your club or family.
- Observe speeches and informal talks on C-SPAN or other television stations. What makes you warm-up to the speaker? What makes the speech believable?
- Get together with your friends to practice telling jokes or funny stories, just like you are “stand-up comedians.” Make a video: “*Live From 4-H!*” Include some friends who are musicians or magicians.
- Volunteer to work with younger children in your local 4-H club or an after school program to prepare and write speeches.
- Present a speech on 4-H to a school group or a civic club.
- Learn to use PowerPoint or other tools that can strengthen your speeches.

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**Speak-Up Alabama! Score Sheet**

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Event: \_\_\_ Persuasive \_\_\_ Informative

Level: \_\_\_ *Junior* (Age 9-11) \_\_\_ *Intermediate* (Age 12-13) \_\_\_ *Senior I* (Age 14-15) \_\_\_ *Senior II* (Age 16-18)

	Possible	Awarded
<b>I. Content</b>		
<b>Research.</b> Demonstrates adequate research on the topic. Cites references.	10	
<b>Clarity.</b> The presentation is understandable. The topic is clearly stated. The speech is appropriate for the category.	10	
<b>Organization.</b> The speech is organized logically and effectively.	10	
<b>II. Degree to which the speech explores the problems and opportunities of youth, families, and society.</b>		
<b>Importance and appropriateness of the issue</b>	10	
<b>III. Oral Presentation Skills</b>		
<b>Voice Clarity</b>	10	
<b>Use of Correct Grammar</b>	10	
<b>Correct Pronunciation</b>	10	
<b>Appropriate Emphasis</b>	10	
<b>Posture</b>	10	
<b>Confidence</b>	10	
<b>Total Points Awarded</b>	100	
Total time of speech: _____ MIN, _____ SEC [Limit of 3- 5 minutes for Juniors/Intermediates. Limit of 5 - 8 minutes for Seniors.] Deduct 3 points for each 30 seconds over or under limits. Deduct 5 points for not providing copies of speech.		
<b>Total Points Subtracted</b>		
<b>Total Score</b>	Possible = 100	

**Judges' Comments**

**Disqualification:** Check as appropriate  
 Using props, visual aids or costumes

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