

Alberta 4-H Public Speaking Rules and Guidelines

(September 2011 – August 2013) Revised July, 2011

Please read the following carefully. Organizing committees at each level will have an adult non-member "ruling" committee to ensure rules, deductions and disqualifications are adhered to.

NEW

Speakers

1. Speakers must be registered 4-H members and in good standing.
2. Age categories (as of January 1 of the club year) are as follows:

Level	Ages	Highest level of competition
Junior	9-11	District or regional (depending on the region)
Intermediate	12-14	Regional
Senior	15+	Provincial

3. **Speakers** must write a new and original speech (defined as having done their own research, scripting and presenting) each year. Speakers may modify their speech or write a completely different **one** for each level of competition.
4. If available, speakers can choose if they want to use a podium and/or microphone (use is not mandatory). They will have the options to see their time faults as well as use or refuse the use of time cards.

REVISED

5. Speakers belonging to more than one club;
 - a. must do a different communications activity for each club. They can choose to do two communication activities of the same type (public speaking or presentation) **but may not use the same speech or presentation in both clubs.**
 - b. can compete for prizes in each club, however, they can only advance in one club. **They must give written notice to each club leader as to which club they are competing to advance in**, a minimum two weeks before the competition.

REVISED

6. **Members may compete and advance in public speaking and presentations within the same club.**

7. If speakers wish to leave a competition early, they must receive permission from the organizing committee prior to the date of the competition. The committee's decision as to whether they will be allowed to leave early is final.
8. Speakers must progress through each competition available, before advancing to the next level. In some regions there may be additional competitions (eg. club - zone - district - regional - provincial). If there is no formal club competition, the speaker must still speak in front of an audience and receive feedback before advancing.

REVISED

9. **All facts and figures are to be accurate.**

Timing

10. Speeches will be timed from the first word spoken. Time limits are:

Level	Prepared Speeches (minutes)	Impromptu Speeches (minutes)
Junior and Intermediate	3-5	1-2
Senior	4-6	1-2*

*2 to 3 minutes at Provincial Finals and some Regional competitions

11. Intermediates/Seniors = Two points will be deducted for every five seconds over or under the time limit. A maximum of 14 points will be deducted for a prepared speech and 7 for an impromptu speech.

Juniors = One point will be deducted for every five seconds over or under the time limit. A maximum of 6 points will be deducted for a prepared speech and 3 for an impromptu.

Seconds Over Time Limit	Prepared (points deducted)		Impromptu (points deducted)	
	Junior	Intermediate / Senior	Junior	Intermediate / Senior
1-5	1	2	1	2
6-10	2	4	2	4
11-15	3	6	3	6
16-20	4	8	3	6
21-25	5	10	3	6
26-30	6	12	3	6
31 +	7	14	3	6

12. Impromptu speeches: Speakers have 15 seconds to select a topic from three choices and 1 minute to prepare. Organizers will request prepared speech topics so topics that appear similar can be removed.

Judging

13. If the tallied results end up in a tie, an impromptu speak off will be held. **This is only necessary if it affects the top four placings.** The tied competitors will speak on the same impromptu topic and wait outside the speaking area until it is time for them to prepare their presentations.
14. Each competition must have three or a multiple of three (e.g. 3, 6, 9) judges.
15. A judge may only judge any speaker's prepared or impromptu speech once at any level in the same year. **Judges must be impartial to all speakers.** Judges **should** not be a member of the immediate family (including aunts, uncles and grandparents) of any of the speakers they are judging.
16. Judges will give **CONSTRUCTIVE** feedback to speakers on comment sheets.

REVISED 17. Judges will receive the speech/impromptu time faults and penalties. Judges will then write their placing on the ranking sheet. Judges must break their own ties prior to giving their ranking sheet to the tellers. Only the ranking sheets will be given to the teller.

REVISED 18. Judges shall not converse during the speech/impromptu or scoring process.

19. **Organizers will destroy** score, placing, timer and teller sheets immediately after the competition. **Organizers will keep** the names of the top four speakers in case the top speaker(s) is/are unable to compete at the next level.

Deductions and Disqualifications

- REVISED** 20. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and **will result in disqualification. If it is discovered at a later time that a speech is copied, the speaker(s) will forfeit any award(s) presented.**
21. Sources and/or reference must be acknowledged. If a speaker fails to give reference to a source that he or she used, they will be deducted 3 points.
- REVISED** 22. Total quotes used must not exceed 75 words and **must be handed in prior to the competition.** If quotes exceed the maximum length there will be a 3 point deduction.
23. Speakers may not use visual aids or gimmicks. A gimmick is any device or stunt used to distract the audience, such as clothing, costumes, props, singing a song, using taped music in the background, or leading a cheer or chant. Gestures are acceptable and are defined as a subtle, physical action that is meant to highlight or support a verbal message. It should not distract the audience and at no time should there be audience participation.
- REVISED** 24. **Speakers may not give an impromptu speech on the same topic as their prepared. If one of the impromptu topics is similar they should either choose one of the alternatives, or inform the “ruling” committee. If a speaker speaks on the same topic, they will be required to re-do their impromptu using a single topic selected by the “ruling” committee.**
25. The “**ruling**” committee may disqualify any **speakers(s)** who have not followed the published rules. Disqualified speakers are not eligible to receive an award. If an award has already been presented, it will be forfeited to the next deserving competitor. Disqualified members will not be allowed to compete in further speaking competitions in the current club year.
- REVISED** 26. Complaints regarding rule violations must be directed to the “**ruling**” **committee**. It will be up to the committee to make a decision regarding **deductions** and disqualifications. If a speaker is to be disqualified, a representative of the competition organizing committee will advise the teller not to place the speaker once all speeches are given. The disqualified individual will be notified in private, accompanied by their parent(s), of the decision and provided with the reason(s) why. If a parent is not present then a guardian or club official must be present in their place. **Disqualifications should only be used as a last resort and discretion in doing so is a must. It is strongly suggested the word ‘disqualification’ be softened when talking to members.**

Alberta 4-H Public Speaking Finals

27. Finalists must prepare a new speech. Speakers will be given a general subject one to two weeks prior to the competition. Speakers must then chose a specific topic related to the general subject and write a prepared speech.
28. Speakers are required to give a 2 to 3 minute impromptu speech.
29. The top speaker at the Alberta 4-H Public Speaking Finals may no longer compete in any future Alberta 4-H Public Speaking Competitions; however, this person is still responsible for completing a communications activity each club year.
30. The Alberta 4-H Public speaking winner will be asked to emcee the following year’s Provincial event.