

4-H Alberta Public Speaking Rules

(September 2015 – August 2017)

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.

Speakers

1. Speakers must be registered 4-H members and in good standing as per 4-H Alberta policy.
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. Each speaker 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. Members may compete and advance in public speaking and presentations within the same club.
5. If available, speakers can choose if they want to use a podium, microphone and/or time cards (use is not mandatory). They will have the option to see their time faults on the day of the competition.
6. *Any form of cue cards is acceptable (including electronic cue cards)*
7. Speakers belonging to more than one club;
 - a. can complete a different communications activity for each club.
 - b. can complete two communication activities of the same type (public speaking or presentation) and compete for prizes in each club if their speech or presentation is different in each competition. Members can only advance to further levels of competition from one club and must give written notice to each club leader a minimum of two weeks before the competition, as to which club they are competing in to advance.
8. 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.
9. Speakers must progress through each competition made available to them (e.g. club → zone/area → district → regional → provincial) before advancing to the next level. If there is no formal club competition, the speaker must still speak in front of an audience and receive feedback before advancing.
10. All facts and figures used in speeches and impromptus are to be accurate.

Timing

11. Speeches are 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*

12. Juniors = 1 point will be deducted for every 5 second range over or under the time limit. A maximum of 7 points will be deducted for a prepared speech and 3 for an impromptu.

Intermediates/Seniors = 2 points will be deducted for every 5 second range over or under the time limit. A maximum of 14 points will be deducted for a prepared speech and 7 for an impromptu speech.

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

13. Impromptu speeches: Speakers have 15 seconds to select a topic from three choices and 1 minute to prepare. A member will not be allowed to choose a topic or prepare until the previous member has finished speaking. Organizers will request prepared speech topics so impromptus that appear similar can be removed.

Judging

14. Each speaker will be judged by 3 or 6 judges at a competition.
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.
16. Judges will give unbiased **CONSTRUCTIVE** feedback to speakers on comment sheets.
17. Judges will receive the speech/impromptu time faults and penalties at the end of the competition and must record them on their sheet. 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.
18. Judges shall not converse during the speech/impromptu or scoring process.
19. 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, chosen ahead of time by the organizing committee, and wait outside the speaking area until it is time for them to prepare their impromptu.

Deductions and Disqualifications

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) received.
21. Sources and/or references must be acknowledged. If a speaker fails to give reference to a source that he or she used, the ruling committee will deduct 3 points from the speaker.
22. Total quotes used must not exceed 75 words and must be handed in prior to the competition. Quotes must also be recognized in the context of the speech. If quotes exceed the maximum length the ruling committee will deduct 3 points from the speaker.
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 (e.g. quoting a nursery rhyme or song is acceptable). 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. Deduct 3 points.

24. Speakers may not give an impromptu speech on the same topic as their prepared or another member's speech who has already spoken in that competition. 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 received 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.
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). 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.

4-H Alberta Provincial Public Speaking Finals (senior level only)

27. Finalists must prepare a new speech. Speakers will be given a general subject one to two weeks prior to the competition (emailed to them and/or posted online). 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 4-H Alberta Public Speaking Finals may no longer compete in any future 4-H Alberta Public Speaking Competitions; however, this person is still responsible for completing a communications activity each club year.

4-H Alberta Public Speaking Guidelines

1. Judges should not be a member of the immediate family (including aunts, uncles and grandparents) of any of the speakers they are judging.
2. Organizers will destroy score, placing, 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. Speakers' times should be written on their comment sheets.
3. The 4-H Alberta provincial public speaking winner will be invited to emcee the following year's provincial event.
4. If using electronic cue cards, *device must be switched to "airplane mode" and not connected to Wi-Fi.*