

Sevier County 4-H Public Speaking



Help!! I am Giving a 4-H Speech! Tips for a Successful Speech

The local 4-H Public Speaking Contest will be held at your school during your November 4-H Club meeting. Each 4-H'er giving a speech will receive recognition and be eligible for the county contest. Check your 4-H newsletter for information about the county contest!

The following suggestions will help you with your speech:

1. **Don't panic!** Tell yourself . . . I can do this! The best speakers have "butterflies in their stomachs" too. . . they just learn how to control them. Realize the more you practice, the easier it will become. (This skill will help you for a lifetime!)
2. **Decide on a subject.** Share something you know about or an experience you've had. Do you want to inform your audience about something or do you want to motivate them to act on an issue? Feel comfortable with your topic. For your 4-H Club Meeting, next month, you may choose your own speech topic appropriate for your class.
 - For 9th - 12th graders, your speech must relate to 4-H. You may present general 4-H information on the county, state, and national level; or relate your personal 4-H involvement. The reason for this topic - if you win at the county level, you will be asked to represent Sevier County at the Regional Level. At the Regional and State level, 4-H will be judged as a major part of your speech content.
3. **Collect your thoughts.** After deciding on your topic, think about ideas connected to your topic. What are the main points you want to get across? Write down your thoughts in your own words on 5 x 7 cards or paper.
4. **Organize your thoughts.** Put your thoughts into a logical easy to easy-to-understand order. Include these three main parts in your speech:
 - Introduction - This may be a question, statement, or experience that attracts attention to your topic. Make sure your topic is known through the introduction.
 - Body - This is the main part of your speech where you present the facts about the topic.
 - Conclusion - This sums up your speech into one or two sentences. State the points you want your audience to remember.
5. **Write your speech** - on 5 x 7 note cards or paper. Do not read your speech; but, be familiar with it so you only have to glance at your notes.
6. **Time your speech** - 4th - 6th graders - 2 to 3 minutes long; 7th & 8th graders - 3 to 5 minutes long and 9th - 12th graders should not exceed 7 minutes.
7. **Practice giving your speech** - Say it in front of a mirror, your pet, your parents, and friends. Listen to their advice to improve your speech and correct mistakes.
8. Other suggestions are:
 - Eye contact - Look directly into the eyes of your audience in various areas of the room.
 - Posture - stand with feet slightly apart. Do not sway back and forth. Do not lean on the speaker stand.
 - Voice - Speak loudly enough for everyone to hear. Speak slowly and clearly and emphasize important words.
 - Notes can be used, do not read your speech.
 - Illustrations and posters are NOT recommended for a 4-H speech. It is a talk only.
 - Attend one of the Speech Workshops.

Speeches are due at your November 4-H Meeting!