

# Public Speaking Competition

The Public Speaking Contest for Edwards, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, and Wayne counties will be held on Monday, Feb. 16 at the Edwards County Farm Bureau community room in Albion, Illinois. The competition will start at 6 p.m. and is open to the public. 4-H members should be registered in FairEntry by Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026. Each county will be able to send a total of three entries from any category to the state contest. There will be up to five top placings overall awarded that night.

The State Public Speaking contest will take place on April 25, 2026 in Champaign, Illinois. **Deadline to advance youth to Public Speaking State Contest: April 8, 2026.**

## COMMUNICATIONS: PUBLIC SPEAKING

Counties may **advance a total of 3 entries** from any category to the state contest.

Enrollment in the Public Presentations project is required to participate in this section. No live animals are allowed in speeches. **Counties may advance a total of 3 speech entries from any category to the state contest.** A 4-H member may advance in one individual category and one team category. **Participating** youth turning 14 years of age on or before **September 1, 2025, must** enroll as advanced.

### Resources:

Youth looking for resources to help prepare for this contest can reference the following:

- [Finding your Voice: Public Speaking made Easy](#) (Public Speaking)
- Refer to the AI policy at [go.illinois.edu/4hai](http://go.illinois.edu/4hai) for Public Speaking specific guidance

## Formal Speech

**Self-written | Notes Allowed | No props | Individual | 4-5 minutes for beginners; 5-6 minutes for advanced**

Formal Speech - Original Beginner Ages 8-13 (SF 50501A)

Formal Speech - Original Advanced Ages 14 & Up (SF 50501B)

Formal Speeches share the presenter's own unique view and are intended to motivate, persuade, or inform an audience and may include a call to action. Youth may deliver a speech on any topic they wish.

## Illustrated Speech

**Self-written | Notes Allowed | Illustrations Required | Individual | 4-5minutes for beginners; 5-6 minutes for advanced** Illustrated Speech - Beginner Ages 8-13 (SF 50503A)

Illustrated Speech - Advanced Ages 14 & Up (SF 50503B)

Illustrated Speeches may be used to inform, persuade, or motivate the audience while using a visual aid. Visual aids may be two dimensional, three-dimensional, or digital. Youth may include audience participation. Digital visual aids must be stored on a USB flash drive. Illustrated speeches may be:

- How-to demonstrations which show the audience how to do something.
- Object lessons which use objects as metaphors to share a message.

- Educational models where drawings or diagrams help explain a topic.

## Original Works

**Self-written | Notes Allowed | Props and Costumes Allowed | Individual or 2-Person Team | Youth must provide manuscripts to judge | 4-6 minutes**

Original Works – Individual (SF 50504)

Original Works – Team (SF 50505)

Original works must be written entirely by the presenter. It may be presented as an individual or a two-person team entry. Manuscripts must brought to the contest. Presentations may be designed for TV, radio, or online media and must be presented live. The types of entries could include:

- Prose and Short Stories
- Poetry/Spoken Word
- Broadcast Media Program
- Theatrical
- Combined Program: Combine any number of the above elements along with other creative presentation forms

## Oral Interpretation

**Published Work | Props and Costumes Allowed | Individual or 2-Person Team | Youth must provide manuscripts to judge | 4-6 minutes**

Oral Interpretation – Individual (SF 50506)

Oral Interpretation – Team (SF 50507)

Presentations in Oral Interpretation must be published works, and manuscripts or transcripts must be brought to the event. They may be presented as an individual or a two-person team entry. The types of entries could include:

- Prose and Short Stories
- Poetry
- Theatrical Interpretation
- Published Speech Recitation: Excerpt from a spoken presentation delivered by a public figure, such as Winston Churchill, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or Maya Angelou
- Combined Program: Combine any number of the above elements along with other creative presentation forms

For questions, contact the Edwards County Extension Office at 618-445-2934. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, contact Samantha Gaither at [sgaither@illinois.edu](mailto:sgaither@illinois.edu). Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

# 4-H GENERAL PROJECT EXHIBIT GUIDELINES

Exhibiting in the 4-H Exhibit is a privilege. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to follow the general rules of this division and the exhibit requirements for the specific class entered. The University of Illinois Extension personnel or their assigned agents do not assume liability for loss, theft, or damage to any exhibit. To see the complete list of rules for the Illinois State Fair General Project Show, please visit the Illinois State Fair page on the Illinois 4-H Website: [go.illinois.edu/4HGeneralProjectGuidelines](http://go.illinois.edu/4HGeneralProjectGuidelines)

## Exhibitors:

- Exhibitors must be currently enrolled as a 4-H member and have been at least 8 years old as of September 1, 2025. Parents and leaders should make provisions for the adequate care and supervision of exhibitors.
- Exhibitors must be enrolled in the project or have participated in the activity in which they are exhibiting during the current year. Due to the nature of the conference judging process, exhibitors must be present.
- For youth and families: Conference judging is not about preparing a presentation. Judging is meant to be a conversation between the judge and 4-H member (or group) about the project and the learning experience. You may bring notes if you wish. Tips on creating an engaging display board are available at [go.illinois.edu/4HDisplayTips](http://go.illinois.edu/4HDisplayTips).
- Accommodation requests must be received in advance by contacting your local Extension office.

## General Exhibit Guidelines:

- All exhibits must be products of the current 4-H year (September 1, 2025 - August 15, 2026).
- Exhibits illustrating inappropriate subject matter and/or graphics are not acceptable. The Superintendents reserve the right to remove exhibits deemed inappropriate or dangerous for youth audiences. The content of any 4-H competitive presentation does not necessarily reflect the beliefs or views of the Illinois State Fair or the University of Illinois Extension 4-H program.
- Some exhibit areas may have size limitations. Read the descriptions carefully. Please choose a display size which is most appropriate for the exhibit you are bringing. Larger does not always mean better; use good judgement in creating your exhibit. Exhibitors will need to carry their project from the distant parking lots on the fairgrounds. **TABLES ARE PROVIDED. Do not bring your own.**
- **INNOVATION CLASSES** are open to all 4-H members in the project areas listed. Members choosing to exhibit in the Innovation class may be enrolled in any level of the project they are studying. Members choosing to exhibit in the Innovation class decide the best way to show off their project mastery and knowledge for the year in that project category. Some suggestions are provided for each category, but members may choose any method they want for demonstrating project learning as long as it does not fit in any other class in that category. Only selected projects categories have an Innovation option.
- **GROUP PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES HAVE EXPANDED.** They include Civic Engagement, Diversity and Cultural Awareness, Leadership, Passport to the World, Service Learning, and Video.
- **Project Manuals:** Some projects require a project manual, book, workbook, or guide. These are indicated with a book icon. 

# PREMIUM INFORMATION

## Tax Implications for Prizes, Gifts or Awards

Program Participants (including minors) will be required to provide their social security number or foreign national tax ID number prior to receiving a prize, gift or award to ensure proper IRS reporting as required by law. This sensitive information is kept confidential and handled through security protected software (PEAR). Participants will not be eligible for prize, gift or award if social security or foreign national tax ID information is not provided.

## Premiums

The Danish System will be used to award premiums. All exhibits will receive a "Blue (A)", "Red (B)" or "White (C)" rating. Premiums are only paid on State-approved projects. No premium will be paid on county projects. Premiums will be distributed ***based upon funds made available*** as noted in the following disclaimer.

Premiums, if available, will be given to your 4-H Leaders or mailed to your home address.

- The total dollars available for premiums will be awarded by using the "X-Factor".
- The amount may vary according to the rating received and State Funding.
- Premium checks will be mailed to each 4-H member who exhibited.

## X-Factors

All projects: 3X, 2X, 1X

## DOA Disclaimer Statement:

*"The Department of Agriculture shall use its best efforts to secure sufficient appropriations to fund premiums. In any year for which the General Assembly of the State of Illinois fails to make an appropriation sufficient to pay such premiums, premium amounts may not be accurately reflected in this Premium Book."*



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