

DeKalb County 4-H Public Speaking Contest
Thursday, March 31, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Return by Friday, March 20
to the DeKalb County Extension Office

Name: _____ Age(as of Sept.1) _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

4-H Club: _____

Title of Speech: _____

Brief Description about your topic: _____

- **Formal Speeches** – must be between 4-5 minutes for beginners (ages 8-13) or 5-6 minutes for advanced (ages 14 and older by Sept. 1) in length; no props, self-written, notes are allowed.
- **Illustrated Speeches** – must be between 4-5 minutes for beginners (ages 8-13) or 5-6 minutes for advanced (ages 14 and older by Sept. 1) in length; self-written, notes are allowed, visual aids may be 2D, 3D, or digital. May include audience participation.
- **Original Works** – must be between four and six minutes in length; self-written, props and costumes are allowed. May be presented individually or as a two-person team.
- **Oral Interpretation** – must be between four and six minutes in length; props and costumes are allowed. May be presented individually or as a two-person team.

Descriptions of Public Presentations

Formal Speech | Self-written | Notes Allowed | No props | Individual | 4-5 minutes for beginner (ages 8-13) or 5-6 minutes for advanced (ages 14 and older by Sept. 1)

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 deliver a speech on any topic they wish.

Illustrated Speech | Self-written | Notes allowed | Illustrations Required | Individual | 4-5 minutes for beginner (ages 8-13) or 5-6 minutes for advanced (ages 14 and older by Sept. 1)

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 | Manuscripts sent in Advance | 4-6 minutes

Original works must be written entirely by the presenter. It may be presented as an individual or a two-person team entry. Manuscripts must be sent in advance 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 | Manuscripts sent in Advance | 4-6 minutes

Presentations in Oral Interpretation must be published works, and manuscripts or transcripts must be submitted prior 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

GENERAL 4-H RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Any person, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, or disability may participate in 4-H programs. Youth who are 8 years of age and have not reached their 19th birthday on or before September 1 of the current 4-H year may enroll in a 4-H club.
2. Eligibility to show is limited to boys and girls officially enrolled in a 4-H project in a 4-H club in DeKalb County.
3. 4-H'ers may enter and exhibit only 1 entry per class.
4. Entries will be judged on the dual-merit system. Exhibits in each class will be rated and placed in one of three groups:
 - Blue award – presented to exhibits that meet the standards
 - Red award – presented to exhibits that need some improvements
 - White award – presented to exhibits that need much improvement

PREMIUM DISTRIBUTION

1. **4-H members are limited to receive one premium per class exhibited in premium eligible projects.**
2. 4-H premiums will be awarded to 4-H youth ages 8-18 exhibiting in premium eligible classes. Premiums will be paid using an "X" factor based on the amount of premium money available from the state. Premium values will be based on the following "X" factors:

General Exhibits

Blue	Red	White
4X	3X	2X

Aerospace, Animal/Veterinary Science, Bicycle, Child Development, Citizenship, Clothing & Textiles, Communications, Computers Science, Consumer Education, Crops, Electricity, Entomology, Filmmaking, Floriculture, Foods & Nutrition, Forestry, Geology, Geospatial, Health, Horticulture, Intercultural, Intergenerational, Interior Design, Journalism, Leadership, Natural Resources, Photography, Plant & Soil Science, **Public Presentations**, Robotics, Shooting Sports, Small Engines, Theatre Arts, Tractor, Visual Arts, Welding, Woodworking

3. *"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."*
4. **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 (including premiums) 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.

5. 4-H premiums will be distributed by the DeKalb County Extension via US Postal Service.
6. Cloverbud members (ages 5-7) do not receive premiums.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the DeKalb County Extension Office. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

Contact Information:

University of Illinois Extension
DeKalb County
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Sycamore, IL 60178
815/758-8194

- Nicole Groezinger, 4-H Program Coordinator, groezing@illinois.edu