Thank you for volunteering your time to encourage youth to grow and build life skills!

**Program Goal:** The public presentation experience is meant to be positive and encouraging for 4-H members. The purpose is to help youth grow as speakers and leaders. Contests in public speaking, demonstrations, illustrated talks, and creative communications provide youth the opportunity to practice important life skills. 4-H members can talk about any topic but must choose a different topic each year. Training and practicing within clubs is encouraged.

**Presentation Categories:** Each category is its own grading criteria. Separate score sheets for each category will be provided.

1. **Public Speaking:** This is a talk presented *without* visual or other aids. Notes are allowed but youth should not read off the entire speech. Speeches should inform, persuade, or entertain.
2. **Demonstrations:** A demonstration is a “show how” (to make, to do, to prepare) type of presentation. Examples include how to build a rocket, how to show a chicken, how to play guitar, etc. There are additional rules for demonstrations that include food.
3. **Illustrated Talk:** This talk uses visual aids such as charts, pictures, posters, graphs, samples, and models. Visual aids should tell about the topic but should not show how to make/do something.
4. **Creative Communication:** This is a stage act. Examples include stand-up comedy, storytelling, drama, debate, skits, poetry, singing, music, etc.

**Divisions:** Each age category has its own rules and regulations. A youth may only enter into one age category.

1. **Cloverbud:** 4-H age is 5-7. Presentation length is less than 5 minutes. Cloverbuds are not to be judged. Please make positive comments only on their score sheets. Cloverbuds do not compete at the contest.
2. **Junior:** 4-H age is 8-13. Presentation length is 3-10 minutes.
3. **Senior:** 4-H age is 14-18. Presentation length is 5-10 minutes.
Teams: Some youth may choose to make their presentation as a team. Team members will receive one collective score on one score sheet, but each member will receive a ribbon. At the State contest team winners will share cash awards.

- Mixed division teams: If a team consists of one or more Cloverbud members, the entire team will not be judged. Cloverbud division rules apply. If a team consists of Juniors and Seniors, the team will be judged by Senior division rules.

Questions: At the end of each presentation, judges should ask at least one question of each speaker. Questions could address the presentation content, why this topic was chosen, how research was performed, etc.

Scoring: Judges may consult with other judges, the room monitor, or 4-H staff, but the ultimate judging decision should be independent. Please write comments on the score sheets that encourage improvement and continued participation. Do not deduct points for things beyond the youth’s control.

No youth is expected to score 100 points unless s/he is truly outstanding.

- Blue ribbon = 85-97 points.
- Red ribbon = 70-84 points.
- White ribbon = >70 points.
  
  ○ Note: Only youth who are totally unprepared or can’t remember their talk should receive a white ribbon.

Participants must score 90 or above to qualify for the state contest.

Once all presentations are completed and scored, all persons aside from the judges and Room Monitor will leave the room. Judges will consult with the Room Monitor to privately review the final score of each presentation and ensure everyone agrees on the scores. Upon completion of the review, all persons are invited back into the room and awards will be distributed by the Room Monitor. Judges are invited to speak briefly to the group to express what was done well and what needs improvement.

State Contest: The top three scorers in each category and age division (9 total) receive cash prizes in addition to ribbons. Judges may be asked to break ties in consultation with 4-H staff.