

## MARYLAND 4-H COMMUNICATION CONTEST RULES

### General Rules:

1. The contest consists of four categories:

- **Prepared Speech**
- **Extemporaneous**
- **Radio Spot**
- **Interpretations**

In all categories, speeches are given by individuals, not teams.

2. Each of the above categories includes three age groups:

- **Junior: 8-10**
- **Intermediate: 11-13**
- **Senior: 14-18**

Ages are as of January 1st of the current year.

3. Time Limits: Judges will deduct points for presentations not meeting or exceeding time limits.

- **Prepared:** Juniors: 3 to 5 minutes, Intermediates and Seniors: 4 to 6 minutes;
- **Extemporaneous:** Juniors and Intermediates: 2 to 3 minutes, Seniors: 3 to 5 minutes;
- **Radio Spot:** 30 seconds for all age groups.
- **Interpretations:** Juniors: 1 ½ to 3 minutes. Intermediates: 2 to 4 minutes, Seniors: 3 to 5 minutes.

4. **Visual aids**, including posters, **are not permitted**. Appropriate gestures are encouraged. For Dramatic Interpretation, contestant may choose to wear a costume and opt to sit for the presentation. Podium use is optional.

### Category Specific Rules:

- **Contestants should not introduce themselves as part of their presentation. This will be done by an MC or room Host/Hostess.** If there is no Host/Hostess then the speaker will be directed to introduce themselves and this introduction will NOT be judged or timed. It will NOT be considered a part of the speech!
- Judges may ask questions of contestants in the **Prepared, Extemporaneous and Interpretations**. Due to time constraints, questioning should be limited to two or three minutes per speaker. Questions will not be asked in the **Radio Spot Category**.

**Prepared Speech:** Time Limits: Junior: 3 to 5, Intermediates & Seniors: 4 to 6 minutes.

Contestants may speak on any topic. It may be wise to discuss topics that could be considered controversial with your 4-H leader or educator before the contest. The speech may be written for a specific audience, such as a 4-H club, PTA, or a Rotary Club. **Memorization is not encouraged.** Only juniors may use a complete script. Note cards containing a key word outline are permitted. These notecards are to be given to the judges at the end of the speech.

**Extemporaneous:** Time Limits: Juniors and Intermediates: 2 to 3 minutes, Seniors: 3 to 5 minutes.

Extemporaneous speakers will draw three topics and choose one topic for their speech. Juniors and Intermediates may have up to 30 minutes and Seniors up to 15 minutes to prepare their talks. Contestants may use one side of up to four, or both sides of up to two, 5 x 8 inch note cards for their **key word outline**. Extemporaneous speakers will be shown time cards at correctly timed intervals indicating "1 MINUTE" "30 SECONDS", AND "STOP".

**Radio Spots:** Time Limits: 30 seconds for all age groups.

Radio Spots should be exactly 30 seconds in length and may include a musical or sound effect introduction and/or background, but may not include a spoken introduction or "tag" by anyone other than the contestant. If music or a sound effect is used, the contestant must provide and operate the sound-making device.

The **contestant will provide a complete written script** (including notations about music/sound effects) to the timekeeper to aid in timing accuracy. Musical/sound effect introductions and endings are considered a part of the radio spot and must not cause the 30 second time limit to be exceeded. The spot should **relate to 4-H**, be **original** and be **created by the contestant**. Questions will not be asked by judges in the Radio Spot category.

If there is no Host/Hostess then the speaker will be directed to introduce themselves and this introduction will NOT be judged or timed. It will NOT be considered a part of the speech!

**Interpretations:** Time Limits: Juniors: 1 ½ to 3 minutes. Intermediates: 2 to 4 minutes, Seniors: 3 to 5 minutes.

Speaker can speak or interpret in language of their choice. If using language other than spoken English, the participant must inform Extension Office a minimum of 10 working days before the event to ensure appropriately qualified judges are available

An **Interpretation** is a memorized oral presentation of selected narrative from published works. Permitted works include dramatic or humorous plays or books or poetry, but not the script of a television show or any unpublished source.

Contestants are to bring two (2) copies of the script for the judges, including a complete reference citation. Language other than English must be translated in these documents.

#### **State Contest Rules:**

A contestant may only compete in one category. If a contestant wins more than one category at the County Contest, they must choose which category to compete in at the State Contest.

**The names of county champions for each age group in each category will be sent to the State 4-H Office by April 1st.**

**State Champions** may not enter the same category and age group a second time.