



Prepared Public Speaking – Middle Grades LDE

Purpose

The Middle Grades Prepared Public Speaking career development event fosters confidence through a variety of public speaking topics as students prepare a speech focusing on an agricultural topic of their choice.

State Event Superintendent

The superintendent for this event is Mrs. Shelby Robertson, State FFA Coordinator, Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences, NC State University, Box 7654, Raleigh, NC 27695-7654
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Eligibility and General Guidelines

This event is open to all Middle Grades FFA chapters (6th – 8th grades) and Middle Grades FFA members in good standing. Chapters may send one participant to compete at the state event. The event will be open only to students who are active FFA members and who are currently enrolled in agricultural education. Each participant's manuscript must be the result of the student's own efforts. Members winning a previous state event in this area are ineligible.

The use or possession of cellular phones, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) or any other mobile electronic communication device is prohibited during any state-level career development event. Any violation of this rule will result in total disqualification.

Any member found cheating in any state-level career development event will result in total disqualification for that event.

The North Carolina FFA Association, in keeping with the FFA mission and purposes, does not permit the use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or Juuls at any FFA facility or at any FFA activity.

Middle Grades Prepared Public Speaking participants may also be involved in the Middle Grades Ritual and Parliamentary Procedure Career Development Event at the state level.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, North Carolina FFA will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Please direct accommodation requests through the CDE/LDE Accommodation Request [Form](#). If the accommodation can be made for all and/or doesn't provide an unfair advantage, then every effort will be made to provide the accommodation. Requests can be accommodated more effectively if notice is provided at least 10 days before the event.



Dress Code

Participants are required to follow the North Carolina FFA Career Development Event Dress Code.

Official dress for an FFA member includes: an official FFA jacket zipped to the top, black slacks and black socks/nylons or black skirt and black nylons, white collared blouse or white collared shirt, official FFA tie or official FFA scarf, black dress shoes with closed heel and toe.

The North Carolina FFA Association strives to promote a positive image at all Official FFA Events. The dress code policy was established to address the issue of appropriate attire at all Official FFA Events. Members should adhere to this policy for all events. A ten percent reduction will be applied to all individual scores from a chapter if a participant from that chapter violates the dress code during that career event.

Artificial Intelligence Usage

All materials that are submitted should adhere to the [North Carolina FFA Artificial Intelligence Policy](#). Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage through the use of AI or other methods will not be tolerated. Noncompliance with this policy represents plagiarism and will automatically disqualify a member.

Procedures for Administering the Event

Each participant's manuscript must be the result of the student's own efforts.

Participants submit their speech electronically by the due date identified in the registration memo for state competition. Speeches should be double-spaced typewritten copies on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with a cover page that gives the speech title, participant's name, chapter, state and date. The body of the manuscript will have 1" margins, and 10-12 characters per inch. Follow APA style manual for developing references and bibliography. Manuscripts not meeting these guidelines will be penalized.

Participants must complete an accurate and complete bibliography used in writing the speech (following National FFA Career Development Event Rules for Prepared Public Speaking).

The participant may take advantage of all available training facilities and personnel in their local school and community in developing their speaking ability.

Facts and working data may be obtained from any source.

Participants shall draw for places on the program.

Visual aids used in presenting the speech will be limited to inanimate objects small enough in size to be easily held in the participant's hand.

Subject – Participants may choose any current subject for their speeches which is of an agricultural character (nature), and which is related to agriculture and/or biotechnology. Official judges of Middle



Grades FFA Prepared Public Speaking shall disqualify a participant if he or she speaks on a subject other than agriculture or biotechnology.

Time Limit – Each speech shall be a minimum of four (4) minutes in length and a maximum of six (6) minutes. Each contestant will be allowed three (3) minutes additional time in which he/she will be asked questions relating to his/her speech. Participants are to be penalized one point per second on each judges' score sheet for being under four (4) minutes or over six (6) minutes. No time warnings will be given.

Method of Selecting a Winner – Three competent and impartial judges will be selected to judge the event. At least one of the judges should have an agricultural background. Judges will formulate and ask questions pertaining directly to the participant's speech (at all levels of competition). The full three minutes for questions should be used. Judges will score participants on the North Carolina Middle Grades Public Speaking rubric.

Each judge will individually score and rank all contestants. The rankings of each judge will be given to the participant director who will compile rankings and determine winner(s) based on low score values. That is, a speaker ranked number one by a judge receives one point, or two points for a second-place ranking, etc.

Procedure for Determining the State Event Winner When Scores are Tied

In the case of a tie, there will be a tiebreaker question.

State Awards

The awards for the state event will be presented annually at the state FFA convention to include a team 1st, 2nd and 3rd place plaque and a travel monetary award.

Bibliography

Official FFA Manual

National FFA Career Development Events Handbook

North Carolina FFA Association
FFA Middle Grades Prepared Public Speaking Career Development Event
Prepared Public Speaking CDE Rubric

Manuscript Content and Composition Rubric (200 points)

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Topic relevance	Topic addresses an issue facing the industry of agriculture.	Topic addresses an issue that may show some relationship to the industry of agriculture.	Topic addresses an issue that is unrelated to the industry of agriculture.		x 6	
Persuasive explanation of position on topic	Position is clearly stated, and ample evidence is provided.	Position is not obvious, and evidence is not clearly provided.	Position is not stated, and evidence is not provided.		x8	
Alternative viewpoints recognized	Identifies and counters alternative viewpoints	Only identifies alternate viewpoints	Does not identify alternate viewpoints		x 4	
Logical order and unity of thought	Clearly organized and concise with strong introduction, body and conclusion layout	Good organization with few statements out of place or lacking in clear construction	Little to no organization is present; sometimes awkward and lacking construction		x 4	
Spelling/grammar (sentence structure, verb agreement, etc.).	Spelling and grammar are extremely high quality with two or less errors in the document.	Spelling and grammar are adequate with three to five errors in the document.	Spelling and grammar are less than adequate with six or more errors in the document.		x 7	
Quality of resources	Resources are from reputable sources.	Resources are from questionable sources.	Resources are unreliable and invalid.		x 6	
Manuscript written according to	5–4 points	3–2 points	1–0 points			
References and in-text citations documented	Research is cited appropriately throughout the work. Citations appear wherever they are appropriate.	Research is cited appropriately in the work, but there should be more research citations. Citations appear wherever they are appropriate.	Research is not cited often, and citations appear only at the end of sentences or paragraphs. More citations are needed to support the writing.		x 3	
Manuscript Format		5 points	0 points			
Double-spaced & formatted to 8½ x 11- inch paper with 1-inch margins. 12-point size, using Times New Roman, Cambria, Arial, or Calibri font					x 1	
Cover page with speech title, participant's name, state, and year.					x 1	
Total Points EARNED OUT OF 200 POSSIBLE						

North Carolina FFA Association
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Presentation and Questions Rubric (800 points)

Indicators	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Oral and Non-Verbal Communication						
Supporting evidence	Examples (stories, statistics, etc.) are vivid, precise and clearly explained.	Examples are usually concrete but sometimes need clarification.	Examples are sometimes confusing, leaving the listeners with questions.		x 15	
Persuasive use of evidence	Exemplary use of evidence to persuade listeners.	Sufficient use of evidence to persuade listeners.	Has difficulty using evidence to persuade listeners		x 15	
Pace	Speaks very articulately at rate that engages audience.	Speaks articulately but occasionally speaks too fast or has long unnecessary	Speaks too slow or too fast to engage audience.		x 15	
Command of audience	Speaker uses appropriate emphasis and tone to captivate audience.	Speaker presents speech as mere repeating of facts and speech comes across as a report.	Speaker lacks enthusiasm and power to engage audience.		x 20	
Eye contact	Constantly looks at the entire audience (90 to 100% of the time)	Mostly looks around the audience (60 to 80% of the time)	Occasionally looks at someone or some groups (less than 50 % of the time)		x 10	
Mannerisms and gestures	No nervous habits are displayed. Hand motions are expressive and used to emphasize talking points.	Sometimes exhibits nervous habits; Hands are sometimes used to express or emphasize points.	Displays some nervous habits; Hands are not used to emphasize talking points; hand motions are sometimes distracting.		x 10	
Poise	Portrays confidence and composure through appropriate body language (stance, posture, facial expressions)	Maintains control most of the time; rarely loses composure	Lacks confidence and composure		x 15	
Response to Questions						
Response to questions	Responds with organized thoughts and concise answers	Answers effectively but has to stop and think and sometimes gets off focus	Rambles or responds before thinking		x 20	
Knowledge of topic	Answers show a thorough knowledge of the subject and support answers with strong evidence.	Answers show some knowledge of the subject but lack strong evidence.	Answers show little knowledge of the subject and lacks evidence.		x 40	
Total Oral and Non-Verbal Communication Points						
Total Response to Questions Points						
TOTAL POINTS EARNED OUT OF 800 POSSIBLE						
Time Deduction (-1 point/second under four minutes or over six minutes)						
Manuscript Score						
Total Net Points						
Rank						