



4-H Happenings

4-H Public Speaking (Grades 4th & 5th)

Theme: America 250 Begins in Tennessee

Choose one Tennessee place that tells America's story – then persuade us to protect it (not just visit it).

WHAT WILL YOU DO

Pick one Tennessee historic, cultural, or natural site (local landmark, state park, museum, historic district, battlefield, civil rights site, Native American site, river/watershed location, etc.).

Your job: Teach the audience why a Tennessee location matters to **Tennessee** and the **United States** as we celebrate America's 250th - and ask people to take action to protect/preserve it.

SPEECHES DUE _____

4th Grade

1-3 minutes

Note cards encouraged

5th Grade

3-5 minutes

Note cards encouraged

STUDENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ My place is in Tennessee
- ☐ I used 2+ credible sources
- ☐ I included 4-6 facts
- ☐ I explained why it matters to TN and the U.S.
- ☐ I described a current need/problem
- ☐ I included a call to action (in speech)
- ☐ I practiced and stayed in time

QUICK PRACTICE TIPS

- Practice out loud to a family member, pet, or mirror
- Use a timer, cut or add 1 detail to hit the time range.
- Highlight your hook, your best 2-3 facts, and your call to action so those parts sound strongest.
- Hold note cards at chest level.
- Have eye contact.
- End with one strong sentence (your "challenge" line).
- Number your notecards.

TENNESSEE SITE IDEAS

- National Park Service sites: battlefields, or historic sites
- State historic parks: mounds, forts, historic sites
- Civil rights history: local landmarks, sit-ins
- Local history: courthouses, museums, historic bridges, cemeteries, downtown districts
- Geography/natural resources: a river, cave area, canyon, mountain pass-paired with a "protect it" argument

RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

Your speech should include 4-6 facts and use at least 2 credible sources.

INCLUDE THESE FACT TYPES (Choose 4-6)

- Where it is (city/county/region) + why the location matters (river, mountains, road, etc.)
- When it was created/built OR when an important event happened (include a date)
- Who is connected (a person or group)
- Why it matters to Tennessee
- Why it matters to the United States
- Number (age, acres, visitors, miles of trail, etc.)
- Today's challenge/need (maintenance, litter, storm damage, fundraising, awareness, etc.)

CALL TO ACTION (In your speech)

- Volunteer day – clean-up
- "Leave No Trace" pledge
- Attend a ranger talk or museum program
- Donate supplies or do a small fundraiser
- Write a thank-you letter to park staff or local leaders
- Create posters or morning announcements to educate others
- Other ideas

AWARDS & ADVANCEMENT

- Ribbons will be awarded in each club: purple, blue, red, or white.
- White ribbons will be given if a speech is significantly less than the minimum time requirement.
- Students who receive a purple ribbon will be invited to compete at the county speech contest in January 2027.

Contact Us

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4-H Speech Planning Guide

Hook (attention getter): _____

T – Topic/Opinion: _____

America 250 connection: _____

Body (Reasons + Evidence)

R1 – Reason #1:

E1 – Evidence/Explain (facts/details):

R2 – Reason #2:

E2 – Evidence/Explain (facts/details):

R3 – Reason #3:

E3 – Evidence/Explain (facts/details):

E – Ending (Restate + Ask + Strong Finish)

Signal Close: _____

Restate your opinion: _____

Call to Action: _____

Strong Final Sentence: _____

