



# AAUW California Speech Trek

## **Student Toolkit**

2023-2024

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## 2023-2024 SPEECH TREK SPEECH CONTEST TOPIC

*Topic: How can we ensure a robust public-school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?*

### ***Background:***

An educated population is essential to a nation's prosperity, according to many world leaders.

If so, then what is the best way to ensure a robust and accurate public-school education?

Imagine you could design your own high school curriculum:

1. What topics would you include and why?
2. Would there be topics you would exclude?
3. How would you ensure the accuracy of your curriculum?
4. Who would you designate as the final decision maker of your course content?

These questions arise as school curricula, textbooks, and library resources are undergoing changes across the country which will impact students of all ages and backgrounds.

Are these changes beneficial or detrimental to what you learn in school?

Throughout history, leaders around the world have credited education as the main driver of prosperity and democracy, including in the United States <sup>1</sup>. This finding leads us to the even bigger question :

*How can we ensure a robust public-school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?*

<sup>1</sup> "The real safeguard of democracy...is education." Franklin D. Roosevelt

<sup>1</sup> "Education is the road to equality and citizenship." Martin Luther King

# CONTEST INFORMATION

**Eligibility:** Speech Trek is open to all actively attending high school students in California.

**Deadlines:** Interested students must submit a "Student Application and Parent/Guardian Permission" notice to their local AAUW CA Branch per the date set by that Branch (please see Page 13).

**Time Limits:** Students are to prepare an original 5:00-6:00 minute speech, with a 30-second grace period on either side. **Speaking under 4:30 or over 6:30 will result in disqualification.**

**Presentation:** These presentations are to be original speeches. Appropriate use of **one** 4" x 6" note card is an option--prompting is not allowed.

**Judging:** During the State Semi-Final and Final competitions, judges shall use the official ballot and score each speaker in two areas: Content (includes Introduction, Organization and Conclusion), 0-50 points; and Delivery, 0-50 points. Branches may opt to use their own Judge's ballot at the local level. Students are advised to request a copy of their Branch's Judge's ballot.

**Prizes:** Each local Branch of AAUW CA will determine the level of award for their contestants.

**Branch Winner:** Each participating Branch will post the video of their winning speech online (YouTube) by **March 15, 2024**. The State Speech Trek judges will identify five finalists, two of whom will be named as Honorable Mention. The judges will award the 4<sup>th</sup> place finalist with \$250 and the 5<sup>th</sup> place finalist with \$150. A new panel of three judges will view the top three finalists' videos and determine the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners. The top three finalists' videos will be showcased at the virtual AAUW CA Annual Meeting on April 27, 2024. Winners will be announced at that time.

**State Finalists:** First place winner at the State contest will receive \$1500; Second place winner at the State contest will receive \$1000; and Third place winner at the State contest will receive \$500. If held live, travel expenses, lodging, and meals for each finalist and her/his chaperone will be reimbursed by Speech Trek. Those expenses should not exceed approved budget.

Your School Contact is: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Your AAUW Branch Contact is: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Your Speech Contest Coach is: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## A Few Helpful Source Suggestions

For the topic: *How can we ensure a robust public-school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?*

- 1) <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/02/who-should-decide-how-students-learn-about-americas-past/385928>
- 2) <https://www.teachforamerica.org/one-day/magazine/when-will-history-be-taught-honestly>
- 3) <https://diversity.ucdavis.edu/news/california-k-12-curriculum-becomes-more-historically-accurate-uc-davis>
- 4) <https://www.teachforamerica.org/one-day/ideas-and-solutions/how-schools-are-building-a-more-inclusive-curriculum>
- 5) <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/who-decides-what-history-we-teach-an-explainer/2021/08>
- 6) <https://blog.ed.gov/2021/07/american-history-and-civics-in-our-schools/>
- 7) <https://districtadministration.com/school-history-shifts-toward-accuracy-diversity/>

### *Researching Speech Writing:*

**If you want humor . . .** Overall presentation with visuals about how to construct and present a speech. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=fUgwc2WIPrk>

**If you only have a minute . . .** A series of 1-minute videos on the basics plus more  
<http://impromptuguru.com/60-second-guru/>

- **Before the Speech** — from anxiety reducing techniques to making sure your message is clear and organized, making you ready to take the stage.
- **Do not memorize speech** — <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plvzipUakMc>
- **During the speech** — from eliminating “ums” and “uhs” to projecting your voice, everything you need to be heard

**If you want "how-tos" from a world-champion speaker . . .**

- **How to write a speech: Crucial first steps:** <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=yD5I7Q9q05I>
- **How to write a speech outline:** <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=M4BkVmA0p6Y>
- **How to write a speech: speech elements:** [https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jaudD\\_PMjMU](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jaudD_PMjMU)
- **How to write a speech: introduction:** <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=p-jOZhFyDR8>
- **How to write a speech: conclusion:** <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=YSi7aPR1-pg>

**If you want written tips AND videos . . . Here's just the one:** 7 Steps To Creating A Public Speaking Speech Outline:

(tips and video) <http://publicspeakingpower.com/public-speaking-speech-outline>

### *AAUW online resources for contest and topic:*

- [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) Topic research: Click on Explore the Issues
- <https://www.aauw-ca.org/2022-speech-trek-results/> 2022 video winners' speeches
- <https://sacramento-ca.aauw.net/programs/speechtrek/> for contest handouts.

**Topic Question: How can we ensure a robust public-school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?**

**First, how many questions do you need to answer? Then, decide** how to attack the question. **Brainstorm** around the ideas suggested above, *and then research*. What answers stand out?

**Speech should consist of three (3) parts** Introduction, body, and conclusion.

- ✓ Introduction (30 – 45 sec) **Good, memorable speeches *END WHERE THEY BEGIN*.**

**Use a strategy** for beginning and ending that hooks your arguments/ideas together.

1. Shocking/impactful/surprising statistic or data - developed within speech.
  2. Quotation – with source! Excellent for reconnecting to ending
  3. Narrative – a little story or vignette sets the stage; creates prologue; can be personal.
  4. Rhetorical question – (very over-used).
    - **State topic.** Many speeches vary off topic. Keep the topic in front of you.
    - **Answer the question[s] – this is your thesis!**
- ✓ Body (3 ½ to 4 ½ minutes)
    - Restate and develop main points from introduction
    - Use *interesting* examples, stories, historical references, statistics, personal experiences and humor.
      - **Hint:** your audience (judges) will be mature, professional women & men with varied backgrounds & interests.
      - Ask yourself, what do you have in common?
    - Transition smoothly between each main point (explain connections)
    - Analyze facts and statistics & draw your own conclusions
  - ✓ Conclusion (30 – 45 sec)
    - Concisely recall or restate main topics and thesis.
    - Avoid introducing new material (points, examples, etc)
    - **Hint: *END WHERE YOU BEGIN; see your introduction.***
    - **Hint: *end with strength; “that’s it” is never appropriate.***

## INSTRUCTIONS TO JUDGES

- Each speaker shall prepare and deliver an original five-six (5:00-6:00) minute speech with a 30-second grace period on either side.
- Time signals will be given for each speaker; however, adherence to the time limit is the responsibility of the speaker.
- This speech is to be presented by using the extemporaneous mode of delivery. Appropriate use of **ONE** 4" x 6" note card is an option--prompting is not allowed.
- In this contest, students have written their own speeches. They are permitted to deviate from their original manuscript to better adjust to the speaking situation.
- Speakers will typically use logical and emotional appeals.
- Some speakers will employ language that is graphic, striking, and sometimes dramatic--but always with the intent of conveying the speaker's ideas, rather than the speaker's technique. These presentations are to be original speeches and not dramatic readings.
- During the state semi-final (via YouTube) and final competition (also via YouTube if the contest is held virtually), semi-final judges and finals judges shall use the official ballot and score each speaker in two key areas: Content, 0-50 points (includes introduction, organization, and conclusion); and Delivery, 0-50 points. Assign a score for each category by entering the number in the appropriate square on your ballot.
- After scoring each category, subtotal the score for each speaker and then rank the speakers from the highest to the lowest.
- In the event of a tie at the semi-finals and final competitions, an additional ballot will be opened to break the tie. This additional judge, known as a "tie-breaking" judge, judges and ranks all contestants. The ballot is unsealed only in the case of a tie. If there is no tie, then the tie-breaking judge's ballot remains sealed.
- Judges must make independent decisions about the speakers. Judges shall not discuss decisions with other judges prior to submitting final ballots.

The official timekeeper may share only that a speaker was outside the time range. **Speaking over 6 minutes and 30 seconds or under 4 minutes and 30 seconds will result in disqualification.**

If a judge submits a ballot without ranking the speakers, the form will be returned for completion of the rankings. Questions regarding contest rules or conduct of the event shall be referred to the contest coordinator.

(Branches may opt to use their own Judge's ballot at the local level--but students moving on to the state semi-final or final round must be given a copy of the official ballot used for state level competition.)

Speech Length: **5 - 6 minutes**. A grace period of 30 seconds before and after the target time.

- No visuals, props, microphone; one (1) 4X6 notecard allowed; Podium available/not required.
- Speech Type: Persuasive
- No more than 75 quoted words *and* credit source
  - ✓ Example: “according to the recent study conducted by AAUW...”
- **Delivery**
  - ✓ Exhibit Good Speech **Posture**
  - ✓ Unnecessary or disconnected **hand or body movement** distracts audience’s attention
  - ✓ Effective use of Hands and body to communicate ideas
  - ✓ Move when changing points (example: “on the other hand...”)
  - ✓ **Vocal Criteria**
    - Enunciate clearly, keep the beginning and ending consonants crisp
    - Expressive inflection...inflection that conveys meaning
    - Project to the back of the room
    - Pacing of speech. This is: **not** performance poetry, rap, or drama; **is** Public Oratory.
      - Use to your advantage (pause at major points)
      - Avoid *speed speaking*
  - ✓ **Vocabulary**
    - Use language appropriate to your audience; use non-standard language as attention-getting device
    - Avoid verbalized pauses, “Um”...**Hint: *breathe*** while you think
  - ✓ **Eye Contact** with audience
    - **Hint:** make audience feel like you are talking directly to each one of them
- **Practice**
- **Practice** deep breathing; breathe to your knees; deep breathe while sitting in your seat; breathe again *before* you begin to speak.
- **Practice**, practice, practice difficult vocabulary, difficult transitions, memory blocks
- Visualize giving your speech, positively
- Develop memory triggers – counting on fingers, contrasting ideas, etc.
- Learn and practice tension-releasing exercises, big ones and isometrics
  - ✓ Head/neck; Shoulders; Hands/feet/ankles
- Perform difficult articulation exercises – Peter Piper, Wood Chucks, She Sells Seashells
- **Practice** saying word endings clearly- “ing” “s” “ed” “st”
- Dress to impress
- **Practice, practice, practice your speech**
  - ✓ To a variety of audiences; ask anyone to listen. Constructive feed back: Ask for one constructive criticism so you work on one improvement at a time.
  - ✓ Practice/memorize a paragraph at a time. Add a new paragraph after you feel comfortable with the practiced paragraph
    - Practice 3-10 times every day.
    - Practice “rough spots” by isolating and practicing just those words or sentences.
    - Use physical clues, hand-gestures, movement or stance to help you remember ideas.



# 2023-2024 - JUDGES BALLOT

**Topic: *How can we ensure a robust public-school curriculum that is accessible to all and teaches historically accurate information?***

CONTESTANT NAMES						
Assign a score in the following categories	Need to Improve	Fair	Avg	Excellent	Superb/ Outstanding	
<b>CONTENT - INTRODUCTION</b>						
Interesting - held the audiences attention	0-1	2	3	4	5	
<b>CONTENT</b>						
Well prepared						
Evidence of audience analysis	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	
Effective use of example, story, illustration						
Well researched and referenced						
<b>CONTENT - ORGANIZATION</b>						
Effective arrangement of ideas						
Main points easy to follow	0-5	6	7	8	9-10	
Transitions to move from point to point						
Material appropriate for topic & purpose						
<b>CONTENT - CONCLUSION</b>						
Summary and a clear sense of finality	0-1	2	2-3	4	5	
<b>DELIVERY</b>						
Good diction, volume, rate, projection						
Displayed poise and confidence						
Displayed energy and enthusiasm	0-12	13-21	22-30	31-40	41-50	
Maintained eye contact with audience						
Avoided distracting mannerisms						
Prepared delivery - not a reading						
Appropriate movement and gestures						
<b>TOTAL FOR EACH SPEAKER</b>						
<b>RANK SPEAKERS - High score = 1, Second = 2, Third = 3, Fourth = 4, Fifth = 5</b>						
Judge's Printed Name _____ Judge's Signature _____						



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR TIMER

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a timer for the AAUW California Speech Trek Contest. This contest is an opportunity to support talented young students, both girls and boys, who are America's future leaders.

- A timer will need:
- A stopwatch or equivalent timing device
- Three (3) timecards that indicate time intervals of 4:30, 5:30, and 6:00 minutes. These timecards can be color-coded (for example, green at 4:30; yellow at 5:30; and red at 6:00 minutes)
- Please seat yourself directly in front of where the contestants will speak.
- Begin timing when the contestant first starts to speak.
- At 4:30, raise and hold the green card.
- At 5:30, raise and hold the yellow card.
- At 6:00, raise and hold the red card. Hold it until the speaker stops speaking. **A 30-second grace period exists before and after the allotted time. A speaker who speaks under 4:30 or over 6:30 will automatically be disqualified.**
- Time stops when the speaker stops speaking. After each speaker is finished, write down the total time spoken and hand it to the coordinator.
- Clear stopwatch/timing device after each speaker.

**NOTE:** if a contestant is under or over the time limit, the contest emcee announces simply that a contestant has been disqualified for time; no name is mentioned.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR GREETER

This contest is an opportunity to support talented young men and women who are America's future leaders.

- Prepare a sign-in table with a program, branch and/or membership information, and name tags if desired. Be sure sign-in materials include name, address, phone, and email.
- Choose someone to monitor this process who understands this information will be necessary for follow up membership activity.
- Greet students, parents, judges, advisors, and honored guests and show them where to sign in.
- Prepare separate lists of names of parents, judges, advisors, and honored guests for use during introductions.
- Make slips of paper with one number on each (1, 2, 3, etc.) for the number of speakers you expect and then put the slips into a container. Each contestant is to draw a number to determine the speaking order.
- While scores are being tabulated, the emcee will allow each contestant to give a brief biography. As time permits, contestants may comment on or acknowledge their parents or teachers.
- At the end of the contest, if the meeting will continue, a break is needed to allow everyone to congratulate the speakers.
- Be sure someone/emcee invites all guests to complete the membership inquiry/application form to be invited to a follow up event to learn more about the branch.

# STUDENT APPLICATION AND PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

10

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**High School Attending:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Advisor/Counselor:** \_\_\_\_\_

*My signature below certifies that I wish to participate in the AAUW California Speech Contest and that I have received and read the following forms:*

- Student Instructions ■ Judge's Instructions & Ballot

***Student Signature:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Date:*** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Information and Permission:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

*My signature below certifies that I have read the rules for the speech contest and wish for my child to participate in the AAUW California Speech Trek Contest. In addition, I understand that my child's name may be publicized locally as a contest participant, and that the speech will be recorded for higher-level competition and selection of finalists.*

*If my child is selected as the 1<sup>st</sup> place branch winner or one of three state finalists, I understand that the video of my child's competition speech may be posted online (see videos of previous speakers at: [aauw-ca.org/Programs/Project/Speech Trek](http://aauw-ca.org/Programs/Project/Speech%20Trek)) or used to promote the contest in subsequent years. I understand I will need to sign an AFFIDAVIT OF ELIGIBILITY AND LIABILITY RELEASE, prior to my child's participation in the competition.*

***Parent/Guardian Signature:*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***Date:*** \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this application to your local branch contact:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AAUW Speech Trek Contest**

The undersigned participant of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Speech Trek Contest and the participant's parent or guardian hereby declare that they have read and understand all of the rules and conditions for the contest and that the undersigned has met all eligibility requirements on the date their contest entry was submitted.

The undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian represent that the speech submitted to the contest (the "Entry") is the participant's own original creation, and that the participant has perpetrated no fraud or deception in entering the contest or claiming any prize.

The undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian represent and warrant that neither she/he nor any parent or guardian is an employee of AAUW, or its related, parent, affiliated and subsidiary companies, advertising and promotion agencies, or the panel of judges, nor is she/he or any parent or guardian connected with them in any way.

The undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian irrevocably grant to AAUW, its successors and assigns and all other persons deriving rights from them, all rights, title and interest in the undersigned's Entry in perpetuity, to print, publish, broadcast, use or modify in any manner in any media whatsoever the Entry as submitted for the contest to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law.

In addition, the undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian grant to AAUW, its successors and assigns and all other persons deriving rights from them, the right to use the participant's name, likeness and/or voice and biographical information, and city of residence for promotional purposes in any medium without compensation, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law.

The undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian hereby waive the opportunity and any right to inspect or approve any such promotion, printing, broadcast use or publication, and further release AAUW, its successors and assigns from all liability in connection with any such promotion, printing, broadcast, use or publication.

The undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian hereby release and hold harmless AAUW and its officers, directors, employees, and agents from any and all losses, claims or damages that may result, directly or indirectly, from participation in the contest or use of the prize award. The undersigned understands that any and all local, state or federal tax liability for the award will be the responsibility of the undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian.

The undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian further acknowledge and agree that the contest prize is non-transferable, and that no substitution of prizes will be allowed, except by the AAUW due to the unavailability of prizes at the time of the award.

he undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian understand that AAUW is proceeding with the award of any prize in the contest in express reliance on this release and the undersigned and the participant's parent or guardian represent and agree that they are free to grant the rights set forth in this release.

The undersigned contest participant and the participant's parent or guardian hereby attest that they have read and understand all the foregoing provisions of this affidavit and agree to be bound by the same.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of contest participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Type or print name of participant**  
**Contest participant's current address**  
**Telephone number**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of parent/guardian** (if contest participant is under 18 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print name of parent or guardian**

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Speech Contest Due Dates

### October- December

- **Learn** about the contest and the topic by asking your faculty contact or AAUW contact.
- **Research** sources on the topic and on speech preparation and delivery.
- **Ask** your AAUW coach for guidance via email, phone or text.

### By Tuesday, Jan. 9 –Complete/Email Application and Affidavit

Send scanned application and affidavit (3 pages) signed by you and your parents/guardians to AAUW contact

### By Tuesday, Jan. 16 - Complete your draft speech

- **Email** your draft speech to AAUW contact.

### By Jan. 16 - Jan. 31 - Receive coaching feedback

- **Contact** your AAUW coach for guidance, assistance and encouragement.
- **Review** video sources for speech preparation and delivery tips.

### Feb. 1 to Feb. 9

- **Polish, Practice, Practice Makes Permanent.**
- **Reduce your speech to 5-10 words on 4 X 6 card.**
- **Polish, Practice, and Practice Make Permanent** some more. This makes the competition fun.

### February 10 – Participate

Each participant will deliver their speech in person. Judges will view speeches and winners will be selected.