



AAUW California Speech Trek

Student Toolkit

2024-2025

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2024-2025 SPEECH TREK SPEECH CONTEST TOPIC

Climate change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet.

TOPIC:

Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA and around the world.

BACKGROUND:

The adverse effects of climate change are well studied in relation to agriculture, ecosystems, water resources, human health, and industry, especially in geographical locations that are economically dependent on local natural resources.

Many studies also highlight climate change in terms of impact to economics.

But do any reports identify any disproportionate effects on women? Is women's health more vulnerable to environmental changes?

Many companies claim their bottom line is impacted by the cost of climate change legislation. Does this have an impact on women's career and leadership opportunities?

If there are disparities in any of these areas, how does that change the way you look at climate change, and what impact is climate change having on women in the USA and around the world?

Climate change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet. Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA, and around the world

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, 2025**. The State Speech Trek judges will identify five finalists, two of whom will be named as Honorable Mention. The judges will award the 4th and 5th place finalists with \$500. A new panel of three judges will view the top three finalists' videos and determine the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. The top three finalists' videos will be showcased at the virtual AAUW CA Annual Meeting on April 26, 2025. Winners will be announced at that time.

State Finalists: First place winner at the State contest will receive \$2500; Second place winner at the State contest will receive \$2000; and Third place winner at the State contest will receive \$1000. If held live, travel expenses, lodging, and meals for each finalist and her/his chaperone will be reimbursed by Speech Trek. Families should contact the Speech Trek Program Director for the spending limits on reimbursable expenses.

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: Climate change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet. Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA, and around the world.

- 1) <https://unfccc.int/gender>
- 2) <https://unfccc.int/news/five-reasons-why-climate-action-needs-women>
- 3) <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/2022/03/the-climate-crisis-is-a-human-rights-crisis-and-a-womans-rights-un-chief-un-chief-says>
- 4) <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9360176/>
- 5) <https://www.ohchr.org/.../10/climate-change-threat-multiplier-women>
- 6) <https://climatepromise.undp.org/.../what-does-gender-equality-have-do...>
- 7) <https://www.state.gov/.../women-and-girls-in-climate-activism>
- 8) <https://www.ox.ac.uk/.../education-und...>
- 9) <https://www.undp/blog/women-are-key-resilience-our-people-an...>
- 10) https://www.unwomen.org/en/news_stories/explainer/2022/02/explainer-how-gender-inequality-and-climate-change-are-interconnected

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
- **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 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: Climate change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet. Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA, and around the world.

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.



2024-2025 - JUDGES BALLOT

Climate change is happening. The effects are widespread and touch upon almost all aspects of our life on this planet.

TOPIC: Select one area of impact and explore the effect climate change is having on women in the USA and around the world.

CONTESTANT NAMES															
Assign a score in the following categories	Need to Improve	Fair	Avg	Excellent	Superb/ Outstanding										
CONTENT - INTRODUCTION															
Interesting - held the audiences attention	0-1	2	3	4	5										
CONTENT															
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															
CONTENT - ORGANIZATION															
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															
CONTENT - CONCLUSION															
Summary and a clear sense of finality	0-1	2	2-3	4	5										
DELIVERY															
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															
TOTAL FOR EACH SPEAKER															
RANK SPEAKERS - High score = 1, Second = 2, Third = 3, Fourth = 4, Fifth = 5															
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 1st 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. 14

- **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 15 – Participate

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