

FFA Leadership Development Program

2015 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest Theme:

*From the Era of the Dust Bowl
to the Present:
Commemorating 75 Years of
Soil and Water Conservation*

To prepare for the public speaking contest, students are to consult with their Ag Science teacher and use the Guidelines Packet accessible on the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's website. The student is also to work with their soil and water conservation district (SWCD) as a local resource. A statement signed by an SWCD representative must be attached to the submitted speech.

If the student needs help finding information on how to locate and contact their soil and water conservation district, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board will be happy to provide students with the name and address of the SWCD that serves the local school district.

This program is a partnership between the Texas FFA, the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

For more information contact:

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
P.O. Box 658
Temple, TX 76503
(254) 773-2250 or 800-792-3485
<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov>



Scholarships Available



Three scholarships will be presented by the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts at the annual Texas FFA convention. One \$3,000.00 scholarship will be awarded to the first place contestant, one \$2,000.00 scholarship will be awarded to the second place contestant and one \$1,000.00 scholarship will be awarded to the third place contestant at the convention.

Scholarship money must be used to defray costs of a recipient's education at a technical institution, college, or university of the recipient's choice. All scholarships will be awarded directly to a public speaking contest winner's chosen technical school, college, or university in the student's name upon proof of registration as a full-time student at the institution of higher learning.

Expense Paid Trips: The state first place scholarship winner and his or her advisor will receive an expense paid trip under State of Texas travel guidelines to the annual meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors. The first place Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest Winner is required to present his or her state winning speech at the annual meeting of SWCD Directors.

To Access the Guidelines Packet

1. Click on the Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board's website: www.tsswcb.texas.gov
2. On the left side of the home page, under Program Quick Links click on "SWCD Information & Education."
3. Click on "[Soil & Water Stewardship Public Speaking Contest](#)" and scroll down for the 2015 Program Guidelines Packet

To Get the Student Started

Using the prompt statements or questions noted in the speech outline on page six, the student is to center his/her speech on the theme "*From the Era of the Dust Bowl to the Present— Commemorating 75 years of Soil and Water Conservation*" The focus of the speech is to demonstrate knowledge gained as a result of research and personal consultation with the local soil and water conservation district. It is further recommended that the student consult the listed resources that follow to gain a well rounded view of the theme topic. **Other resources may also be consulted in addition to the listed references.**

Recommended Resources for Speech Development

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/files/docs/infoed/PlowingNewGround.pdf>

Plowing New Ground, The 75th Anniversary History of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, by Dan K. Utley with Rusty Ray This is a chronicle of promise, community cooperation and a celebration of human ingenuity and perseverance as people weathered the effects of terrible dust storms in the 1930's which ultimately led to the state and nation's creation of soil and water conservation districts. (Highly recommended resource)

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ydd01>

In the latter half of the 1930s the southern plains were devastated by drought, wind erosion, and great dust storms. Some of the storms rolled far eastward, darkening skies all the way to the Gulf and Atlantic coasts. The areas most severely affected were western Texas, eastern New Mexico, the Oklahoma Panhandle, western Kansas, and eastern Colorado. This ecological and economic disaster and the region where it happened came to be known as the Dust Bowl.

http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_02.html

The most visible evidence of how dry the 1930s became was the dust storm. Tons of topsoil were blown off barren fields and carried in storm clouds for hundreds of miles. Technically, the driest region of the Plains – southeastern Colorado, southwest Kansas and the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas – became known as the Dust Bowl, and many dust storms started there. But the entire region, and eventually the entire country, was affected.

http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/res/div/ocp/drought/dust_storms.shtml

The Dust Bowl drought of the 1930s was one of the worst environmental disasters of the Twentieth Century anywhere in the world. Three million people left their farms on the Great Plains during the drought and half a million migrated to other states, almost all to the West.

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/green-science/dust-bowl-cause.htm>

When pioneers headed west in the late 19th century, many couldn't resist the lure of the tall grassy land in the semiarid Midwestern and southern plains of the [United States](#). They settled there to farm. They were prosperous in the decades that followed, but when the 1930s rolled in, so did strong winds, drought and [clouds](#) of dust that plagued nearly 75 percent of the United States between 1931 and 1939 [source: [PBS](#)]. The era became known as the legendary **Dust Bowl**.

<http://www.history.com/news/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-dust-bowl>

Explore 10 surprising facts about the environmental disaster that ravaged the southern Plains in the 1930s.

<http://www.trinity.edu/jdunn/dustbowl.htm>

"Dust Bowl" was a term born in the hard times from the people who lived in the drought-stricken region during the great depression. The term was first used in a dispatch from Robert Geiger, an AP correspondent in Guymon, and within a few short hours the term was used all over the nation.

<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/swcds/locatormap>

This link is provided for the convenience of the student to locate the office of their local soil and water conservation district. The student should click on the State District (geographical area in which they live) and then click on their respective home county. There they will find their local soil and water conservation district's contact information.

Specific Instructions: The speech must be between *six and eight minutes in length*.
For specific rules and requirements relating to the contest, consult the Degree Check Guidelines.

Objective of Speech

The objectives of the speech are as follows:

1. The speaker is expected to demonstrate knowledge on how and what caused the great dust storms of the 1930's.
2. The speaker should be able to explain the national efforts in the 1930's to deal with the catastrophic effects of wind erosion.
3. The speaker should be able to identify the national and Texas state leaders who played a significant role in getting laws passed to protect the soil and water resources in the state.
4. The speaker is expected to demonstrate general knowledge about what the early Texas organizers of the soil and water conservation district program in Texas wanted with respect to a state law.
5. The speaker should be able to explain when his/her local soil and water conservation district was formed and what role it played in combating the effects of the turmoil of the "dirty 30's". Perhaps the speaker can emphasize how many conservation plans are currently in effect on X number of acres in the local SWCD to demonstrate a historical bridge from the past to the present on why voluntary conservation programs on private lands have been successful.



Speech Outline

Introduction

- Introduce the theme “From the Era of the Dust Bowl to the Present: Commemorating 75 Years of Soil and Water Conservation”
- Set the tone of the speech with some thought provoking quote about the era of the “Dust Bowl which led to the formation of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and local soil and water conservation districts.”

Body of Speech

- State some facts about why soil management and protection is a critical issue facing Texas citizens today.
- From interviews and discussion with local soil and water conservation district personnel (USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service personnel, a soil and water conservation district employee, or a conservation district director) discuss ways in which the local soil and water conservation district has evolved with respect to early program priorities to present day priorities.
- Discuss how local communities, the state and nation benefit from conservation programs and practices utilized on agricultural lands.

Conclusion

- How do you visualize carrying the theme, “From the Era of the Dust Bowl to the Present: Commemorating 75 Years of Soil and Water Conservation “ into the future?

** It is not required that the above prompt questions be addressed in the speech as chronologically listed. The student has the flexibility to rearrange the prompt questions in a manner that permits a smooth flow of delivery. The student also has the flexibility to introduce other concepts into his or her speech that he or she feels relevant to the presentation.*

Soil and Water Conservation District Consultation Affidavit

I certify that _____ consulted with
the _____ Soil and Water Conservation
District in preparation for the 2015 Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking
Contest (“From the Era of the Dust Bowl to the Present: Commemorating 75 Years of
Soil and Water Conservation”).

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(SWCD Representative Signature)

(Date)

(This form should be submitted along with the speech.)

