

4-H Communication Fact Sheet 1.0

Kansas 4-H Presentation Overview

Kansas 4-H members have been learning to speak skillfully before an audience for more than 100 years. It is often one of the things people say they most remember about their 4-H experiences — before participating in 4-H, they could not speak comfortably in front of an audience. Through 4-H, thousands of youth have learned the skills necessary to clearly organize and present ideas and instructions through project talks, demonstrations, illustrated talks and public speaking.

4-H members and presentations

Every 4-H member profits in some way from planning and presenting a project talk, demonstration, illustrated talk or public speech. Shy, retiring members will develop the ability to express themselves, become part of the group and develop more interest in 4-H.

Even confident members will learn to organize, to complete a job and to establish a standard of excellence for themselves and others.

Good presenters are made, not born. Presenting is a skill that must be learned, just as other skills are.

Value of presentations

The real value of a presentation is to the member who prepares and presents it. Poise, confidence and self-assurance grow each time a presentation is given. Members also learn cooperation and appreciation for the work of others. In addition, a presentation provides members the opportunity to develop in a variety of areas:

- Work on something they like and are interested in.
- Learn new information and, consequently, learn a great deal more about the subject and project.
- Acquire the skill of speaking and performing more easily before groups.
- Learn to plan and organize their thoughts so they can transmit ideas more clearly.
- Tell others about things they are learning. Presentations emphasize the practical application of things they learn.

Presentations teach life skills

Giving presentations in 4-H will teach members many skills that have value later in life, including these marketable skills:*

- How to organize thoughts in a logical manner
- How to find information and research a subject
- How to express ideas clearly and convincingly
- How to prepare visuals and use them to support the presentation
- How to listen to the opinions of others and accept feedback
- How to teach others
- How to manage time
- How to manage stress

**Introduction to Presentations by Roberta Lundeberg, 4-H Program Coordinator, Oregon State University, 2009.*

A healthy look at competition

Although not all talks given in 4-H will be competitive, members will be encouraged to give competitive talks at county 4-H days, regional 4-H days and perhaps at the Kansas State Fair.

4-H members who participate competitively will be evaluated in terms of content and delivery. Each type of presentation — including project talks, demonstrations, illustrated talks and public speaking — has a separate scoresheet for constructive feedback from a judge or evaluator.

The purpose of the evaluation or scoresheet is to help members accept and benefit from constructive criticism. The evaluation is designed to give feedback to help members improve their performances.

Members or parents may disagree with the ribbon the judge gave the 4-H member's talk. Keep in mind that every judge reacts differently to a presentation, and their likes and dislikes will vary.

All youth need to develop healthy attitudes toward competition. Throughout life, youth will be in situations in and out of school where they will be judged

and compared with peers or set project or presentation standards. Competition should be an exciting experience, not something youth dread or fear.

Competition, done the right way, is a way to motivate youth to work hard and to try to do their best. Parents and other adults should help youth put the experience in perspective — there is something to be learned and gained from doing one's best, whether or not a top ribbon or award was received for the effort. Youth — and adults — often learn more from failures or mistakes because they provide opportunities for improvement and growth.

Ways to encourage members

4-H'ers and leaders should encourage other members to develop confidence so they are willing to give a presentation when asked. The following suggestions help build confidence in members:

- Show a genuine interest and faith in their ability. Not all are endowed with the same ability, but regardless of ability level, each member has some potential.
- Offer needed help and guidance. Remember — some will need more help than others, but there is a difference between helping and doing. Members have the right to expect and receive help from leaders.
- Encourage parents to be interested and helpful.
- Emphasize the good things about presentations. Help members see and relate values derived from giving presentations. Give encouragement for efforts.

The starting point

The presentation starts in the project meeting and from there can move to the local club, to the local community and beyond as the member practices and gains skill. Encourage members to start their presentation program in their project group.

Good local leaders include presentations in almost every project meeting, local club meeting or program. With the youngest members, the presentation may last only a minute or two. If the beginners get on their feet and say and do something while everyone watches and listens, they have overcome a hurdle that could get bigger the longer they wait.

Types of presentations

Different types of presentations serve different purposes and are appropriate for different age groups and audiences. Table 1 on page 4 is a summary of the material presented below.

Project talk

- Tells about a 4-H project.
- Is for members 11 years old and younger.
- Does not require visuals.

The first project talk for a young member might be an interview with an older member.

The project talk for younger members is a short talk about a project that tells about the member's experiences in the project. It gives some information relating to the project, and it promotes the project.

Demonstration

- Is to teach by showing how.
- Involves making or doing something. (There often is a finished end product, such as a salad.)
- Is for all ages.

Anyone who has ever shown someone how to show an animal, bake a cake, sew on a button or service an air cleaner on a small engine has given a demonstration. Demonstrations may be given individually or in a team of two.

Illustrated talk

- Is to teach by telling how.
- Shows a finished product instead of making one.
- Uses pictures, charts, models, equipment and other types of visual aids.
- Is for all ages.

Some members choose to teach by using the illustrated talk rather than a demonstration. Illustrated talks may be given individually or in a team of two.

The demonstration and the illustrated talk are both excellent teaching methods. One method is of no greater importance or value than the other.

In deciding what type of presentation to give, the member needs to consider which method will be the most effective for teaching.

Public speaking

- Is a speech that persuades, informs, entertains or inspires.
- Is for 4-H members 14 years and older.
- Allows use of visuals that complement the speech. Visuals are not used in competition.
- Questions are optional.
- Generally last 5 to 15 minutes.

Public speaking is the skill of promoting or presenting an issue through a persuasive, entertaining, informational or inspiring speech. Effective speakers are not necessarily polished or perfect. However, good speakers strive to be energetic, direct and open in their message. Speakers should be actively involved with their topic and their audience.

The five senses and learning

Learning takes place through the five senses: seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling. Research indicates 85 percent of learning comes through the sense of sight, 8 percent through hearing, 3 percent through feeling, 2 percent through tasting and 2 percent through smelling. All presentations include seeing and hearing, but some presentations involve all five senses. Effective presentations involve as many senses as possible.

Other resources to help you

4-H Communication Fact Sheets:

4H975 *Kansas 4-H Project Talk Scoresheet*

4H976 *Kansas 4-H Demonstration and Illustrated Talk Scoresheet*

4H977 *Kansas 4-H Public Speaking Scoresheet*

4H979 *4-H Project Talks*

4H980 *4-H Demonstrations*

4H981 *4-H Demonstration or Illustrated Talk Outline Form*

4H982 *4-H Illustrated Talks*

4H983 *4-H Public Speaking*

4H984 *Effective Presentation Tips*

4H985 *Preparing and Using Visual Aids*

4H986 *Presentation Brainstorming Activity*

Ultimate goal

The ultimate goal in any presentation experience — whether it is a project talk, demonstration, illustrated talk or public speech — is for members to complete the presentation with a good feeling about themselves and what they have done and learned.

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Table 1. Different types of presentations.

Criteria	Project Talk	Illustrated Talk	Demonstration	Public Speaking
Format	Tells about	Tells about, but does not actively do or make a finished product	Shows how. Makes or does something. Often ends with a finished product.	Promotes or presents an issue
Purpose	To inform	To teach	To teach	To persuade, inform, entertain or inspire
Age	7 to 11 years old	Any age	Any age	14 years and older
Visuals	Optional but not required. Any visuals used should enhance the talk.	Pictures, charts, models, etc. Electronic visuals OK.	Pictures, charts, lists of parts/procedures. Any visuals used should enhance talk. Electronic visuals OK.	Use as appropriate. Do not use in competition.
Questions	Not to be asked	Asked for by presenter.	Asked for by presenter.	Optional; asked for by presenter.

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