



4-H Static Exhibit Judge's Guidelines

Why judge exhibits?

4-H Achievement Days & Fairs provide an opportunity for youth to enter static exhibits they have completed while learning about a particular project area.

Entering exhibits to be judged can foster the development of several life skills among youth such as communication, critical thinking and learning to learn. These skills are encouraged through engaging youth in learning and providing an opportunity to master skills.

Engagement in Learning

The judging experience extends the opportunity for youth to not only be involved in learning through the actual work they did to complete the exhibit, but also by reflecting on that experience through evaluation and applying new knowledge in the future. Learning is a hands-on and minds-on process!

Through the judging experience, youth are able to build a connection with a person knowledgeable in the project area in order to develop a deeper understanding.

By evaluating the quality of the exhibit based on standards of excellence and developmentally appropriate expectations the judge helps youth progress toward self-set goals, brainstorm future learning goals and anticipate reaching them.

Engagement is also about a spark, and being excited about learning. A judge's interest and enthusiasm in a project area can be contagious!

Engagement means focusing on learning as a way of improving (getting better) instead of proving (that one is the best or better than someone else).

Opportunity for Mastery

Mastery is about developing knowledge and demonstrating the competent use of that knowledge. It is important to develop this competence because youth derive a lasting sense of self-esteem from "feeling good about doing well".

Mastery is a process that occurs over time. The level

of mastery depends on the developmental ability and experience of the individual child or youth.

The projects and activities in 4-H are the vehicles that we use to help youth develop mastery. Mastery can occur at higher levels when we work together and learn with others, such as through the exhibit judging process.

Settings that promote mastery encourage youth to seek out challenges, and focus on self-improvement, rather than comparing themselves to their peers.

Tips for Judging

Be informed - Review resources: 4-H Division State Fair Handbook, Score Sheets, Project Materials, etc.

Look the part - Dress appropriately and bring along a smile.

Be prompt

Use your sense of humor

Be tactful

Offer constructive criticism

Make decisions quickly and firmly

Begin by examining the entry form for helpful information:

- Age of child and number of years in project
- Clues to the maturity level of the child, his/her fine motor skills, and intellectual comprehension
- Consider what a child might have to work with, for example, limited resources available in areas

Interview Questions

- Why did you select this project?
- How did you do this... (specific task?)
- What was your favorite part of preparing this exhibit?
- What was your favorite part of this 4-H project?
- What was most challenging?
- What would you change next time?

Four Important Words in Judging

Friendly • Fair
Firm • Consistent



Using the Sandwich Method of Providing Feedback

- Start with two positives
- Discuss one way to improve
- Add another positive
- End with a one or two word descriptor



Developmental Milestones

Knowledge of developmental milestones and competencies will help determine what youth are capable of accomplishing at different ages. Keep in mind that no two individuals develop at the same pace, but growth and development do tend to progress in predictable stages.

The 4-H Ribbon System

Purple

- The exhibit is outstanding.
- It exceeds the standards in every criteria.
- Designates superior work — clearly superior in attracting attention and arousing interest, conveys message, design, originality and workmanship.

Blue

- The exhibit is very good.
- Exceeds the standard in most criteria.
- Designates excellent work — exhibit meets standards in all major aspects.

Red

- The exhibit meets all criteria.
- Designates average work — exhibit lacks one or more qualities.

White

- The exhibit needs improvement.
- The exhibit does not meet the criteria in one or several areas.
- Designates room for improvement — exhibit clearly lacks several qualities. 4-H member is provided with suggestions.

Cloverbuds

4-H Cloverbuds (youth in Grades K-3) may enter exhibits on a non-competitive level. At this age positive reinforcement and encouragement are more important than the child's knowledge and the exhibit quality. Emphasis is placed on encouraging the child to share what they liked or learned about their exhibit/work/activity. Cloverbuds can choose from a variety of colorful participation ribbons for their entry.

Judges' Resources

SD State Fair 4-H Division Handbook

4-H Exhibit Score Sheets

Judges Training Materials (availability dependent on project area)

Tips for Interview Judging Handout

Agas and Stages of Youth Development

Sources:

KState Research & Extension Creating a Positive Experience for 4-H Youth at the County Fair

University of MN Extension 4-H

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

