

Making the Best 4-H Clubs Better – Virtually

Intended Audience

- 4-H Club Members

Lesson Objectives

Club members and parents will:

- Identify important information to include in 4-H project displays
- Understand and apply basic design principles to make their own project displays

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies

- Pencils
- Paper
- Sticky Notes (variety of colors)
- Scissors

Do Ahead

- Review Curriculum Overview
- Review Lesson
- Let members know what supplies they will need to gather before lesson begins

Blue Ribbon Project Exhibits

BACKGROUND

Most 4-H members work for weeks to complete their 4-H projects in time for judging week. However, members have a very short amount of time to communicate all they have learned about a project to a judge during their county's judging event, often only about 5 minutes. How do members let their judge know what they have learned from the project in only 5 minutes?!?

Project exhibits or displays can help tell the story. Having a visual aide can remind members of important points to cover, allow judges to SEE what the member has done, and present what the member has learned in an appealing and fun way.

In counties conducting judging, exhibits may be the only way members have to communicate what they have done. In those counties, judges cannot ask the right questions to get at the information they want. They have to select the winners solely on what they see. Project exhibits convey a message to those looking at them. Let's make sure they say what we want them to say!

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Making a Mock Exhibit

Making a Mock Exhibit - Have each member lay out their own mini project exhibit. They should have a blank sheet of paper, several sticky note pages, scissors, and a pencil. After discussing display content and layout, described below, give members 5-10 minutes to create their exhibits using the suggested materials. You may want to try giving them a silly topic for their exhibit, so they don't have to spend time coming up with an idea. After members have time to complete their mock exhibit, give each member the ability to show and tell about their mini project exhibit on the screen.

DISPLAY CONTENT & LAYOUT

- What information should be displayed? Examples include what they did, what they learned, why they chose the project, relevant pictures, project helpers, relationship to real world issues, career connections, and so on.



Sources

(Note: The sources may contain information that IS NOT from your state or county. Disregard any size/dimensions listed.)

- Michigan State University
4-H Youth Development,
Communications Toolkit: Fun,
Skill-Building
Activities to Do With Kids,
https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/236/67553/4-H_Communications_Toolkit-Intro.pdf
- Iowa State University
Extension & Outreach, 4-H
Exhibit Tip Sheet,
<http://www.extension.ias.tate.edu/4hfiles/projects/hotsheets/PosterTipSheet.pdf>
- New Mexico State University
Cooperative Extension
Service,
Making Posters,
<https://aces.nmsu.edu/4h/documents/making204-h20posters-fixed.pdf>

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*We are indebted to the original author of the previous version of this lesson plan,
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Reviewed by

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- Remind members of how we read – left to right. Our eyes are trained to follow this order. Place things so that the eye will follow the information in that way.
- Lettering – if using printed wording, change font size and letter spacing for emphasis only. If writing, be sure to use line guides and write neatly and check spelling.
- Color – can help members create interest and visual appeal but can overwhelm viewers if it's overdone.
- “White space” is open, empty space on the display and is an important part of the design. It's hard to read information when items are crowded.

Additional Information: When members work on their full-size displays, there are a couple of additional things to remember:

- Follow directions: if the county gives dimensions/sizes to follow – DO IT! Ability to follow directions is an easy way for the judge to evaluate the exhibits.
- Size: if a member's display will be viewed from a distance – it's at the back of the club's fair booth and judges/viewers cannot walk inside the booth – the member should use the following rough estimate of letter size to be easily read:

Letter Size Viewing Distance

¼ inch	8 feet
½ inch	16 feet

- Being judged virtually? Best practice would be to take a still picture of the project, set as your background, or share your screen, so that they judge can look at the project while the member is giving presentation. Judges have a hard time trying to see what is on your board when the camera is always moving.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- Discuss what worked and what didn't with your members. If doing a full-size display, how could it be done differently?
- What was chosen to be displayed and why?

Apply:

- Try applying your project to a platform like Flip Grid to see how it looks and what you would need to change.

EVALUATION

Place the following link in the chat for attendees to use to complete the evaluation for the session

go.osu.edu/bestbettervirtual .