



Demonstration Judging: A Message to Judges and Planners

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A demonstration helps others learn how to do something useful, perhaps in an easier or more practical way. Demonstration is one of the best methods of teaching others, because it involves visual and verbal presentations at the same time. Demonstrations help 4-H members:

- develop self confidence
- express their ideas clearly
- respond to questions
- acquire subject matter knowledge

Furthermore, demonstrations involve public speaking which can be very intimidating for young people. Demonstration judges can help make them less intimidating and instead a great experience.

Here are some pointers for judges:

- Review the demonstration score sheet prior to the event to be familiar with guidelines.
- Put 4-H'ers at ease with a smile and a pleasant tone of voice.
- Listen and use words kids will understand.
- When given the opportunity to ask questions avoid questions that can be answered with just yes or no. Ask --- How? Why? When? Where?
- Respect creativity and understand that emotions are high.
- Be sincere, specific in your comments, positive and friendly.
- Complete the score sheet including the numeric points and comments. The score sheet is the primary way 4-H'ers to receive feedback regarding their demonstration.

Those responsible for the demonstration event also play an important role in assuring the event is a positive experience.

General logistics:

- Provide participants an order for demonstrations so they can prepare and be ready to take the stage.
- Provide a time frame for demonstrations (usually 5-10 minutes) and be sure there is a time keeper. If a 4-H'er exceeds the time limit have the announcer or judge quietly tell the presenter their time is up. NOTE: some demonstrations time limits may vary. For example, egg demonstrations can advance to a national competition and that time frame is longer.
- Provide judges with supplies that will make their judging experience easier – clipboards for writing comments, pencils and plenty of score sheets, trash bags for utensils that were used for tasting food and drinking water.
- Introduce the demonstrator to the audience before the demonstration begins.
- When all demonstrations are complete judges should retire to a quiet place and determine final rankings and/or those who will advance to other events like the State Fair.
- Publicly announce the results and recognize and thank all 4-H'ers for their participation.

The demonstration process begins with planning, practice, and preparation. Younger 4-H members likely will need the help of an adult to get their demonstration set up and have everything in place. Older 4-H members should recognize that part of mastery is learning how to plan and prepare and should be able to prep and stage their demonstration without the help of an adult. This also includes removing items after the demonstration and completeing any necessary clean-up.

Other 4-H publications found at <http://4h.missouri.edu/> related to demonstrations include:

LG730, Judging: 4-H Teaching Technique

LG731, Conference Judging: Helping 4-H Members Evaluate Their Work

LG744, 4-H Demonstrations