



Clowning Project Brief

Learning Objectives

- Know the types of clowns & how each is unique
- Learn techniques of applying clown make-up and creating a clown costume
- Realize the importance of the Six Pillars of Character to clown etiquette
- Discover the important historical role clowns have played in entertainment and political satire
- Build communication and leadership skills

Fair Projects

- Create a clown face and costume
- Illustrate the history of clowning
- Make and use clown props
- Educational display about balloon animals

Demonstration Ideas

- Do a demonstration on another topic as a clown
- The role of clowns throughout history
- Props, clothing, makeup and/or wigs
- Negative media stereotypes vs. real clowning
- Developing gags and skits

Field Trips

- Visit a circus or other performance where clowns will be involved
- Schedule a meeting with a professional clown, and come prepared with a lot of questions
- Visit a nursing home or retirement center, then discuss as a club how a clown visit could work
- Visit places like the International Clown Hall of Fame in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
<http://www.theclownmuseum.org>

Ideas for Speech Topics

- Clowns – the first people to enjoy free speech!
- Different types of clowns and their personalities
- Ways clowns make the world a better place
- Clowns in cultures throughout the world
- Creating unique makeup and costumes
- The importance of laughter

Critical Thinking

- How does the work of the Commedia del'arte continue to have influence today?
- Why were clowns (or “fools”) in early times among the only members of some communities to enjoy free speech?
- What are some communication skills a clown must have to be effective?
- What are some safety considerations a clown must keep in mind, from balloons to big shoes?

Community Service

- Appear as a clown for local events (parades, festivals, etc.)
- Hold a clown performance at a nursing home, retirement center, kindergarten class, or other places that might value the experience
- Teach younger children the art of clowning
- Assist in the Fair building as a clown

Science & Technology

- Take an Internet field trip, visiting some of history's great clowning performances, as well as those of pantomime artists and puppeteers
- Study how different lighting and colors affect the mood of the performance and audience
- Experiment with different styles of music. Which is the best fit for the character and mood you wish to create in your performance?



Show Me Character

Trustworthiness

- Always show up ready and prepared at meetings, rehearsals and performances
- Practice at home and know your routine; everyone is counting on you to do your part
- Be dependable and help out to make sure the entire performance is the best possible

Respect

- Value every clown's differences and utilize them to make the act stronger
- Portray your clown character with integrity to their clown type's personality
- Respect the art of clowning by always putting your best effort into every performance and by adhering to clown etiquette while in costume

Responsibility

- Be on time or early to practices, meetings and performances
- Know your clown character and your routine
- Help others when you can, so the entire performance is as great as possible
- Take time to learn your lines, and to know about the tools and technology you are using

Fairness

- Seek first to understand before judging the intentions of others
- Take turns being in the spotlight; that way everyone shares the work and the limelight
- Listen to everyone's ideas before making a group decision
- Be open-minded when choosing roles in skits and gags; it may not sound like what you want to do at first, but may work out in the end.

Caring

- Share what you have learned with others
- Go out of your way to perform for a local group of young or elderly people
- Resolve disagreements out of costume and away from the stage
- Appreciate your fellow project members and everyone that makes your high quality performances possible

Citizenship

- Know your group's goals and help it reach those goals
- Do what is best for the common good of your group and your community
- Share important information in an interesting way through clowning
- Offer your skills to organizations in your community
- Use your craft to help promote messages and ideas that benefit the community
- Always be a good role model

Show Me Standards

Missouri 4-H members will acquire the knowledge and skills to gather, analyze and apply information and ideas, communicate effectively, recognize and solve problems, make decisions and act as responsible members of society.

4-H members will acquire a solid foundation which includes knowledge of:

- **Communication Arts** – participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas; identifying and evaluating relationships between language and culture.
- **Fine Arts** – process and techniques for the production, exhibition or performance of one or more of the visual or performed arts.

Resources

231 Clowning

Y620 4-H Project Record
Y2310 The Art of Clowning
LG2310 The Art of Clowning Leader's Guide

241 Communications Toolkit: Fun Skill-Building Activities to Do with Kids

To sample the communication toolkit, go to <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/toolkit.html>

Communications Toolkit 4H1560 available from Michigan State University at: <http://web2.msue.msu.edu/bulletins/inventorysearch.cfm>

To Order

- Extension Publications online at <http://extension.missouri.edu/explore/shop/> or by phone 1-800-292-0969
- For additional resources check with your local University of Missouri Extension Center or the 4-H Source Book at <http://www.4-hmall.org/educationalresources.aspx>.