



Getting Started in 4-H Demonstrations

Everyday you listen to others and they listen to you. You share ideas with your parents or friends trying to be as clear as possible so they understand what you mean. That is what demonstrations and illustrated talks are all about—learning to organize and present ideas so that others will understand you.

When you show others how to plant a flower or how to make a rocket, you are demonstrating. You may use posters, pictures and charts to help explain your idea. Learning how to plan and give a demonstration will help you at school, express your ideas to other people, and in the future, get a job.

Your 4-H club is a good place to practice giving a demonstration.

Interesting facts:

- *Only two out of ten people remember what they hear.*
- *Seven out of ten people remember what they SEE and HEAR.*

Planning a Demonstration

Picking a topic is the first step in getting started on a demonstration. You might pick something related to a 4-H project that you have learned, a hobby you have, or something of interest to the entire club.

Your parents, leaders or others might have suggestions for you. Pick a topic that you are comfortable with and know something about or can find the information.

The length of a demonstration can vary from a short three to five minute “mini” demonstration for a younger member or first time dem-

onstrator. More experienced members or a team demonstration (a demonstration with two or more members) may take 10-15 minutes.

As you plan your demonstration think of the Three main parts:

1. **Introduction**—this should include who you are, what your demonstration is about and why it is important.
2. **The Main Body**—this is where you include all the ideas you want to share with your audience or the “show and tell” part as you go through the steps to explain your topic.
3. **Conclusion or Summary**—this is the “wrap-up” where you help your audience remember the most important points or steps and display a finished product if you have one. You will also make a closing statement so your audience will know you are finished and answer any questions.

The Planning Sheet

Preparing an outline of your demonstration will help you organize your ideas. A planning sheet, like the one shown, may serve this purpose.

For most people writing down each of the main ideas or steps with some notes is better than memorizing word for word. As you practice and present the demonstration, discuss each idea or step using your own words.

Research the Information

Once you have picked a topic, find as much information as you can. You might use 4-H project bulletins, check out the library, or



“surf the web”. Ask your parents, leaders or teachers for ideas about resources that you might check out.

It is probably easiest to plan the body of your demonstration first, then do the conclusion and introduction.

Preparing to Demonstrate

Once you have your demonstration planned out, you will need to start gathering the materials, equipment and supplies you will need. You will want to have a few posters or other visual aids to help illustrate the points you want to make. You might have posters that:

- List the main steps;
- List the supplies that are needed;
- Illustrate some of the steps; or
- Have charts that support what you are trying to say.

You might use other visual aids to help make your point, such as slides, Power Point presentations, transparencies, pictures, charts, etc. Visual aids can be used to show something that:

- Is normally too small to be seen by a group;
- Is too large to bring to the meeting;
- Is hard to explain with just words;
- Is difficult to remember; or
- Needs special emphasis.

Some things to remember about visual aids are the lettering needs to be neat and large enough to be seen by the group. Visuals should be simple and bold, not cluttered with detail.

You will want to be prepared, so practice your demonstration several times before the meeting. Make a list of the supplies and things you need to take so you don't forget anything.

Remember to follow your plan as you give your demonstration. SMILE...and concentrate on having the audience understand your ideas.

When your demonstration is done, remember to take care of everything you have used. Clean up any mess you might have made and return any items that you have borrowed.

Most importantly, take time to review your demonstration. How well did it go? You might ask your leader to give you suggestions of tips of what went well and what you can do to improve the next time.





4-H Demonstration Check List

- INTRODUCTION—Interesting, short, complete.

- TOPIC—Worthwhile and practical, related to project or activity.

- APPEARANCE—Dress appropriate, well groomed, good posture.

- PRESENTATION—Voice natural, words distinct, poised, friendly, convincing, well organized.

- SUBJECT MATTER—Emphasize important points, information accurate, complete, usable, knows the subject.

- EQUIPMENT—Suitable for demonstration, good visual aids if needed.

- CONCLUSION—Stress important points in summary, show finished product if there was one, definite closing, questions answered satisfactorily.

Most of all have fun sharing what you have learned with your fellow members!

This information was adapted from “Getting Started in 4-H Demo Talks” by Kenneth Schmidt, Associate State Leader, 4-H, University of Nebraska.





4-H Demonstration Planning Sheet

Topic: _____

INTRODUCTION—What is the topic and why is it important, etc.

- A. Attention Getter
- B. Information About Topic
- C. Related information about demonstrator

BODY—Description, explanation and information of topic

What to do

What to say

What visuals needed

CONCLUSION—What was accomplished, what did it mean, etc.

- A. Summary—Most important points or steps, “big ideas”.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- B. Think about possible questions
- C. Closing statement

