

Kansas 4-H members have been learning to speak skillfully before an audience for more than 100 years. It is often one of the things people say they most remember about their 4-H experiences -- before participating in 4-H, they could not speak comfortably in front of an audience. Through 4-H, thousands of youth have learned the skills necessary to clearly organize and present ideas and instructions through project talks, demonstrations, illustrated talks and public speaking.

Every 4-H member profits in some way from planning and presenting a project talk, demonstration, illustrated talk or public speech. Shy, retiring members will develop the ability to express themselves, become part of the group and develop more interest in 4-H.

Even confident members will learn to organize, to complete a job and to establish a standard of excellence for themselves and others. Good presenters are made, not born. Presenting is a skill that must be learned, just as other skills are.

The real value of a presentation is to the member who prepares and presents it. Poise, confidence and self-assurance grow each time a presentation is given. Members also learn cooperation and appreciation for the work of others.

Giving presentations in 4-H will teach members many skills that have value later in life, including these marketable skills:

- How to organize thoughts in a logical manner
- How to find information and research a subject
- How to express ideas clearly and convincingly
- How to prepare visuals and use them to support the presentation
- How to listen to the opinions of others and accept feedback
- How to teach others
- How to manage time
- How to manage stress

Learning takes place through the five senses: seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling. Research indicates 85 percent of learning comes through the sense of sight, 8 percent through hearing, 3 percent through feeling, 2 percent through tasting and 2 percent through smelling. All presentations include seeing and hearing, but some presentations involve all five senses. Effective presentations involve as many senses as possible.

The purpose of the evaluation or score sheet at 4-H Club Days is to help members accept and benefit from constructive criticism. The evaluation is designed to give feedback to help members improve their performances.

All youth need to develop healthy attitudes toward competition. Throughout life, youth will be in situations in and out of school where they will be judged and compared with peers or set project or presentation standards. Competition should be an exciting experience, not something youth dread or fear.

Competition, done the right way, is a way to motivate youth to work hard and to try to do their best. Youth, and adults, often learn more from failures or mistakes because they provide opportunities for improvement and growth. The ultimate goal in any presentation experience is for members to complete the presentation with a good feeling about themselves and what they have done and learned.

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Twin Creeks Extension District, Norton office, 785-877-5755.

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## **Article Header**

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#### **“Chasing Clovers”**

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