

Judging and Award Guidelines For 4-H Presentations

The Judge's Role

While your primary role is an evaluator, you are also a teacher and an encourager. 4-H youth should learn from this experience and want to improve on their next presentation.

The judge of a presentation is expected to:

- Rate each presentation according to the 4-H guidelines.
- Completely fill out evaluation sheets. All boxes should be checked, and comments should be written for each of the main sections as well.
- Offer constructive suggestions for improvement.
- Be consistent and fair in your evaluations.
- Dress appropriately and professionally.

You should have read all the material on Presentations on the state website. It is important to understand that there is a difference between 4-H presentations and those done in other venues. Be sure to read the State Fair book for criteria on each class.

When judging 4-H Presentation Contests, the following guidelines will help provide consistency in evaluating and placing.

Champion/Reserve Champion/State Selected

If most of the checks are in the “well done” boxes, consider this presentation for champion ribbons.

Blue Award

Blue awards should have a mixture of “well done” and “satisfactory” checks. There should be no more than one check for “could improve.” The time limit for the class should be met.

Red Award

Red awards should be mainly “satisfactory” with a few checks in the “could improve” boxes. If the presenter narrowly misses the time limit for the class, the presentation may be awarded a red if it meets all other requirements.

White Award

White awards will have many checks in the “could improve” boxes. White awards should also be given to presentations that are grossly under or over time. Even if all other criteria have been met and are at or above satisfactory, a presentation that fails to meet the time limit by more than 1-2 minutes should be awarded a white.

While we are striving for consistency in judging, remember that we may have different expectations for juniors than we have for seniors.

Use the following rubric for checking the boxes on the evaluation sheet.

Judging Rubric for all Presentations

	Well Done	Satisfactory	Could Improve
Manner and Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicely dressed in way that matches topic • Excellent posture, relaxed movement • Steady eye contact with judge and audience • Facial expressions match verbal language and are genuine and add to presentation • Extremely poised and comfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressed nicely but not matching or enhancing topic • Posture adequate; movements sometimes rough or uncomfortable • Has eye contact most of the time • Facial expressions are neutral • May have slight fidgeting or seem a bit uncomfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not appropriately dressed for a 4-H venue • Poor posture; Very little or no movement • Limited eye contact • Little to no facial expressions or gestures; not connected to verbal • Fidgets a lot or seems very uncomfortable
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural even delivery • Volume that the audience and judge can hear easily • Speed is easy to listen to and understand • Diction is excellent. • Seniors: no notes, JR/INT: very limited glances at notes without becoming distracted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some variance in delivery • Volume slightly too high or too soft • Slightly too fast or slow • Diction is adequate. • SR: some brief glances at notes. JR/INT: some continuous reading of notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncomfortable and unpredictable delivery • Volume either too soft to be understood or too loud • Significantly too fast or too slow to allow comprehension • Many errors in diction. • Extensive reading of notes
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention getting, and interesting • Purpose and importance made clear to audience • Audience has clear idea of what is coming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction adequate but not exciting • Purpose stated but audience may have questions • Limited outline of what will be included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely short, lacking interest, or missing introduction • No discernable purpose or reason to listen • Approach seems random; no overview
Subject Matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting and unique topic that is appropriate to age and venue • Central theme clearly established • Clear, logical sequence that audience follows easily • All information is accurate and from a variety of credible sources • Topic is covered completely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic acceptable but not special • Appears to have a central theme but may have questions • Mostly logical sequence • Most information is accurate but may be from a limited number of sources • Topic covered but left with feeling there could have been more information given. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic is not appropriate for age or venue • Theme not clear • Little logic to presentation. Audience gets lost during presentation • Inaccurate or missing information. Sources not given. • Presentation is incomplete. Topic may have been too wide or narrow.

	Well Done	Satisfactory	Could Improve
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter prepares audience for conclusion • Presenter has excellent recap of major points • Conclusion ties together with introduction • Gives closure to audience • Presenter provides references of appropriate quality and quantity • Repeats questions and has excellent responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate recap of major points • Conclusion is interesting but does not match introduction • References okay but could have had more with more variety • Presenter usually repeats question and answers adequately although maybe not fully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not give conclusion, or it is lacking in length or quality • Abruptly stops speaking, or ends with "That's All" • No references given or lack quality or quantity • Does not ask for questions, or responds inadequately to questions
Visuals (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds a special touch to presentation • All audience members can easily read or see visuals • Made with craftsmanship and are of high quality • Incorporated smoothly into presentation. Never a distraction, and presenter confident using them • Enhance presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither benefits nor distracts from presentation • Some audience members struggle to read or see visual • A few lapses in craftsmanship, but mainly adequate • Visuals are adequately used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visuals distract from presentation • Judge and audience members can't read or see visuals • Flaws in workmanship or lacking in design • Seem to be an afterthought. Not needed. • Presenter has trouble using them smoothly
Effect on Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience was engaged and learning • Presentation held audience's attention and was enjoyable to listen to • Made impact on audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience had some learning • Some parts were engaging for audience • Presenter lost audience's attention at times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter did not teach or engage audience • Audience became bored or distracted • Audience seemed confused
Team (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team members worked together effectively • The conversation flowed from one to the other seamlessly • Transitions were easy to follow • Evenly balanced between members • Presenting as a team added value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team members worked together adequately • A few rough or awkward transitions between members • Mostly balanced between members. • Presenting as a team neither distracted nor added value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not seem to work as a team • Team members talk over each other, or have long pauses • Confusing transitions or no transitions between members • One member significantly overshadowed other member • Presenting as a team distracts from presentation
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had time to cover subject • Completed within time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject was slightly too big or too small for presentation type • Was within a minute of the set time limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject significantly did not fit time limits • Was 1 ½ to 2 minutes or more outside of time limits