

## County Fair Exhibit Ideas

The county fair . . . what a great time it is! Every summer, families flock to county fairs to see the latest 4-H project exhibits. Exhibiting is a fun way for you to showcase your project work. The following list of exhibit ideas is based on the latest 4-H curriculum. Use it to generate project entries for your next county fair. If you're a county fair superintendent, use this list to enhance your county fair premium book.

### **COMMO1: Creative Wordworking**

1. A hand written "commonplace book"
2. A scrapbook or notebook of original poetry including at least one of the following: "found poem," nature poem, cinquaine, "telephone or vertical poem," or any other original poem
3. A poster about proper e-mail "etiquette"
4. A personal essay about why you keep a journal or diary (Note: journals and diaries should not be entered in the fair)
5. A handmade "few kind words book"
6. Any other piece of original creative writing (poem, short story, essay or play)

### **COMMO2: 4-H Public Speakers Handbook**

1. A collection of two or more items that document how you planned your speech; could include: speech planning worksheet, list of references, speech outline, note cards, etc.
2. A poster of stress reduction tips and suggestions for dealing with speech anxiety
3. A cassette or videotape of you practicing your speech, with a short note describing what you noticed when you listened to the tape

### **COMMO3: Crazy about Books – Group Projects**

1. An exhibit that includes books, props and visual aids to illustrate the books your group has read and discussed together
2. A poster of new words (and their definitions) that the members of your book group discovered while doing this project
3. A scrapbook or collage about the various books that were read and discussed together

### **COMMO3: Crazy about Books – Individual Projects**

1. An original book review about your favorite book
2. An original cover illustration for one of your favorite books
3. A poster illustrating your top 10 favorite books ever read
4. A cassette tape recording of yourself reading a children's book to a child, and note about who it was intended for

### **COMMO4: Voices from the Past**

1. A photo exhibit, scrapbook or collage about the things you discovered from the person you interviewed

2. An exhibit including photos and any other items you've gathered that relate to the project
3. A report, essay or computer document about the person you interviewed

**COMMO5: It's All in the Family**

1. A poster or collage that illustrates things families can do together instead of watching television
2. A scrapbook or notebook about books people in the family have read and talked about together
3. A family scrapbook of special events; birthday book; holiday book; or any other family journal that was created by *two or more* family members

**COMMO7: Communications Activities for 4-H Clubs – Group Projects**

1. A display of "paper plate collages" that club members created to illustrate their interests, talents and personal characteristics
2. A poster, signed by club members, listing rules and guidelines the club has created to make sure people treat each other with courtesy and respect
3. A photo exhibit or scrapbook with pictures of club members presenting "silly speeches" and team demonstrations at club meetings

## Tips for County Fair Exhibitors

When you enter a communications exhibit at the county fair, you'll be showing the public, and the judge, what you've learned in the project. Make your exhibit the best it can be. Here are some exhibiting tips:

### Creative Wordworking

1. Clarity: be clear in what you express; the meaning should be easy to understand.
2. Creativity: express your original ideas imaginatively.
3. Organization: arrange your ideas and thoughts so they fit together into a logical arrangement.
4. Detail: thoughts, feelings and experiences should be described effectively.
5. Credibility: your piece should be believable. In the case of fiction, science fiction or fantasy writing, your piece should seem like it *could* be true.
6. Mechanics: you should use correct spelling and grammar.

### 4-H Public Speakers Handbook

The following checklist may be helpful when preparing and giving a 4-H public speech:

- I. Content and organization
  - A. Introduction
    1. Captures attention briefly and creatively
    2. Introduces subject matter and main points to be covered
  - B. Main body
    1. Discusses main points in an orderly fashion
    2. Presents accurate information clearly and understandably
    3. Material supports main points
  - C. Summary
    1. Briefly reinforces main points without introducing new ideas
    2. Ends strongly with an interesting statement (quote, challenge, etc.)
- II. Delivery
  - A. Appearance
    1. Neat and well groomed
    2. Appears confident and at ease
    3. Handles mistakes well
  - B. Audience contact
    1. Maintains eye contact
    2. Uses gestures naturally
    3. Uses correct grammar and pronunciation
    4. Voice is clearly heard and easy to understand

The following checklist may be helpful when preparing and giving a 4-H demonstration:

- I. Content and organization
  - A. Introduction
    - 1. Captures attention briefly and creatively
    - 2. Introduces subject matter
  - B. Main body
    - 1. Focuses on one main theme or idea
    - 2. Uses accurate information, presented in a logical sequence
    - 3. Demonstrates skills and procedures competently for the audience
  - C. Summary
    - 1. Briefly reinforces major theme without introducing new ideas
    - 2. Exhibits finished product (if appropriate)
    - 3. Invites questions and answers them directly
    - 4. Ends strongly with an interesting statement (quote, challenge, etc.)
- II. Delivery
  - A. Appearance
    - 1. Friendly and well groomed
    - 2. Handles mistakes well
  - B. Audience contact
    - 1. Maintains eye contact
    - 2. Uses correct grammar and pronunciation
    - 3. Voice is clearly heard and easy to understand
- III. Props
  - A. Equipment
    - 1. Equipment is suitably and appropriately arranged and handled
    - 2. Observes safety rules
    - 3. Is familiar and experienced with materials and procedures
  - B. Posters
    - 1. Signs and charts are neat, easy to read and used

### **Voices from the Past**

- 1. Photo exhibits, scrapbooks or collages should contain information that's been neatly and legibly recorded to describe what's been learned as a result of your interviews.
- 2. All photos and other items in your exhibit, scrapbook or collage should be clearly identified, attractively arranged and carefully mounted.
- 3. Organization structure and layout should be easy to follow and understand.

## **Tips for County Fair Judges**

If you want to be a county fair judge, the State 4-H Office and the Wisconsin Association of Fairs are developing a series of online training courses for county fair judges. For more information contact Wayne Brabender at [wayne.brabender@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:wayne.brabender@ces.uwex.edu). Wisconsin 4-H recommends that you use the following criteria to judge communication entries at county fairs.

## **4-H Public Speakers Handbook**

The underlying objective of the 4-H public speaking and demonstrating program has as much to do with what youth are learning about themselves as it does with the finer points of public speaking. For this reason it's important to consider the following when evaluating 4-H public speakers:

1. Focus your initial comments on what the speaker did well. Once you've provided some "good news" you can move on to point out where improvement is needed.
2. Concentrate on giving youth specific information about what needs to be corrected by pointing out specific steps to take in order to improve.
3. When you point out mistakes, always focus on what the speaker can do next time.
4. Consider using the "sandwich approach" to balance negative with positive feedback: Start with something the speaker did well, followed by those things that need to be improved. End with a final positive observation.
5. Always remember your role is to be encouraging, helpful, supportive and constructive.

When judging exhibits in this project, look for evidence of what youth have done to plan, practice and deliver a speech or demonstration. In addition to the general appearance of the exhibit (neatness, attractiveness, etc.) the following criteria should be taken into consideration:

1. Collections should include items that document how a speech or demonstration was planned, including planning worksheets, references, speech outline, note cards, etc.
2. Posters should be attractively and neatly designed to present information about dealing with speech anxiety and stress.
3. Cassette recordings should be clearly labeled, along with a short note describing what was done to use the recording as an aid in practicing the speech.

### **Questions to ask during face-to-face interviews:**

1. How did you select the topic of your speech or demonstration?

2. Where did you find the information you needed?
3. How long did it take to prepare your speech or demonstration?
4. Where did you present it?
5. Were you nervous – what did you do to relax?
6. What kind of feedback did you get?
7. What kinds of things can you do to improve your public speaking skills?
8. What other kinds of uses can you think of for using your public speaking skills?

## **Voices from the Past**

Questions to ask during face-to-face interviews:

1. Why did you choose to interview this particular person?
2. How did you decide what questions to ask?
3. How did you gather and organize the information?
4. Did you do any other research to prepare yourself for the interview?
5. What did you discover about this person that was especially interesting?
6. How do you think this person felt about being interviewed?
7. What did you like best about working on this project?
8. Why do you think it's important to listen to the experiences of older people?
9. Who are other people in your family or community with interesting stories to share?

## **It's All in the Family**

When judging these entries it will be important to look for evidence that the entire family had an opportunity to be involved in the project. The following criteria can help you assess the extent to which family members participated in project activities:

1. Posters, collages, scrapbooks or other written reports should reflect specific things families did together, including what they did in place of watching television, books that have been read together, etc.
2. Scrapbooks and similar items should be constructed of durable material and contain work that's been neatly and attractively organized.
3. This project provides an opportunity for two or more family members to submit an exhibit they have worked on together. These entries (including family scrapbooks, birthday books, holiday books, or similar items) should clearly indicate that two or more family members were involved.

**Questions to ask during face-to-face interviews:**

1. How many people are in your family?
2. Which family members were involved in this project and what kinds of things did you do together?
3. How do people in your family decide what to watch on TV and how much time to spend watching it?

4. What are some other things you enjoy doing with your family besides watching TV?
5. What are some things you really enjoy about being a member of your family?
6. Tell me about the books your family has read together and what people liked and didn't like about those books.
7. What are some special things you're planning to do as a family this year?

## **Communication Activities for Clubs**

When judging these entries, look for evidence that the club as a whole participated in project activities. Because these exhibits should reflect the work of two or more club members, it is important to take into consideration the varying ages and skill levels of those who participated.

### **Look for the following:**

1. A club's display of "paper plate collages" should include the names of club members who participated in creating them, and reflect their varying ages, interests, talents and personal characteristics.
2. A poster listing club rules and guidelines should include specific information about treating others with courtesy and respect, and should include the names and signatures of club members.
3. A photo exhibit or scrapbook of club members presenting "silly speeches" and team demonstrations at club meetings should be neatly and attractively arranged with the names of the club members who participated.

### **Questions to ask during face-to-face interviews:**

1. Tell me how many people are in your club.
2. How did you decide to work on these activities together and who took the leadership for explaining them?
3. What do you think the club learned about communication from these activities?
4. Why do you think it's important for club members to learn these kinds of things?