

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.

Wisconsin 4-H recommends that you use the following criteria to judge drawing and painting entries at county fairs.

1. The design or composition should be well organized visually, even if it is complex.
2. Lines, shapes and colors should create a directional flow, movement or rhythm that leads the eye around the composition and towards the center of interest.
3. The exhibitor should consider and use all parts of the composition, including the spaces around the center of interest.
4. A range of values should be used, including areas of very dark, mid-gray and very light.
5. There should be evidence of color mixing and use of color harmonies.
6. For drawings or paintings of the visible world, look for evidence of careful observation.
7. For original compositions, exhibitors should show evidence of the process used, including original photos and preparatory sketches.
8. For an imagined composition, the inner logic of it should fit together, even if it would not make sense in the “real” world.
9. For line drawings the exhibitor should show control of the tool, including variety in line quality and range of value through cross-hatching, as appropriate.
10. There should be no visible evidence of smudges, dust, hair or paint bristles.
11. The quality of paper should be appropriate for the media used.
12. The mat, mount or frame can be simple, but should complement the artwork.
13. Copying of syndicated material (e.g., Disney cartoons, coloring book images, or copyrighted photos) is not allowed. The source of other copied materials (e.g., photographs or other paintings/drawings) should be clearly acknowledged and the original included. Copying is appropriate for sketchbooks and preparatory drawings, but should not be exhibited as an original.