
Educational Presentation Essentials

A 4-H educational presentation is a demonstration of a 4-H member's knowledge and skills in a project area. It is presented in a way that is most comfortable to the 4-H member. It can be accomplished using posters, props (method demonstration), or media presentations (illustrated talk), or by simply speaking, convincing, and educating with words alone (public speaking).

Educational presentations are part of the statewide event known as Roundup. Conduct Roundup at the county level, as well as the district and state levels. Each district determines when to hold its district Roundup.

Texas 4-H Roundup is always the second full week in June; it includes all events such as educational presentations, fashion show, food show, judging contests, public speaking contests, and quiz bowls. Based on the schedule for your district, the list of competitions at the district roundup will vary.

Know the schedule of competitions for your district so you can plan for adequate preparation and practice time for your 4-H members.

Basics

Educational presentations are conducted consistently across the state for each category and 4-H age division. Below is a summary of the rules and guidelines that pertain specifically to the educational presentation. These rules are released annually in the *Texas 4-H Roundup Rules and Guidelines*.

Topic

Educational presentations should address emerging or current issues in each of the contest areas. Some contests provide a list of suggested topics for educational presentations, along with a resource list. Senior contestants are encouraged to research these emerging and/or current areas to develop their presentations.

- **Accuracy of information/resources:** With the Internet being used heavily as a source of information for educational presentations, 4-H members must know the difference between research-based and non-research-based information. Contestants must use information that is factual and can be supported through adequate documentation. Reliable websites are those by federal, state, and local governments, independent research organizations, and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Internet information that is questionable includes personal sites, chat rooms, and message boards. 4-H members should prepare a list of references (biography, works cited) for their presentations.
- **Subject matter:** The skills and knowledge exhibited in any 4-H contest should be the result of experiences in a project in which the member has participated. A presentation should relate to the contest entered, contain current information, and not be more suited for another contest. It should be appropriate for the member's age and experience.
It must give appropriate credit for references used. If there is a question about which category a presentation belongs in, consult the district 4-H specialist, state 4-H office and/or state contest superintendent.
- **Time limits:** Each educational presentation is limited to 12 minutes. An additional 9 minutes can be given to allow presenters to set up their equipment before the presentation and to clean up the stage afterward. A penalty of 2 points per minute or partial minute of overtime will be deducted from the final score. Adults are permitted to help 4-H members with the on-stage arrangements and cleanup.
- **Visuals:** The use of charts, photographs, computer graphics/programs, and other visual materials is permitted. The visuals should contribute to the presentation. Each presentation demonstrates the participant's ability to communicate an idea.
- **Judges' questions:** Judges and/or superintendents may ask contestants questions at the end of their presentations. This will be done on the judge's time. Only official judges and superintendents may ask questions of the contestants.
- **Scorecard:** The *4-H Educational Presentation Score Sheet*, 4-H 3-5.041 (revised August 2005), will be used by contest judges in scoring educational presentations regardless of presentation style (method demonstration, illustrated talk, or speech). Separate scorecards are used in public speaking and Share-the-Fun. All score sheets are available on the Texas 4-H and Youth Development publication website.

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- **Judges' gifts/handouts:** Gifts (of any kind) may not be presented to the judges in any contest. Contestants may give handouts to judges and the entire audience.
 - **Video, audio, and display equipment:** Participants are responsible for all video and audio equipment (and components) used in a contest. Video and audio equipment includes computers, easels, extension cords, compact disc players, viewing screens, and video projectors.

Categories

An educational presentation can be made on any topic in the disciplines of family and consumer sciences, agriculture, or natural resources. To see a complete list and detailed rules related to each category, refer to the current *Texas 4-H Roundup Rules and Guidelines*.

Family and consumer science educational presentations can be presented in clothing and textiles, health, open family and consumer sciences, and safety and injury prevention. Refer to the *4-H Roundup Rules and Guidelines* for category updates and descriptions of each category.

Developing the presentation

Make developing educational presentations fun for 4-H members. First, help them select a topic in a 4-H project that they are interested and actively participating in. It should be an important issue in our world today. Encourage the members to choose topics that will be challenging so they can grow. As they increase their knowledge and involvement in the 4-H project, they can also expand the presentation focus.

After selecting a topic, the 4-H member should start researching. Research should include only scientific, research-based facts. Outstanding resources for acquiring such resources include local, state, and federal government websites/publications, firms that conduct unbiased research, and other organizations' and associations' websites/publications that provide research-based information (such as the American Heart Association and American Cancer Society).

The 4-H member should then decide whether to make the presentation alone or with other 4-H members, and whether it will be a speech, a method demonstration, or an illustrated talk. Factors that help them decide the method to use include the resources available (such as a computer with a presentation program) and whether the topic can be demonstrated or is more informational/persuasive and should be delivered as a speech.

Help the 4-H member prepare an outline using the resources collected. Younger 4-H members may have to write out their entire speeches; older members who have been involved in public speaking may just need to prepare a detailed outline. For all participants, practice is the key to success.

Coordinating a Roundup contest

Counties need to hold local 4-H roundups to help members prepare for the competition at the district and state 4-H roundups. Roundup events can be held in the evening or on a weekend, depending on the number of entries.

A county roundup event is typically used as a qualifying process for 4-H members to advance to the district level. To plan for the qualifying competition at the county level, know the number of entries in each contest that can advance to the district contest.

Whether you are having a county roundup to qualify entries for the district level or using it as an opportunity to give feedback and practice time for your 4-H members, consider these factors when planning it:

- Secure a facility and announce the location, date, and time of the event at least 3 months in advance to give the 4-H members and leaders enough time to prepare.
- Ask the 4-H volunteers and committees to organize the event. Allow them to recruit and train the judges and other event workers. Have a volunteer committee arrange for awards and/or recognition for contestants and for refreshments, greeters, and other logistics.
- Have the judges provide helpful feedback to participants so they can improve their educational presentations before the district competition.
- Use the county 4-H youth leaders by having them host an assembly to recognize those participating.

Benefits of doing an educational presentation

Making an educational presentation builds self-confidence and teaches a 4-H member organizational skills and the ability to relay a message successfully. It can increase the members' public speaking skills and allow them to share their knowledge with a group of other 4-H members and/or adults.

Educational presentations can be fun! They can be done individually or with one to four team members.

Supporting adults, such as volunteer leaders and county Extension agents, should help the members identify credible, unbiased research to use in their presentations. When helping with the development of an educational presentation, adults can encourage creativity and enthusiasm.

Resources

- AgriLife Extension publications: texas4-h.tamu.edu
 - ✧ *4-H Public Presentation Guide: Method Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks*
 - ✧ *Get to the Point with 4-H Presentations* (on-line training module)
 - ✧ *Public Speaking: 4-H Style*
 - ✧ *Texas 4-H Roundup Rules and Guidelines* (released annually)

Specialists

Educational presentations:

- **Clothing and textiles**
 - ✧ Greg Myles, gmyles@ag.tamu.edu, 979-952-9263
 - ✧ Jill Martz, jill.martz@ag.tamu.edu, 979-862-8819
- **General**
 - ✧ Darlene Locke, Extension 4-H Youth Development Specialist, dlocke@ag.tamu.edu, 979-845-6533
 - ✧ Jana Barrett, Extension Associate, jcbarrett@ag.tamu.edu, 979-845-6533
- **Health:** Alice Kirk, akirk@ag.tamu.edu, 979-845-2098
- **Open Family and Consumer Sciences Educational Presentation**
 - ✧ Dianne Gertson, CEA-FCS, dlgertson@ag.tamu.edu, 281-342-3034
 - ✧ Courtney Latour, CEA-FCS, clatour@ag.tamu.edu, 979-864-1558
- **Safety and injury prevention:** Myrna Hill, Extension Program Specialist, mr-hill@tamu.edu, 979-845-3885