

Section 3: Evaluating Presentations

WHAT TO EXPECT AS AN EVALUATOR

Before the Event

Read the 4-H Presentation Manual. Spend more time on the evaluation section, presentation requirements, and evaluation forms.

Arrival and Check in at the Event

Check-In to receive your nametag. Walk to the room where the Orientation will take place.

Orientation

Sorted into rooms with two to three Evaluators per room. Presentations are assigned to rooms by format type and age of presenter (teams are assigned by the age of oldest member presenting). They are not sorted by quality so there are no fixed numbers of awards for any room.

Entering the presentation room (before any presenter begins)

Position yourselves around the room (not next to each other). Review presenter types. Review forms to see if a presenter has noted special needs.

During the Presentation

Sit quietly, take a few notes, and if you so desire, begin marking the evaluation form.

After the presentation: Asking Questions

Questions are to learn how the member handles questions. Questions should relate to the presentation. This is also a good opportunity to determine how the presentation relates to the member's 4-H experiences. This is not the time to ask a question that tests for the outer limits of the member's knowledge.

What was your favorite thing you learned while studying this topic?

Key Reminder for Evaluators:

- ✓ Your job is to help youth improve their public speaking abilities. Take the perspective that you are an educator and are reviewing presentations to offer insights on what they are doing well and where they need improvement. You are not a judge.

Scoring Presentations

Complete evaluation forms in pencil only. Use a fresh evaluation form if you make dramatic changes in the contents of the evaluation form. Evaluators must complete the evaluation and return it to the tally room before engaging in any disclosure or verbal critiques. Evaluators should not confer with presenters, audience members, or other evaluators prior to completing the evaluation and turning it in to the tally room. Placements of awards are determined by the Tally Room by a pre-determined scoring key. The average of all three evaluators is used to place the award for the presentation.

The 4-H uniform cannot be required, although it may be worn, wearing or not wearing the 4-H uniform will play no part in evaluation.

Writing Comments

Comments should be constructive, positive, and specific for improvement. Saying something is done improperly does not teach how to correct the problem. Positive constructive comments are better than inappropriate or critical comments. Even the best presenters want to know how to become even better.

EVALUATOR ORIENTATION CHECKLIST: ARE YOU READY?

- ❑ What procedures are followed if equipment malfunctions?
- ❑ Can a presenter be disqualified?
- ❑ How many members may be in a team/group, and what determines the age category for a mixed-age group?
- ❑ How should work and speaking parts be distributed among members of a team?
- ❑ What is the minimum number of presentation boards (or equivalent) required for the various type of presentations?
- ❑ What factors dictate how long a presentation should be?
- ❑ Are assignments for school or science fairs appropriate topics for a 4-H presentation?
- ❑ May speakers use notes, and, if “yes,” how many and what size?
- ❑ Should the presentation/reading be memorized?
- ❑ What constitutes “appropriate dress” for the various types of presentations?
- ❑ Are presenters allowed to use props; if “yes,” what type?
- ❑ Who, if anyone, may ask questions?
- ❑ Are there specific elements that must be included (e.g., a prepared introduction, an explanation of purpose, a hypothesis, etc.?)

ANSWER KEY: EVALUATOR ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

1. What procedures are followed if equipment malfunctions?

The presenter may request an opportunity to restart the presentation once they have had a chance to repair the equipment. Parents and/or room hosts may assist with equipment malfunctions. You should give the speaker the opportunity to relax and regroup their thoughts prior to restarting the presentation.

2. Can a presenter be disqualified?

No presentations may be disqualified except by the Event Coordinator.

3. How many members may be in a team/group, and what determines the age category for a mixed-age group?

The number of presenters varies by presentation format. See the matrix on [page 10](#). Members of teams and group presentations will be evaluated using the age of the oldest team member. Any team presentation that includes primary members may not be evaluated.

4. How should work and speaking parts be distributed among members of a team?

Team members should divide work and speaking parts equally. An uneven distribution of work or speaking parts will impact the evaluation. They are evaluated as a team.

5. What is the minimum number of presentation boards (or equivalent) required for the various type of presentations?

The number of posters or slides varies by presentation format. The matrix on [page 10](#) provides an overview of the minimum number.

6. What factors dictate how long a presentation should be?

The speaking time for presentations vary by format; see [page 10](#) for a range for each presentation format. In most cases, the complexity of the topic and the age of participants should dictate the appropriate length.

7. Are assignments for school or science fairs appropriate topics for a 4-H presentation?

School assignments or science fair displays need to be related to 4-H experiences or youth sparks. Speakers are strongly encouraged to relate the presentation to their current 4-H project work or 4-H activities or spark. If the speaker is questioned concerning the relation of the presentation to a 4-H activity and the presentation is not based on a 4-H activity, the speaker should connect the presentation to a club or project based 4-H presentation program or 4-H experience.



8. May speakers use notes, and, if “yes,” how many and what size?

Speakers may use notes only in the Informative Prepared Speech, Persuasive Prepared Speech, and Impromptu Speech formats. Notes are limited to one 5"x7" card, one-sided. Speakers should use their primary source material in the Interpretive Reading format.

9. Should the presentation/reading be memorized?

Presentations do not need to be memorized. In many cases, the speech will be more effective when the presenter modifies their delivery for the context in which they are speaking; for example, the size of the audience and layout of the room.

10. What constitutes “appropriate dress” for the various types of presentations?

Members should practice good personal hygiene. Costumes are appropriate for demonstrations, illustrated talks, science or engineering presentations, share the 4-H fun skits, and cultural arts. The 4-H uniform cannot be required. Although it may be worn, wearing or not wearing the 4-H uniform will play no part in evaluation

11. Are presenters allowed to use props; if “yes,” what type?

Props (or visual aids) may be used in many presentation formats. Visual aids are required in demonstration, and may be used, but are not required, in the illustrated talk, science or engineering presentation, persuasive prepared speech, share the 4-H fun skit, and cultural arts.

12. Who, if anyone, may ask questions?

Only evaluators may ask questions. The amount of time for questions may be limited by the evaluators as needed (recommended time for questions is maximum five minutes).

13. Are there specific elements that must be included (e.g., a prepared introduction, an explanation of purpose, a hypothesis, etc.?)

Each presentation format has a specific purpose and respective elements that need to be included. These elements are reflected on the evaluation form.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS

Written Comments

Evaluators must include written comments on the back of the evaluation form for every presentation. This is the critical part of helping 4-H members improve their public speaking skills.

- Personalize your comments, and be sure that they reflect today's presentation. Realize that the stress of travel, illness, or other factors may cause a presenter to perform at a different skill quality level than in a previous competition.
- Be specific. Avoid generalizations.
- Offer specific suggestions for improving and/or expanding the presentation.
- Challenge the member(s), but conclude with a positive statement to motivate future participation and expansion of their public speaking skills (e.g., suggest trying a different category next year).

Try these words/phrases:

- ✓ Consider
- ✓ Suggest
- ✓ Possible
- ✓ How about . . . ?
- ✓ May
- ✓ Another way . . .
- ✓ Next time . . .
- ✓ Have you thought . . . ?
- ✓ Have you tried . . . ?

Avoid these words/phrases:

- ∅ Can't
- ∅ Don't
- ∅ Won't
- ∅ Never
- ∅ Always
- ∅ Wrong
- ∅ No
- ∅ Should
- ∅ Must

Key Reminder:

- ✓ Comments must be constructive, positive, and specific for improvement. Saying something is done improperly does not teach how to correct the problem. Positive constructive comments are better than inappropriate or critical comments. Even the best presenters want to know how to become even better.

Below are some examples of **POORLY WORDED** comments. Try rewriting them.

1. Your voice was way too quiet; no one in the back could hear you.

Try raising your voice next time. You want to make sure that those in the back of the room can hear you.

2. Practice moving your posters more since you were very clumsy.

You may want to practice smoothly transitioning your posters from one to the next

3. You need a better conclusion. I didn't know you were really done until you asked for questions.

Another way to conclude your presentation is to use a closing device; this will make your presentation memorable and will notify your audience that you have finished your presentation.

4. Your skit was cute, but the theme has been used so often that it was totally predictable.

I really enjoyed your skit, but have you thought about selecting a more unique and original theme?

5. You looked a bit sloppy. Next time, iron your shirt, and be sure it's tucked in!

Next time, consider wearing a neat and ironed shirt that is tucked in; professional appearance can help to reinforce the message that you are trying send.

6. Please avoid jargon. I'm not familiar with your project, and I had no idea what you were talking about.

Consider who the members of your audience may be ahead of time. Some audience members were not familiar with the jargon that you used, and this made it difficult for the audience to fully understand your message. I suggest that you avoid using jargon in future presentations.

7. Your plan of action didn't have much action.

Next time spend some extra time on your plan of action; this helps to ensure that the goals of your project are met.

