

Writing Commentaries for Fashion Revue

4-H Fashion Revue commentaries present the 4-H'er and his/her project to the audience. The narration should introduce the 4-H'er, describe special features of the garment, and highlight interesting information about the project. The following are guidelines to help 4-H'ers write descriptions of their garments for Fashion Revue. Keep the narration to fewer than 100 words which will allow the member to come on stage, make one or two turns, and then exit. Keep in mind that the Fashion Revue committee reserves the right to re-write or revise narrations.

The purpose of the 4-H Fashion Revue activity is to:

1. Build self-confidence and poise.
2. Develop skills in planning, selecting, and making clothing for different occasions.
3. Select appropriate accessories.
4. Develop good posture, grooming, and punctuality habits.
5. Complete applications clearly and submit them on time.
6. Acquire knowledge and skills in planning, presenting, and participating in fashion revues.

The specific objectives of a narration are:

1. To introduce the member and his/her project.
2. To focus on skills learned in the clothing and textile project.
3. To express challenges, fashion trends, and cost savings.
4. To interest the audience in 4-H activities.
5. To display the garment attractively.

Before you begin:

1. Analyze the garment. What is special about it? Be sure to include color descriptions!
2. List major features you want to describe, along with a few comments that relate to the garment and how it will be worn. Create an appealing mental picture with descriptive words.
3. Study mail order fashion catalogs, magazines, the pattern envelope, and advertisements to see how they describe similar features. This is especially useful for beginning projects such as skirts that don't have a lot of details.
4. Describe the garment by starting with the obvious, then call the audience's attention to details such as accessories that relate directly to the garment.
5. Write. Get down all you want to say. Don't worry about the length -- yet.
6. Use alliteration (words beginning with the same sound, i.e. "flirty flounce" for ruffle).
7. Use action words as much as possible. (A belt circles the waistline, a flaring hem swings, etc.)
8. Tell the biggest problem you encountered in sewing the outfit, what new sewing technique you learned. Saying you put in the sleeve six times can encourage some of your audience who are less skilled to keep on trying.
9. If there are two parts to your outfit, such as a coat and dress, mention the outer layer first.
10. Edit. Polish your narration, cut out repetitious phrases or ideas. Keep sentences short and avoid tongue twisters. Aim for clear, concise phrases that create audience interest. Make it as bright, crisp, and informative as possible. The audience is there to learn about new fashion as well as to be entertained.
11. Read your narration aloud to a friend. Does your friend know what you are talking about? Practice modeling with your narration. Do you think of other things that you might say? Re-edit and re-read. Be sure to write in the third person.

12. Add one sentence that talks about you, the model! Be sure to include your name and county, or city, either at beginning or closer to the end of the narration.
13. Finally, cut the narration to 100 words or less. Hyphenated words count as two words.
14. Print your finished commentary double-spaced on an 8 ½ x 11 piece of paper in 14 size font.
15. Complete your entry form, narration and all other forms required for your category and submit them before the deadline to the State Fashion Revue Registrar. ***(Part of 4-H is learning to complete forms accurately and on time.)***

Outline to **HELP** you write a short commentary of your own. The commentary will be read during the fashion show while you are modeling your garment. Unfortunately, for the State Fashion Revue the commentary must be quite short so there is probably not time to describe your hobbies and interests.

- Name
- Age
- Club
- Pattern(s) Used
- Description of Fabric: color, texture, fabric design
- Description of garment: Look at pattern envelope for key words to describe your garment.
- What grade are you in? Which school?
- Where do you plan to wear the garment?
- Describe two items of special interest about yourself or your hobbies/activities

Examples of Narrations

Gleaming in her sequined skirt, Kathleen Mitchell is modeling a stylish denim look. It is hard to believe, but this cloth was once a lonely remnant just waiting to be snatched up! This remnant now has a multi-purpose. For example, it will be this year's Easter outfit, and then be worn as a casual around-the-town skirt. It has a light and airy feeling, with its slit in the back. Her biggest challenge was matching the sequins as she cut out the fabric. This 11-year old home schooler loves Irish Dancing and sketching her fashion ideas. Kathleen is in her second year of sewing with the Pleasantville 4-H Club. She is enjoying every minute of it! (114 words. How would you get it to 100 words?)

Christina Williams will be warm and stylish in her new wool jacket and skirt. The black, 100% wool jacket is fully lined, with princess seams and a front, center zipper. She used a "New York Collection" Vogue pattern to sew her jacket and shortened it to fit her own personal style. The light blue, 100% Pendleton wool skirt is lined at the yoke and has an invisible zipper on the side. Christina designed the pleats herself, because she could not find a pattern that she liked. To put a finishing touch to the outfit, Christina designed and made her blue, Australian Crystal earrings. Christina has been in the Highland 4-H Club for 9 years and has been a Junior Leader for the sewing project for four years. Christina will enjoy wearing her new fashionable outfit.

(136 words. What would you eliminate to get this down to fewer than 100 words?)

Helpful Words for Writing a Commentary

accent design festive coordinate embellish compliment challenge create sew construct accessorize unique one of a kind gleaming outfit modeling wear sparkly chic flounce rare closure appeal flatter enhance fashionable stitch highlight classic decorate elegant special shimmering adds to stylish trendy modern casual unusual pastel