

4-H Project Planning Design Kit



4-H Project Planning
Facilitating Youth Development
through the Project
Let's Get Organized!



PROJECT PLANNING CHECK SHEET

Basic Check List	Check if Completed
1. Obtain a 3-ring binder or file for easy storage of your project materials	
2. Get a list of your project members	
3. Order project materials from the 4-H Publications Catalog	
4. Review resource materials at the UCCE County Office	
5. Meet with your Junior/Teen Leader(s) and review plans and expectations for the year – have available for participants a copy of the Junior and Teen Leadership Development Report Form and explain its purpose.	
6. Utilize Experiential Learning	
7. Focus on at least one Life Skill	
8. Promote the Essential Elements of Youth Development	
9. Prepare project goals and expectations for members	
10. Prepare a sample project meeting outline	
11. Complete a calendar for your project's year, including dates of meeting and event	
12. Reflect/Evaluate your project	

Physical Domain Characteristics

Focus	5 – 8 year-olds	9 – 11 year-olds	12 – 14 year-olds	15 – 19 year-olds
Physical Development	Youth are mastering physical skills, exhibiting better command of large muscles (e.g., legs) than small muscles (e.g., hands and fingers).	Youth are physically stronger and exhibit better balance and coordination; small muscle coordination is advancing.	Both genders experience physical changes (e.g., height, voice, secondary sex characteristics) that are rapid and profound. Physical strength, balance, and muscle coordination continue to advance.	Most teens have gone through puberty. Physical strength, balance, and muscle coordination are well developed.
Maturation Rates	Physical growth for this age group is generally gradual and consistent across gender.	Youth are maturing physically at different rates. Most females will be maturing faster than their male counterparts with some females entering puberty.	Sexual maturation and growth rates vary within and between genders; however, changes in females generally occur sooner than for males.	Rates of sexual maturity and growth are similar between genders.

Cognitive Domain Characteristics

Focus	5 – 8 year-olds	9 – 11 year-olds	12 – 14 year-olds	15 – 19 year-olds
Thinking Strategies	Youth this age are concrete thinkers. They base their thinking in the present (here and now) and in absolutes (e.g., right or wrong; yes or no).	Favor concrete thinking, but begin to use reasoning skills and abstract thought. Youth vary greatly in cognitive abilities.	Youth exhibit abilities to think abstractly and hypothetically. Beginning to develop skills using logic; can use reason to understand results and consequences.	Youth are competent abstract thinkers. Have the ability to process information and ideas to explain how and why things occur.
Interests and Attention	This age group is naturally curious about their immediate environment and relies heavily upon sensory experiences. They generally have a short attention span.	Creative; curious; eager to try new things. Interested in collections and hobbies.	Interests broaden; youth are curious about the world beyond their immediate environment. Begin to show interest in regional, national and global issues.	Exhibit a sense of community awareness and concern for others. Develop personal philosophies and enjoy sharing their knowledge and ideas.

Emotional Domain Characteristics

Focus	5 – 8 year-olds	9 – 11 year-olds	12 – 14 year-olds	15 – 19 year-olds
Self-perception	Self-centered and sensitive. Express a wide range of feelings. Easily upset by criticism, failure, or changes in plans or routines.	Self-confidence and self-esteem can be fragile. Need recognition and praise.	Youth can be highly self-conscious and self-critical. Changing body images may result in anxiety and embarrassment. Youth are at risk of having low self esteem.	Feelings of inadequacy and not being equal to their peers are prevalent among this age group. Some males may still be going through puberty and may be uncomfortable with their changing body image.
Dependence/ Autonomy	Strongly dependent on adults and seek adult attention. Willing to help and desire to please.	Begin questioning parental authority, but look to those “in charge” to help guide appropriate behavior. Admire and imitate older youth.	Mood swings are common. Independence is desired, but youth still require parental guidance.	Achieving independence from adults; cultivating own identity.

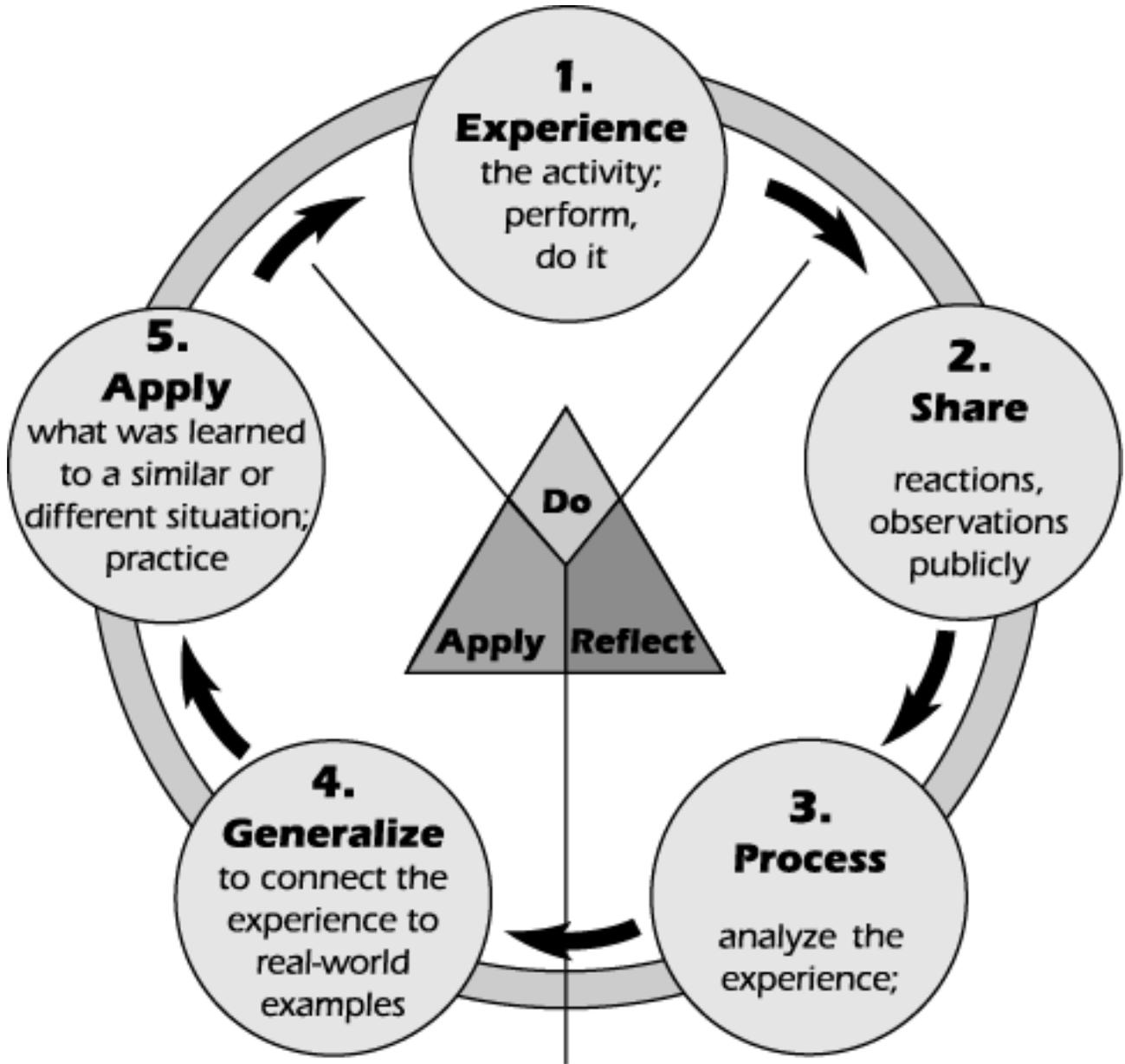
Social Domain Characteristics

Focus	5 – 8 year-olds	9 – 11 year-olds	12 – 14 year-olds	15 – 19 year-olds
Interactions	Youth are beginning to explore social settings (e.g., clubs, sports, youth groups) outside of their homes, but still need adult approval.	Youth express themselves by guiding their own activities. They enjoy teamwork, but may begin exhibiting a sense of competition.	Youth begin to exhibit more independence, shifting from a reliance on parents to forming own values. However, adult approval is still important.	Youth are more independent; exhibit an increased willingness to accept responsibility and fill adult leadership roles.
Relationships	Friendships are evolving, with possibly more than one “best friend.” Youth continue to be self-interested, but are starting to develop empathy. Cross-gender play takes place, with same gender favored at the end of this stage.	Youth enjoy group activities and exhibit group loyalty. They hold older youth in high regard and try to emulate them. Require adult direction to remain on task.	Youth are concerned about peer relationships and personal appearance. Excessive grooming behavior is common and normal.	Youth seek individual identity, yet they also seek status within their peer groups. Their interest in mixed gender activities and dating increases.

Best Practices with Multi-Aged Youth

	5-8 Years Old	9-11 Years Old	12-14 Years Old	15-19 Years Old
PHYSICAL	Provide physical experiences that utilize both large and small muscles, but do not require precision or detail for the youth to be successful.	Provide active learning experiences that allow for more precision-oriented tasks.	Provide fun, active learning experiences such as sports and games.	Youth have achieved a high level of physical competence; activities that require detail, precision, and/or physical endurance are appropriate.
COGNITIVE	The experience is more important than the end product. Activities for this age group should be short, sensory-oriented, and involve physical movement.	Promote success for all participants by planning a variety of short activities for a range of abilities and interests. Directions should be to the point and not too complex.	Engage youth in problem-solving activities; provide supervision, but do not interfere with the process. Encourage youth to evaluate the results of their efforts; provide assistance only when necessary.	To maintain the youths' interest, provide relevant, meaningful, problem-solving activities. Youth are capable of generating and implementing their own activity ideas. Youth should evaluate the outcomes of their efforts.
EMOTIONAL	Focus on cooperative activities so all youth have the opportunity to experience success. Avoid competition and comparisons. Low youth/adult ratio for activities is desirable. Be available to discuss feelings.	Positive feedback is essential. Allow youth to identify their own progress; comparisons with others can be detrimental to self-confidence and self-esteem. Suggested improvements should be done individually and in a caring and consistent fashion.	Plan activities that help youth build skills without comparing them to others or singling them out among their peers. Do not use put-downs or sarcasm.	Plan activities where youth have increased responsibility within their roles. Provide opportunities for youth to be accountable to themselves and others. Communicate in a supportive and constructive fashion that treats youth as young adults.
SOCIAL	Youth still need individual attention. Small group and mixed gender activities and allow exercising social skills. Cooperative rather than competitive environments are encouraged. Use interactive experiences.	Youth prefer same gender groups that plan their own activities. This age group benefits from interactions with older youth as role models/mentors. Adult leadership is important.	Provide experiences for youth to learn about themselves. Include opportunities for youth to plan mixed gender activities.	Promote activities that encourage individual development. Create a supportive peer environment. Provide mixed gender, self-planned activities with leadership roles such as spokespersons, coordinators, coaches or tutors, group leaders, or mentors.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: 5-STEP LEARNING CYCLE DEFINITION

EXPLORATION: “Do it”

Perform or do an activity with little to no help from the leader. Examples might include: making products or models; role-playing; giving a presentation; problem-solving; playing a game.

Features of experiences include:

- i) May be an individual or group experience, but involves doing.
- ii) Most likely will be unfamiliar to the learners – a first-time activity.
- iii) Pushes the learner beyond previous performance levels.
- iv) May be “uncomfortable” to the

SHARING: “What Happened”

Publicly share the results, reactions and observations. Get the participants to talk about their experience. Share reactions and observations. Discuss feelings generated by the experience. Let the group (or individual) talk freely and acknowledge the ideas they generate.

Examples of sharing questions:

- i) What did you do?
- ii) What happened?
- iii) What did you see, feel, hear taste?
- iv) What was the most difficult? Easiest?

PROCESSING: “What’s Important?”

Discussing, analyzing, reflecting, looking at the experience. Discuss how the experience was carried out. Discuss how themes, problems, and issues are brought out by the experience. Discuss how specific problems or issues were addressed. Discuss personal experiences of members. Encourage the group to look for recurring themes.

Examples of processing questions:

- i) What problems or issues seemed to occur over and over?
- ii) What similar experience(s) have you had?

GENERALIZING: “So What?”

Connect the experience with real world examples. Find general trends or common truths in the experience. Identify “real life” principles that surfaced. List key terms that capture the learning.

Examples of generalizing questions:

- i) What did you learn about yourself through this activity?
- ii) Why is (life skill) important in your daily life?
- iii) How does what you learned relate to other parts of your life?

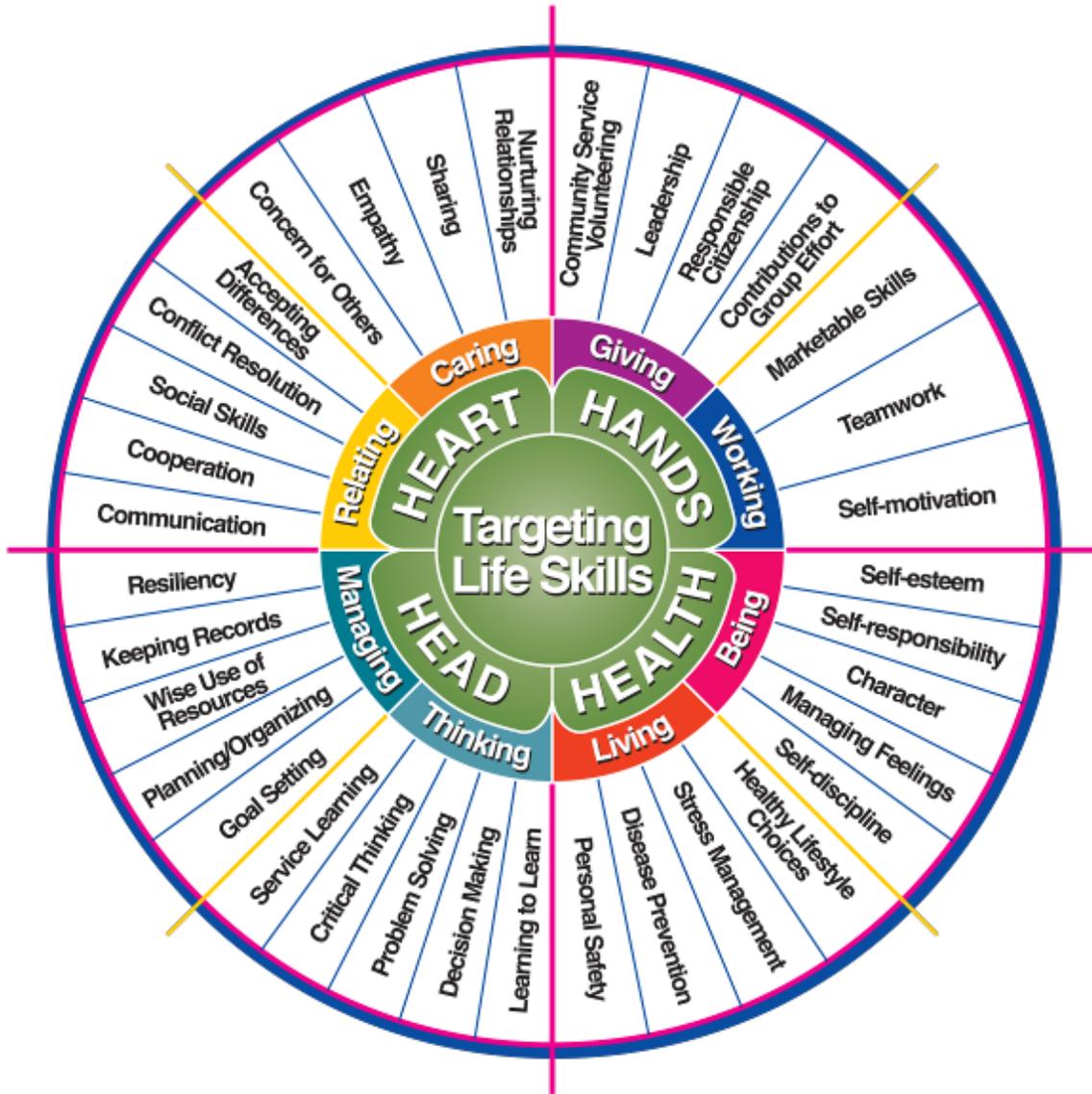
APPLICATION: “Now What?”

Apply what was learned to a similar or different situation, learn from past experiences, practice. Discuss how new learning can be applied to other situations. Discuss how issues raised can be useful in the future. Discuss how more effective behaviors can develop from the new learnings. Help each individual feel a sense of ownership for what was learned.

Example questions about applying the experience:

- i) How can you apply what you learned to a new situation?
- ii) How will you act differently in the future?
- iii) How could you apply life skills learned through this practice in the future?

TARGETING LIFE SKILLS MODEL



DEVELOPING PROJECT GOALS

Project goals should be:

- Realistic and measurable
- Meet the needs and interest project members
- Provide individual achievement opportunities for each member
- Clear and understandable

A measurable goal has three parts:

1. Action – how you will do something
2. Results – what you are going to do
3. Timetable – when you are going to do it

A goal should also pass the “control test.” Do you have control over the outcome of the goal, or does someone else have that control? For example, you control the outcome of this goal, “I will conduct 8 project meetings by the end of the program year.” But you do not control the outcome of this goal, “I want each member to construct a flawless bookcase by May.” In this goal, the member controls the outcome.

Example:

<i>Action</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Timetable</i>
I will conduct	8 project meetings	by the end of the program year.

Directions:

1. Write three goals that you have for your project.

2. Write three goals that a 4-H member in your project might have.

3. How will you know that you have achieved your goals? How will your members know that they have achieved their goals?

4-H PROJECT REFLECTION



What could we do better next year?

My favorite thing about this 4-H project...

If I was in charge of this project, I would...

This project makes me feel...

If you could tell your best friend one thing about this project, what would it be?

4-H Project Meeting Planning Guide

Project Name	Meeting Date
Meeting Time	Location
Leadership Team for Meeting (List adult and youth leaders):	

Basic Checklist	Check if OK	Notes
Notification of members?		
At least two adults present? (required by policy)		
Adequate space for meeting?		
Safety concerns addressed?		
Arrival activity for early birds?		
Instructional Interest Getter? (15-20 minutes)		
Hands-on Activity (30-50 minutes)		
Discussion Time (10-15 minutes)		
Member presentations? (10 minutes)		
Record keeping Time (10 minutes)		
Summary and Assignments for future (10 minutes)		
Refreshments & recreation		

Content Planning

Part of Meeting	Why	What We Will Do	Who Will Lead
<p>Interest Getter (15-20 minutes)</p> <p>Ideas include identification quizzes, judging contests, relay skill game, videos, tour, guest speakers, instruction by leader, etc.</p>	<p>Establishes concepts to be learned at the meeting. Promotes skill development and mastery.</p>		
<p>Skills Session (30-50 minutes)</p> <p>Hands-on activity using Experiential Learning</p>	<p>Improves learning, promotes a sense of mastery and independence, develops life skills.</p>		
<p>Discussion (15 - 20 minutes)</p> <p>Allow time for members to process the experience of the skill session.</p>	<p>Promotes mastery of the concepts and skills. Promotes a sense of teamwork.</p>		
<p>Presentation (10 minutes)</p> <p>Have members make short and simple prepared talks.</p>	<p>Promotes mastery and independence. Develop public speaking life skill.</p>		
<p>Record Keeping (10 – 15 minutes)</p> <p>Help members capture what they did and learned</p>	<p>Promotes a sense of mastery and record keeping life skill.</p>		
<p>Summary & Assignments (10 – 20 minutes)</p> <p>Summarize key points and make assignments.</p>	<p>Promotes sense of belonging, develops leadership and possibly citizenship.</p>		
<p>Refreshments & Recreation (20 minutes)</p> <p>Time can vary. The point is fun and fellowship.</p>	<p>Promotes sense of Belonging.</p>		

Suggested Division of Time for a 90-minute 4-H Project Meeting

Summary & Assignments 10 Minutes

Assign presenters for next meeting. Plan a service project. Promotes Belonging and could be used for Citizenship.

Record Keeping 10 Minutes

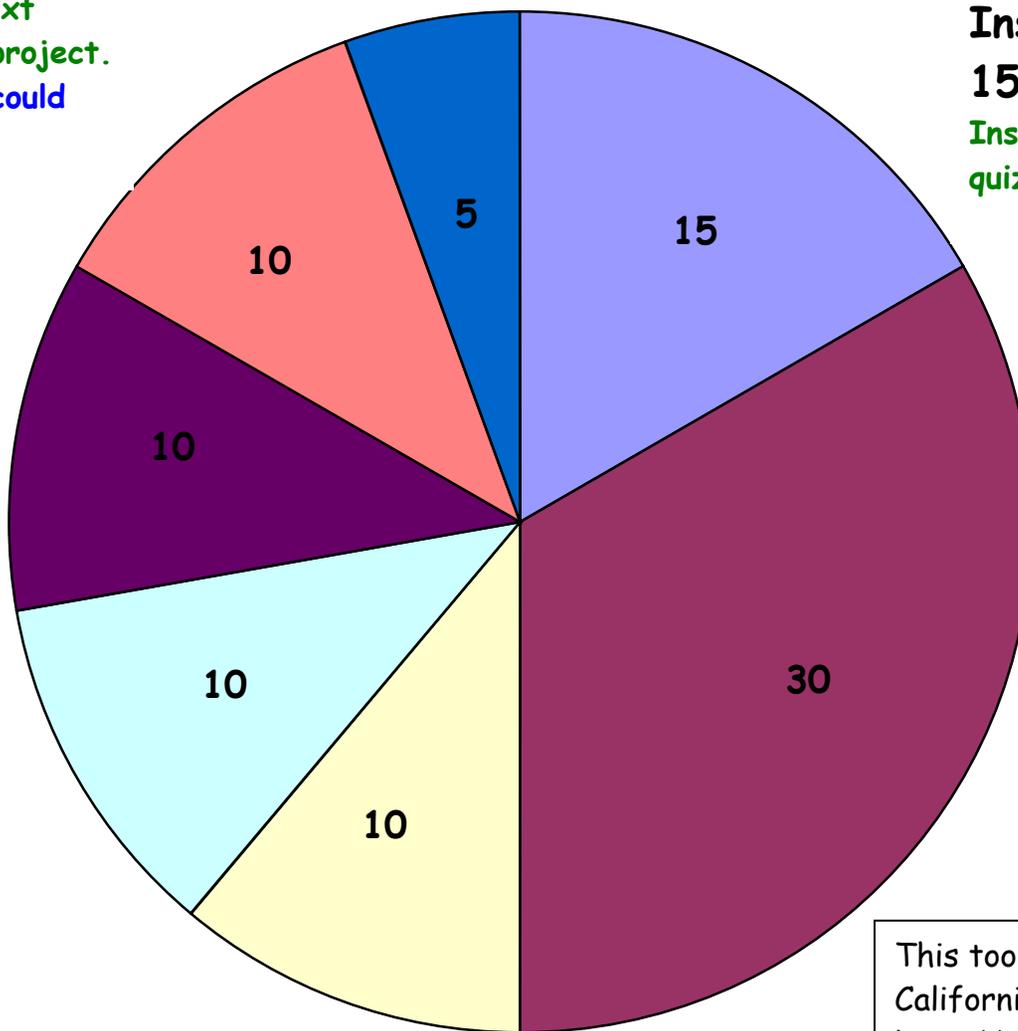
Spend a few minutes helping members capture what they did and learned. Great Life Skill!!!

Presentations 10 Minutes

Have members give short, simple presentations on topics from other meetings or new information they have researched. Great for building confidence and life skills and developing Independence and Mastery.

Refreshments & Recreation - 5 Minutes+

Promotes a sense of Belonging. It's fun!



Instructional Interest Getter 15 Minutes

Instruction, videos, demonstrations, quizzes, tours, guest speakers.

Skills Session - 30 Minutes

Hands-on activity in which the members are involved in learning and practicing a new skill. This is the first step of Experiential Learning and promotes a sense of mastery and accomplishment. Use experienced members to help less experienced ones to promote leadership. Address safety issues at beginning of session.

Discussion - 10 Minutes

Talk about what happened in the skill session. Ask questions to help members think about applying what they learned to future experiences. Promotes a sense of teamwork, belonging and mastery.

This tool is recommend for use with the California 4-H Project Leaders' Digest
<http://ucanr.org/4hdigest>