



GRADING ORAL REASONS FOR 4-H AND FFA CONTESTS

Compiled by Tony Seykora, University of Minnesota, reviewed in 2023

I. Score Card

- A. Content (accuracy and completeness).....30
- Accurately compares the two animals for each placing.
 - Presents important differences first (those that clearly influenced the decision) in an organized manner.
 - Uses a "positive approach with comparative terminology. Provides appropriate grants for the lower place animal.
- B. Delivery.....20
- Uses proper terminology, grammar, and pronunciation.
 - Speaks convincingly with moderate speed.
 - Is sincere and courteous. Completes reasons in allotted 2 minutes.

TOTAL POINTS50

II. Benchmarks for Scoring Reasons

Score	Description
20	Showed up
25	Poor Said how they placed the class
30	A full set of reasons but reasons lacked proper terminology and accuracy
35	
40	Good Accurate but lacked terminology and style: or good terminology and style but lacked accuracy
45	Very Good Very complete with style, accuracy and good use of terms
50	Excellent Excellent – like an excellent collegiate set

III. Guidelines for Oral Reasons Evaluation

- A. Generally, 3-5 points are deducted if notes are used during the presentation - depending upon how much the notes are relied upon. Contestants that use notes rarely score above average with 39 being the top score for someone that used notes
- B. Placing score should not influence reasons score. If a contestant places a class quite differently from the official, but has valid reasons for doing so, the contestant can still score a "50" on reasons.
- C. Maintain a friendly attitude that will be encouraging to the contestant.
- D. Ask questions only to clarify a point of misunderstanding or to determine if the contestant really saw the class. Avoid trivial questions.
- E. Avoid gestures which indicate disagreement with what the contestant has stated.
- F. Avoid mannerisms which may disturb the contestant.
- G. There is no required closing for reasons. A statement about the bottom cow is as acceptable as, "Therefore, I placed this class of Holstein cows, etc."
- H. There is no credit or penalty for ... "Thank you. Are there any questions?" This may be part of the contestant's own individual style.
- I. Following are averages and ranges of reason scores from recent Minnesota state dairy judging contests:

	Average	Low	High	Two-thirds within this range
State FFA Contest	35.2	20	48	29-41
State 4-H Contest				
Juniors	36.1	27	47	30-42
Seniors	37.5	29	50	33-44
Seniors	39.0	28	48	33-44

					Distribution for Intermediate Reasons																	
											X											
								X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47

							Distribution for Sr Reasons															
											X											
								X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50