



# Performing arts (non-performance based) project resource guide

## What is this guide?

The purpose of this project resource guide is to help support your learning within the Performing Arts project project area. It provides step-by-step suggestions on how to get started and how to continue learning within the project area.



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## What is project learning?

We believe young people learn best by doing. In our program, you have the opportunity to choose project areas that interest you. We then offer opportunities for positive learning environments and guidance from adult mentors. We also encourage you to take leadership roles and learn independently.

## What is a non-performance based performing arts project?

Performing arts is about self-expression through theatrical or musical arts. But you don't have to perform to do a project on performing arts! You could visit a play and write about your experience, create the best thunderstorm sound effect, explore costume and set design, write a song and have someone else perform it, or try out makeup techniques and technical stage lighting and sound.

If you are interested in performing, check out the [performance-based project resource guide](#).

## Getting started with a non-performance performing arts project

### Figure out what you want to learn

First, think about what you want to learn about performing arts. One way to do this could be to write down all your questions—anything you are currently wondering about or want to learn how to do. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- What items make the best “walking” sound effects?
- How do you build a flat for a set piece for a play?
- How do you do make-up to make someone look old?

- What's the best version of "Happy Birthday" out there?
- What are some examples of birthday songs from around the world?
- How does a basic stage lighting board work?
- What jobs are there in theater/film that's not being an actor?
- How can I mix my own song?

### **Do some research**

Next, find some resources that can guide you and provide answers to your questions. Here are a few general resources you may find useful.

- See a performance at [Northrop theater](#) on the University of Minnesota campus
- Discover theater resources at [Dramatics.org](#)
- Explore [Smithsonian Folkways](#) (music) online museum
- Look through [Rock & Roll Hall of Fame](#) online resources
- Check out [PBS Dance](#) resources

### **Identify your project**

Now it's time to narrow down your research into a specific project focus. What do you want to do? Here are some examples.

- Put together an educational display on some aspect of music, drama, dance or performing.
- Provide a journal of your performing arts experiences.
- Create a script for a one-act play.
- Make an audio file of sound effects to use with a play.
- Compare versions of a song and create a display about the merits and history of each.
- Experiment to create the best stage bread for a play.
- Choreograph a dance and video someone else performing it.

### **Do your project!**

Once you know what you want to do, it's time to do it! This is the fun part. You may get messy or encounter challenges, but in 4-H we learn by doing. It's all part of the learning process! You can ask others for help and ideas. Be sure to take pictures or video as you go or have some other way to record what you're doing and how it's going.

### **Reflect**

The most important part of doing a project is the learning that happens as a result. Think about:

- What was my goal for this project when I began?
- What am I learning from this project that I didn't know before? OR What was the most challenging part of this project? Why?

- Did you have fun doing the project? What would you do differently?
- What am I learning about myself by doing this project?

### Share your work

After you finish your project, it's time to share what you learned! Sharing your new skills and getting others excited about your project is a great way to continue learning and can be a valuable way to serve your community! Here are some ideas:

- Share your project at school, with your 4-H club or other out-of-school time program.
- Ask to set up an info table at your local library, community center, or community event such as a festival or farmer's market.
- Develop an exhibit to take to your local county fair through the 4-H program. Head back to the [performing arts project page](#) for more information about how to showcase your project at a county fair.

### Take your learning further

You've wrapped up one project...what's next? What are you inspired to learn more about? Maybe creating those sound effects inspired you to create a radio play! Or maybe your stage bread turned out so well, you'd like to take a photograph of it to fool the world into believing it's real! Here are other expressive arts projects you may want to check out:

- [Crafts and fine arts](#)
- [Creative writing](#)
- [Photography](#)
- [Video and filmmaking](#)
- [Public presentations](#)

Explore these future study and career opportunities related to non-performance arts.

- UMN music career exploration page  
<https://cla.umn.edu/music/undergraduate/career-exploration>

