



AIRE Application & Prep Packet

Name _____

County _____

District _____

READ CAREFULLY: This "Prep-Packet" can be used to prepare for the AIRE program. Official Registration for AIRE will take place using a google form where the 4-H Agent or County 4-H program designee will upload the application and accompanying materials.

- AIRE candidates may be required to submit this paper version to their county 4-H Agent before the state-level registration date. Don't hesitate to contact your county 4-H Agent for county-specific requirements.
 - **State-Level AIRE Electronic Registration is due by May 15, 2024.**
-

Please rank the 4-H Programs in the order of your preference to attend (1st being your top selection, 2nd being your following, and 3rd being your final program of choice). *If you have attended one or more programs below, please indicate so by placing an "X" in the ranking column. Youth can only attend each event one time.

() **National 4-H Congress** – Is held annually in November. *Trip is for November/December 2024 -Ages 14-18

() **National 4-H Conference** – Is held in March/April. The actual cost to the 4-H'er is \$100 plus spending money. *Trip is for 2024 – Ages 15-18

() **National Leadership Conference** – Is held annually in June. The 4-H'er pays for all travel except registration. *Trip is for June 2025. Grades 10, 11, 12.

The North Carolina 4-H Program is an equal opportunity program. You may request accommodations to participate in the application or interview process.

Please limit your answers to the space provided.

***NATIONAL CONGRESS APPLICANTS ONLY:** Please rank the curriculum categories in which you want to compete by placing a rank order in the box. Example: Citizenship & Civic Education = 1, Communications Arts = 2, etc. You may select up to 3 curriculum category options. Under Animal Science, please circle if you are applying for Dairy or Swine.

***National 4-H Conference and National Leadership Conference Applicants** do not select curriculum categories.

FUNDED CATEGORIES FOR NATIONAL CONGRESS

Please check Three (3) that apply

- ☐ Animal Science: Beef
- ☐ Animal Science: Dairy
- ☐ Animal Science: Swine
- ☐ Civic Engagement
- ☐ Communication Arts
- ☐ Electric
- ☐ Family & Consumer Sciences/Child Development (FCS)
- ☐ Family & Consumer Sciences
- ☐ General 4-H/Any Curriculum Area
- ☐ Healthy Lifestyles
- ☐ Horticulture Science
- ☐ Leadership, Citizenship, Community & Public Service
- ☐ Leadership & Personal Development
- ☐ Plant Science
- ☐ Science & Technology

AIRE Applicant Information

Name: _____
Last First Middle

Home Address: _____ Gender: _____

City: _____ State: NC Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____

County: _____ District: _____ Email: _____

Years In 4-H: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

PREVIOUS AIRE EXPERIENCE

I have received an AIRE Trip in the past:

_____ Yes,

If so, what year _____

and trip _____.

REQUIRED PARTS OF YOUR APPLICATION

Application & Signatures: _____

Essay: _____

Resume: _____

Interview: Time will be announced later.

Certification Statement:

I certify that the information on this application is accurate and complete. These events operate under the NC 4-H Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure Guidelines

Should I be selected to represent North Carolina at a National Event, I promise to abide by all rules.

Signature of 4-H'er Date

Signature of Parent Date

Signature of 4-H Agent Date

AIRE Essay

Essay: Candidates will write an original essay based on the "Common App" prompt below.

- Essays should be between 525 - 650 words (650-word maximum)
- Essay Specifics: Font Size: 12 - 14; 1.5 Line Spacing
- Essays should engage the reader, answer the prompt question(s) concisely, and reflect the participant's character and personality. Essay cannot be generated by AI.

1. Essay Prompt for 2024: Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

Things to Consider

This prompt allows you to write about anything that sparks your enthusiasm! It can be a hobby, an interest, a sport, or anything else that comes to mind. Here are some ideas to help you articulate your passions in a way that will make for a powerful essay.

Explain why it's meaningful to you.

Once you identify the passion you wish to write about, explain what it means to you and how it impacts your life. Remember that this essay is about you, so be sure to relate it to yourself and make it personal.

What to avoid

When writing about something you are passionate about, it's easy to get lost in describing the activity or idea itself. You will want to explain why your subject is fascinating but avoid making your entire essay about that. Write most of your essay about how losing yourself in your passion has shaped you into who you are today. Ultimately, you want your reader to learn more about you, not just your chosen topic.

College Essay Brainstorming Worksheet

Essays are generally about one thing. You! Most essay questions are designed for one reason “to tell the reader about you.” Here’s a simple brainstorming worksheet that you can use to prepare for writing essays. You’ll discover your strengths and weakness as you move through the topics.

1. Ask a few family members or friends to describe you. Use adjectives or personality traits.
2. List three things you love spending time doing and explain why?
3. What five people have influenced you the most and why?
4. What is your favorite book or movie, and why?
5. What makes you unique? Don't be shy, tell us.

Your AIRE Essay: Responding effectively to college essay prompts is quite different from other essay writing. The combined challenge of addressing a question in an exciting way while staying focused and making yourself stand out, all within a limited number of words, is something that all students struggle with every year. Here are two exceptional essay examples. Do not let these essays intimidate you. Use your voice, experience, interests, and uniqueness to write “your exceptional” essay. Don’t forget to edit, revise and edit again. You’ve got this!

Essay Example #1 (Using Common App Prompt #6)

The worst part about writing is putting down my Rubik’s cube so that I can use my hands to type. That’s usually the worst part of tackling my to-do list: setting aside my Rubik’s cube. My parents call it an obsession. But, for me, solving a Rubik’s cube challenges my brain as nothing else can.

It started on my ninth birthday. I invited three friends for a sleepover party, and I waited to open my presents right before bed. Wrapping paper, ribbons, and bows flew through the air as I oohed and aahed over each delightful gift! However, it was the last gift—a 3 x 3 x 3 cube of little squares covered in red, green, blue, yellow, white, and orange— that intrigued me.

I was horrified when Bekka ripped it out of my hands and messed it all up! I had no idea how to make all the sides match again. I waited until my friends were fast asleep. Then, I grabbed that cube and studied it under my blanket with a flashlight, determined to figure out how to restore it to its former pristine state.

Within a few weeks, I had discovered the secret. To practice, I’d take my cube with me to recess and let the other kids time me while I solved it in front of them. The better I became, the more they gathered around. But I soon realized that their attention didn’t matter all that much. I loved solving cubes for hours wherever I was: at lunch, riding in the car, or alone in my room.

Cross. White corners. Middle-layer edges. Yellow cross. Sune and Anitsune.

The sequential algorithms became second nature, and with the assistance of a little black digital timer, I strove to solve the cube faster, each time attempting to beat my previous record. I watched speed solvers on YouTube, like Australia's Feliks Zemdegs and Max Park from Massachusetts, but I wasn't motivated to compete as they did. I watched their videos to learn how to improve my time. I liked finding new, more efficient ways of mastering the essential 78 separate cube-solving algorithms.

Now, I understand why my passion for my Rubik's cube has never waned. Learning and applying the various algorithms soothes my brain and centers my emotions, especially when I feel overwhelmed from being around other people. Don't get me wrong: I like other people—just in doses.

While some people get recharged by spending time with others, I can finally breathe when I'm alone with my cube. Our psychology teacher says the difference between an extrovert and an introvert is the situations that trigger their brains to produce dopamine. For me, it's time away, alone, flipping through cube patterns to set a new personal best.

Sometimes, the world doesn't cooperate with introverts, requiring them to interact with many people throughout the day. That's why you'll often find me in the stairwell or a library corner attempting to master another one of the 42 quintillion ways to solve a cube. My parents tease me that when I've "had enough" of anything, my fingers get a Rubik's itch, and I suddenly disappear. I'm usually occupied for a while, but when I finally emerge, I feel centered, prepared to tackle my next task.

Secretly, I credit my cube with helping me earn top marks in AP Calculus, Chemistry, and Physics. It's also responsible for my interest in computer engineering. It seems I just can't get enough of those algorithms, which is why I want to study the design and implementation of cybersecurity software—all thanks to my Rubik's cube.

Just don't tell my parents! It would ruin all the fun!

Word count: 607

Essay Example #2 (Using Common App Prompt #5)

In the quiet town of Serenity Springs, lived Alex, a young woman with dreams as vast as the open sky. Her life was serene, predictable, and perhaps a tad mundane. Little did she know that a single event would shatter the calm, setting off a ripple effect that would lead to a profound period of personal growth and self-discovery.

Her transformative journey occurred one summer day when Serenity Springs decided to host its first-ever talent show. Alex, always the reserved and introverted soul, had never considered showcasing her talents publicly. She was content with the solace of her room, where she could strum her guitar and pen down the verses that echoed the depths of her soul. However, fate had a different plan for her.

Encouraged by her friend Sarah, Alex reluctantly agreed to participate in the talent show. The prospect of standing on a stage, baring her vulnerabilities to the world, filled her with a mix of anxiety and excitement. Little did she know that this seemingly small decision would be the spark that ignited a profound period of self-discovery.

As the day of the talent show approached, Alex found herself grappling with a whirlwind of emotions. The fear of judgment and the uncertainty of how her music would be received gnawed at her confidence. Yet, beneath the surface, a dormant courage began to stir. Alex was about to discover a resilience within herself that had long been overshadowed by her insecurities.

The night of the talent show arrived, casting a spotlight on the small stage set up in the town square. As Alex stepped into the limelight, guitar in hand, the hushed whispers of the audience echoed in her ears. With a deep breath, she began to strum the strings, pouring her heart into the melody that unfolded. The crowd, initially skeptical, soon fell silent, captivated by the authenticity of her performance.

In that vulnerable moment, Alex realized the power of self-expression and the ability of art to bridge the gap between individuals. The applause that followed was not just an acknowledgment of her musical prowess; it was a recognition of the courage it took to share a piece of herself with the world. This realization marked the beginning of a new chapter in Alex's life—one characterized by a willingness to embrace vulnerability and authenticity.

The aftermath of the talent show brought unexpected changes to Serenity Springs. Alex, once a quiet presence in the background, became a source of inspiration for others who had long suppressed their passions. The town, too, began to shed its inertia, hosting more events that encouraged self-expression and community involvement. Alex's journey had not only transformed her but had also sparked a collective realization that the pursuit of one's true self was a path worth exploring.

As Alex continued to explore her newfound sense of self, she ventured into uncharted territories. She collaborated with local artists, participated in community projects, and, most importantly, forged genuine connections with those around her. The walls of her introversion crumbled, revealing a person who not only understood herself better but also saw the beauty in others' unique narratives.

Alex's transformation was not just a personal triumph; it was a testament to the profound impact that self-expression and authenticity can have on a community. Serenity Springs, once characterized by its quiet routine, now vibrated with the energy of individuals embracing their passions and connecting on a deeper level.

The talent show became the catalyst for Alex's remarkable journey of self-discovery and personal growth. Through the vulnerability of sharing her music, she not only uncovered hidden facets of her own identity but also ignited a spark of inspiration that reverberated through her community. Alex's story serves as a poignant reminder that sometimes, it takes a single moment of courage to set in motion a period of transformation that shapes not only oneself but also the world around.

Word Count 649

Functional Resume

A functional resume focuses on your skills and experiences rather than your chronological 4-H History. It is used most often by youth involved in various 4-H programs, youth with less than five years of 4-H experience, or youth who wish to focus on their experiences and skills vs. leadership positions and previous accomplishments.

- Resume Length Requirement: 1 - 2 pages

I. **Header:** Name, address, email address, phone number

II. **Professional Statement:** This short statement describes your career aspirations (including college / work plans). **OR**

AIRE Summary Statement: This short statement describes your purpose for applying (state what trip you are applying for and what subject area). You can briefly mention your 4-H career highlights, including past roles and strongest skills.

III. **Education:** This contains middle school / high school or college information, expected date of graduation, and course of study. Include academic honors.

IV. **4-H Project Experience:** For each project or activity, format it after the following example and include:

- Amount of time you were involved,
- extent and diversity of knowledge and skills,
- extent and level of responsibilities, personal growth,
- how you extended your knowledge into your community
- size, the scope of the project,
- reflection of competency,

V. **4-H Citizenship & Leadership Experience:** This section provides Information about 4-H related activities in citizenship and leadership.

VI. **Community Service, Citizenship & Leadership Experience: Organizations:**

In this section, provide information about activities within 4-H and non-4-H in the areas of community service. Format it after the following example and include the duration and extent of your involvement,

- your roles and responsibilities, the size and scope of your effort,
- time spent, impact and resources committed, and what you accomplished individually or as a team.

Chronological Resume

A chronological resume starts by listing your 4-H history, with the most recent position listed first. Your leadership positions are listed in reverse chronological order, with your current or most recent position first. This type of resume works well for youth with a strong, solid 4-H history.

- Resume Length Requirement: 1 - 2 pages

I. **Header:** Name, address, email address, phone number

II. **Professional Statement:** This short statement describes your career aspirations (including college / work plans). **OR**

AIRE Summary Statement: This short statement describes your application purpose (state what trip you are applying for and what subject area). You can briefly mention your 4-H career highlights, including past roles and strongest skills.

III. **4-H Project Experience:** Begin with your most recent significant 4-H accomplishments and continue backward to report your 4-H history. List and explain accomplishments (briefly), including dates and levels (county, district, state, etc.).

- Try to begin each bulleted sentence with an action word.
- Write about your experience and skills to aim toward the accomplishment.
- Provide the most information about your most recent accomplishment. For example: write a brief description consisting of a few sentences followed by a short list of bulleted items.
- Show growth and progress with responsibilities.
- Stress achievements and accomplishments.

IV. **Education:** This contains middle school / high school or college information, expected date of graduation, and course of study. Include academic honors.

V. **4-H Citizenship & Leadership Experience:** This section provides Information about 4-H related activities in citizenship and leadership.

VI. **Community Service, Citizenship & Leadership Experience:** In this section, provide information about activities you've been involved in within 4-H and non-4-H in community service. Format it after the following example and include the duration and extent of your involvement,

- your roles and responsibilities, the size and scope of your effort,
- time spent, impact and resources committed, and what you accomplished individually or as a team.

Combination Resume

A combination resume lists your skills and experience first. Your 4-H history is listed next. With this type of resume, you can highlight the skills you have that are relevant to the 4-H trip you are applying for and also provide the chronological 4-H history reviewers prefer.

- Resume Length Requirement: 1 - 2 pages

- I. **Header:** Name, address, email address, phone number
- II. **Professional Statement:** This short statement describes your career aspirations (including college / work plans). **OR**

AIRE Summary Statement: This short statement describes your application purpose (state what trip you are applying for and what subject area). You can briefly mention your 4-H career highlights, including past roles and strongest skills.
- III. **Summary of Qualifications:** Statement that describes your expertise, leadership abilities, and skill set. The summary should give the reviewer an idea of who you are, except it allows you to focus more on your 4-H experience than your goals. You can briefly mention your 4-H career highlights, including past roles and strongest skills.
- IV. **Accomplishments:** Begin with your most recent major 4-H accomplishments and continue backward to report your successes in 4-H, school, work and / or volunteer service.
- V. **4-H Experience:** In bulleted format, outline your 4-H experiences, starting with the most recent and significant.
- VI. **Education:** This contains middle school / high school or college information, expected date of graduation and course of study. Include academic honors.
- VII. **4-H Community Service, Citizenship & Leadership Experience:** In this section, provide information about 4-H **and** non-4-H related activities in community service, citizenship, and leadership.

Examples of Action Words

Learned	Showcased	Expanded
Adapted	Coordinated	Led
Contributed	Explored	Implemented
Collaborated	Demonstrated	Analyzed
Participated	Presented	Maintained
Developed	Facilitated	Taught
Organized	Contributed	Designed
Volunteered	Presented	Administered
Assisted	Took Initiative	Trained
Initiated	Served	Produced
Engaged	Promoted	Conducted
Achieved	Championed	Managed

15 College Interview Questions You Should Know

1. What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
2. How do you handle challenges or setbacks?
3. How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
4. What defines you?
5. What is your proudest achievement?
6. Why do you want to attend our college / take part in our program / work here, etc.?
7. How did you spend last summer?
8. What's the most challenging situation you've faced?
9. If you could change one thing about your high school, what would it be?
10. How do you respond to academic demands and pressure?
11. Which authors, books, movies or articles have had a profound impact on you?
12. What would you do and why if you could take a year off?
13. How would your friends describe you?
14. What has been your most challenging leadership experience?
15. What do you plan to major in and why?

15 College Interview Questions You Should Ask Your Interviewer

1. Can you tell me more about the academic programs and majors offered at this college?

2. How does the advising system work?
3. What are the students here like?
4. What is the housing situation like for freshman? How are roommates matched?
5. What is a typical class size, and how much individualized attention can students expect?
6. How accessible are professors to students outside of class?
7. Can you describe the campus-culture and student life?
8. Are there any big changes in store for campus? Construction Projects (are there any underway or slated to begin – if so, when and where)?
9. What activities are available for freshmen to meet other students?
10. What are the weekends like?
11. What type of support services are available for students, including mental health resources?
12. What are the significant campus events during the year?
13. What do alumni say about the school?
14. What do current students like the most about school?
15. What type of crime (criminal activity) has occurred on campus in the last few years?

College Interview Mistakes

College interviews are crucial opportunities to make a positive impression on admissions officers. Avoiding common mistakes during these interviews is essential. Here are some college interview mistakes to steer clear of:

1. **Lack of Preparation:**

- Mistake: Going into the interview without researching the college, its programs, and its values.
- Solution: Conduct thorough research and be prepared to discuss why you are a good fit for the institution.

2. **Inappropriate Attire:**

- Mistake: Dressing too casually or too formally for the interview.
- Solution: Choose an outfit that is professional and reflects the seriousness of the occasion.

3. **Arriving Late:**

- Mistake: Arriving late for the interview.
- Solution: Plan your travel well in advance, accounting for potential delays, and arrive early.

4. **Talking Too Much or Too Little:**

- Mistake: Rambling on without direction or providing very brief answers.
- Solution: Practice concise yet comprehensive responses to common interview questions.

5. **Being Overly Rehearsed:**

- Mistake: Delivering rehearsed answers that sound robotic.
- Solution: Practice your responses but aim for a conversational tone, allowing for flexibility.

6. **Neglecting Non-Verbal Cues:**

- Mistake: Ignoring non-verbal communication, such as lack of eye contact or fidgeting.
- Solution: Maintain good eye contact, sit up straight, and use confident body language.

7. **Being Too Casual or Overconfident:**

- Mistake: Adopting an overly casual or overly confident attitude that may come across as arrogance.
- Solution: Strike a balance between confidence and humility, showing respect for the opportunity.

8. **Failing to Ask Questions:**

- Mistake: Not asking thoughtful questions about the college or the interviewer's experiences.
- Solution: Prepare a list of questions that demonstrate your genuine interest in the institution.

9. **Disregarding Time Constraints:**

- Mistake: Going over the allotted time for the interview.

- Solution: Be mindful of time and ensure your responses are succinct and to the point.

10. Being Negative:

- Mistake: Expressing negativity about past experiences or individuals.
- Solution: Focus on positive aspects of your experiences and convey optimism about the future.

11. Exaggerating or Providing Inaccurate Information:

- Mistake: Stretching the truth or providing inaccurate information on your achievements or experiences.
- Solution: Be honest and authentic, as integrity is valued in the college admissions process.

12. Not Following Up:

- Mistake: Failing to send a thank-you email or note after the interview.
- Solution: Send a brief and appreciative thank-you message expressing your continued interest.

13. Interrupting the Interviewer:

- Mistake: Interrupting the interviewer while they are speaking.
- Solution: Practice active listening and wait for the interviewer to finish before responding.

14. Using Inappropriate Language:

- Mistake: Using slang or inappropriate language during the interview.
- Solution: Maintain a professional tone and choose your words carefully.

15. Appearing Unenthusiastic:

- Mistake: Failing to convey genuine enthusiasm for the college and the interview.
- Solution: Showcase your passion and excitement for the opportunity to attend the institution.

By avoiding these common mistakes, you can present yourself in the best possible light during a college interview and increase your chances of making a positive impression on admissions officers.

AIRE Interview Question Pool

Critical Thinking

1. As someone involved in 4-H, you likely understand the importance of personal growth and well-being. In your experience, what ideas or activities do you think could positively impact the mental health of teenagers within our community?
2. Currently, 13% of NC students drop out of high school. What do you think should be done by administrators, parents, and communities to reduce this alarming number?
3. Our society has become much more conscious of the food we eat from a safety and nutritional perspective. Whose responsibility is it to protect the US food supply and how far should we go with this protection?
4. NC is experiencing a teacher shortage. Why is this a problem, and what must we do to attract and retain quality individuals to teach?
5. What can the school system do to prevent students from bringing weapons to school besides using metal detectors?
6. What are your goals in life? (Career, Personal, etc.)
7. The Governor has chosen you to accompany her to the National Governor's conference to speak on the concerns of the youth in our nation. What concerns would you share?
8. If chosen to go on a volunteer mission to another country, what country would you choose and why? What volunteer work would you do based on the needs of the country?
9. What are your strengths and weakness?
10. What is your favorite quote? Explain why it's meaningful to you.
11. What do you expect to be doing in five years?
12. Which is more important: creativity or efficiency? Why?

Cause/Effect

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted each of us; what have you learned about yourself during the last year/year and a half?
2. Tell me about a time when you had to make a tough decision. What was the situation and how did you handle it?
3. Give me an example of when you had to show personal integrity.
4. Describe your work ethic.
5. Give me an example of when you used your fact-finding skills to solve a problem.

Behavioral

1. What is something you believe strongly in and/or about; tell us about it and why it matters to you.
2. What punishment would you recommend for students with behavior problems in school?

3. What would you do and why if you could take a year off?
4. How are you involved in your community?
5. Tell me about a time when you were forced to make an unpopular decision.

General 4-H Questions

1. Share one of your most memorable 4-H experiences. What made it memorable?
2. Why should we (judges) select you for one of these National trips? And, if you are selected to attend, how do you plan to use the knowledge you gained in your county, district, and state?
3. Has your 4-H experience had an impact on your life? Be specific.
4. You have been awarded a million-dollar grant to spend on 4-H youth programs; how would you spend this money?
5. What type of 4-H involvement do you plan for the coming year?
6. Give us an example of a time when you set a goal in 4-H and could meet or achieve it.
7. Which "H" (Head, Heart, Hands, Health) has had the most significant impact on your life and why?

North Carolina AIRE Interview Score Sheet

Name:

County:

Possible
Points

Actual
Points

Personal Appearance, Eye Contact, Voice First Impressions, etc. **7**

Opening & Closing Remarks **5**

4-H Experience, Knowledge & Skills Demonstrated (as reflected through the interview) **16**

Ability to respond to Youth Issues / Current Event Questions **12**

Poise, Confidence, Engagement (communication) **10**

TOTAL

50

Judges Feedback:

North Carolina AIRE Resume Score Sheet

Name:

County:

Possible Points

Actual Points

General Appearance

(Page limit (2), neatness, easy to read, organized, error-free)

6

Professional Statement

(Career aspiration if know and/or trip applying for & why)

3

4-H Project Experience

10

4-H Community Service, Citizenship & Leadership

6

Non-4-H Community Service, Citizenship &

4

Leadership

Education

1

TOTAL

30

Judges Feedback:

North Carolina AIRE Essay Score Sheet

Name: _____ County: _____

	Possible Points	Actual Points
General Appearance	1	
Creative Content (grabs and holds reader's attention; content is unique)	4	
Organization (flow, easy to follow, answers prompt question(s))	6	
Use of Language (word selection, etc.)	3	
Grammar, Spelling & Sentence Structure, Word Count	6	
TOTAL	20	

**Questions about the AIRE Process
Please contact:**

Dr. Shannon B. McCollum
4-H Youth Development Specialist, Extension Associate
Box 7655 NC State
Raleigh, NC 27696-7655
(919)515-8486
shannon_mccollum@ncsu.edu



NC STATE

EXTENSION

Resources developed by Dr. Mitzi Downing, Extension Assistant
Professor, T&D Specialist Department of 4-H Youth Development

Updated by Dr. Shannon B. McCollum, 4-H Youth Development
Specialist, Extension Associate