

# Public Presentations project resource guide

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## What is this guide?

The purpose of this project resource guide is to help support your learning within the public presentation 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 4-H public presentation project?

A 4-H presentation project is an oral presentation, speech, or demonstration that shares an idea, concept, viewpoint, or experience in an educational or informative way (not for entertainment or performance). All presentations involve you getting up in front of others and teaching them something, but the topic of the presentation is up to you. For example, you could present on leadership lessons you learned through a trip to Washington DC, or you could do an educational presentation that explores renewable energy options. You could make a speech about social media's effects on youth mental health, or you could do a demonstration on how to make orange salad dressing. Regardless of the topic, public presentations give you the opportunity to develop and practice communication skills. There are many options with a presentation. Let's get started!

## Getting started with a public presentation project

### Figure out what you want to present

First, think about a topic you want to present. Be sure to choose something you're interested in. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- What you learned on a school or family trip
- Why you like Instagram

- The best way to support your friends when they are stressed out
- Why cats purr
- Grading eggs
- How to tap a tree
- The best concert you've ever been to and how it inspired you
- How to Tie-Dye a handkerchief
- The right way to measure a square
- How to care for a rat
- How to fold a paper airplane that flies straight
- How to sand wood
- Easy yoga poses or meditation exercises

### Figure out how you want to present

In 4-H, you can choose from 5 types of presentations—a presentation, a speech, a demonstration, an interactive demonstration, or a livestock demonstration.

- The purpose of a **presentation** is to inform, explain, or persuade an audience about a specific topic, and it often includes visual aids to help the listeners understand or see what you're talking about. The structure of a presentation is usually organized logically with an introduction, a body or main points (often with bullet points to make it easier for the audience), and a conclusion. Examples:
  - A report on leadership lessons learned on a trip to Washington DC.
  - An educational presentation that explores sustainable energy options.
- A **speech** is an address given to an audience with the goal of inspiring, motivating, entertaining, or getting across a specific message or idea. Speeches often focus on broader themes or issues rather than specific details like a presentation. The structure of a speech is usually more flexible but includes an opening that captures the audience's attention, a central message, and a conclusion that reinforces the main points and leaves an impression. Examples:
  - A persuasive speech on effects of social media on youth mental health.
  - An informative speech on how food preserves traditions and connects cultures.
- A **demonstration** is an opportunity to teach the audience something, like how to make lemonade or slime. Like a regular presentation, a demonstration also has an introduction (introduce the idea), a body (demonstrate your topic), and a conclusion (reemphasize your points and show the finished product). Examples:
  - Teaching a project or activity such as Taekwondo
  - Making macrame
- An **interactive demonstration** also teaches the audience something, but it includes an opportunity for the audience to participate. An example could be to give

step-by-step instructions on how to do a yoga pose, where the audience is copying your motions as you do them. Examples:

- Teach the public origami by taking them through the steps to fold a frog.
  - Teach the audience various yoga poses.
- A **livestock demonstration** teaches the audience something with a focus on livestock species. If doing a livestock demonstration at a county fair with 4-H, it must include beef, dairy, dairy goat, llama - alpaca, meat goat, poultry, rabbit, sheep or swine content and use a live animal. Other demonstrations involving animals can be entered under the demonstration category, such as basic pet care or demonstrating animal first-aid. Examples could include:
    - Demonstrate how to care for an animal or prepare it for showing at the fair
    - Teach others how to tie a halter.
    - Give a talk on preventative or veterinary care for a species.
    - Demonstrate how to tattoo an animal.

### **Put together your presentation and practice**

Once you know what you want to do, it's time to do it. This is the fun part. Depending on the type of presentation you chose (presentation, speech, demonstration, or interactive demonstration), you may need to assemble supplies or create presentation materials, like a display board or PowerPoint presentation. You might also think about different ways to write down your presentation, such as making note cards or cue cards or developing a script. 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. Try new things, like rewording instructions or using props. Give yourself plenty of time to practice by yourself, and then try presenting to friends, family members, or other trusted neighbors and adults. Doing any project can get complicated, and you may not be immediately successful, but it's all part of the learning process. [Click here for some helpful tips to build your presentation plan.](#)

### **Give your presentation!**

After you finish your project, it's time to share it! Here are some ideas:

- Share your presentation at school, with your 4-H club, or with another group that you're a part of.
- Ask to present at your local library, community center, or community event such as a festival or farmer's market.
- Share your presentation with the people that you practiced with so that they can see the final product.
- Develop an exhibit to take to your local county fair through the 4-H program. Return to the [public presentations project page](#) for more information about how to showcase your project at a county fair.

## 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?
- 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?

## Take your learning further

Presentations are just one opportunity for you to learn and apply skills, and maybe through doing this project, you've been inspired to learn or do more. While you are welcome to continue doing more and different presentations, we invite you to check out these other related project areas:

- [Global connections](#)
- [Youth leadership](#)
- [Citizenship](#)

The skills developed through the presentations project are some of the most useful skills in almost any career. Explore these future study and career opportunities related to public presentations:

- You could study communications, writing or drama to become a better public speaker.
- Good communications skills across cultures is a 21st century skill - important for any career you choose. [Professional communicators](#) craft and deliver messages in art, business or politics.



Presentation tips

# Presentation tips

Once you've used the [Public Presentations Project Resource Guide](#) to help you figure out what you want to present about and what type of presentation you want to do, you can use this Tips guide to guide you through creating your presentation!

## Presentation Software/Tools

No matter what type of presentation you are considering, you'll want to think about what visuals or sound you either need or want, in order to enhance your presentation. Google Slides/Microsoft Powerpoint, Canva, Prezi, or Adobe Express are all easy to use platforms for putting together digital visual presentations. Pixabay, Unsplash, and Pexels are online tools for finding free, quality pictures.

If you're presenting at a 4-H county fair, you'll be responsible for securing any equipment necessary well before your scheduled judging. Extension Staff may be able to assist in this process.

## Parts of a Presentation

### Introduction/"Attention Getter"

- BANG! Get everyone's attention with an interesting introduction! A joke, famous quote, a poem, song, a question, an exaggerated statement regarding your subject, etc.
- Introduce your topic by previewing your main points.
  - *Example: Today, I am going to talk about X, Y and Z.*
- Introduce yourself. Make sure the audience knows your name, age, club and how you got interested in the topic.

### Transitions

- A transition is a jump from topic to topic without losing the audience's attention. This is what makes the difference between a rough/choppy speech and a smooth well-organized speech.
- Use phrases like "in addition", "the next step is" and "after you finish this step, we can move to..." to signify a transition within your presentation.
- You should have a transition after your introduction and each main point of your body.

## Body

- This will change based on what type of presentation you are giving (see each area for more specifics—demonstration, speeches, interactive demonstrations, etc.)
- This is the bulk of your presentation.

## Summary

- As you come to your summary, make sure to provide sources for your information either by verbally listing them, or citing them on a poster/slide.
- Your summary should come right before your conclusion. It is done to remind your audience of what you discussed throughout your presentation: "Today, I discussed X, Y and Z."

## Questions

- Ask for questions. When a question is asked, repeat the question asked, and then answer it for the audience as completely as you can.
  - *Judge: Why did you choose this topic?*
  - *You: The question was why did I choose this topic? I chose this topic because..."*
- If you do not know the answer to a question that is asked, say so. After all, no one knows everything!
- If presenting as a 4-H project at a county fair, the judge will typically ask you at least one question. Any audience member can ask questions as well.

## Conclusion

- Transition back to you speaking before jumping into your conclusion.
- If possible, connect your conclusion back to your attention getter.
- Conclude your presentation without introducing new information.

## Presentation Tips

### Tips for all presentation types

- Choose your topic carefully. Demonstrate something that you are knowledgeable about and that you feel comfortable doing. Make sure it's age-appropriate.
- SMILE! Try to relax. Enjoy yourself, and your audience will enjoy listening to you. Relate to your audience.



- Speak clearly and loudly. Do not have long “silences” during your demonstration. Use correct grammar and enunciate properly. Do not talk fast.
- Dress appropriately for your demonstration. Be creative!
- Research your topic well so that you know as much about it as possible. If presenting as a 4-H project at a county fair, the amount of knowledge the judge will expect you to have regarding your topic will depend on your age.
- Use posters that are neat and easy to read at a distance of 10-15 feet away. All posters should be the same size if they are all on the same easel. You may use more than one easel if you wish.
- Use note cards if you wish, but DO NOT READ THEM. Know your material well enough so you do not have to be constantly checking your notes.
- Practice your presentation many, many times so that it goes smoothly and naturally for you. Don't panic if something goes wrong. Handle the situation as best you can. Keep your cool! Nearly everyone has a mishap at some time or other.
- HAVE FUN! And remember, it gets easier every year!

### **Tips for presentations and speeches**

- You may give handouts that pertain to your presentation/speech to your audience.
- Make sure your poster/visual aid is supporting your presentation. You want the audience to listen to what you are saying more than reading your slideshow.
- The body of your presentation should be divided into 3 main points. The main points are what you will preview at the beginning of your speech and review at the end of your speech.
- Make sure all your points connect and are grouped well. Practice giving your presentation to parents/siblings/guardians and ask where they got confused or lost. If you lose the audience's attention, it is hard to regain it.

### **Tips for demonstrations**

- If working with food, use good handling practices such as washing your hands and pulling your hair back.
- Use proper equipment and techniques in presenting your demonstration. Use standard measuring tools. Consider having ingredients already premeasured and portioned into cups or bowls and note that you have pre-measured. If needing to measure something out, demonstrate how that item would be measured appropriately.

- Show your finished product to the audience. Tell the audience what makes a desirable product and what causes flaws that the product may have, such as tunnels in muffins.
- If you're presenting as a 4-H project at a county fair, when you're done you'll sit down with the judge to discuss your demonstration. If the finished product is edible, you could offer the judge a taste (keep in mind the judge may decline).
- You may give samples to the audience or handouts that pertain to your demonstration.

### **Tips for interactive demonstrations**

- Have your hair pulled back away from your face. Don't touch your hair with your hand during your demonstration (especially when working with foods).
- Let the audience see what you are doing. Keep the space in front of you uncluttered. Use clear containers as much as possible.
- Use proper equipment and techniques in presenting your demonstration. Use standard measuring tools. Consider having ingredients already premeasured and portioned into cups or bowls and note that you have pre-measured. If needing to measure something out, demonstrate how that item would be measured appropriately.
- Work from right to left. This gives a smooth, organized effect to your demonstration and makes it easier for you to see at a glance what is left on your work station.
- As much as possible, keep your work area clean and tidy. Use trays to hold your supplies so that you can easily move things out of the way if needed. If you are making something messy, lay down a piece of wax paper. Have a damp washcloth available for spills. When presenting, wait until you have concluded your demonstration before you fully clean up the workspace so you don't distract the audience. You want your full attention to be on questions. A tidy and clean workspace is important, but not at the expense of delivering your presentation.
- Show your finished product to the audience. Tell the audience what makes a desirable product and what causes flaws that the product may have such as tunnels in muffins.
- Have enough supplies for all audience members to participate. Practice passing out supplies and come up with creative solutions to be efficient.

### **Tips for livestock demonstrations**

- Practice your demonstration with your animal, so the animal is prepared for what is going to happen.

- You are in charge of your animal during the demonstration, so if you need help make sure to organize a person who is comfortable with your animal to hold it. Make sure you are the one demonstrating and the other person is simply holding the animal.
- If presenting as a 4-H project at a county fair, you are not being judged on animal behavior, but the demonstration will go smoother the more comfortable you and the animal are with the presentation.

## 4-H Presentation Planning Sheet

Project \_\_\_\_\_

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

1. Introduction – What is the topic, why it is important, etc.

- a. "Attention Getter":
  - b. Information about the topic:
  - c. Related information about the demonstrator:
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2. Body – Description, explanation and information of topic:

- a. What to do:
  - b. What to say:
  - c. What visuals are needed:
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3. Conclusion – What was accomplished, what did it mean, etc.:

- a. Summary – Most important points of steps, "big ideas":
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- b. Think about possible questions (from the audience and evaluator):
- c. Closing Statement: