

# Teaching Techniques

Oklahoma 4-H Volunteer Development Series



## Principles of Learning

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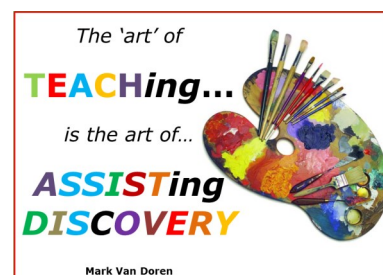
One of the most important responsibilities of a volunteer is to help youth acquire the skills and knowledge to reach their goals. Some basic principles apply to all learning situations:

1. Youth learn best in an atmosphere of **WARMTH AND ACCEPTANCE**.
2. Youth must have clear, **SELF-DETERMINED GOALS**.
3. Each youth will have

4. Adequate learning requires **MOTIVATION**. Self-motivation comes from basic needs, personal preferences, and feelings of self-worth and belonging. External motivation, on the other hand, is based on incentives

and awards received.

5. Youth must be **ACTIVELY INVOLVED** in selecting and carrying out the learning activities.
6. **SELF-EVALUATION** is the most meaningful kind of evaluation.



Mark Van Doren

## Ways to Learn

Youth will be more interested and active learners if a variety of teaching methods are used. How much information a learner keeps will vary from method to method. Remember that "learn by doing" is a basic concept in 4-H and often the best way to retain knowledge.

### READING.:

Youth will retain approximately 10% of what they read. Printed project materials and other literature are important ways to share knowledge, but they should be supplemented with other learning methods.

### HEARING:

The youth will retain approximately 20% of what they hear. Most teachers talk too much. Give youth a chance to explain and discuss what is presented.

### SEEING:

Youth will generally retain

**"One of the most important responsibilities of a volunteer is to help youth acquire the skills and knowledge to reach their goals."**

## Ways to Learn (cont.)



I hear and I forget  
I see and I remember  
I do and I understand

30% of what they see. Exhibits, posters, and illustrations are a big plus in teaching, especially when youth prepare materials to share.

### HEARING AND SEEING:

When the youth see and hear new material, they will retain approximately 50%. Observing demonstrations, seeing movies, slide/tapes, etc., and participating in

tours are all ways youth can see and hear and are generally popular teaching methods.

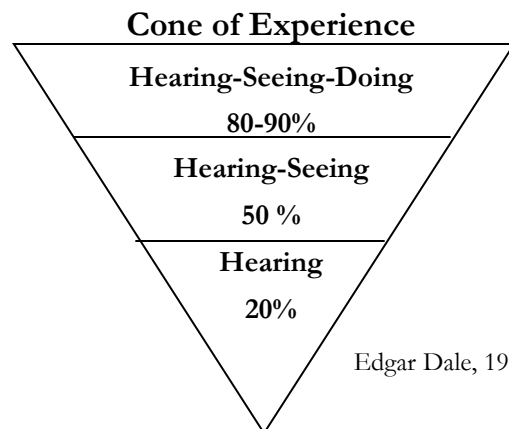
### SAYING:

Youth will retain approximately 70% of what they personally explain. When youth become an active part of the learning process, the amount they learn increases dramatically. Discussion groups and judging experiences are two

important ways members can express their ideas.

### SAYING AND DOING:

When youth are actively involved in saying and doing, they will retain approximately 90% of the material. Most people learn best by actually "doing." Provide opportunities for youth to practice and explore what they have learned. They might plan and present a demonstration or teach



Edgar Dale, 1969

**"The local club public speaking experience provides the fundamental skills necessary for teaching lessons as a teen leader."**

## Demonstrations

Demonstrations are traditional teaching techniques in 4-H. A volunteer can present demonstrations to help the youth learn. The youth in turn will reinforce this learning by repeating demonstrations for the group. As they become more experienced, youth should be encouraged to present their demonstrations at club meetings, for parents, at

county activities and events, or district and state events. As they progress, they will assume an increasing amount of responsibility for choosing a subject, preparing the demonstration, and evaluating their efforts. The local club public speaking experience provides the fundamental skills necessary for teaching lessons as a teen leader.

Demonstrations will help the youth:

- develop a positive self-concept
- acquire more self-confidence in front of a group
- express their ideas clearly
- spontaneously respond to questions
- acquire subject matter knowledge

## Discussion Groups

Discussion groups can help youth increase their subject matter knowledge and learn leadership skills. Some decisions regarding programs, meeting times, expenses, etc. can be handled well in a discussion group where everyone contributes. The youth will have a greater commitment to the group when they help make the decisions.

As youth share information to make a group decision they will become more aware of each persons skills and contributions to the group. Try to look at yourself as a member of the group, with no more authority or prestige than the youth, but with a special function of helping all youth make and carryout group decisions. The amount of

direction needed will depend on the youths ages and abilities. Use the experiential learning model to facilitate discussion and questions. (See Volunteer Development Series 4H·VOL·101 “Leading a Project Group”)

The following suggestions may help:

1. Make sure the topics or questions for the discussion are clearly stated. Older youth should take the leadership role in determining an agenda.
2. Keep discussions short for younger youth. They will lose interest and direction quickly.
3. Older youth should set their own time limits and assume responsibility for keeping the discussion on the topics.
4. Differences of opinion will occur. Such conflict is good, if the youth can discuss their differences and reach some agreement. You can help by trying to state differences clearly, by recognizing the contributions of each side, and by attempting to find ways for each side to consider the other's viewpoint. Don't force agreement.
5. Try to get contributions from all the youth. Avoid having a few youths do all the talking.



**“As youth share information to make a group decision they will become more aware of each persons skills and contributions to the group.”**

## Judging

Children have judging experiences long before they become involved in 4-H. Their 4-H project work should be one means of further developing their decision-making abilities. Judging is making a decision based on current knowledge

and explaining why you made it. For the youngest youth this will involve selecting between only two items. As the youths skills develop they will judge more items and become more experienced in stating the reasons for their

decisions. The older, more experienced youth may choose to participate in judging days at county level or higher. These special events provide an opportunity for the youth to develop and practice their skills in a broader arena.





## *Field Trips and Tours*

Well planned and organized field trips will develop more interest in the project work. Trips will create group feeling and commitment. New experiences are a vital part of youth development. They are always interested in meeting new people and seeing different places.

You will probably find that this is a popular teaching technique. Youth like to get out and visit new places. In order to provide a meaningful learning experience you will need to:

1. Plan carefully; involve the youth.
2. If possible, visit the location or person ahead of time.
3. Provide transportation; this is one way to involve parents.
4. Make sure the purpose of the trip is clear.
5. Tell youth enough of what to expect to arouse interest.
6. Evaluate the experience with the youth soon afterwards.
7. Carry over the learning

## *Exhibits*

**“Each individual needs to be recognized both by his/hers friends and important adults in his/her life.”**

Generally, youth will be excited about exhibiting their project work. This gives them an opportunity to look successful in the eyes of their friends and important adults. Each individual needs to be recognized both by his/hers friends and important adults in his/her life.

Sometimes the youth will want to create a group exhibit of their work for a club meeting, fair or special event. This will provide them with an opportunity to work as a group and to experience success through cooperative efforts.

Young people should be encouraged to share their learning with others, but should not be required to do so.

## Reference Table of Teaching Techniques

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brainstorming</b></p> <p>Brainstorming is a freewheeling technique where creative thinking is more important than practical thinking. The format is to have members spontaneously present ideas on the topic without regard to how practical the ideas might be, to jot the ideas down and then to edit the list. An atmosphere must be created which allows the participants to be uninhibited.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Buzz Session</b></p> <p>The buzz session is a method involving all members of a group directly in the discussion process. The group is divided into small groups (3 to 5 members) for a limited time (about 5 minutes) for discussion to which each contributes his/her ideas.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Collage</b></p> <p>An artistic composition of fragments of printed matter and other materials pasted on a surface. A collage is used to convey an idea or theme to others. A group or an individual can do it. Materials that can be used include: magazine pictures, newspaper headlines and clippings, tissue paper, advertisements, etc.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Committees</b></p> <p>A committee consists of a small group of members selected to fulfill a function or perform a task that cannot be done efficiently or effectively either by the entire group or by one person.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Demonstration</b></p> <p>The method of demonstration is a presentation that shows how to use a procedure or to perform an act. It is often followed by the member carrying out the activity under the supervision of the leader. It is basically a visual presentation accompanied by oral discussion.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discussion Group</b></p> <p>A discussion group includes a meeting of two or more people informally discussing a topic of mutual concern. It is generally based on a common background achieved through assigned readings or shared educational experiences. The facilitator gets things going, keeps the conversation on the subject, and makes sure everyone gets a chance to speak. This technique must have leadership and direction or it may become non-productive.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibits</b></p> <p>Exhibits are collections or related items displayed to assist in the learning process or to carry an educational, informational or inspirational message. They are educational during the preparation as well as upon completion of the exhibit to both the preparer of the exhibit and the viewer.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Experiment</b></p> <p>The experiment shows the outcome of some practice that can be seen, heard, or felt. It often deals with operational costs, production procedures, or with the quality of a product and often requires a considerable period of time to complete.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Field Trip or Tour</b></p> <p>A planned visit to places of educational interest for direct observation and study. Field trips usually involve less than four hours, while tours include visits to many points of interest and require from one day to several weeks to complete. Each consists of three parts: a discussion period for planning a trip, the trip itself, and a second discussion period to summarize and evaluate what was seen and learned. Tours allow participants to be "where the action is." It adds excitement to the learning process.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Games</b></p> <p>Games can provide interest, add variety to a program and increase retention. The game may be used to introduce a subject, to break a tense moment and/or a long period of lecturing, or to reinforce a point.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Illustrated Talk</b></p> <p>A talk presented for the same purposes as the project talk with the addition of visual aids such as charts, pictures, slides, models, or posters. The speaker relies on visuals, as much as what he/she is saying in this method. Audience attention is easier to hold, since the visuals allow for more showmanship. The illustrated talk is used when the purpose is to leave a more vivid impression and to stimulate greater interest with the audience. This technique makes use of the eyes, as well as the ears, resulting in more learning taking place.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Information Sheet</b></p> <p>Paperwork commonly called: "handouts," information sheets are learning aids given to trainees in support of a presentation. They may be in narrative or outline form, or copies from published materials.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jingle Writing</b></p> <p>Jingle writing is creative writing using rhymes. It is used to emphasize important points in a lesson and to develop creativity in students. Decide what topics are suited to jingle writing and explain that no special organization, type of structure or particular talent is needed to write jingles.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Judging</b></p> <p>Judging is the process of measuring quality in comparison with an established standard. When several members are taking on the same project, you can help them by group judging. Place all projects where the members can all see them. Help them look the projects or items over; discuss good points, and those that need improvement. Judging does not have to be limited to projects. It's a learning activity. Members learn to recognize quality; they set standards and sharpen their judgment.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lecture</b></p> <p>In a lecture, the teacher speaks alone; this enables the teacher to present ideas to large numbers of people. Since the lecture makes use of only our ears, participants retain only a small portion of the information presented. Attention and interest is difficult to hold since the members do not become involved, nor are they always required to think.</p> <p>The lecture is useful in presenting facts and information, but has limited value in developing skills, attitudes and the kind of understanding which is necessary for members to put their knowledge and facts to work in their situation. The lecture should seldom be used in 4-H club work by itself, but is often effective when combined with other techniques.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Newsletters</b></p> <p>A newsletter is mailed/emailed to many people. It carries a message, which might be an announcement or report. It often carries internal information and is a way of personally communicating with many people.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Panel</b></p> <p>A panel is a dialogue between a group of four to eight experts on an assigned topic in front of a group. It often carries internal information and it is a way of personally communicating with many people.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project Talk</b></p> <p>A project talk is a “telling” process. If it is a “telling and showing” process, it is an illustrated talk. If the member is “doing” the process while “telling” about it, the project talk becomes a demonstration.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Puppet Show</b></p> <p>Puppetry is a technique in which participants express ideas and concepts through puppet characters. The participants can write original scripts or use stories, songs, or existing scripts to convey ideas. The puppets can be hand-made, purchased or stuffed animals. This method permits imagination and creativity for participants and audiences.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Role Playing</b></p> <p>Role-playing is a technique where a small group of participants acts out a real-life situation in front of a group. There is no script. The participants make up their part as they act. The performance is then discussed in relation to the situation or problem under consideration.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Skit</b></p> <p>A skit is a brief, rehearsed dramatic presentation involving two or more persons. Working from a prepared script, the participants act out an event or incident, which dramatizes a situation taken from a real life experience.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Work or Learning Station</b></p> <p>Individuals can work at their own pace at a work/learning station. Supplies, instructions (both verbal and written) and space are provided. The educator makes sure the person is comfortable with what they are to do and have a safe understanding to precede. The educator needs to check with the individual from time to time.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Workshop</b></p> <p>The workshop is a teaching method, which permits extensive study of a specific topic. It usually gathers a number of people who meet together to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding of a specific topic or problem.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Video/PPT/Electronic Recording</b></p> <p>A presentation for the same purpose as the talk, illustrated talk, demonstration. Finished product edited and posted on the internet or shared through some form of electronic communication.</p>

To learn more about teaching others refer to Training Trainers to Teach (T3), Unit 8.

## Adapting Teaching Techniques for Needs of Youth

In all of these methods the volunteer will need to be more directive with younger youth. Carefully plan how to involve all youth according to their abilities and

interests. With increasing maturity youth should assume more responsibility for planning and carrying out activities. Adolescents should be responsible for planning and

implementing almost the entire program. A volunteer should always be available for support and guidance.

	5-8 Year Olds	9-12 Year Olds	13-15 Year Olds	16-19 Year Olds
<b>Demonstrations</b>	A "show and tell" opportunity gives youth practice in speaking in front of an audience and gives them a chance to take pride and share in their projects.	Have youth follow examples of older youth and volunteers, suggest brief, simple topics, develop self-confidence within peer group.	Provides an excellent opportunity for youth to acquire self-confidence and recognition within peer group. Expand to illustrated talks and regular talks.	Presentations will be for a much wider audience such as district, state, or national groups; serve as role model for younger youth. Teach workshops.
<b>Discussions</b>	Discussions should be kept brief to accommodate short attention spans. This is a good opportunity to practice the 4-H Pledge and sing a group song.	Emphasis should be on a group feeling and participation of all youth. Will require adult leadership and guidance.	Youth will enjoy questioning and exploring; young people will want to know "why", devote time to discussions and questions.	Use discussions extensively; provide alternatives rather than directions, high interest in co-educational activities.
<b>Judging</b>	Games with an emphasis on choosing or making a decision will help youth develop judging skills.	Plan for simple choices, closely related to daily experiences; youth will enjoy simple contests, where competition is not stressed.	Judging can be a significant way of providing success in the peer group.	Youth will have high motivation in subject areas which relate to their career interests.
<b>Trips/Tours</b>	Youth will be excited and interested to visit and learn about businesses and industries, such as a bakery, police station or post office.	Youth will be interested in new experiences and group activities.	Youth will be interested in exploring beyond their own community.	Trips are an excellent incentive instead of medals and ribbons; planning should be largely by youth; high interest in state and national events.
<b>Exhibits</b>	A group exhibit where everyone's work is recognized will build the skills of teamwork and self-confidence.	Pins and ribbons are a big incentive; youth need recognition from adults and older youth.	Youth will enjoy working with the opposite sex who have similar interests. Begin exploring service possibilities.	Suggest activities of a service nature; activities designed for career exploration and development will be of high interest.

Materials adapted from *Sharing Resources for Project Leaders*, Missouri Cooperative Extension Service, 1979.

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