

Judging

Oklahoma 4-H Volunteer Development Series



Judging A Teaching Technique

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To Make the Best Better" is the 4-H motto. How do we know what is best? How can we learn to make it better unless we learn standards and develop the ability to make sound decisions? Every experience, which helps us make wise decisions, enriches our lives. Good judgment is based on proper information and the ability to make wise decisions.

To present a broad scope of judging, we will answer four big questions.

What is Judging?

Judging is making a decision and explaining why you made it. Seldom a day goes by that you do not have decisions to make. When you buy groceries, you must constantly choose between brands while considering quality, size, and cost in making a purchase. This includes how carefully we select the apples from a

grocery counter and the many decisions involved in the selection of an automobile. In 4-H, judging is essentially a matter of comparing two or more items and deciding which is better and why.

The key to successful judging is having knowledge about the items to be judged. If youth know what factors make up an ideal birdhouse, dress, or loaf of bread, then they are more able to recognize a top quality product.

Why Have Judging in 4-H?

Judging is a valuable teaching technique for the 4-H volunteer. It provides the volunteer another way to present project information to youth. Judging can be used to stimulate interest in a subject or as an incentive to motivate better work.

Value to Youth

1. Teaches youth to appreciate high standards
2. Teaches youth to observe closely
3. Teaches youth to develop their reasoning ability
4. Teaches youth to make sound and systematic decisions
5. Teaches youth to improve their own work
6. Teaches youth to develop the ability to concisely express thoughts

When Does Judging Training Start?

Judging training can start as soon as project meetings begin. Successful judging depends on knowledge of the product or animal to be judged. With this in mind, it is easy to see that the basis for judging starts when the volunteer begins teaching





Oral reasons: telling someone why and how you placed a class, by comparing the good points and the faults of a product.

youth about the product they are making or growing. Judging training needs to come at the beginning of the project so youth may use this knowledge in selecting materials or animals for their project. Always reference 4-H Project Manuals when learning to judge. Some projects have very specific guidelines and scorecards (i.e., Land, Forestry, Horticulture, Meats, etc.)

How Do We Teach Judging?

These guidelines will help teach the values of judging and prepare youth for judging contests.

Step 1. Study the scorecard. Before attempting to judge a product, study the scorecard that applies. Scorecards have been developed for most 4-H projects. If a scorecard does not exist, discuss major characteristics and the importance of each. General 4-H scorecards are given at the end of this section as a reference.

It is not necessary to memorize the scorecard or score each item. It is important to know which characteristics to compare and which are the most significant.

For example, the main headings on a vegetable

scorecard are: quality, 35 points; condition, 35 points; size and uniformity, 30 points. Quality refers to factors occurring during growth of the vegetable. Condition refers to factors occurring during or after harvest, and uniformity and size means specimens should be alike; oversized or undersized specimens are less desirable.

Step 2. Judge one article.

Use the information found on a score sheet and apply it to a product. Evaluating a single item or animal early in the project would be time well spent before setting up a full class.

Step 3. Judge a class of four items. Remember judging is a comparative process. One product is compared to another under a given situation and the individual must decide which is better of the two and tell why. When a decision is reached between the two, compare the top with the other two products. The next step would be to compare the two remaining products for second and third place.

By adding one additional product we have a "standard class" of four products. The process as outlined is continued to choose the best of the four products, which is second, third, and fourth. With four in a class,

the decision making process is a little more complicated. Let's consider ways of judging a class of four.

Analyze the entire class from a distance. Look for something, which stands out-an easy top or bottom or maybe the class, divides itself clearly into a top and bottom pair. This helps narrow the class and gives a mental picture that will help as reasons are given.

Examine the class at close range. Your placing may be confirmed or changed by closer examination. Handle the products, if this is permitted, to help discover finer points of quality.

- Make a final decision.
- Take notes to prepare for oral reasons.

How To Give Oral Reasons

Oral reasons is telling someone why and how you placed a class, by comparing the good points and the faults of a product. Beginning judges often may use a few notes, but more experienced youth will want to talk from a mental image to logically and accurately defend the placing.

1) Taking Notes. It is impossible for anyone to remember all the details of a class; therefore, youth should make a practice of

Judging Contest Placing Card		
	1-2-3-4	A
	1-2-4-3	B
	1-3-2-4	C
	1-3-4-2	D
	1-4-2-3	E
	1-4-3-2	F
	2-1-3-4	G
	2-1-4-3	H
	2-3-1-4	I
	2-3-4-1	J
	2-4-1-3	K
	2-4-3-1	L
	3-1-2-4	M
	3-1-4-2	N
	3-2-1-4	O
	3-2-4-1	P
	3-4-1-2	Q
	3-4-2-1	R
	4-1-2-3	S
	4-1-3-2	T
	4-2-1-3	U
	4-2-3-1	V
	4-3-1-2	W
	4-3-2-1	X

Contestant: _____

Class: _____

Reasons
Class: Yes No

Placing Grade: _____

Reason Grade: _____

taking notes. Your notes will help you recall the visual image of the product or animal.

A class of four divides itself into three pairs: a top pair, a middle pair, and a bottom pair. Use a note-taking system that is simplest for you.

Look for big things first. Judge the whole product and not just a particular part. Keep the scorecard in mind. Notes should be brief. Use them as reminders of things to mention, and use them only during rehearsal time while you wait to give reasons.

The ability to effectively express your-self is an important quality. How well you organize your thoughts will largely influence how well the listener understands you. Use a system of presenting your reasons that is logical, clear, and easy to follow. Since the class divides itself into a top, middle, and a bottom pair the same basic procedure should be used to present each pair.

2) Style and Form

Introduce the Class - "I placed this class of potatoes 1-2-3-4."

Top Pair. General Statement - Start with the most important general points for placing this pair. Example: "In the top pair I placed one

over two because one contained more uniform, firm, and mature tubers."

Compare-(Continue to bring in details which will aid in your comparison.) Example: "One was more uniform as to variety, brighter, and was cleaner in appearance. One was free from greening and pre- and post- harvest diseases."

Grants - If the second place is superior in some respects, indicate the most important first. Example: "I will grant that two has a more uniform color and exhibits less damage from insects."

Middle Pair. General Statement - "In my middle pair, I placed two over three because two is more uniform in color and size, and exhibits little mechanical damage or post-harvest disease."

Compare - "Two is free of sprouting and is uniformly shaped. In addition, two is firm and free from feathering and shriveling."

Grants - "I will grant that three is cleaner, in fact, the cleanest of the class."

Bottom Pair. General Statement - "In a close bottom pair, I placed three over four, choosing the cleaner and more mature tubers."

Compare - "Three was free of greening and insect injury."

Grants - "I grant that four has less mechanical damage and disease, but fault the plate of potatoes for being irregular in size, insect damaged, and exhibiting too much green color to be placed higher in the class.

3) Delivery

Remember to speak clearly and convincingly when giving reasons. Avoid meaningless words such as "better," "I like," "that," "it," "for being," "kind of," and other such words or phrases which add little to your reasoning. Use precise descriptions in telling the judge why one item is better than another. A summary or conclusion is usually not necessary. If you need one to let the judge know you are finished, you may simply state the placing. "The class was placed 1-2-3-4." The form for giving reasons can be easily acquired by practicing in the project meeting and at home.

When presenting your reason to a judge, look at the judge at all times, standing straight and still. Talk at a rate of speed, which is easily understood. Don't talk too loud; adjust your voice volume to the room or setting. A set of oral reasons in a judging contest should not exceed two minutes in length.

"Good judgment is based on proper information and the ability to make wise decisions."



The Judging Event

Steps for Person in Charge

The person in charge, either for a single class at a project meeting or for a judging contest at a county or state level, has an important role to play. Generally, the project leader in project meetings will fill this role. Sometimes a teen leader may have charge of a judging class. Let's think through the job step by step.

Step 1 - Set up the class. It may be a class of two, three, or four. For beginners, the differences should be fairly obvious. You can simplify a class of four by selecting an easy top or bottom and only one close pair.

Step 2 - Designate by letter or number the individual items in class. Letter cards may be placed on still objects.

Step 3 - Beginners will need to be instructed how to use a placing card.

Step 4 - Tell the group what is to be judged. "This is a class of school dresses." "This is a class of bird

houses." "This is a class of market potatoes." Remind youth to write the class title on their cards.

Step 5 - Announce how much time will be allowed for placing and how much time for giving reasons. The usual time limits are 10 minutes for placing and 2 minutes for reasons. These can be adjusted for the age group judging or for other reasons.

Step 6 - Hand out placing cards and an extra card or paper on which to take notes, unless notes are allowed on the back of the placing card.

Step 7 - Call time is up.

Step 8 - Listen to reasons. Move away from the group so that the person giving reasons cannot be heard by others. While the member is talking, listen attentively - do not interrupt. Two minutes should be allowed for reasons; as the youth become more skilled it is desirable to time them. After the youth has completed his/her reasons, you may question him/her about the class.

Step 9 - Scoring classes. A perfect score on placings is usually set at 100. A table is included to help you figure scores in case you do not have a computing slide. The table is based on a 15 point cut for every switch in placings. A computing slide

gives a much fairer score if the spread between items is not equal because adjustments can be made for the closeness of pairs. Computing slides are available from commercial sources.

Step 10 - Scoring Reasons. In scoring reasons, think of the three comparisons made. Consider whether or not the significant differences were discussed. Also make allowances for closeness of pairs.

If decisions are based on skimpy reasoning, a low reasons score is justified even if the placing is correct. If the placing is incorrect, it need not concern the scoring of reasons too much. That has been taken care of in the placing score.

Step 11 - Review the Class. A member who has given a good set of reasons may be asked to give reasons to the entire group. The person in charge should also go over the class, giving reasons for the official placing. Do this in front of the products, pointing out the differences

Step 12 - Announce results.



GRADE FOR PLACINGS*

HOW TO USE THE CHART.
 - Find the correct placing of the class in the left-hand column. Read across to the 100 score for that placing. The vertical column in which the 100 score occurs is the one used for scoring the class; thus for the ACBD placing use column 3, BDCA placing use column 12, DCBA column 24, etc.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
ABCD	100	85	85	70	70	55	85	70	70	55	55	40	70	55	55	40	40	25	55	40	40	25	25	10
ABDC	85	100	70	55	85	70	70	85	55	40	70	55	55	40	40	25	25	10	70	55	55	40	40	25
ACBD	85	70	100	85	55	70	70	55	55	40	40	25	85	70	70	55	55	40	40	55	25	10	40	25
ACDB	70	55	85	100	70	85	55	40	40	25	25	10	70	85	55	40	70	55	55	70	40	25	55	40
ADBC	70	85	55	70	100	85	55	70	40	25	55	40	40	55	25	10	40	25	85	70	70	55	55	40
ADCB	55	70	70	85	85	100	40	55	25	10	40	25	55	70	40	25	55	40	70	85	55	40	70	55
BACD	85	70	70	55	55	40	100	85	85	70	70	55	55	40	70	55	25	40	40	25	55	40	10	25
BADC	70	85	55	40	70	55	85	100	70	55	85	70	40	25	55	40	10	25	55	40	70	55	25	40
BCAD	70	55	55	40	40	25	85	70	100	85	55	70	70	55	85	70	40	55	25	10	40	55	25	40
BCDA	55	40	40	25	25	10	70	55	85	100	70	85	55	40	70	85	55	70	40	25	55	70	40	55
BDAC	55	70	40	25	55	40	70	85	55	70	100	85	25	10	40	55	25	40	70	55	85	70	40	55
BDCA	40	55	25	10	40	25	55	70	70	85	85	100	40	25	55	70	40	55	55	40	70	85	55	70
CABD	70	55	85	70	40	55	55	40	70	55	25	40	100	85	85	70	70	55	25	40	10	25	55	40
CADB	55	40	70	85	55	70	40	25	55	40	10	25	85	100	70	55	85	70	40	55	25	40	70	55
CBAD	55	40	70	55	25	40	70	55	85	70	40	55	85	70	100	85	55	70	10	25	25	40	40	55
CBDA	40	25	55	40	10	25	55	40	70	85	55	70	70	55	85	100	70	85	25	40	40	55	55	70
CDAB	40	25	55	70	40	55	25	10	40	55	25	40	70	85	55	70	100	85	55	70	40	55	85	70
CDBA	25	10	40	55	25	40	40	25	55	70	40	55	55	70	70	85	85	100	40	55	55	70	70	85
DABC	55	70	40	55	85	70	40	55	25	40	70	55	25	40	10	25	55	40	100	85	85	70	70	55
DACB	40	55	55	70	70	85	25	40	10	25	55	40	40	55	25	40	70	55	85	100	70	55	85	70
DBAC	40	55	25	40	70	55	55	70	40	55	85	70	10	25	25	40	40	55	85	70	100	85	55	70
DBCA	25	40	10	25	55	40	40	55	55	70	70	85	25	40	40	55	55	70	70	55	85	100	70	85
DCAB	25	40	40	55	55	70	10	25	25	40	40	55	55	70	40	55	85	70	70	85	55	70	100	85
DCBA	10	25	25	40	40	55	25	40	40	55	55	70	40	55	55	70	70	85	55	70	70	85	85	100

Examples of Scorecards for Project Judging – Always reference 4-H Project Manuals and Literature for the most current judging cards and information. These are only examples of possible percentages.

Clothing

I.	Design and Color (Color combination, pattern and fabric, suitable for wearer, blouse and skirt combination)	30
II.	Fabric and Trimmings (Quality suited to purpose, interfacings, thread, buttons, zippers, and hem tape)	20
III.	Workmanship (Cut on grain, fabric design matched,, facings, buttonholes, hems)	30
IV.	General Appearance (Clean, pressed)	10
V.	Relation of Value to Cost	10

Crafts

I.	Suitability to Purpose	10
II.	Appropriate Materials	10
III.	Design	10
IV.	Color	10
V.	Shape	10
VI.	Balance of Space	10
VII.	Texture Typical of Product	10
VIII.	Craftsmanship	10
IX.	Emphasis or Center of Interest	10
X.	Significant Effort and Workmanship	10

Electrical Exhibits

I.	Practicability (Suitable to purpose for which it is designed, labor efficiency, frequency such an appliance would be used on farm or in home)	25
II.	Workmanship (Meets standards prescribed, stability fittings – finish, appropriate to purpose, proper connections)	45
III.	Safety (Correct wiring – size of wires, connections, proper insulation)	30

Educational Displays, Notebooks, & Posters

I.	Content (Meaningful, related to project, proper ID)	50
II.	Organization	20
III.	Appearance	20
IV.	Originality	10

Entomology Collections

I.	Variety of Specimens in the Collection (Number of orders, number of species represented)	30
II.	Accuracy of Identification Assignment of Species to Correct Order Correctness of Common or Scientific Name	10
III.	Performance (Mounting Technique - use of insect pins, pin placement in specimen, proper spreading of specimen, height uniformity on pin)	20
IV.	Condition of Specimens (Wings, legs, and antennae not	10

V.	Broken or missing Correctness and Uniformity of Labels	10
VI.	Overall Neatness and Arrangement of Collection	10

Home Furnishings or Home Grounds Articles

I.	Suitability for Purpose (Material, design and/or color, maintenance qualities)	40
II.	Workmanship (construction)	40
III.	General Appearance	20

4-H Photography Collection

I.	Sequence (Picture tells a story, story is logical and complete)	25
II.	Composition (Close-up, human interest, busy subjects, background, arrangement)	30
III.	Lighting (Sunshine)	10
IV.	Technical quality (Exposure, focus, camera steady, defects)	20
V.	Display (Number of prints, mounted for album, neatness, data, file numbers)	15

4-H Photography Single print

I.	Composition (Close-up, human interest, busy subjects, background, arrangement)	40
II.	Lighting (Sunshine, flash, available light)	20
III.	Technical quality (Exposure, camera steady, defects, focus)	25
IV.	Display (Right size, mounting, neatness, data, trimmed)	15

Baked Products**Muffins, Biscuits & Cakes**

I.	Shape (Muffins – Uniform, well rounded tops; Biscuits – Well proportioned, vertical sides, level top)	20
II.	Crust (Evenly brown, tender)	10
III.	Volume (Muffins – Light for size; Biscuits – Almost twice volume of unbaked)	10
IV.	Crumb (Tender, pleasing color)	25
V.	Flavor (Blended flavor of well baked product)	35

Yeast Bread

I.	Shape (Well-proportioned, evenly rounded tops)	10
II.	Color	10
III.	Volume (Light in weight in proportion to size)	10
IV.	Crust (1/8" deep; crisp, tender, smooth)	10
V.	Crumb	20

VI.	(Tender, moist, silky, elastic) Slice (Regular and well shaped)	10
VII.	Flavor (Pleasing blend of flavor)	30

Cookies

I.	Shape	20
II.	Crust (Uniform color, free from darkened edges)	25
III.	Crumb (Small even cells, tender)	20
IV.	Flavor (Well-blended flavor)	35

Quick Bread

I.	Shape (Well proportioned, evenly rounded or a flat top)	20
II.	Color (Uniformly brown)	10
III.	Volume (Light weight in proportion to size)	10
IV.	Crust (Crisp, tender, no cracks)	10
V.	Crumb (Moist, elastic, tender, round even cells, flaky lightness)	20
VI.	Flavor (Blended flavor of ingredients)	30

Canned Fruits & Vegetables

I.	Package (Standard jar – lid, seal, clean and labeled)	15
II.	Pack (1/2" headspace, correct proportion liquid to product)	30
III.	Product (Size of pieces, color, texture and grain, free of defects, maturity, liquid)	55

Pickles, Relishes, Jellies, Jam, Butter

I.	Package (Standard jar – lid, seal, clean – labeled)	30
II.	Product (Color suitable, texture typical of product, free of defects)	70

Vegetables

I.	Quality	35
II.	Condition	35
III.	Uniformity and Size	30

(See 4-H Publication #702 – Horticulture Crop Judging Manual, for further details.)