

June 2011

To: Iowa 4-H Visual Arts Exhibit Judges
Re: Exhibit Judging Reminders

As we write this, the first four county fairs are underway or completed. Four down, 96 to go!

With the fair season heating up in earnest after the July 4 holiday, we wanted to remind those judging county fairs in 2011 to review the resources available to exhibit judges.

Before you judge at county fairs, be sure to review:

- The April 4, 2011 webinar recording explaining changes in exhibit classes
- 2011 4-H Exhibit Rules and Class Descriptions
- Tip Sheets and Hot Sheets for Visual Arts
- Judges Tip Sheet reviewing the 2011 exhibit changes.

All judging resources are located on the 4-H Judges web page at
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/adults/judges/>.

Special Notes for Visual Arts Judges:

- 1) Design Elements and Art Principles – emphasis during exhibit evaluation should be on the exhibitor use of DE/AP in the creation of their exhibit to accomplish their exhibit goals. Help the exhibitor focus on the most relevant terms for their exhibit, not simply a listing of all that were used. Keep in mind the stages of youth development. Members may know about line, color, shape, rhythm, balance but may not associate them with the phrase “design elements” or “art principles”. Younger members should not be expected to be as familiar with or as articulate about them as experienced members. Use the judging conference to ask developmentally appropriate questions of the members and their use of DE/AP as they may not have included that information in their “write-up”. If they can explain it to you, that is acceptable.
- 2) One way to help 4-H’ers put design elements and art principles into context is to read artist statements. Many artists include a statement, philosophy, purpose or something similar on their websites. Some are very complex, some very simple. I have a work in our home by artist Jerry Brehm. He describes his art this way:
“My paintings are constructed of the basic elements of art: line, color, texture, and movement play important roles. Multi mediums are used to show different phases of the work. For instance, the smudges and adjustments of the charcoal remain to show the history and process. The subject matter, inspired by ordinary objects, is easy to accept and encourages a response based on individual experiences. As a result, the viewer’s reaction to the subject and with the process completes the painting.”
(<http://www.jabrem.com/>)

Printmaking artist Barbara Bouman Jay says this about her work:

“I create non-representational monotypes and monoprints; an intriguing hybrid of techniques that combines printmaking and painting. My focus is on combinations of subtle layered, textured surfaces, using soft geometric shapes and abstract marks with

emphasis on limited color relationships and composition. My work addresses proportion and balance with repeated gestures or chine colle' elements that punctuate the main compositional elements.” (<http://www.barbaraboumanjay.com/>)

I think many times 4-H members, and we as adults, try to make the use of design elements and art principles too complex. In both the above examples the artist gets to the point quickly, and readily identifies how they attempt to use the elements and principles in their work. We wouldn't expect our members to be quite as eloquent, but please help them simplify the concepts. (These examples are intended for judges to learn more. It is not expected that 4-H members have developed an artist statement.)

- 3) Copyright – pay special attention to paintings, drawings, sketches, etc. that are based on another work (ex: photo, calendar, painting). A red flag should go up anytime the source is given as “photo from a magazine”, “photo from the Internet”, “photo in a book”. These would all be considered derivative works, and only the copyright holder can authorize a derivative work. There is no amount of changes that can be made to make these acceptable. The standard to be applied is whether the works “substantially similar”. It's not about the number of changes; it's whether the two pieces are more alike than different. Unless the original work is in the public domain (generally pre-1923), permission needs to be obtained for the member to exhibit these types of pieces at the Iowa State Fair. If the source or permission is questionable, it would advisable not to select that item for exhibit at the state fair. Use the county fair conference judging as an opportunity to educate members about copyright issues and artists' rights. Please review the first two questions at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4H/StateFair/SFExhibitFAQviscopy.htm>. Please ask about the specific procedures for the county you're judging.
- 4) Some rules are meant to be broken – Encourage creativity and originality. The 4-H visual arts program deliberately emphasizes art, not crafts. We want to encourage individual expression of 4-H'ers creative talents. While one of the evaluation criteria is “Appropriate use of medium – the exhibit should look as though it were made from that medium”, successful artists push the limits. As an example, see the work of Minnesota wood artist Paul Lambrecht (<http://www.paulambrecht.com/>). When you view his sculpture page, you'll wonder if it's really wood. Help foster innovation in our young people as you work with them during exhibit judging.

We thank you for your continued support of the Iowa 4-H program and for all you do to encourage 4-H members during the exhibit evaluation experience. Best wishes for a great summer.

Sincerely,



Mitchell Hoyer
State 4-H Youth Development Program Specialist
515-294-1531
mhoyer@iastate.edu