

4-H Communication Events and Copyright Information

Please review this information for common questions about 4-H communication events and 4-H communication copyright questions.

Q. I've been selected to give my Working Exhibit at the Iowa State Fair. How many supplies do I need?

A. Plan on supplies for at least 100 participants (60 for junior exhibitors). Senior working exhibits (grades 7-12) are presented for 45 minutes; junior working exhibits (grades 5-6) are presented for 25 minutes. Here's how I figure the math.

If your activity takes 3 minutes to complete, then 15 people can do the activity in 45 minutes (45 divided by 3 = 15). Figure that 6 people can be at the working exhibit table at once, so multiply 15 by 6 to get 90 people in a 45 minute time span. If it takes a less time to do the activity, then you'll need more supplies. Adjust accordingly. Figure that sometimes extra folks may crowd the table, so you'll need a few more supplies, so round up. You don't want to run out!

Plan on having extras, and then present your working exhibit locally this fall at a children's fair or other 4-H promotion event. That will help use up the extra materials and give you an opportunity to promote 4-H communications.

Q. Can I distribute handouts of directions or a recipe with my working exhibit or educational presentation?

A. Maybe. It depends on if the directions or recipe are copyrighted (most likely they are), and if you have permission to make copies and distribute them. When using copyrighted instructions, you may display the instructions on a poster and credit the source. You may not make copies and distribute copies without permission. It is acceptable to distribute information informing others where they can obtain the instructions.

Permission to make copies can be granted by the copyright owner (author or website), or may be implied by the terms of use stated on the website or in the copyright notice of the book. If you plan to distribute copies of instructions, you will be asked for the source of your information and the copyright permission statement. If you are using information from a website, document the source, and print off the terms of use policy if the policy allows you to re-distribute materials. If the policy does not permit copying, then you will need to obtain permission, or simply not hand out the instructions. See the next two questions below for additional information.

Q. Two of our 4-H members are doing a Working Exhibit using a activity from the ZOOM website. Can they use the activity and can they hand out directions to the activity?

A. In order, Yes and No. ZOOM is a popular TV show and website that has several excellent activities for young children. Many of these adapt themselves very well to 4-H work in a variety of project areas. There are no copyright issues if the members are demonstrating and teaching the activity as part of a Working Exhibit. The members should give credit to the source of their idea or inspiration one of their posters. However, ZOOM explicitly prohibits distribution of materials found on their web site. So no, members may not hand out copies of directions obtained from a ZOOM web page.

The members may, and are encouraged to, hand out copies of a paper which give the name of the activity, the source, and the web page so they could obtain the directions themselves. Alternatively, members could contact the person who submitted the activity to ZOOM and ask that person for permission to distribute. Another option is to attempt to find a similar activity from another source that would allow distribution of the directions. Be sure your members inform the communication judge during their conference that they did not distribute directions because of copyright issues. Members will not be penalized in their evaluation for doing the right thing regarding copyright.

Q. Two of our 4-H members are doing a working exhibit making a craft item. They saw the idea on a web site called Kids Domain. Can they hand out directions for the craft item?

A. What do the terms of use for the web site state? Kids Domain is owned and operated by Kaboose, Inc. The Terms of Use for the web site state (in part):

“Ways you may use these craft activities:

You may print them and share them with people in your own home, in schools (both public and private), daycare centers, scouts, youth groups (including church groups) nursing homes, and other community groups. You may reproduce them and hand them out to any of the previously mentioned groups, so long as you are doing this for free. Please make sure your handouts include the contributor information (if available) and our copyright notice and site URL.”

Given this information, as long as the member follows the credit instructions as listed, we would allow them to hand out the specified directions. The members should print off a copy of the Terms of Use page so the judge can see that permission to use the directions is allowed.

The Kids Domain and ZOOM examples illustrate perfectly the wide range of copyright permission given by publishers. Each case must be dealt with separately. Members must locate the copyright statement and/or terms of use to determine the permitted uses.

Q. I am helping a 4-H member with her presentation and we are questioning who we would get permission from for a recipe. It is a cookbook celebrating the 150th anniversary of Anywhereville and it doesn't say it's published by a company. It lists a four person committee who coordinated the recipe book. The recipe does list a person that submitted the actual recipe. Would it be her that we get permission from to make copies to hand out of the recipe?

A. Yes, have your 4-H'er contact the person who submitted the recipe to obtain permission to distribute the recipe. That would work whether or not it was published by a company. The original author (unless they sold those rights) can always grant permission to use their material. That certainly applies to recipes in community and church cookbooks.

Q. I will be doing a 4-H Educational Presentation at the state fair. I prepared my visuals using PowerPoint and need to use an LCD projector. I know it is very bright in the 4-H building; will the audience be able to see the slide show, and do I need to bring my own projector?

A. Yes, it is bright in the 4-H building presentation rooms, even with a fabric shade on the windows. The audience will be able to see the visuals - if you do your job in effectively preparing your PowerPoint slides for use in bright conditions. I would advise you to select a background and font color combination that will project well in lighted viewing conditions. This usually means a light or white background, with black or dark colored text, just the opposite of formats many of us use in darker conditions. This may mean you will need to make changes to the slide template from the current design. Other graphics and photos often depend on the quality of the initial image. There may also be some adjustments that can be made to the computer resolution to allow better viewing. Practice at home in varying conditions and with varying formats to see what works best.

We will have an LCD projector available. However, some members may be more comfortable using a projector they have practiced with. That will be up to you. Members do need to bring their own computer, and should have all appropriate connecting cables and know how to connect them. Projection screens are used in the presentation rooms; we supply those. Please check with your county extension office to make sure they indicated on the communication event database entry form this will be a computer/LCD presentation. That will help us in scheduling and making sure we have the right equipment available in the right presentation room when it is time for your presentation

Q. A 4-H member giving an educational presentation at the state fair wants to use part of his exhibit selected for the state fair in his presentation. Can he do this?

A. Yes. Because the item will be removed from display for only a brief period, he can use the item in his state fair communication event. Have the member inform our staff during the communication event check-in that an exhibit is needed for the presentation, and where the exhibit is located. The member should not remove the item on his own. Our building and communication staff will assist the member in removing the item for use in the presentation, and replacing the item as soon as the presentation is completed.

Q. Can I use a frosting made with dairy products in my educational presentation?

A. As long as you follow food safety guidelines and practice safe handling and storage procedures, sure. Refrigerators are available for the storage of ingredients prior to preparation. It would be best to bring your ingredients in unopened, sealed containers. Be sure to maintain proper temperature during transport to the fair. Any product prepared during an educational presentation is consumed immediately after preparation. Members need to follow safe handling and preparation practices, and be prepared to thoroughly discuss those practices with the presentation judge, as well as demonstrate safe practices (during the presentation) to the viewing audience.

Q. One of our 4-H members is doing an educational presentation on the topic of "High Jumping". She printed off pictures of different executions of jumping (showing change over the years) from the Internet. She has cited the websites and tracked down the photographers of each photo in plain view under each picture. There is not a link at the sites for copyright information. Is this OK?

A. If the 4-H member plans to use the printed photos on a poster for the presentation this is likely OK. While this might seem contradictory to what we would say with an exhibit, the difference is that the EP is a "one time" use, and is being used as part of an educational/instructional session. The photos are not displayed or used other than as part of the presentation. This type of use allows us some additional flexibility. Credit to the photographer and/or the source of the photos/images needs to be given during the presentation. This does not permit copying the photos and placing them on a handout to be given the audience.

Somewhere on those web sites will be some type of contact information. Find it. She should write and ask permission to use the photos. However, be aware that the web site may or may not be using the photos properly. The web site may also not have rights to the photograph other than to use on their web site. The original photographer typically retains rights and grants use of the photos. The exception sometimes is a photographer who works for a magazine, newspaper, etc. In those cases, the magazine or newspaper may be the holder of the rights. If the member has identified the photographer, search and find the contact information, and then ask the photographer.

Q. The 4-H Extemporaneous Speaking Contest rules indicate reference material must be printed materials such as books or magazines. Are printed materials from web sites allowed?

A. Yes, printed materials from web sites will be allowed. Use of the Internet allows members access to many news magazines and newspapers beyond those to which they may subscribe. Use of these sources should be encouraged as a member prepares for Extemporaneous Speaking events. Such material should clearly indicate source (web site or other originating source) of the information. And as with other reference material, if the member uses quotes, etc. in the speech, that material should be properly cited.

Please note: Firearms, ammunition, and knives, (including models and replicas designed to closely resemble these items) are not allowed in 4-H exhibits or communication events at the Iowa State Fair. Archery arrows without tips (blunt ends) and archery bows may be allowed. 4-H members should consider personal and public safety, as well as the safety of exhibit items, when preparing 4-H exhibits for county and state fairs.

Q. One of our members restored an antique rifle. Can this be exhibited at the county fair? State Fair?

Q. One of our members is doing an educational presentation on gun safety and wants to use a shotgun in the presentation. Is this allowed?

A. Probably Yes for county fair; No for state fair. (However, please check with your county fairboard or other exhibition location to see if they have policies restricting firearms in 4-H exhibits.)

We believe it is quite appropriate for members interested in guns/gun safety/hunting/wildlife, etc. to prepare exhibits or give educational presentations on gun safety and related topics. If the member wants to display a gun at your county fair as part of an exhibit, we encourage a discussion with the member about how to safely display the gun. This includes safety for the viewing public, and safety of the exhibit, not unlike safety with other valuable items on exhibit. This would include not exhibiting any ammunition, removing gun parts as needed to make the gun inoperable, installation of trigger locks, and securing the gun as needed. As with other valuable exhibit items, the member should be aware that while county extension staff will attempt to display the item as securely as possible, there is always some possibility, despite your best efforts, of damage to and/or theft of exhibit pieces.

For an educational presentation at the county, much the same. The member should bring the gun cased, trigger locks installed, and it should be inoperable. Leave the ammo at home. I often suggest the member check the gun in with extension staff when they arrive, obtain it in time for the presentation, and then remove the gun from the presentation area and secure it in their vehicle immediately when finished.

There is no reason not to select a qualified exhibit or presentation using firearms for the state fair. However, the Iowa State Fair policy is no firearms (or other weapons) on the fairgrounds during the Iowa State Fair. We have asked about their use in exhibits and educational presentations, and the State Fair Patrol has consistently said no means no. There is not an exception during the state fair for the 4-H building, no matter what security precautions we might offer. The member will need to modify his presentation to use a model or some other prop to substitute for the gun. We realize this is sometimes a little awkward for the 4-H'er, but believe our members are resourceful and will make the best of the situation. For an exhibit, the member will exhibit any poster, display, report, etc. documenting the restoration process (or other topic), but the firearm must remain safely at home.

State fair judges have been instructed in the past, and will be again, about state fair policy, and that the 4-H member is not to be penalized during the evaluation of an exhibit or presentation because they are unable to use the firearm as they did at the county.