

Record Book Judging

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we judge Record Books? A Record Book is a summary of the 4-H member's entire year. While a 4-H'er may receive recognition during the year for participating in activities or with an exhibit at the fair, Record Books measure the growth and accomplishments the 4-H'er has made throughout the entire year.

What do I look for when judging a Record Book? Start by looking the book over for neatness and completeness. Make sure the 4-H'er has included all of the appropriate forms: cover page, personal goal sheet, yearly summary, project records, pictures and newspaper clippings. They should have a project record for each project they are enrolled in and project worksheets where appropriate. Make sure the 4-H'er has set realistic goals for themselves and that they have talked about what they did and learned while working toward those goals. Identify Citizenship, Communication and Leadership experiences the 4-H'er had during the year. Check project worksheets for accuracy (be sure to check the math where appropriate).

Does it matter if the Record Book is hand written or printed on the computer? NO. We let each 4-H'er make that decision and encourage them to use whichever format works best for them.

Does a 4-H'er need to be enrolled in a project to receive a Record Book Award in that project? YES. A 4-H'er must be enrolled in the project by May 15 to receive a project award.

How many "Project Record" forms does the 4-H'er need to fill out? The 4-H'er should complete one "Project Record" form for each project area they are enrolled in.

Does a 4-H'er need to complete a "Project Record" if they did not take anything to fair in that project. YES, they should. The 4-H'er still had goals in that project, that's why they enrolled in the project in the first place. It's ok if they were not able to reach their goal this year. The 4-H'er can explain why. That is part of the learning process.

Does a 4-H'er have to exhibit something in a project at the fair in order to receive a project award? NO. Record Book Awards are different than Fair Awards. Things happen that may change what the 4-H'er originally planned. An animal may have died, or the 4-H'er had a conflict and could not attend county fair with their exhibits. That doesn't mean the 4-H'er did not learn something in that project. In fact, they may have learned more. They should explain what happened or how their goals changed during the year in their record book. A 4-H'er can participate in a project throughout the year and never plan to exhibit at the fair. Remember, fair isn't the end all.

Do we give record book awards for Educational Presentations, Decorator's Showcase, Best of Iowa, etc? NO. These are fair activities, NOT project areas. They have already been evaluated at fair for their participation in these activities. However, a 4-H'er can and should record their participation in these activities on their "Yearly 4-H Summary" and on the appropriate "Project Record". For example, if they gave a presentation at fair on how to fit a calf, they should list it on their beef project record. If they participate in Best of Iowa it should be recorded on their food & nutrition project record. 4-H'ers should NOT complete separate "Project Records" for these activities.

What are "Project Worksheets" and who fill these out? Are "Project Worksheets" required? A project worksheet should be completed for each livestock and small animal project the 4-H'er is enrolled in (beef, sheep, swine, dairy, goat, horse, dog, rabbit, and poultry). In addition, there are project worksheets for photography (1st year), horticulture, crop, shooting sports, and Discovering 4-H. Any 4-H'er enrolled in these projects should complete the appropriate "Project Worksheet" to be eligible for an award.

Does a 4-H'er need to complete a photography project worksheet every year? No, the worksheet states that it must be used the first year in the project and it is optional after that.

Does a 4-H'er have to complete a "Project Record" even though they have completed the appropriate worksheet for that project? YES. In most cases, the project worksheet does not ask for goals and does not give space to record communication, citizenship and leadership experiences. Therefore the "Project Record" is required for EVERY project, regardless if there is a project worksheet included.

Is the 4-H'er required to fill out the expense portion of the "Project Record"? If there is a "Project Worksheet" (for example, market animal), the 4-H'er should complete that information on the appropriate "Project Worksheet". Encourage the 4-H'er to write something on the "Project Record" like "please see project worksheet". If that information is not required on a project worksheet, then YES, the 4-H'er needs to record information on the expense portion of the "Project Record".

What if a 4-H'er hasn't received their premium checks yet to know how much to record? That happens. We don't have a lot of time to get all of those checks out to individual members. Encourage the 4-H'er to record premium on the income line, but write in pencil or include a sticky note that says, "Information not available at this time". The 4-H'er can fill in the information at a later time.

What if a 4-H'er hasn't received their livestock sale check before their record book is due? That is a possibility. The bank has to receive payment from the buyers before they can issue checks to the 4-H'ers. We can not control how long this may take. But don't worry, because EVERYBODY is in the same boat. The 4-H'er should be able to fill everything else in. If they know what their animal brought, they should be able to come close in calculating the income themselves. They can also write in with pencil or on a sticky note that "Information is not available at this time" and complete the worksheet at a later time. But DON'T LEAVE IT BLANK.

Do I have to judge the Senior Record Books? YES. You are evaluating the Senior Record Books at the club level and nominating them for project awards. These books will only be judged at the county level in the project areas you nominate them for.

Do I have to turn a Senior Record Book into the Extension Office even if we do not nominate it for an award? YES and NO – YES IF the 4-H'er has applied for Youth Council or if the 4-H'er graduated from high school last spring. We do not need other Senior Record Books if they are not nominated for a project award.

What do I do with the Junior and Intermediate books after I have judged them? We will automatically award Junior and Intermediate 4-H'ers the project awards that you list on the green award sheet. We do NOT need these books turned into the Extension Office. You can return these books to the 4-H'er at your convenience.

Is there a limit on how many project awards a 4-H'er can receive? NO.

What if there are no newspaper clippings in the Record Book? We can not control what the newspapers decide to print or not print. While it's great to see newspaper clippings in a Record Book, we can not penalize a 4-H'er if they did not have access to clippings to include.

Can the 4-H'er add or change information in their Record Book after it has been judged by the leader? YES. That is why we encourage you to conduct Member/Leader conferences when you evaluate Record Books. We want to make this a learning experience for the 4-H'er. During the conference, the 4-H'er may start talking about something they did but forgot to record in their Record Book. Encourage them to add that information. If they forgot to record a particular event or activity, it's ok to remind them. Maybe they weren't sure where to put it. Take time to explain to them where it goes. You can let them make these changes before deciding if they will get an award in a project.

What is the difference between a personal goal and a project goal?

Personal Goals help you think about what the 4-H'er can do to become a better person. Personal Goals should be recorded on 4H-93 "Personal Goal Record", the buff colored sheet that goes in the Record Book. Personal Goals could include:

- Meet new friends
- Attend 4-H Camp or State Conference
- Learn the 4-H Pledge
- Be a better listener
- Give an educational presentation
- Sit quietly at 4-H meetings
- Start early on your Record Book.

While it's great to set personal goals like getting good grades, encourage 4-H'ers to think about Personal Goals that relate to their 4-H experience.

Project Goals should be written for every project area a 4-H'er is enrolled and should be recorded on the "Project Record". Project Goals help a 4-H'er think about what they want to do within the project area. Some examples could be:

- Visual Arts - Learn about the Elements of Design and Art Principles
- Food & Nutrition - Learn how to run small appliances
- Photography - Learn about the rule of thirds
- Beef - Train your market beef to lead
- Woodworking - Learn about different types of wood

Explain the Leadership, Communication and Citizenship requirements.

In order to receive a project award, 4-H'ers must show that they have been involved in Leadership, Communication, and/or Citizenship in each project area.

Juniors (grades 3-6) need to complete at least one of these areas in a project
Intermediates (grades 7-8) need to complete at least 2 of these areas in a project
Seniors (grades 9-12) need to complete all 3 of these areas in a project.

Definitions:

Leadership – is having responsibility for guiding, planning and carrying out of an activity. Leadership is the process of determining needs, exploring resources, setting goals, planning action, and evaluating. *Key words that show leadership include plan, organize, conduct, teach, guide, oversaw, supervised, recruited, coordinated and lead.*

Communication – is writing, talking to, or showing others in order to share ideas, knowledge and skills. Communication can be either spoken or through non-verbal means such as writing, posters, pictures or displays. *Key words that show communication might include talk, wrote, announce, speak, record, display, introduce, or perform.*

Citizenship – is helping others or working for the benefit of others or the community for no pay. *Key words that show citizenship might include help, give, donate, serve, assist, aid, provide, furnish or share.*

We can't begin to make an all inclusive list of what is acceptable and what is not – as the leader and evaluator you will need to decide on your own. However, use some common sense. What is acceptable for a junior is going to be easier than what you might expect from a senior.

If a 4-H'er lists "I showed my younger sister how to care for her lamb" under leadership, communication and citizenship, all 3, that's stretching things. Encourage the 4-H'er to be more specific.

Take this opportunity to visit with the 4-H'er to help them understand the differences between Citizenship, Leadership and Communication and help them identify things that they have done during the year that fit under each of these. It's ok to give the 4-H'er the opportunity to include things you discuss in their Record Book.