



STATE 4-H AWARDBOBE CLOTHING EVENT

The Importance of the Fashion Show

In clothing and textiles industries, a fashion/runway show is the means by which designers use to introduce new clothing collections. A well planned fashion show incorporates design, music, elements of dance or movement, oral commentary, and lighting to present new fashion concepts.

As a form of visual merchandising, the fashion show is a major marketing method used at all levels in the fashion industry. Retailers often team up with mall management to present fashion shows to market new merchandise. Sometimes malls and retailers will co-sponsor 4-H shows.

4-H FASHION PRESENTATIONS TELL ABOUT YOU AND YOUR PROJECTS

4-H'ers have an opportunity to develop communication skills through writing and delivering fashion commentary during 4-H fashion presentations. At the State 4-H Awardrobe Clothing Event, senior 4-H'ers introduce State 4-H Awardrobe Clothing Event participants as they appear on stage through a "Fashion Narrative" or stage commentary. Through the experience of writing and delivering fashion commentary, experienced 4-H'ers develop leadership skills and self-confidence. 4-H'ers can also have this experience in their home counties by assisting with planning and presenting at a county fashion event. Planning a show can be a lot of fun and is a good way to learn to work with other 4-H'ers.

You don't have to be a great writer to write fashion narratives, but each fashion narrative should:

1. Identify the 4-H'er by name, club, community, and/or county,
2. Contain a little information about the garment or outfit, and
3. Provide information about the 4-H'er's achievements, activities, or career goals.

GROUP ACTIVITY

1. Practice reading aloud each of the example narratives filling in the blanks with the names of 4-H'ers in your county. Then, time each other with a stop watch, second hand on a clock, or watch as each narrative is read. Be sure to use an easy-listening, slow pace as you read each narrative being careful not to rush.
2. Practice walking forward the length of a stage, turning around, smiling at the audience, and walking back off the stage. (You don't need to have a stage; you can mark off an area in a room and pretend it is a stage.) Notice how far you can walk with each narrative.
3. Determine how long you want your show to be. If you have more people, you may want shorter narratives. If you have fewer people, each participant may be given more time on stage.

TIPS TO REMEMBER IN PLANNING A FASHION SHOW

- Write narratives to fit the amount of time you have for the show.
- Audiences like shows that are not too long.
- Don't write a lot of detail about trim, small prints, or parts of a garment that cannot be seen from a distance. The audience will not be able to appreciate these details.
- Use actions words in your writing as much as you can to give the show "life". (See 6F3 *Clothing Event Commentary Help*.)
- Practice reading difficult names or fashion terms aloud so you can pronounce them with confidence (e.g. madras or indigo).
- Taped background music played during the show will help models relax and walk with greater confidence. If music is too loud, the audience will not be able to hear the narrator. Check the sound system at rehearsal before your show starts.
- Arrange seating so the audience can see as well as possible. For a room without a stage or risers, plan to have the models walk down a center aisle. This will allow more people get a better view.
- Walking in front of an audience can be nerve racking; practice will help calm one's nerves and strengthen a sense of confidence.
- If a video camera is available, tape each other as you practice modeling. Then, play back the tape to see how you can improve. Do not tease or make fun of one another.
- A well-planned fashion show can increase community members' awareness of the objectives and benefits of young people who participate in 4-H and showcase the incredible skills of Iowa 4-H members.

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