

4-H Lingo

Every organization has its own terms or “lingo” which have special meaning to its members. It can be frustrating, however, for newcomers in the group who might feel like they’re the only ones who don’t know what everyone is talking about! This is a partial listing of some terms that are used in the 4-H organization. As time goes by, don’t ever be too shy to ask, “What in the world are you talking about?”

Juniors - Junior 4-H’ers are youth in grades 4 - 6.

Intermediates - Intermediate 4-H’ers are youth in grades 7 & 8.

Seniors - Senior 4-H’ers are youth in grades 9 -12.

4-H Leaders - Organizational leaders are the “main” leaders in the 4-H clubs and handle the general organization of the club. They may or may not have assistant leaders who help them carry out specific responsibilities. There are also countywide project leaders who teach in specific 4-H project areas.

4-H Newsletter - A 4-H newsletter is e-mailed 10-12 times yearly to each 4-H family in the county. Read the newsletter carefully for important information and deadlines. This is often the only source of information and notification. Post it where everyone can read it!

Meetings - All 4-H clubs are expected to hold regular meetings. These are usually held monthly, often on a set day (such as the first Monday of the month). 4-H meetings have three parts: Business (20 min.), Program (30 min.), and Social (30 min.) Attendance at 4-H meetings is important. A 4-H’er is responsible for contacting the leader to find out what information they will miss if unable to attend.

Club Activity - A 4-H club usually plans more than just regular meetings. Club activities may include special project workshops, parties, trips, or family potlucks. They are opportunities for “learning by doing” or just plain having fun.

Community Service Project - Many clubs carry out community service projects. The variety of projects is endless, but may include such things as working with the handicapped, painting a public building, having foster grandparents in a nursing home or planting trees.

Communications - There are four categories of 4-H Communication. Educational Presentations are talks or demonstrations, given in front of an audience, about some topic that interests the 4-H’er. They should contain three parts - an introduction, a body and a conclusion. A Working Exhibit is less formal than an educational presentation that involves a one-on-one type of demonstrating technique. 4-H’ers usually work from a table in an area where people walk through and stop to see what the 4-H’er is showing. Members are expected to do at least one educational presentation or working exhibit at the local club meeting each year. Sometimes 4-H’ers may choose to work in pairs when giving educational presentations or working exhibits.

Extemporaneous Speaking is an opportunity for Senior members to think, to organize and to speak before an audience on a 4-H related topic. Finally, there is Share the Fun. These are entertainment acts and can include things such as music, dance, interpretative speech, or skits. They can involve any number of youth from one 4-H’er to the whole club. All types of 4-H Communications are judged at the county level where some are selected to advance to state level.

Recordkeeping System - Each 4-H member is expected to record a summary and evaluation of his/her 4-H experiences each year. First year members receive a green 3 ring binder that includes information about the record keeping philosophy, goal setting, a basic recordkeeping form, yearly summary and Delaware County Expected Standards sheet to get them started.

4-H Project - A 4-H project is an area of emphasis in which the 4-H’er enrolls, studies, learns, keeps records and perhaps, exhibits. Examples are visual arts, food and nutrition, and dog. A 4-H’er can complete work in a project without exhibiting at the county fair.

4-H Exhibit - A 4-H exhibit is an item resulting from project work that a 4-H’er has chosen to be exhibited at the fair and evaluated by a judge.

4-H Camp - Going to camp can surely be a high point in a 4-H member's year. There are area camps held at the Pine Bluff 4-H Camp near Decorah for junior and intermediate members. There are also statewide camping opportunities for all 4-H'ers.

Club Tour - A club may schedule a tour of all the members' homes before the county fair. The purpose is for each 4-H'er to show the rest of the group his/her projects that may be exhibited at the fair. This works especially well for clubs that have a lot of livestock projects.

Achievement Show - Some 4-H clubs have local achievement shows shortly before the county fair. These events are an opportunity to 4-H'ers to bring their 4-H exhibits to be evaluated by a knowledgeable adult who can give suggestions on how an exhibit can be improved or prepared to be judged at county fair. It also gives the 4-H'er "practice" in the conference judging procedure used at fair.

Conference Judging - This method of judging is used for the majority of classes at the county fair, with the exception of some livestock classes. The 4-H'er brings her/his exhibit to the judge and discusses the work with the judge. The judge uses the information, any written information required by the class rules, and the exhibit itself in determining the ribbon placing of the exhibit. A ribbon is awarded, the placing is recorded and the exhibit is displayed.

Livestock Identification Form - Usually referred to as a "Livestock ID", this is how the 4-H member identifies all of his/her livestock projects. These forms need to be filled out for all Market and Breeding Beef, Dairy Cattle and Goats, Dogs, Horses, Ponies and Mules, Market and Breeding Sheep and Market Swine, Poultry, Rabbits, and Pets. Only livestock listed on these forms are eligible to be exhibited at any 4-H Show. This is not a fair entry, but its purpose is to ensure that the animal has been the 4-H'ers project during the year and not just an animal purchased two weeks before the fair. Market beef, swine, market sheep and meat goats are identified at the weigh-ins held in each county.

County Fair - A fair is an annual countywide event at which 4-H'ers have the opportunity to be evaluated on their exhibits and to receive recognition for what they have accomplished.

State Fair - 4-H'ers from across the state exhibit at the State Fair. Some projects and classes require that the exhibit be selected at the county level for state fair competition, others do not. The Iowa State Fair is held every August in Des Moines.

Extension Office - Each county has an ISU Extension Office which provides research-based information to the general public. This is called Iowa State University Extension Service and is funded with county, state and federal taxes. The four basic programming areas are Agriculture, Families, 4-H & Youth and Community Resource Development. If you have questions about almost anything, the Extension Office is a good place to start.

4-H & Youth Committee - This committee's members are adults and youth appointed by the Extension Council to help determine the 4-H and Youth programming needs. They help with many activities such as evaluating records, helping during the fair and the many other activities that go on during the year.

Extension Council - The Extension Council consists of nine elected representatives from all over the county. They oversee the county Extension program and approve all of the expenditures. The Council is the legal governing body of the county Extension program and meets monthly.

Iowa 4-H Foundation - A private non-profit corporation formed to supplement the state 4-H program, primarily through the development and operation of the Iowa 4-H Education and Natural Resources Center at Madrid and the specialized programs conducted there. They also provide funding for innovative programs around the state and provide funds for youth who need financial assistance to participate in the 4-H Youth program.

4-H'ers for 4-H - A combined effort in early spring by 4-H groups around Iowa to contribute to the Iowa 4-H Foundation. The campaign is coordinated and promoted by the State 4-H Council. Funds are used for (1) special Iowa 4-H youth programs needs, (2) the State 4-H Council, (3) International 4-H programs and (4) financial aid for preparation in 4-H events.