



# 4-H Public Presentations Guide

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# Public Presentation Guidelines

## **General Guidelines:**

The most important part of public presentations is simply making the effort. Presenters are evaluated based on their age and level of experience. No matter whether this is your first presentation or your 50th presentation, practice is always important.

## **Presentation Length:**

Cloverbuds: ages 5-8

It is recommended that Cloverbuds do a very simple demonstration with 2 or 3 steps. For example, how to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Cloverbuds are evaluated for participation only, but will be scored and evaluated based on age and experience. Cloverbuds are expected to make a presentation between 3 and 5 minutes.

Presenters ages 8 & up

Presentations should be at least 5 minutes but no more than 15 minutes.

**Parts of the Presentation:** Presentations include 3 main parts- Introduction, Body, and Summary. At the end of your presentation you need to give your sources of information- it is perfectly acceptable to list knowledgeable adults as part of your resources.

**Use of Animals:** Animals are permitted as part of your presentation at the county level. You need to provide appropriate caging and be prepared for cleanup. If you are deemed eligible for district competition, animals are not allowed at the district or state level and if your county level presentation incorporated a live animal you will need to be creative in presenting without one.

**Power Point and Other Media:** If you plan to use a power point, you must notify the office when you register. Bring your presentation on a portable drive (in-person presentations) or email it to the office in advance (virtual presentations), but please be prepared to present in an alternative way if the technology fails to cooperate.

## **A Note on Your Appearance:**

Your dress can say just as much about your topic as your presentation. Clothing should be neat and 4-H appropriate. No flip flops (except as part of a costume), no halter or spaghetti strap tops. All presenters are evaluated for appearance so make sure yours is neat and appropriate for your topic.

**District Presentations:** Youth proceeding to district presentations will be determined by evaluators, Cloverbuds are not to proceed to district. At district competition, youth who are selected to represent their counties at the State 4-H Public Presentation Event must be age 13 or older.

**The Danish System of Judging:** Cornell Cooperative Extension's 4-H Youth Development program uses the Danish Judging System as its primary method for evaluating 4-H Public Presentations. Using this method, each youth presentation is evaluated based on the "ideal" standard for the presenters' age, experience, ability and developmental level. Therefore, each presentation is not compared to, or in competition with, other presenters and presentations.

**Needs Improvement:** Needs work, needs to be improved upon (something may have been omitted).

**Met Expectations:** Met expectations for age & experience level.

**Above Expectations:** Very good/above expectations for age & experience level.

**Outstanding:** Exceptional, needs little improvement.

All ratings START at "Met Expectations" and are rated up or down as appropriate – with these exceptions:

- "Appearance" and "Visual Aids" start at "Above Expectations" and move from there
- Presenters who fail to give an adequate Creative Introduction or Appropriate Conclusion/Summary will automatically receive a "Needs Improvement" rating



# Presentation Categories

## Types of Presentations for ages 8-19

**Time Limit: A minimum of 5 minutes - maximum of 15 minutes**

**Demonstration** – The presenter *shows* and *explains how to do or make something* (how to juggle, do basic dance steps, build a kite, make cookies, care for a pet, etc.).



Appropriate equipment, models or illustrations, posters/visuals are used as needed to explain information being conveyed and to show the steps in the process being demonstrated. It is sometimes necessary to show a large-scale replica of something that is too small for the audience to see. A finished product is shown. **Team Demonstrations** are allowed at the state level and should reflect a topic requiring teamwork as well as effective balancing of verbal communication and hands-on action.

**Illustrated Talk** – The presenter uses visual aids to *tell about* the topic. The effective use of charts, pictures, posters, slides, PowerPoint slides, overheads, graphs, examples, models etc. play a major role in communicating the presenter's message. **TEAM Illustrated Talks** are **not** allowed at the state level.



**Formal Speech** – The presenter aims to **persuade, motivate** or **inform** the audience without the use of visuals. Proper use of note cards is acceptable. In this category, the presenter chooses and researches a topic of choice.



Depending on the topic chosen, the presenter chooses a format (persuasive, motivational, or informative) that best suits what is to be conveyed to the audience. For example, if the topic is censorship of literature, the presenter can choose to inform the audience about this topic, persuade the audience of his convictions, or motivate the audience to take a more active role in making current changes to this arena. A Speech is written in the presenter's own words, however, poetry, quotations, humor, or imagery may be incorporated to command attention or emphasize a point. **TEAM Speeches** are **not** allowed at the state level.

**Creative Communication** bridges the gap between message-delivery and the performing arts. Art forms such as **Recitation, Dramatic Interpretation**, puppetry, skits, clowning, singing, music and story telling are used as a vehicle for conveying a message. Currently **Recitation** and **Dramatic Interpretation** (definitions follow on the next page) are the only subcategories under Creative Communication being evaluated at the state level.

**Recitation** – The presenter, with the use of vocal inflection and body language as communication tools, delivers his rendition of a piece of **pre-written material**. Props should not be used, but appropriate dress to subtly represent the character or mood of the written piece is acceptable. **Dress should not overwhelm the oral presentation**. Memorization is expected, but proper use of notes is permitted either in the form of note cards or a book. This area is not intended for presentation of original pieces of material written by the presenter. **TEAM Recitations are not** allowed at the state level.



**Dramatic Interpretation** – The presenter or team of two delivers a reenactment of a piece of scripted material. The content can be taken from plays, movies, sketches, or monologues—dramatic or comedic. This form of presentation, by definition, should include props and costumes. Props need to be **simple** and **minimal**, not detracting from the strength of the presenter(s). Original pieces written by the presenter(s) are accepted in this category, but **4-H educators should** monitor appropriateness of presentation.

**Cloverbud Presentations** – (grades K-2, ages 5-7)

**Time Limit:** 1-5 minutes

Cloverbuds give a “Show & Tell” type of presentation or a short recitation, such as the 4-H Pledge. Show-and-tell is not evaluated but a dialogue between the member and the evaluators provides motivation and praise. Emphasis is on self-expression and helping the member feel comfortable speaking to a small group of peers and adults.



### **Notes from the State Office**

- **A Team Presentation...**  
is to consist of NO MORE than TWO presenters. In a team presentation, both evaluators score both presenters individually, and their scores are averaged together for an overall total.
- **Time Limits ...**  
for all types of presentations at the State level is a maximum length of 15 minutes and a minimum length of 5 minutes. All state level presenters are encouraged to attempt to produce a solid presentation within a 15-minute time limit. Point reductions will result from abuses of time limitations. Scoring will depend on the effective use of time based on the material being presented. Timing of a presentation begins when the presenter starts to talk and ends at the close of the presenter’s conclusion or summary. Questions and answers are not a part of the overall time measurement of the presentation.



# Selecting a Topic for your Public Presentation

**LIST THREE HOBBIES:**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**LIST THREE THINGS ABOUT WHICH YOU ARE CURIOUS:**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**LIST THREE THINGS ABOUT WHICH YOU KNOW A LOT:**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**LIST THREE FAVORITE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, 4-H PROJECTS OR OTHER ACTIVITIES YOU ARE INVOLVED IN:**

**1**

**2**

**3**



# Presentation Preparation

## The Four P's

- PLAN:** The KEY to a successful presentation is planning. Take time to think about a topic. Consider a 4-H project or activity, or something that excites you.
- PREPARE:** All presentations must have three parts – introduction, body and conclusion. By using the PUBLIC PRESENTATION PLANNING WORKSHEET (on the following page) you will write your outline so you are prepared with what you will say and do. Design your poster on the PLANNING WORKSHEET.
- PRACTICE:** Practice is very important. The more times you do your presentation, the more comfortable you will feel and less nervous you will be.
- PRESENT:** After all your hard work getting ready, it is now time to relax, smile and do your best.

## The Presentation Outline

1. INTRODUCTION (What I am going to tell you)
  - Attention Getter
  - State the Topic/Title
  - Relate to the Audience
  - Preview Main Points
  
2. BODY (I tell you)
  - Major Point 1
  - Major Point 2
  - Major Point 3
  
3. CONCLUSION (I tell you what I told you)
  - Signal Close (In conclusion, finally, to end)
  - Reinforce Major Points

**Make sure to state the sources that were used**

**Ask...Are there any questions?**



# Public Presentation Planning Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **TYPE OF PRESENTATION:** (circle your presentation type)

Demonstration      Illustrated Talk      Recitation      Dramatic Interpretation  
Formal Speech      Cloverbud Presentation

## **TOPIC:**

I will do my presentation on: \_\_\_\_\_

A good title for my presentation would be: \_\_\_\_\_

## **INTRODUCTION:** (What I am going to tell you)

Attention Getter: \_\_\_\_\_

State the Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Relate to the Audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Preview Main Points: \_\_\_\_\_

## **BODY:** (I tell you)

Major Point 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Point 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Point 3: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONCLUSION:** (I tell you what I told you)

Signal Close: \_\_\_\_\_

Reinforce Major Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Strong Ending: \_\_\_\_\_

**SOURCES USED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presentation Length:** Ages 8-19, time limit is 5 minutes minimum to 15 minutes maximum;  
Cloverbuds time limit is 1-5 minutes

Practice time 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Practice Time 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Practice Time 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Practice time 4: \_\_\_\_\_

**VISUAL AIDS:** (circle the visual aid the will be used in your presentation)

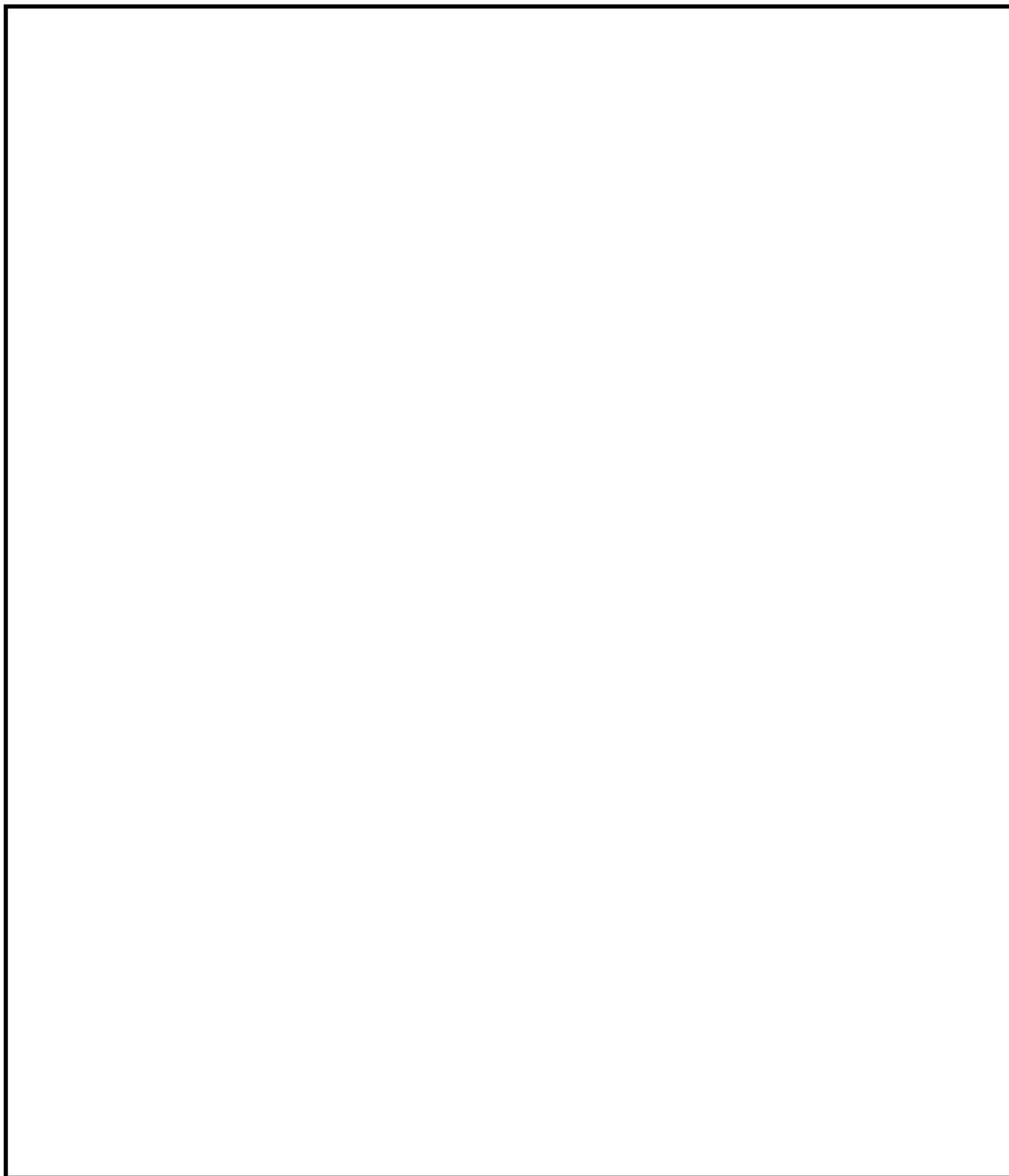
Posters      Handouts      PowerPoint      Video      Music      Props/Equip

**Tips for Public Speaking**

- ✓ Practice
- ✓ Know the Subject
- ✓ Know your Audience
- ✓ Speak clearly and in a friendly voice
- ✓ Take breaths between units of thought
- ✓ Use humor
- ✓ Make eye contact
- ✓ Use good posture and movements
- ✓ Use visual aids
- ✓ Talk at a normal speed but avoid being monotone



**POSTER (See Posters & Visual Aids on next page for help)**



**Posters can help the audience understand your presentation. They can attract attention to the title, list of facts or steps, show an enlarged view of an object to show detail, or summarize key points. Good posters are attractive, neat, brief, useful and clear.**



# Posters and Visual Aids

## General Tips in Making Posters

- ✓ Use heavy weight poster board that does not bend or buckle easily, or use foam core poster board.
- ✓ Avoid using a tri-fold (science fair type) poster board for your demonstration. These boards exhibit all your visual information at once, so rather than focusing your audience's attention, the visual aid actually distracts your audience from what you are saying.
- ✓ If possible, have all posters oriented the same way to avoid having to turn posters during the presentation. Use permanent markers to make your posters. They do not fade or run easily. Anything attached to the poster should be glued on very well with no loose edges.

## Neatness Counts

- ✓ Prepare your posters in a clean work area. Use yardstick or ruler to make guidelines in pencil. Make sure to erase guidelines. If your handwriting is poor, or for a more professional look, use stencils to trace your letters. If using computer-generated letters, cut the border size the same when piecing the letters together to form words.

## Size

- ✓ Make sure your posters can be read easily. Letters should be large enough to be read from 20 to 30 feet away (usually 1 ½ to 2 inches high).

## Spacing

- ✓ Leave enough space around the edge of the poster and between words and graphics so it does not look too crowded. Take special care to leave extra space at the bottom. Easels often have a ledge on them that may cover words written too close to the bottom.

## Easy to Read

- ✓ Your poster may be beautiful, but can your audience read it? Use capital letters for emphasizing an important phrase or word, but do not use them for your entire poster. Do not overcrowd. Write key words on the poster rather than the entire script! Save fancy or script letters for catching the reader's attention, but do not use them for all the lettering. Double check fonts for ease of reading.

*"This is eye catching and pretty, but it is also hard to read."*

- ✓ Space lettering carefully. Your poster will be difficult to read if the letters are spaced too close or too far apart.

**Too Close Together**

**T o o F a r A p a r t**

- ✓ If you use stencils, fill in the lines from the stencil to make a complete letter without any breaks.

## FILL IN THE STENCILS TO COMPLETE THE LETTER.

- ✓ Contrast is important. Use dark lettering on a light background and light lettering on a dark background.
- ✓ A combination of upper and lower case letters is easier to read than all capital letters. It may be difficult to find large, lower-case stencils. To make the poster appear to have upper and lower case letters, use a combination of larger and smaller stencils. For example, use a 2" stencil to make the "T" in the word "This," and use a 1 1/2" stencil to make the letters, "his."

**This Is Easy To Read.**

**THIS IS MORE DIFFICULT TO READ.**

### Color

- ✓ The smart use of color can really make posters more attractive and help gain your audience's attention. However, color used incorrectly can make your posters very difficult to read.
- ✓ Avoid light, pastel colors (pale yellow, pink). Decide on a color scheme and carry it throughout your presentation. For example, a demonstration on raising pumpkins would look nice with orange and black lettering on white poster board. Smart use of color will enhance your overall demonstration.
- ✓ Color combinations make a difference. Scientists have studied different color combinations and found that deep red and green on white, black on white, yellow on black, and white on dark blue or black are very effective. Avoid such combinations as blue on orange, red on green, purple on yellow or vice versa.

**A A A A A A A A A A A**

These letters are easier to read on a white background

**A A A A A A A A A A A**

These letters are harder to read on a white background

### Creative Touches

- ✓ Have fun with your posters and let your imagination run wild! Clever title posters help you get your audience's attention. "Fit for the Fair" will attract more attention than, "How To Wash and Groom a Lamb for the County Fair."

- ✓ Titles should be short and catchy. Velcro can be used to attach objects or signs to your main poster during the demonstration. You can use fusible webbing to iron fabric letters or borders onto your poster. Borders are an easy way to pull together a color scheme. Borders can be made of fabric, colored vinyl tape, etc. It is important to attach borders securely.
- ✓ Artwork is an excellent way to add interest to your posters. You may draw or stencil directly onto your poster or attach a picture, drawing, computer-generated artwork, etc. to your poster. Again, make sure it is attached well. Punch out letters can be glued onto posters for a quick, professional look. Interactive and/or moveable parts can be attached to the poster to add dimension and creativity.

**Number of Posters:** Use the number of posters you need to effectively get your point across. Do not use a lot of posters just for the sake of having visual aids. A typical demonstration or illustrated talk will utilize:

- ✓ A title poster—a very eye-appealing poster that includes the title of the demonstration or illustrated talk. Body—two to three posters covering the main points of the demonstration. These posters may include recipes, step by step procedures, nutrition charts, maps, diagrams, etc. Summary poster—a poster that lists the main points of presentation that is used during the summary.

### General Tips in Using Posters

- ✓ It is easier to pull posters from behind to the front during the presentation. A pointer is a good tool to use during your demonstration to refer to key points during your demonstration. Avoid facing your poster when talking. Angle your body so you can glance at your poster, but also be able to look at your audience.

### Taking Care of Your Posters

- ✓ You will use your posters for a long time. You may present your demonstration or illustrated talk to your club, at 4-H contests, or for community groups. You need to properly care for your posters. Store your posters flat, preferably in a poster carrying case that can be made or purchased. Do not leave your posters out in the weather, car, etc. Your posters will warp and the colors will fade.

**Source:** National 4-H Council (1995). Making Posters. Excerpts from the New York State 4-H State Level Guidelines and Evaluator's Guide





# Public Presentation Helpful Hints

## Snappy Introductions

4-H Members often begin their presentation with the standard “Hello, My Name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old and am a member of \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club”. We live in a fast-paced world! To be successful in the 21st Century, you’ve got to grab peoples’ attention in 30 seconds or less.

For Demonstrations & Illustrated Talks, the presenter will begin by introducing his/her topic in a manner that creatively catches the attention of the audience while either stimulating their curiosity or providing information about the subject; the presenter’s first name may be incorporated in to the creative introduction.

Sample (Demonstration) Intro: (A football is thrown from the side of the room and caught by the presenter who is dressed in football uniform). “If you have ever watched a football game, you know how important it is for the players to be able to throw and catch the ball skillfully and today, I, Joe Smith, will show you how.”

Sample (Illustrated Talk) Intro: “Vehicular accidents are the number one killer of youth ages 16 to 20 My Name is Sam and today I will share these statistics with you”.

## Examples of Snappy & Clever Introductions....

- ❖ **A Short, Snappy Sentence:**
  - “Help! I’ve just lost my steering! Not my car, but on how to groom that beautiful steer out in the barn.”
  - (Yell) “Fire in the kitchen! Please don’t leave an empty pizza box in the oven.”
- ❖ **Quote:**
  - “To bee or not to bee, that is the question.” According to Shakespeare...(if doing a presentation about Bees)
  - "Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look what they can do when they stick together." - Vista M. Kelly new what she was talking about when she reminds us how small things working together can make a difference...
- ❖ **Question:**
  - “Would you rather be going the right way or the wrong way? I would rather be steering in the right direction.”
  - “Did you know that manure could be very useful? Manure makes excellent compost for your garden. Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am going to tell you how to set up a home composting system to recycle the manure from your farm animals.”
- ❖ **Surprising Fact:**
  - “Vehicular accidents are the number one killer of youth ages 16 to 20”
  - “Both insects and fish use a form of ‘anti-freeze’ that keeps them alive – even after being frozen.”

- ❖ **Joke or Funny Story:** (Be careful not to offend your audience and make sure it relates to the topic)
  - “Doctors are one of the most educated and trained professions and yet everything they do is called their practice.”
  - “Why do we park on the driveway and drive on the parkway?”
  
- ❖ **Relate a Personal Experience:**
  - “While on vacation last summer I was able to save a life by using CPR.”
  - “Traveling to another country was an amazing experience for me...”
  
- ❖ **Show an Unusual Object:**
  - “I found this snake skin last year while hiking in the Adirondacks....”
  - “This fossil is hundreds of thousands of years old...”
  
- ❖ **Describe Dramatic/Historical Significance:**
  - Martin Luther King’s inspirational words, in his ‘I have a dream’ speech, marked an unprecedented turning point in our nation’s history.

*Information for Snappy Introductions provided from 4-H Public Presentations 2016 Presenter’s Guide, Putnam County, NY*



## 4-H Presentation Examples

**Check out there 4-H presentations on YouTube!**

All Dutch to Me! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HajfZUVaD-I>

Packing Tape Sculptures <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3QBkP2erIc>

How to Groom Your Horse <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PFBuVRWBzU>

Quiver & Bow Stand <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vqe-z38-yAc&feature=youtu.be>

It’s Showtime! How to Demonstrate the 4-H Way (a step-by-step guide through planning, organizing and displaying public presentations) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WTytHTCkv8c>