

Giving a Demonstration the 4-H Way

YEX-51

Giving demonstrations is a tradition in 4-H. You learn many new skills and how to do neat, interesting things by watching others. After watching others, you can begin giving demonstrations when you feel that you are ready. With practice you get better as you show others what you are learning.

What Is A Demonstration?

A demonstration puts words with actions. During a demonstration, each step is explained as the audience watches how each step is completed. Demonstrations are full of action-packed words, such as *mix*, *saw*, *turn*, or *fold*, that accurately describe the action that is being viewed.

Why Is Giving A Demonstration A Good Idea?

Giving a demonstration is one way agents, volunteers, and 4-H'ers show or teach others. There are several good reasons that make giving a demonstration a good idea.

- A demonstration is powerful—much more powerful than simply telling someone how to do something new. A demonstration shows the step-by-step process for making or building something, presents an example of the way a product should look or taste, illustrates the correct way to do something, or teaches a new skill. Viewing the step-by-step process helps members of the audience understand what they are learning.

- Preparing a demonstration helps you learn more about the topic. To be able to show and explain something to others, you must know a lot about the topic. You have to explore the topic in great detail.

- Giving a demonstration helps you gain poise and self-confidence. By explaining something to another person, you improve your ability to express yourself clearly.

- Giving a demonstration helps you become more organized. Demonstrations have to be arranged or organized in a sequence. As you plan and give a demonstration, you begin to think in an organized manner. You begin to arrange the materials for your demonstration in the order that you plan to use them.

What Are the Steps To Planning A Demonstration?

The **Sample Demonstration Outline** on page 2 will help you as you plan your demonstration. You may want to write down ideas on a scrap sheet of paper as you read through this section. When you're finished, use the blank **Demonstration Outline** on page 8 to write down your final ideas. Here are the steps to planning a demonstration.

- 1. Select a topic that you know a lot about.** Think about all the different things that you have learned through your 4-H projects. Ask yourself the following questions as you decide on a topic:

- What do I know the most about?

- What have I had the most experience doing?
- What do I feel the most comfortable doing?
- What do I have the time to prepare for?

- 2. Decide on a title that will grab the attention of the audience.** Remember that while a cute title may capture your audience's attention, they may not keep listening if the rest of the demonstration does not live up to the title. The title should:

- Be simple.
- Describe what you are going to demonstrate.
- Tell the audience immediately what you are going to demonstrate.

- 3. Establish the purpose of the demonstration.** A demonstration should focus on one main idea that should be made absolutely clear to the audience. Ask yourself the following questions as you determine the purpose of your demonstration:

- What do I want to teach or show the audience?
- What do I want to be the focus of the demonstration?
- Is the purpose worthwhile, helpful, and practical?

- 4. Develop an outline of the topic.** A good demonstration has four parts:

- (a) An introduction.
- (b) A body.
- (c) A summary.
- (d) Questions.

Begin with a skeleton of the main points to be made. Fill in with the details that will help the audience to understand.

Sample Demonstration Outline

I. Introduction

A. Title:

Terrific Terrariums

B. Purpose:

To show how to use containers from home and common native plants to build a terrarium.

C. Equipment:

Jar	Soil	Moss
Gravel	Fern	
Peat Moss	Ivy	

II. Body

A. Need large clear container with lid.

B. Need gravel, peat moss, and soil.

C. Place plants in soil.

D. Water plants.

E. Cover with lid.

III. Summary

- Collect necessary supplies.
- Prepare the medium for planting.
- Plant.
- Water, cover with lid, and place in a sunny, warm area.

IV. Possible Questions

- What types of containers can be used successfully?
- What types of plants are easy to grow in a terrarium?
- Why do you have to add water?
- Will the plants have to be watered regularly?
- Will you have to add fertilizer?

How Do I Create The Four Parts Of A Good Demonstration?

At this point you should have already decided on a title, established a purpose for the demonstration, and developed an outline. You are now ready to begin to develop your demonstration. The **Sample Demonstration Worksheet** on pages 4 through 6 will help you. You may want to write down your ideas on a scrap sheet of paper. When you're finished, fill out the blank **Demonstration Worksheet** on pages 9 and 10 with your final ideas.

1. Decide on an introduction. The way you introduce your demonstration sets the stage for your audience. One function of the introduction is to get the attention of your audience; however, its main function is to give your audience important information about what you will be demonstrating. The introduction should:

- Include a clear statement about the purpose of the demonstration.
- Be creative, interesting, and informative.
- Include the title and the purpose of your demonstration.

- List the things you'll need to bring to carry out the demonstration.

2. Develop the body of the demonstration.

- Determine the best method(s) to present the information. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Would visual aids or finished products help the audience understand?

- Does the audience need to be close to be able to see, or can they see the details from a distance?

- What is the best way to arrange the demonstration area?

- Write a step-by-step plan for giving the demonstration. The steps of the plan should be in a logical order. A step-by-step plan includes the title, the purpose, a list of equipment, a time line, and a script that explains each step. If you need to, explain the *why*, *how*, *where*, *what*, or *when* of each step.

- Decide which steps may be finished or partially finished ahead of time. Finishing some of the time-consuming steps before giving the actual demonstration, will help the demonstration run smoothly and save time. Be careful not to eliminate any of the important steps!

- Make a list of the equipment you need for the demonstration. Include only the items that are absolutely necessary.

3. Develop the summary.

The summary reviews the main points given in the body of the demonstration. During the summary you should:

- Highlight the main points.
- Clear the demonstration area except for the finished product.
- Display the finished product.
- If possible, pass the finished product around the audience for close inspection.

4. Plan for questions. You need to be prepared to answer any questions the audience may have. Ask your audience if they have any questions. Asking for questions gives your audience an opportunity to clarify information that they either may have not heard or that may have been left out. When someone asks a question, repeat the question to the audience so that everyone can hear. After answering all the questions, end the demonstration by saying, "This concludes my demonstration."

Sample Demonstration Worksheet

Title: Terrific Terrariums

Purpose: To show how to use containers from home and common native plants to build a terrarium.

Equipment Needed:

grocery bag
large clear or plastic container with large opening and lid (mayonnaise, pickle or peanut butter jars)
gravel
peat moss

soil
three types of plants (mosses, ferns, ivy)
rock or small object (optional)
small scoop or spoon
paper
terrarium already finished

Pre-preparation: Make a terrarium for display the day before.

Introduction:

My topic today is “Terrific Terrariums.” I am going to show you how to use containers that you may have at home and common native plants to build a terrarium. A terrarium is a sealed container that has plants inside. Plants in a terrarium may grow for years. As I demonstrate how to make a terrific terrarium, I will tell you why.

Time Line	Say This	Do This	Equipment Needed
8:00	I am using a large, brown grocery bag that I cut so that it lies flat.	Place brown paper on surface directly in front of you to catch dirt that may fall.	Grocery bag
	Any large mouth jar may be used to build a terrarium. The jar, however, must have a lid that will seal.	Place jar in front of you. Tilt jar toward audience to show the wide mouth on your jar. Set the jar down.	Jar
	For plants to grow properly, they must have the right type of planting medium.	Place box with gravel, peat moss, and soil in front of you along side the jar.	
8:02	Having the right type of planting medium includes having some type of drainage.		Gravel Peat moss Soil

Time Line	Say This	Do This	Equipment Needed
	I am filling the bottom of the jar with a layer of gravel so that the water from the soil can drain.	<i>Fill bottom with layer of gravel.</i>	Gravel
8:03	I am adding a layer of peat moss.	<i>Add a layer of peat moss.</i>	Peat moss
8:04	I am going to plant a sprig of ivy, a small fern, and a bit of green moss.	<i>Display the three plants.</i>	Fern Ivy Moss
	All three of these plants came from a spring near my house.		
8:05	First, I am going to make a place inside the terrarium for each of these three plants by using a small scoop to dig three holes.	<i>With an old tablespoon, make three holes large enough to spread the roots out.</i>	Tablespoon
	Notice that I am making the three holes larger than the roots of the plants so that the roots can grow.		
	I am planting the fern first.		
	Notice that I am being very careful to cover the roots without going above the original soil line.	<i>Place roots of plant in hole.</i>	
	I am pressing very gently down on the soil. This helps to hold the fern in place.	<i>Cover the roots.</i>	Fern
	Now, I am going to plant the ivy.	<i>Press down on soil slightly to help hold the fern in place.</i>	
		<i>Place roots of plant in hole.</i>	
8:07			Ivy

Time Line	Say This	Do This	Equipment Needed
	I am being very careful to cover the roots without going above the original soil line.	<i>Cover the roots.</i>	
8:09	I am pressing very gently down on the soil. This helps to hold the ivy in place.	<i>Press down on soil slightly to help hold the ivy in place.</i>	
	The last plant to be planted is the moss.	<i>Place roots of plant in hole.</i>	Moss
		<i>Cover the roots.</i>	
	I am being very careful to cover the roots without going above the original soil line.		
		<i>Press down on soil slightly to help hold the moss in place.</i>	
8:11	I am pressing very gently down on the soil. This helps to hold the moss in place.		
		<i>Place unusual rock to one side in the jar.</i>	
	For decoration and to add interest, I am adding this interesting rock to the right side.		Rock
8:12	I am adding just a little water to get the terrarium off to a good start. If they are kept in a sunny, warm location with the lid closed, these plants should do very well.	<i>Place a little water inside the terrarium and close the lid.</i>	Container Water
		<i>Remove the terrarium and roll up the brown paper that caught the spills.</i>	
		<i>Place the clean terrarium on the front of the demonstration table.</i>	
	Are there any questions?	<i>Answer questions.</i>	Clean terrarium
8:13	This concludes my demonstration.		
8:15			

How Do I Prepare A Good 4-H Demonstration?

You've planned and developed your demonstration. Now it's time to prepare. One good way to do this is to actually present your demonstration for a close friend or family member. Have them look over "Tips For Giving A Good 4-H Demonstration" on page 7. This will give them an idea of what to listen for. Give them a copy of the **Practice Record** on page 11. Ask them to record the things you do well and the things you need to improve. Also ask them to record how long your demonstration lasts.

1. Practice, practice, practice the demonstration.

Practice your demonstration as many times as possible before giving it in front of an audience. Before you give your demonstration for your family or friends, you may want to practice alone in front of a mirror. You can use the **Practice Record** to keep track of how well you think you did. Each time you develop a demonstration on a different topic, you will need to use a new **Practice Record**.

- Say and do everything you plan to say and do in front of an audience. Practice until you become comfortable and can move from one step to the next smoothly.

- Time yourself as you practice your demonstration. Timing the practice sessions will help to ensure that the demonstration will not be too long.

- When you feel you are ready, ask your family and friends to watch your demonstration. Ask them to give you honest, constructive suggestions for how to improve.

2. Consider the results of your demonstration. Use this information to help you improve your demonstration techniques. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What parts or steps of the demonstration did I do very well?
- Which parts or steps could I improve?
- Are there any steps that I left out?
- Are there any steps that need to be omitted?

3. Revise your demonstration based on the results of your practice sessions. Be sure to revise your **Demonstration Worksheet**.

Tips For Giving A Good 4-H Demonstration

1. Be organized. Make sure that you have all of the equipment and supplies needed to carry out the demonstration.

- Arrange your equipment and supplies in the order you'll use them and away from the front of your working space. The audience should be able to see what you are doing.

- Ask for a supply table. Place the supply table to the side and put extra equipment on it. This will keep the demonstration table from being cluttered.

- Use trays or baskets to group small equipment, supplies, and ingredients together.

2. Keep the audience focused on the purpose of the demonstration. Try to keep supplies and equipment in the background until they are needed.

3. Come prepared. You should have everything that you will say, do, or need written on your **Demonstration Worksheet**. If you made many changes after your practice sessions, you may want to copy your worksheet over.

- Check ahead of time to see if you will need your own extension cord.

- Bring paper or plastic bags, paper towels, and other supplies for clean-up.

4. Use visual aids such as signs or posters sparingly. Signs and posters should help to explain the demonstration.

- Keep visuals simple. Include only the main ideas or major points.

- Make visuals easy to read. Lettering should be large enough to be read from a distance of 20 to 30 feet.

- Show visuals only for the time needed.

- Use upper and lower case lettering.

5. Make a good impression on the audience.

- Use good posture. Stand tall and place your weight evenly on both feet.

- Wear clothes that fit properly and are neat and clean.

- Wear clothes that are appropriate for the type of demonstration that you are giving.

- Wear jewelry that does not dangle or make noise. Wild jewelry and clothes distract the audience. Keep in mind that the attention of your audience should be on your demonstration.

6. Speak clearly and distinctly.

- Speak loudly enough to be heard across the room.

- Talk directly to the audience, not the table or the floor, so your voice will carry.

7. Smile and enjoy helping others learn.

Demonstration Outline

I. Introduction

A. Title:

B. Purpose:

C. Equipment (Things you'll need to bring):

II. Body

A.

B.

C.

III. Summary

IV. Possible Questions

Demonstration Worksheet

Title:

Purpose:

Equipment Needed:

Pre-preparation:

Introduction:

Time Line	Say This	Do This	Equipment Needed



YEX-51



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