

Let's Demonstrate

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What is a demonstration?

Have you ever shown anyone how to jump rope, how to make a snowman or how to tie a shoe? If so, then you've given a demonstration, because it's simply showing and telling how to do something by using action words, such as cut, fold, stir, mix or saw. For example, say, "Fold the paper into halves," as you actually fold the paper. **Demonstrations are not difficult; they are simply showing and telling how to do something.**

Why give demonstrations?

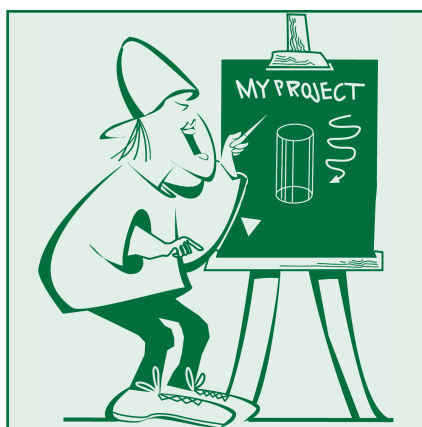
A demonstration helps others learn how to do something. Demonstrations are one of the best methods of teaching others.

Demonstrating helps you, too. It helps you gain poise and self-confidence. It improves your ability to express yourself. It increases your knowledge on a subject and helps you organize a topic and think clearly and quickly on your feet.

What kinds of demonstrations are there?

Individual demonstration

An individual 4-H'er shows and



tells how to do something.

Team demonstration

Two or more 4-H club members work together on a topic that requires more than one person to successfully demonstrate the procedure.

Working demonstration

Members giving working demonstration do not prepare a talk on the demonstration. Rather, they select a project in which they have considerable experience. They sit at an assigned table and work, more or less, continuously. When a person comes up and asks a question, the demonstrator describes what they are doing and continues the conversation as long as the person has an interest. When that onlooker leaves, they continue working until another person asks a question. This type of demonstration is good for fairs, displays in shopping centers or at special events.

How do demonstrations get into 4-H club work?

Project leaders provide opportunities for 4-Hers to give demonstrations at 4-H project meetings. Later, the 4-Hers may give the same demonstration, or one similar to it, at the 4-H club meeting. Start by showing and telling others how to do something useful and interesting. Showing other people how to do the things you learned in 4-H is fun. As you practice and gain skills, you may want to give demonstrations for other community groups and at 4-H achievement days, fairs and other such events.

How is a good demonstration organized?

Select a topic

Develop a subject or topic, suitable to your age and experience, from project work or practice. The topic should be worthwhile, helpful, practical and useful. Base the topic on a single idea you can explain in a short period of time.

Plan the demonstration

A demonstration has four parts: (1) introduction and title, (2) body of demonstration, (3) summary and (4)

questions. However, it's best to plan your demonstration in this order.

Body of demonstration

Collect needed materials

List the equipment or materials needed — pans, rope, tools, scissors, etc. Include a tray to carry equipment to the worktable. For example, if you are going to give a demonstration on the safe use of a knife, you might need the following equipment: sharp pocket knife or kitchen knife, a green stick (such as you would use to roast wieners) and piece of wrapping paper or newspaper.

Develop the demonstration outline

First develop steps by actually going through the demonstration and writing down each step. **Second**, define the key point to emphasize and write down the key point for each step. **Third**, build in explanations. For each step tell what is being done, how it is being done and why. **Next**, show the results. If you cannot complete a whole job in short time, prepare a sample ahead of time. For example have some cookies baked or have an apron with a pocket already sewn on, etc. Invite the audience to look over or sample the finished product. Finally, tell where you got the information

Now lets go through a demonstration on the safe use of the knife as an example.

What to do

"I chose a green stick to sharpen for roasting wieners."

"I am using a sharp knife to do the job quickly and easily."

"I whittle to make the point, and I cut away from myself."

Why?

"So it won't catch on fire."

"You can cut with a sharp knife without pressing too hard so it is less likely to slip."

"So if the knife slips, I won't cut my hand."

"My source of information is *Safety Makes Sense*, a safety activity publication available from your local University Outreach and Extension center."

Summary

- Give the main points to remember.
- Clear the table except for the finished project.
- Display the finished product attractively.
- Offer it to the audience for close inspection, if necessary.

Continuing the demonstration of the safe use of a knife, summarize by saying, "This shows a safe way to make a pointed stick. I chose a green stick for roasting wieners and used a sharp knife to work quickly and safely. As I whittled, I cut away from myself to avoid an accident. This is a safe method to use when whittling, carving wood or other jobs you do all the time."

Questions

Ask, "Are there any questions?" When a question is asked, repeat it. You may say, "John asked. . . ." or just repeat the question, such as, "Why did I use a sharp knife?" If you don't know the answer, say so, or tell the audience you will try to get the information for them, or refer them to sources of information.

When the questions are answered add a courteous ending. Say something like, "This ends my demonstration. I hope you will find this information useful." But use your own words to say how you feel.

Introduction and title

Plan the introduction and title last after outlining what to do. The introduction gives the reason for this practice or method. Include the subject in the introduction and

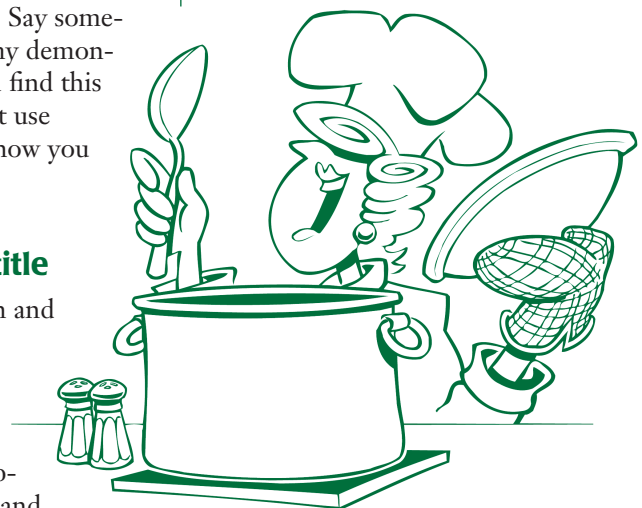
give a good reason for presenting the demonstration. This is a chance to sell the topic to the audience. Making the introduction interesting and catchy gets the audience to listen attentively to the rest of the demonstration. A young demonstrator might use the following introduction for a demonstration or the use of a knife: "All of us use knives for many different jobs at work or at play. The proper use of a sharp knife can prevent cuts. It's better to be safe than sorry."

Finally, plan an action title for your demonstration. It should identify the subject and add interest and curiosity about the subject. Which title sounds the most exciting, "Eight Wheels Rolling" or "How to Roller Skate Safely?" Would you rather listen to a demonstration called "Tempting Tacos" or one on "How to Make Tacos"? Look for ways to brighten the demonstration by giving it a good title.

Table arrangement and equipment

Tables

Arrange the table neatly and conveniently and have plenty of work space behind you. Make sure the audience can see what you're doing on the table. Many times you'll find it is an advantage to have a supply table either behind, or just to the side of, the demonstration table. With this arrangement, you can place supplies and



equipment out of the audience's view.

Equipment

Arrange equipment so the audience can always see what you're doing. Keep only what is immediately needed on the front table. This way you can keep the table neat and the front of the table clear.

Try to keep equipment and supplies in the background until they are used. Group the equipment for a procedure or a step together to make it easier to handle.

Trays are useful for grouping small equipment and bringing it to the table. Have towels available if needed. In addition to careful organization of the table and equipment, consider using mirrors, transparent containers and tables tilted forward to improve the audience's view.

Signs or posters

Use signs and posters if they add to the demonstration. Posters, like talking, are added attractions to help tell the whats, whys and hows of the topic demonstrated.

- **Keep them simple.** Lettering must be large enough to be seen easily by the audience. Concentrate on only one point per chart.
- **Make them readable.** Posters should be attractive and readable from a distance of 30 feet. ($\frac{3}{4}$ -inch letters with no thinner than $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch line is a minimum).
- **Don't over expose posters** – show just for the time needed. Take them down when they do not add to the demonstration.
- **Lettering in upper and lower case** letter is easier to read than all capital letters of the same size.

Posters can be a help

They can also be a crutch that weakens a demonstration. Like talking, the poster should be developed



after the “doing” is perfected — and then, only if it adds to the demonstration.

Practice

Practice is important. It helps work out the easiest way to arrange materials and equipment.

- Do things in order.
- Explain every action.
- Know the subject.
- Have all of the equipment needed.
- Keep the equipment in plain sight.
- Give reliable information.

Look your best when giving your demonstration, whether it is for a club, parents or for a group in the community. “Be clean and neat” is a good rule to follow. Wear clothes that are appropriate for the kind of demonstration you're giving. Don't wear wild clothes or jewelry. The audience should focus on what you're **doing**, not you. Posture is important — stand tall, on both feet. A clear, pleasant voice helps, too. As you practice your demonstration, see if you can improve your voice. Speak clearly, distinctly and loud enough to be heard across the room. Then, forget yourself and think about how you can best help your audience learn to do what you are doing. Be natural, at ease and smile. Talk directly to the audience, not the table

as you work. Keep your chin up so that your voice will carry.

Tests of a good demonstration

Making things to show to others is fun. Everyone enjoys watching an action program. When you finish the demonstration, ask yourself these questions:

- Did it arouse enough interest so that the audience will want to do the things demonstrated?
- Was the demonstration clear enough so anyone unfamiliar with the subject would be able to go home and repeat the practices?
- Did the demonstration seem worthwhile?
- Did a good product result?

The main points of a demonstration are:

Why

Tell why the demonstration is valuable and why people would want to know about this subject.

How

Show how to do something important that others will want to try out, and give reasons while you work.

Where

Let the audience know that your information came from tested and true sources.

What

Show the results.

Remember, demonstrations help you...

- gain poise and self-confidence;
- improve your ability to express yourself;
- increase your knowledge; and
- think clearly and quickly on your feet.

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