

4-H Reading Project

Introduction

Reading is one of the most important skills you have learned — one that can bring you a great deal of pleasure throughout your life. You use reading in nearly everything you do — playing games, shopping, driving down the highway, watching TV, or searching the Web. It is no wonder many people list reading as their favorite hobby.

Reading is the key that will unlock the storehouse of knowledge. It provides the opportunity for you to learn the “whys” of the everyday world. It is the magic carpet that will take you all over the world. Through reading, you can become acquainted with famous people of the past and present. Reading, like most skills, is improved by use.

Ever since people lived in caves, they have tried to record important events. Some of you may have seen paintings and carvings done by early humans on walls of caves or cliffs.

You have heard legends or tales that have been passed from one generation to another by word of mouth. Interesting as these may be, they are not very accurate because each storyteller leaves out bits and adds to the tale so that, through the years, the original story may be almost completely lost.

Not until writing was developed were people able to record information that could be accurately passed from one generation to another. Early books were hand lettered, a slow and laborious process. Only a few wealthy people could afford books. Many of the hand-lettered books were done by monks or students, so the books were the property of the monastery or the school.

Johannes Gutenberg’s introduction of the movable type printing press in Germany in the 15th century opened up a whole new world. Printed matter became available to everyone, and people wanted to learn to read. Today publishing happens so rapidly you could never read all the books printed or all the Internet sites.

With this vast flood of information online and in books, you have almost unlimited opportunity to read about any subject. It is important to learn how to select those things you will read.

Objectives

You will learn more of the “whys” as well as the “hows” of your projects.

You will learn about the use of the library and the Internet.

You will broaden your interests and understanding.

You will learn to read critically — to evaluate what you read.

You will discover the enjoyment of reading.

You will have the opportunity to read and share ideas with others.



Think of all the sources of printed matter you can find about a particular topic. For example, if you are interested in the health and wellness project you could read novels and short stories about doctors and nurses. You might read autobiographies and biographies about people like Dr. Jonas Salk or Madame Curie. You might use the Internet and reference books to trace the development of polio vaccine. Current magazines have articles on recent developments in the field. Poetry and plays written about people and events help bring the subject to life for the reader.

Your job in reading is to become selective in what you read and to learn to approach a topic through a variety of sources so you can fully understand it.

The Reading Project

Whatever your age, or wherever you live, you will enjoy the 4-H reading project.

You will find books written for people of all ages and with different reading abilities. Your parents, leader, and librarian can help you select books that suit your age, ability, and interest. If one book is too difficult, ask for an easier book. However, you will not enjoy reading books that are too simple.

In addition to reading, you have the opportunity to learn how to use a library and its many services. You also may share your experiences with others. All of us like to tell others about books we are reading. This might be

done at your project meetings, at club meetings, or at home as you tell your family about the book.

You and your family can read aloud together. Small children and many elderly people like to have someone read aloud to them. Not only will you be offering a valuable service, but you will improve your reading skill.

This project is divided into three phases. You may enroll in more than one phase at a time, if you wish. These phases are Reading for Enjoyment, Reading for Project Enrichment, and Reading for Discussion. Suggested activities follow.

Reading for Enjoyment

Reading for Enjoyment is a project phase suited to every 4-H member. You can find interesting books to help you enjoy reading. Since there are so many books available and each of us has time to read so few of them, you will want to learn to choose the best books you can find. Don't forget that magazines have interesting stories and articles, too.

In addition to reading, you will learn more about libraries and have interesting activities in the project.

Goals:

1. Set a goal for the number of books to read and activities to complete.
2. Choose from different *genres* of books to read. (Genre — pronounced zhan-ruh — means type, or category, of book, such as fiction, non-fiction, biography, poetry.)
3. Keep a record of books read and activities completed.
4. Share the book you enjoyed most with someone — parents, family, friends, or 4-H'ers.
5. Do several of the suggested activities.
6. Do as much as possible of "Know Your Library." (See back page.)
7. Share what you have learned.
 - Make an exhibit, either as an individual or with a group. Prepare a poster, notebook, or display to share. (4H985, *Preparing and Using Visual Aids* can help you complete this step.)
 - Give a talk or demonstration in front of a group, such as a club meeting or at club days. (4H978, *Kansas 4-H Presentation Overview*; 4H979, *4-H Project Talks*; 4H980, *4-H Demonstrations*; and 4H981, *Demonstration*

or *Illustrated Talk Outline Planning Form*, can help you complete this step.)

Reading for Enjoyment Activities:

1. Visit or tour a library.
 - Get a library card.
 - Introduce a friend to the library.
 - Start your own library.
2. Keep a journal about what you are reading.
 - Record interesting new words or phrases you have read.
3. Read a variety of books by the same author.
4. Respond to a book or books through fine arts (music, drama, art).
5. Visit a bookstore.
6. Tour a newspaper office or book publisher.
7. Share books with others.
 - Preschoolers
 - Nursing home residents or shut-ins
8. Donate a book to a library, preschool, hospital, service organization, etc.
9. Volunteer at a library.
10. Serve as a junior leader in the Reading Project.
11. Volunteer with summer reading or after-school programs.

Reading for Project Enrichment

If you select the Reading for Project Enrichment phase, you can do part of the reading about one project and the rest about another. For instance, if you are enrolled in both entomology and home improvement, you can read some books about entomology and some about home improvement.

If you read for project enrichment, you do not need to read the entire book. Much of your reading may be done in reference books where you find only a few paragraphs or several chapters about the topic. Newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets may be better sources of information than books about some subjects.

Learn to be selective in what you read. There are sample reading lists for some projects. You may wish to use these, or you and your librarian may select other books on the subject.

Goals:

1. Set a goal. Determine the topic you will learn about as well as the activities you will complete.

2. Keep a record of books read and activities completed.
 - Read project material.
 - Read for information about projects from other sources.
 - Read for pleasure at least one book related to your topic.
3. Share the book you enjoyed most with someone — parents, family, friend, or 4-H'ers.
4. Do several of the suggested activities.
5. Do as much as possible of "Know Your Library." (See back page.)
6. Keep a record of what you are doing.
7. Share what you have learned.
 - Make an educational exhibit, either as an individual or with a group. The exhibit should pertain to the topic you have chosen for your reading enrichment. Examples: Entomology — Life Cycle of Insects; Foods — Nutrition for a Healthy Lifestyle.
 - Give a talk or demonstration for a group. (4H978, *Kansas 4-H Presentation Overview*; 4H979, *4-H Project Talks*; 4H980, *4-H Demonstrations*; and 4H981, *Demonstration or Illustrated Talk Outline Planning Form*, can help you complete this step.)
 - Prepare a poster, notebook, or display to share. (4H985, *Preparing and Using Visual Aids*, can help you complete this step.)

Reading for Project Enrichment Activities:

1. Collect and read a variety of resources about your topic. (Read pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, Internet articles, and books.)
2. Devise a way to organize materials for easy reference.
3. Expand knowledge using community resources.
 - Prepare a list of questions and interview someone who has experience in your topic area.
 - Visit or tour sites related to your topic. (For example: entomology — K-State's Insect Zoo; gardening — nursery or experiment station; sewing — fabric or quilt store, etc.)
4. Explore career possibilities related to your topic.
5. Serve as a junior leader in your topic area.
6. Visit a special library or interest group related to your topic.

Reading for Discussion

The Reading for Discussion phase can be an interesting and challenging experience for teenagers.

As a group of teens, select either a single book you will all read or some special topic you want to read about. You then share with other members the ideas you gain from reading.

This phase could be part of any project. For instance, this phase offers the opportunity to study other cultures in world citizenship.

Goals:

This project is designed for 4-H'ers to interact with a group. This could be accomplished through a book study or discussion group at a public or school library or a book store.

1. Identify your discussion group. This could be a face-to-face discussion group, an e-mail discussion group, a discussion through a Web site such as Shelfari.com, or even a discussion with others using Internet communication technology such as Skype.
2. Set goals.
 - Set group goals for books read and discussion times.
 - Set personal goals for participation and activities.
3. Keep a record of books read and discussions attended.
 - Keep an *annotated bibliography* (a summary and evaluation) of books read with your group.
 - Keep an annotated bibliography of related books and materials read individually.
 - Keep a record of book discussions attended.

Reading for Discussion Activities:

1. Learn to participate in group discussions. Attend training meetings, read materials, or watch a video on how to participate in a group discussion.
2. Keep a journal of reactions and reflections.
 - Record your thoughts about materials read before discussion.
 - Think about the group discussion. Record your own thoughts on the discussion.
 - The group could use a blog to post comments on a book, as well as in face-to-face discussions.

- Think about your participation in group discussion.
 - Write about your reading and discussion experiences on a personal blog.
3. Encourage a group response to the book read that can be shared with others outside the discussion group. Examples: After reading *Gracie's Girl*, by Ellen Wittlinger, hold a food drive to benefit a community food pantry or soup kitchen; do a book talk at school or for another group.
 4. Serve as a junior leader. Lead or guide a book discussion with younger 4-H'ers.
 6. Learn how to get books and materials from the State Libraries of Kansas and interlibrary loan.
 7. Find out what reference books are available and how to use them.
 8. Find out what materials besides books are available at your library. The materials might include pamphlets, newspaper clippings, art, music, videos and DVDs, or magazines.
 9. Learn about special programs and services your library offers. Examples include computers, genealogy resources, story time, special exhibits, or a summer reading program.

Know Your Library

1. Get to know your librarian.
2. Get a library card.
3. Learn the library rules for conduct and use.
4. Learn the classification system your library uses to store and locate its books and how the system works. The Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress systems are the two in general use.
5. Learn to use the catalog system at your library to locate books and materials.
10. Learn about ways to support your library through Friends of the Library, volunteering, fundraisers, and other activities.
11. Learn about the educational requirements to become a librarian.
12. Visit a library outside your community, such as a university library, presidential library, special interest library, or archives.

This publication has been reviewed to ensure that the contents reflect current research and practice.

Reviewer: **Diane Mack, 4-H Youth Development Specialist;**

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