

Jackson County 4-H

Project Book Interview Tips & Information

4-H Project Book Interviews can be a little overwhelming for youth at times – especially when it is their first interview experience. Below are some resources to help youth and parents feel more at ease about 4-H Project Book Judging. Outlined below are the aspects of a successful 4-H project book interview – which can translate to any interview as youth prepare for adulthood. Check out the FAQ’s session at the end to ensure all of your questions have been answered.

General Information about Project Book Interviews:

- **Interview:** *A meeting of people face to face, especially for consultation. A conversation about something. Telling others all about something you have learned about.*
- Interviews take about 10-15 minutes. If a member is exhibiting multiple projects in the same area (i.e. Beef Breeding and Market Beef, or Horse Record Book and Trial Riding), both projects will be judged at the same time with the same judge.
- We only choose nice, caring judges who are the best people to ask you about your experiences. They want the best for you, and to help you be successful in your 4-H project areas. They are knowledgeable, local experts in their areas and are able to provide exceptional feedback and information should you have questions.
- It is okay to be nervous! That’s normal.

PARENTS: Due to a lack of space in the Extension Office, once youth are checked in for their project interviews and seated in the waiting area, parents are asked to exit the space and wait in the hallway or in the car for their child. Parents are not allowed to enter the judging area with their children. Teen helpers and volunteers will assist youth back to the judging area if necessary. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding. If your child has a Winning 4-H Plan or needs accommodation, please contact Maddie.

General Tips for Interviews:

“To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late, and to be late is to be left behind.”

- **Arrive early for your interview!** Being on time means being a few minutes early to ensure you are not late. This helps keep everything moving efficiently and quickly and shows your interviewer qualities of punctuality and care.
- **Dress to impress.** Business professional or business casual dress preferred (with exceptions for some projects). Examples of what to wear are attached at the end.
- **Smile, make eye contact, and shake their hand.**
- **Confidence is key.** The judges are there to help you – so just be yourself and have fun!
- **Know before you go.** Study your project area material. The more knowledgeable you are about your project area and subject matter, the more successful you will be!

Aspects of a Successful 4-H Project Interview:

1. Project Completion

- **Project Book:** Look for the project guidelines in the front of the book. Usually has the word "activity" and indicates how many of those activities must be done for project completion. A good rule of thumb is to complete the book to the best of your ability and do as much as you can!
 - Visit the 4-H Youth page on our website for this year's Project Completion & Fair Requirements document.

2. Displays

- Displays are a collection of your knowledge from the project in the form of a physical object. 4-H project displays can vary from posters, food journals, cake decorating, practice welds, examples of your work, sewn clothing, printed photographs, shoebox habitats, cages, or nesting boxes, scrapbooks, PPTs, etc.
- Many displays are what you think would be best, but some are in the requirements to help the interview judges best pick the best projects.
 - Find the area of your project where it talks about what is required. Is there a display requirement? If not, what kind of things did you make for your project? Did you purchase anything, or take pictures of yourself completing the project? Can you recreate a diagram to talk with the judge about what you learned?
- Youth should bring a display for every project – regardless of a requirement or not. A poster board usually works well, but keep in mind uniqueness as you design your display.
- For **Livestock Projects:** Each year, a theme is announced for Livestock Project Displays. Themes match the chapters in the 4-H Livestock Resource guides. Themes can include nutrition, housing, history of species, health, disease, etc. Please double check that your display matches the current year's theme.

3. Answering Interview Questions

Be able to answer...

- Why did you choose this project?
- What did you do during your 4-H project experience?
 - How you did it, who helped, etc.
- What did you learn during the experience?
- What might you do to improve the next time?

4. Project Specific Questions

- Specific information about your project area.
- Can include key terms, vocabulary words, facts, phrases, and important information necessary to know about that project area.



- Most books have a “topics of interest” section that outlines important topics related to the project area. These are areas that youth should be knowledgeable about prior to their project interview as interview questions can, and will, be about these areas.
 - Projects that come with an additional resource book (such as most livestock projects or multi-year projects) should be studied as well. Interview questions can, and will, be taken from information provided within resource books.
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What to expect BEFORE judging...

- You will be given a judging slot (time) ahead of project interviews. Please pay attention to your email and reserve the date of project judging on your calendar ahead of time.
- Make sure your project is completed and you have fulfilled all of your requirements. Don't wait until the last minute to do your project as it is very stressful!
- Make sure you feel comfortable in what you wear, and confident in your appearance, knowledge of the project area, and ability to engage with the judge.

What to expect ONCE YOU ARRIVE at judging...

- You will check in when you arrive and be given your score sheet.
- Helpers will give you directions to the table where your judging is going to be. You will wait until it is your turn and then go to your judging table.
- Then...the interview starts!

What to expect DURING your interview...

- Shake the judge's hand and introduce yourself.
- The judge will ask you to tell them about yourself and the project you have chosen. Give a brief overview of your display and what you did during your project.
- The judge will ask you questions about your project and score your project book based on completion.

What to expect AFTER your interview...

- Once your interview is completed, you will receive a copy of your score sheet with feedback to take with you.
- Results will be tabulated following the judges results and the placings and State Fair Delegates will be announced.
 - If you are selected as a State Fair delegate, more information will be provided to you from the Extension Office.
- Awards will be presented at the Jackson County Junior Fair Awards Ceremony. If you cannot pick up your award during the ceremony, they will be available in the Junior Fair Office during the Fair.

If you have further questions regarding interviews, your child's ability to interview, Winning 4-H Plans, or accommodations for interviews, please contact Maddie at the Extension Office at allman.68@osu.edu or by calling at (740) 286-5044.

4-H Project Interview FAQs

Why does my child have to complete a project book interview?

- 4-H project books and project book interviews are a vital piece of the 4-H program. Completion of the project book facilitates learning and understanding of the subject material, whereas the interview is the mechanism that allows the youth to demonstrate this understanding.
- 4-H projects teach youth important and necessary life skills that youth should comprehend and apply to their lives following completion of the project.
- Interviews are an important and vital aspect of adulthood. By the time 4-H members graduate from the program, they have completed multiple interviews and have learned the dos and don'ts of interviewing. 4-H members are two times more likely to get a job or go to college because of their 4-H experience.
- The County Fair is not 4-H, and 4-H is not the County Fair. 4-H Project interviews are a 4-H member's "Game Day." By completing your project book and interview, you then are eligible to exhibit at the County Fair.

The wrong project or a project my child is no longer completing is listed on their interview schedule. What do we do?

- Please email Maddie at allman.68@osu.edu the information as soon as possible.

What do I do if my child can't attend Project Book Judging?

- Youth who cannot attend regularly scheduled 4-H Project Book Judging and Interviews will need to schedule a makeup interview with Maddie. Makeup interviews are typically scheduled for a date in early July and are by appointment only.
- Youth who complete a makeup interview are not eligible for State Fair delegation or awards and are simply judged for project completion and feedback.

My child is completing a makeup interview. Why are they not eligible for awards?

- Youth who complete makeup interviews are judged on a different day, given more time to complete their projects.
- Youth who complete makeup interviews are not judged by the same judges that all other competitors in their category were judged by. Those judges oftentimes only volunteer their time for the one day and are not asked to return for the makeup judging day.
- Ohio State Fair delegations are due by a certain deadline which usually falls before the makeup judging date.
- Awards must be ordered as soon as possible following the Project Book Interview date to ensure their arrival in time for the awards ceremony at the fair.
- It is simply not fair to the exhibitors who exhibited on time.

My child has a disability and needs accommodation. What can we do?

- Please fill out a Winning 4-H Plan and contact Maddie to come up with a plan of action to best support your child in completing their project requirements.

What to Wear for your 4-H Project Interview

Business Professional/Business Casual Dress is recommended. Some photos for reference are below. Imagine what you would wear for a job interview one day? What would give a good impression and help you land the job?

- Dress pants, khaki pants, long skirts, and dresses are acceptable. A nice, unstained pair of jeans are also acceptable.
- A collared shirt is recommended. You can try polo shirts, button-up shirts (short sleeve and long sleeve are both acceptable), or a nice blouse/undershirt with a cardigan or jacket over. Shirts should try to be tucked in.
- NO t-shirts, ripped jeans, denim shorts, or short skirts.
- For Livestock 4-H projects, typical show attire is acceptable and encouraged.

