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As
We
Judge

EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

As We Judge

Let's Agree -

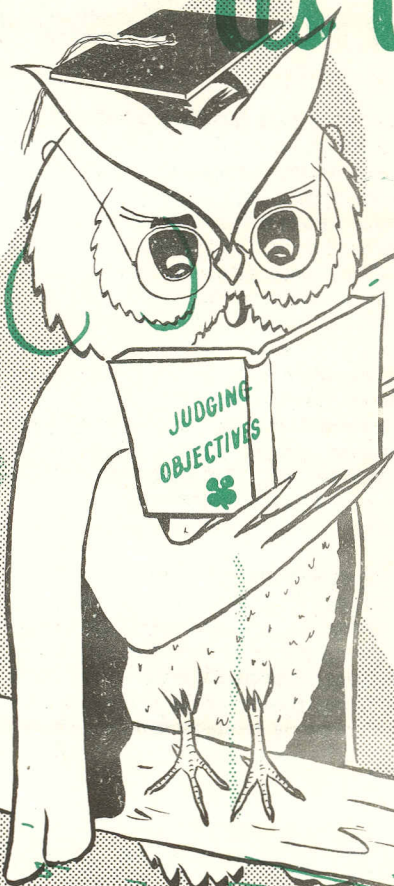
THE REAL PURPOSE OF 4-H JUDGING IS

to help boys and girls recognize
standards of quality in 4-H products,

and

to give them practice in making
choices and definite decisions

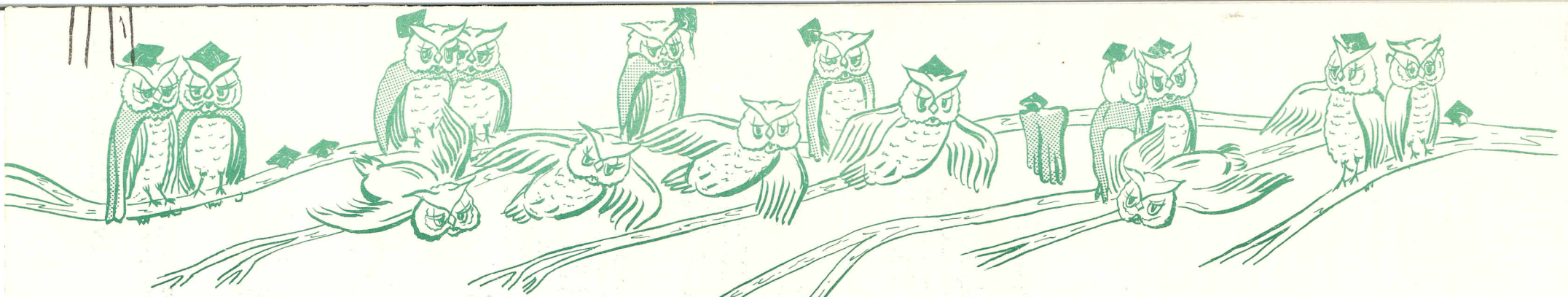
which they can support with good reasons.



JUDGING
OBJECTIVES



4-4-2
R.C. 0-44-2



AS WE JUDGE IN CLUB MEETINGS

When baby brother picks up the red ball instead of the grey one, he is making a choice. When 10 year old Mary says to her 4-H club leader, "I like this one best", she has made a choice, and we call it 4-H judging. We make choices every day, all our lives.

Almost every club meeting should include some judging practice. It should begin in a very simple fashion. The leader might talk about just one animal or article and ask the members to think and vote as a group first. Judging cards or score cards can be used as suggested below:

When live animals are not available, pictures, livestock products, rope halters, blankets, combs can be judged. In home economics clubs, there is no end to the real products and the samples that can be judged in club meetings.

Suggestions to leaders of many of the projects propose that the club members judge their own products. It is excellent training in developing the ability to accept criticism of one's efforts, but sometimes the feelings of sensitive boys and girls can be terribly hurt by the thoughtless remarks of other youngsters. The good leader can generally offer extra praise to the victim of such treatment, and at the same time give the group a little training in tactfulness. In home economics clubs, one person often makes all the things to be judged in one class.

One good way to teach members to judge is to give each of them a score card or judging card and a pencil and then, as a group, look at, discuss, and score or rate one animal or article. The members should learn the new words on the cards and connect them with the product they are considering. Then they can try another card on another animal or article, doing this one alone and comparing results. If this is done several times in local club meetings, members will be learning the real foundation for the group plan of judging 4-H exhibits at fairs and shows.

One way to "make the official placing" in judging practice at the club meeting, is to share the responsibility with parents who attend. On a livestock tour, ask three of the parents to act as the judging committee and work together in making the official placing. In the cooking club, ask three mothers to come to the meeting to be the official judges. They like it, and it will build parent interest in the club activities.



AS WE JUDGE IN TRAINING MEETINGS AND CONTESTS

Leaders often wonder if their own personal ideas and standards are correct. They may score a product high and then wish they knew if the official judge at the fair would do the same.

One of the problems is to develop uniformity among all judges regarding these standards of perfection. Experienced 4-H club members and leaders know that judges vary in their opinions, exhibits will not look the same from day to day at different shows, and human errors can be made even by the best of judges.

The Extension Service offers leader training days and judging days each year. Some new methods of teaching boys and girls to judge may be tried. Leaders who attend can learn the standards that are being used by the state extension specialists in the educational program for Nebraska 4-H clubs.

Judging contests have been developed around the idea that there must be four animals or articles or products in a "class", that the four must be placed first, second, third, and fourth, and that reasons are given orally or in writing for placing the first one over the second one, etc. Members usually compete as teams of two, three, or four representing the club, county, or state.

To train members for such competition, begin by having them place and give reasons on two animals or articles that are "placeable," that is, two units that differ in quality to the extent that almost everyone would agree on the placing. Then try it with three or four units in the class and make the placings more difficult. First training can be as a group, but later practice must be individual work without discussion between members.

Beginners will do best if they can look at the animals or articles while they try their first reasons. Teach them to compare, using the words from the judging cards, then drill them on comparisons rather than simple descriptions. Good reasons include only the outstanding comparisons, not every detail. As the members get more experience, they should give reasons on their placing of the entire class, and also without looking at the class. In contests, they can take notes to review before giving their reasons. Training in taking notes that are worth something should be included in the preparation for contests.

RANKING WITHIN GROUPS

Some judges have liked to rank the individual exhibits as they grouped them into purple, blue, red, and white groups. They say it pleases the ringside and the exhibitors who still think about winning first, second, third, etc., and who still love the champion. They feel that a gradual shift to true group plan judging is better than a sudden change.

The managements of some shows want the exhibits grouped and then some champions picked from the purples. This focuses attention on a few individuals and helps the newspapers and radio and television programs. Some special awards are offered in such a way that it is necessary to pick top place winners.

Additional experience with group plan judging should lead toward the long-time objective of placing each exhibit in its proper group according to merit, as if it were measured on a score card, without ranking the exhibits within the groups. As club members and parents and friends become accustomed to group judging, the trend should be toward acceptance of this long-time objective.



ONE JUDGE'S EXPERIENCE

One judge demonstrated that he could handle a large number of exhibits in a day by looking the animals over carefully as they walked by, and then sending them directly into the white, red, and blue groups. He went over each group again to shift a few up or down to another group if necessary, but he did not make any attempt to rank the exhibits within the white, red, or blue groups. He picked top calves as candidates for purple out of each class, and talked about them individually. Exhibitors and ringside seemed to be well satisfied with the judge's work.



DIVIDING THE PREMIUM

Under the group plan, exhibitors must be prepared to share the awards when the number of entries and quality are high. The usual custom is to announce a maximum award for each group, say \$4 for purple, \$3 for blue, \$2 for red, and nothing for white, and also the total dollars available for the class. Supposing \$100 is set up for the class, and the ribbons are hung as follows:

8 purple	@ \$4.00	- \$32.00
15 blue	@ 3.00	- 45.00
24 red	@ 2.00	- 48.00
		<u>\$125.00</u>

Then the fair management would scale down each premium by 1/5 and pay \$3.20 for purple, \$2.40 for blue and \$1.60 for red ribbon awards.

No premiums are paid over the maximums, so some fairs will use the money left in small entry classes to help pay the deficit in the large classes.



AS WE JUDGE I

The Nebraska Extension Service, its county extension agents, will try to help the judging program in all 4-H clubs.

The trend is from the placing of exhibits in the group plan of judging which collects white groups according to merit. The same tests and to judging practice in club meetings.

Statements on this page are intended to be carried on this year in leader training, and exhibiting and judging at fairs.

GROUP PLAN JUDGING A

The judging cards and so this circular for beginning judges. True group plan judging of members learn to use the cards. Follow the idea unconscious with their ideals, then the fitting climax to the year's stu

It takes real courage on entries according to actual entries in one class and on that there should be purples too, to put most of the exhibit and blue groups. The local plan judging and expect to h regardless of quality.

In perfect group plan ju in the blue ribbon group at should also place in the blue petition of the year at any o that the appearance of the ex shows.

It is suggested that whe the range of points be the fol

Purple	-
Blue	-
Red	-
White	-
No award	-

COMPETITION

4-H leaders, state specialists, and club leaders and 4-H members improve

first, second, third and fourth toward the entries into purple, blue, red, and orange may be applied to judging con-

be the foundation for the activities to judging days, coaching of judging teams,

SCORE CARDS

cards suggested elsewhere in this book are really the foundation of judging at 4-H shows. If club members, and fair judges learn to use them, they compare the exhibits in competition at the fairs can be a valuable training in club activities.

part of the judge to place the exhibit. Just because there are 10 entries in another does not mean it is better than her class. It takes courage, and a local show in white, red, and blue may not understand group judging. The best exhibits made purple

is, an exhibit which is placed in a local club show, for example, is on group in the keenest competition at large shows. This assumes that the judge does not change between the

numerical scores are applied, and the judge for the four groups.

points and over
94 points
84 points
74 points
or 65 points



THE SHOW ARENA AND RINGSIDE

Livestock is generally judged in an arena of some kind with space so the spectators can watch from the ringside and also hear the comments of the judge. The animals are usually judged the second and third days of the fair. On the other hand, home economics exhibits are generally judged as they come in to the fair, and in a crowded place where no one is wanted except the judge and a few helpers.

Recently arrangements were made at the state fair to offer the girls and the mothers and leaders and friends opportunities to see ringside spectators while the judges work. Because of limited space available, this arena judging has been like a demonstration. It is hoped that in the future, home economics exhibits can be judged in a satisfactory place while the ringside watches and listens as they do in the livestock arena.

GROUP PLAN JUDGING CONTESTS

As the group plan of judging 4-H exhibits becomes more widely used and understood, judging contests may be changed so that from six to ten articles or animals are grouped into purple, blue, red, and white groups by the contestants. A few clubs have tried it in meetings, and the leaders say it is better training for the boys and girls than the usual type of contest. The change has been tried at judging days in some projects. Getting large enough classes to work on has been a problem in livestock judging, but in home economics some of the classes have been arranged and taken from place to place by state leaders and specialists.



SPORTSMANSHIP IN COMPETITION

When a judge accepts his assignment, he knows he cannot please everyone all the time. He is employed to do the best job he can, and his decisions are final. A good judge will be careful and courteous, and will offer helpful criticisms of workmanship on the products as well as about the excellence of the animals and materials.

Some members, and more parents, compete with blood in their eye, and can't take it when they don't win. They say they just can't understand it, and they want to know "why", and they say mean things about the show and the judge and their competitors. The only positive answer to the "why" is that they did not present an exhibit that attracted attention of the judge or impressed him as one deserving a higher award.

Most 4-H members enter a judging contest to find out how well they can judge and give reasons. Those who do not rate as high as others can take note of where they were scored down, and try to improve next time.

Exhibiting is full of "know how" which can be learned only by experience. There seems to be a little luck connected with it. A club member may have his day or her year. On the whole, however, the best club members are consistent winners who know how to take it when they slip a little, and also how to control their enthusiasm when they hit the top.