



National 4-H Curriculum Facilitator Tips

Think Safety

Promote an inclusive environment where youth feel safe to have voice and openly share ideas. Remember to also account for physical safety issues, including electrical needs, fire exits, flow of traffic in and out of the room as related to the work spaces.

Be Prepared

Read through each section of the Facilitator Guide. Remember that strong, upfront planning of the series of activities will allow you to make connections and see continuity that can be shared with the youth.

Provide consistent expectations of behavior

Provide opportunities for choice and include the strengths of all youth to enrich student experiences. Model clear communication strategies by talking directly to youth through maintaining eye contact and practicing active listening skills. Provide options for different learning preferences and intelligence types.

Engage Youth

Note when youth are interested—take advantage of their curiosity and catch those “teachable” moments! Invite them to be actively engaged through your contagious enthusiasm and sense of humor. Give youth opportunities to ask probing questions and share ideas with each other.

Embed Essential Elements

In 4-H, the critical components of a successful learning experience are a sense of Belonging, Independence, Mastery, and Generosity. It is your role, as a facilitator, to provide guidance and support. Give youth opportunities to become leaders, practice citizenship, develop a sense of independence, a sense of belonging, and ability to master the content.

Balance Discussion with Hands-On Activities

Limit the amount of discussion. Interactive mini-lessons, approximately 5-10 minutes long are sufficient to provide core “chunks” of information. 4-H is about learning through doing. Alternate instruction with active hands-on learning. Ask yourself: What is absolutely essential to teach for youth to understand the concepts? What can they discover on their own?

Youth quotes:

“Least fun was the talking times when we weren’t doing anything. We were just sitting in the classroom.”

“I like that we get to learn something different... Coming here we can feel good about what we do.”

Encourage Career Exploration

Make the connections to careers in the fields of science, engineering, and technology. Make connections with experts in the field and invite them to share their passion for their profession. Utilize them as a resource for information and current trends and issues.

Focus on Relevance

Encourage youth to demonstrate application to the real world. Model this by using relevant examples that apply to their daily lives.

Go Further

Encourage youth to explore beyond the activity and take learning into their own hands. Notice when they become emerging experts and give them leadership opportunities.