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Photography Leaders

*Whether you are one of several adults serving as a project leader for your 4-H club or possibly the club's organizational leader performing this task, you are responsible for **overseeing** the project learning of members. The following is designed to help you with this important task.*

Photography Group Projects

Sometimes a group of members may want to focus on a project of particular interest or take on a club project in addition to individual projects. To meet these needs, group project work is often organized and conducted by a project leader who is responsible for directing project work. Group project work can be conducted as part of, or separate from, the club meeting. When apart from the meeting, project leaders can provide a more in-depth exploration of the topic and involvement in project activities. Sometimes members from surrounding clubs are invited to be a part of these specialized project sessions. When this occurs, these members are considered part of a 4-H Special Interest group.

Getting Started

Involve Members in Project Planning

As much as possible, involve your members in planning project work sessions. They will have a greater commitment to the project if they have been involved in its planning. The length of time members spend on project activities will depend on the nature of the project and the ambitions of the group.

Setting Individual and Group Goals

By your second meeting, have members determine their personal goals for their project, as well as those of the group. However, this needs to be done with consideration for the individual abilities of each member. As a project advisor, guide members in setting realistic goals for both themselves and the group.

Preparing for Project Instruction

Successful learning will depend on how well you involve members in hands-on activities. You may want to use a variety of techniques such as role playing, experiments, demonstrations, and discussions to maintain member interest in the project.

Project Advising, Review and Recognition

As a 4-H leader, one of your jobs is to monitor the project work of your club members. This includes having members give regular project reports at club meetings.

Project reports give leaders an opportunity to check on the work each member has done, especially if it is done at home. If members have encountered difficulties, they can be discussed. Project reports naturally lead into project demonstrations, which are typically assigned in advance. The demonstration provides the opportunity for members to highlight important things they learned about their projects at home.

Project Review

Review of the member's accomplishments should take place once the member's project goals have been met. Typically, this evaluation is done at home by either a project helper or at a time and location agreed upon by the club. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess "to what degree" members have achieved their project goals.

Additionally, members may take part in a club level evaluation to assess contributions in leadership, citizenship and community service; participation in 4-H events and activities; involvement in the club; and personal growth through 4-H. Typically, this level of evaluation is conducted as part of or following a members project review. It is usually done to assign the member a final grade or a particular "Honor Member" type of award.

Members may also be encouraged to take part in county level judging, sometimes referred to as county project judging. However, this level of assessment is designed to determine "how well" rather than "to what degree" a member has achieved within a project. Normally, a judge will review the planning section of the member's project manual in order to assess the scope of the member's project knowledge and involvement. Members may also be required to bring a project exhibit or demonstrate an activity as a way of assessing project skills. Normally, grade ribbons (A, B, C) or color ribbons (blue, red, white) are assigned to reflect individual project achievements as determined by the judge.

At the highest level of member assessment called "competition against others," members are judged against standards of excellence as well as the achievements of others. Typically, this takes place during county level evaluation at the time when trophy winners and state fair participants are determined. It also takes place at county and state fair contests and special competitive events.

Member Recognition

Individuals who earn recognition for project and membership achievements should be recognized among fellow members. Before distributing awards, ask members to tell what they learned from their experiences. Help members focus on triumphs rather than failures. Don't forget, pats on the back and verbal praise can be done at any time. Additional opportunities to recognize significant member achievements are available through your state. For more information contact your local Extension Office.

