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4-H Clothing Project Leader Guide

Skill Level 3

As a leader of members enrolled in skill level 3 of the 4-H clothing project, you've probably experienced guiding and organizing a group of youth. You know how satisfying it is to work with young people and how rewarding it is to help them be successful in decision making, creativity, and gaining skills in clothing and personal appearance. You understand that youth are eager to learn and want learning to be fun. You're aware that they differ in their ability to accept responsibility and gain knowledge and skill.

You may have a club with youth at several different skill levels. Planning for meetings that include more than one skill level requires coordination and organization. The wider the range of abilities within one group, the greater the need for flexibility and planning by the leader.

This leader guide is organized by types of activities and learning areas. It's intended to allow flexibility, yet offer support in planning meetings. Select and plan a variety of activities to maintain member interest. Try to choose activities that will provide a balance among the five learning areas:

- Planning and evaluation
- Individual development and outreach
- Management, consumership, and wardrobe building
- Textiles
- Construction

For each meeting it's recommended that you consider a:

- Roll call activity
- Primary learning activity or change of pace activity
- Construction activity

Some examples of these activities are described on pages 3-6. You may also wish to develop some of your own. Decision making and creativity are encouraged for leaders just as they are for members.

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4-H 9213L
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Activities

Roll call activities. The purpose of these activities is to provide a short mini-lesson. These activities can be used as an introduction to a more in-depth lesson or as a review of a previous lesson. The review is useful to reinforce what was learned previously and help those who were absent catch up.

Primary learning activities. These activities are designed to convey learning or develop awareness. The project should offer members a variety of activities to help develop skills and awareness related to clothing. To help members develop responsible behavior to accompany their desire for independence, skill level 3 has an emphasis on the Consumership learning area. Since most of the members are likely at an age where their sensitivity to clothing is increasing, discussions about the effects of clothing on personal feelings are helpful to verbalize and clarify the role of clothing.

It is not always necessary to provide answers. Many times developing an awareness of the conditions and problems will make learners more receptive to information at a later time.

Change of pace activities. If your group is very large, it may be desirable to work with a few members at a time while others work on their own. Change of pace activities are individualized learning activities designed to supplement small group work. They also offer more depth to members who are eager to do additional work on their own at home.

Construction activities. These activities provide an opportunity for applying skills in decision making and creativity. They mostly consist of demonstrations, explanations, and application. Demonstrate construction techniques as thoroughly as possible. Explain what you are doing, how you are doing it, and why. Demonstrate alternative ways of doing a technique whenever you can. Explain the differences in the techniques and results to give members a basis for deciding when to use different techniques depending on fabric, garment style, personal skill, time available, equipment on hand, etc. Encourage members to make decisions and select suitable techniques.

Resource materials

Member handouts for skill level 3 are available to distribute at meetings where particular learning activities are planned. They are intended as take-home materials to reinforce meeting content. Be sure you have a copy of 4-H 9210L, *Clothing Program Guidelines for Leaders*. It outlines the overall sequence of the nine skill levels in the project with learning activities suggested for each of the five learning areas. Also available are Extension publications on selected topics, suitable for leaders and older members. Materials specific to skill level 3 are:

Leader materials

- 4-H 9210L, *4-H Clothing Program Guidelines*
- 4-H 9213L, *4-H Clothing Project Leader Guide, Skill Level 3*
- EC 930, *Darts*
- EC 923, *Ease and Gathers*
- EC 940, *Zippers*

Member handouts

- 4-H 9212, *The 4-H Clothing Project, Skill Level 3*
- 4-H 92132, *How to Construct Darts*
- 4-H 92133, *Easing and Gathering*
- 4-H 92134, *Centered and Lapped Zippers*
- 4-H 921R, *4-H Clothing Record*
- 4-H 92101, *The 4-H Clothing Advancement Program, Skill Levels 1–3*

In addition to materials available through Extension, there are many well-written commercial publications you may wish to use.

Roll Call Activities

Planning

Invite each member to share what she or he would like to learn at the beginning of the skill level or at the beginning of an article. Perhaps these expectations could be written down for review at the end of the skill level or article.

Evaluation

Invite each member to share what he or she learned from an activity, article, or the skill level. Members may wish to share feelings about what they did. Be sure to encourage positive accomplishments, rather than weaknesses.

Individual development

Ask each member to tell the foods she or he would eat for one meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) that demonstrate a nutritious diet. Suggest each member demonstrate one exercise and tell the parts of the body that are affected by the exercise.

Management

Have members select names of sewing machine parts and describe how to clean, oil, or lubricate that part.

Consumership

Give the members the assignment to “just suppose” they were given a birthday present of \$50.00 to spend on clothes. How would each member spend it to get the most satisfaction for the money?

Before the meeting, prepare magazine pictures or tracings of fashion illustrations. Instruct members to randomly select an illustration and describe the style being illustrated.

Wardrobe Building

Have members describe the silhouette lines or design lines of a garment they are wearing.

Textiles

Before the meeting, prepare a sack of knitted fabric scraps. Have each member select a fabric and describe the type of knit, the characteristics of that fabric, or an example of a garment which could be made from it.

From a sack of knitted fabric scraps, have each member select a fabric, measure it for stretchability, and coordinate it with one of several patterns available.

Construction

Before the meeting, cut single illustrations from the monthly pattern advertisements available in fabric departments. Instruct members to select an illustration and describe an appropriate fabric from which the garment could be made.

Before the meeting, sew seams in several different types of fabric samples. Ask members to select a seam and tell whether or not that fabric would need a seam finish, what kind of finish it might need, and why.

Before the meeting, prepare samples of different types of fabrics with suitable or unsuitable hems. Ask members to select a sample and tell why a hem is or isn't suitable for the fabric used.

Primary learning activities

Planning and evaluation

Members should be encouraged to be thorough in developing plans for activities, garments, and articles, and then to record the plan for follow-up during self-evaluation. Members should accept increased personal responsibility for developing their plans, but the plans should have parent and leader approval.

Individual development

Help members become aware of posture by looking at photos and illustrations of fashion models, entertainers, sports figures, etc. Point out relationships between posture, body build, muscle development, and “expected appearance.”

Play “Posture-Freeze” by having a person designated as “it” watch for individuals not practicing good posture, and tell the person, “Freeze.” Measure the height (as is, seated or standing) of the “offender.” Then tell them to sit or stand tall, and remeasure them. Compare good and poor posture height. Point out that good posture increases height, makes clothing look less wrinkled, increases attractiveness, etc.

Use a “line-up” activity to illustrate that each person is unique. Have members line up from shortest to tallest standing in their bare feet. Next have them line up from shortest to tallest while kneeling. Then have them line up again, sitting flat on the floor, feet and legs extended in front of them. There will probably be some surprising rearrangements of the line. Discuss how different kinds of clothing silhouette/design lines can enhance body proportions.

Outreach

Have an exchange meeting with a foods and nutrition project group to learn more about nutrition and its effect on personal appearance.

Management

Demonstrate and apply general principles of sewing machine care including lint removal, needle replacement, and oiling of moving parts. Try to obtain owner’s instruction manuals for machines being used.

Consumership

Ask members to list the items of clothing (do not include underwear) that they are now wearing. In a second column, list other items which they own that can be worn with an item of clothing they have on. Include coats, sweaters, and accessories, as well as coordinates. Discuss the idea that versatile clothing items that can be coordinated with other clothing are more economical buys than non-coordinating garments.

$$\text{value of clothing item} = \frac{\text{original cost}}{\text{number of wearings}}$$

As an example, figure the value of a party dress or good suit compared to a pair of jeans.

Consumership, wardrobe building

Have members name a garment they might like to add to their wardrobe. Ask them to describe the item as completely as possible including style, fabric, color, texture, etc. Discuss making the garment vs. buying it. Talk about the components of a clothing decision such as financial resources available for clothing, need vs. want of item, availability of the item, and the care it will require. Also discuss the values related to clothing such as importance of fashion, physical comfort, durability, individuality, and likeness to what others are wearing. This discussion should increase awareness of the complexity of clothing decisions, not necessarily be an involved lesson.

Consumership, evaluation

After members have completed an article or garment, compare it with a similar commercially made item. Compare fabrics, design, construction, cost, and time (for construction or shopping). Discuss the value of satisfaction, creativity, learning, and appreciation gained from a personally made article.

Consumership

Have on hand several ready-to-wear garments. Using each garment as an example, make a list of what to look for when shopping for that type of garment. Using a shirt, for instance, look for smooth fabric without flaws, even stitching appropriate in size for fabric, finished seams of adequate width, collar points matching right and left, buttonholes evenly stitched and smoothly cut, buttons firmly attached, and hemming appropriate for the fabric and even in width.

Use large name tags to designate roles for “informed buyer,” “uninformed buyer,” “busy salesperson,” and “helpful salesperson.” Have members do role playing on how to ask for help when buying clothing. Discuss appropriate and inappropriate behavior by role playing buying situations.

Textiles

Have sacks of knitted fabric scraps available for individuals or teams. After showing examples of different types of knitted fabrics and giving instructions on how to identify them, instruct individuals or teams to distinguish between the different types and sort them into groups. You may wish to organize this activity as a competition or timed event. Review the activity and correct any errors the members have made in sorting.

Demonstrate how to measure knitted fabrics for stretchability and how to coordinate them with patterns. So that members can practice measuring and coordinating, have on hand a variety of knitted fabrics and patterns or pictures of patterns from the free monthly advertisements available in fabric stores or departments.

Take a field trip to a fabric store or department and look for various kinds of knitted fabrics. The group may wish to develop a checklist to be sure that they find examples of different types. If a field trip isn't possible, the members may wish to find examples among garments in their wardrobe and bring them to show at a later meeting.

Change-of-pace activities

Individual development

Suggest members complete an activity related to diet. Contact your county Extension office for copies of publications used in the 4-H foods and nutrition projects or in the EFNEP *Nutri-Kids* series.

Outreach

Suggest that a member plan and prepare to share with others a skill that he or she has learned. Some suitable skills include maintaining a sewing machine or finishing seams to make ready-to-wear garments more durable. This skill might be shared with a neighbor or friend or might be demonstrated to members in a beginning skill level.

Wardrobe building

Suggest that a member learn style terminology from current teen magazines such as *Seventeen*, *Coed* (available through schools), or *Young Miss* by reading the garment descriptions in either the feature articles or advertisements. List the terms found and define or illustrate them with sketches or tracings. Using the list of terms and definitions or illustrations, a member might wish to prepare a crossword puzzle or other word game for the other members to do during a meeting.

Construction activities

The construction activities appropriate to skill level 3 are listed in 4-H 9210L, *Clothing Program Guidelines for Leaders*. Skills to be learned include

- Pattern and fabric coordination
- Darts
- Seam finishes
- Controlling and joining uneven lengths of fabric
- Waistband application
- Crotch construction
- Simple sewing skills for wovens and moderately stretchy knits
- Closures

The *Guidelines* also suggests particular garments incorporating the skills to be learned. Techniques relating to the skills are described in member and leader project materials.



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