

4-H Volunteer Leaders' Series

Teaching Techniques

Darlene Z. Millard, Ph.D.
Assistant Director -
4-H Youth Development

Learning and Teaching

Learning is a change in the way an individual thinks, acts and feels. Learning takes place through experiences involving people, things and events and the response to these. There are as many learning experiences as there are 4-H'ers in your group. Everyone does not respond in the same way. As a teacher and leader, you provide a variety of learning situations for your 4-H members. These learning situations are created by the teaching techniques utilized within the group.

Methods of Learning

The individual learns through the five senses – hearing, sight, touch, smell, taste and combinations of these – in involvement-oriented experiences. As the 4-H'er moves from listening to seeing to doing, learning occurs faster, more learning occurs and there is a greater transfer of learning to other similar situations.

Methods of Teaching

The method of teaching selected must be interesting to the learner. The methods can be tied to the methods of learning – listening, seeing and doing.

Listening involves the hearing of something (use of only one of the senses). Since hearing accounts for only 13 percent of learning, this is the least effective method when used alone. Examples of teaching

techniques include lectures and discussions, which permit 4-H'ers to learn through listening.

Seeing involves the eyes in observing new information. It is estimated that 75 percent of learning is derived from the eyes. Examples of teaching techniques include illustrated talks, demonstrations, tours, field trips and exhibits, which permit 4-H'ers to learn through seeing.

Listening and Seeing – When the young people see and hear new material, they will retain approximately 50 percent. Observing demonstrations, seeing movies, participating in tours, etc., are all ways members can see and hear and are generally popular teaching methods.

Doing involves the total individual in the learning process or experience. By the involvement of the learner, maximum learning occurs. Examples of teaching techniques include work sessions or workshops, judging and role-playing, which foster learning through “doing” by 4-H'ers.

Saying and Doing – When young people are actively involved in saying and doing, they will retain approximately 90 percent of the material. Most people learn best by actually “doing.” Provide opportunities for the members to practice and explore what they have learned. They might plan and present a demonstration or teach younger members.

These are teaching methods you may want to adapt to your group, or experiment with other methods.



*18 USC 707

Visit our web site at:
<http://www.uaex.edu>

Teaching Techniques Involving Listening

Learning through listening accounts for approximately 13 percent of learning. There is wide variation among people with normal hearing who can actually use their ears. People typically hear what they want to hear.

Lecture – The lecture is a talk by a person well informed on a particular topic. This is the easiest technique for the leader to use, but not always the easiest for the 4-H'er. Many people use the lecture and exclude other methods because of preparation time. It is not always possible for the 4-H'er to listen attentively without some active involvement in the session. Also, the lecture does not provide for feedback from the 4-H'er to determine if learning is occurring. If lectures are used, they should be short, not more than 10 minutes, and should be planned. Allowing time for questions provides a chance for you to check the amount of information gained by the 4-H'er.

Discussion – Discussion or group talk is when two or more persons say what they know, think and feel about a topic. Group discussion may be used to give information, make plans and reach a decision. Group discussion allows all 4-H'ers present to actively participate. The leader guides the discussion rather than doing all the talking. The leader encourages all 4-H'ers present to participate. In preparing for group discussions, do the following:

- Decide what information you want the 4-H'ers to gain.
- Consider the information the 4-H'er has about the topic.
- Plan for free exchange of ideas, information and understanding.
- Lead the discussion so the 4-H'ers are able to gain from the information.

Teaching Techniques Involving Seeing

The eyes are important in the learning process. It is estimated that 75 percent of learning is derived from the eyes. The way the 4-H'ers view things depends on their past experience and their interests. It is never safe to assume that a 4-H'er you are teaching sees something the same way you see it.

Demonstrations – A demonstration is an oral and visual presentation of how and why something can and should be done. When a good demonstration is given, the individual or group accepts the idea or practice.

Visuals including posters, charts and models can add to the effectiveness of a demonstration. If used, they should be neat, clear and large enough for people in the last row to see. If a 4-H'er does the demonstration, it becomes a doing experience for that individual. As they become more experienced, the young people should be encouraged to present their demonstrations at club meetings, for parents, at county O-Rama or other district and state activities. As they progress, they will assume an increasing amount of responsibility for choosing a subject, preparing the demonstration and evaluating their efforts.

Illustrated Talks – Adding illustrations to a talk or lecture increases learning during the session. The involvement of the eyes in the learning experience permits greater learning to occur. Examples of illustrations include charts, pictures, models, real objects, posters and diagrams. Illustrations should be large enough for the audience to see and read. Care should be taken to work their use into the talk or lecture. If audiovisual equipment is used, practice its operation before using it with the 4-H group.

Exhibits – Exhibits or displays use works and objects to show and tell basic ideas on a specific theme. To prepare an effective exhibit, you need to know your purpose or goal in doing the exhibit. The visuals and materials should be developed to help you reach the goal.

Field Trips, Tours – Field trips and tours afford the 4-H'ers an opportunity to see real-life projects first hand. It allows them to have experiences that are impossible to bring to the regular learning site. You will probably find that this is a popular teaching technique. Young people like to get out and visit new places. In order to provide a meaningful learning experience, you will need to:

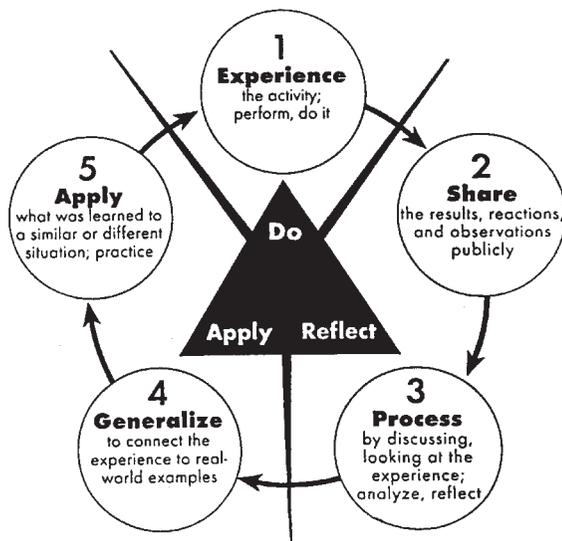
1. Plan carefully; involve the young people.
2. If possible, visit the location or person ahead of time.
3. Provide transportation; this is one way to involve parents.
4. Make sure the purpose of the trip is clear.

5. Tell members enough of what to expect to arouse interest.
6. Evaluate the experience with the members soon afterwards.
7. Carry over the learning from the trip into project activities.

Teaching Techniques Involving Doing – Experiential

The active participation of the learner permits all the senses and the total individual to be involved. When all the senses – seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting – are involved, there is a greater chance for learning to occur.

The 4-H Program has adopted a process that allows youth to first learn by doing before being told or shown how and then process the experience. The experiential model includes five specific steps:



1. Participant(s) **experience** the activity – perform or do it.
2. Participant(s) **share** the experience by describing what happened.
3. Participant(s) **process** the experience to determine what was most important and identify common themes.
4. Participant(s) **generalize** from the experience and relate it to their daily lives.
5. Participant(s) **apply** what they learned to a new situation.

When this model is used, youth both experience and process the activity. They learn from thoughts and ideas about the experience. Each step contributes to their learning.

Providing an experience alone does not create experiential learning. Experiences lead to learning if the participant understands what happened, sees patterns of observations, generalizes from those observations and understands how to use the generalization again in a new situation.

For more information, see the fact sheet 4HCJ4, *Experiential Learning in 4-H Project Experiences*.

Judging – When you make a decision or a selection, you have been involved in judging. To judge is to compare. Judging is learning to choose by using facts. One practices judging to help him/her make wise choices. Some appropriate questions when judging are:

- What is this article going to be used for?
- What qualities are necessary for this use?
- What are the reasons for a particular choice or decision?

Through judging, 4-H'ers learn to observe carefully, recognize good products, improve their work, be a better buyer and make choices.

Adapting Teaching Techniques to Needs of Youth

In all of these methods, the leader will need to be more directive with younger members. Carefully plan how to involve all the members according to their abilities and interests. With increasing maturity the members should assume more responsibility for planning and carrying out activities. Adolescents should be responsible for planning and implementing almost the entire program. A leader should always be available for support and guidance. Remember that each child develops at his own pace. These interests will not be observed in all children of the same age. Individual experience will also have a big effect on interests.

Adapting Teaching to Needs of Youth

9-11 Years Old	12-14 Years Old	15-18 Years Old
<p>Demonstrations Have members follow examples of older members and leaders, suggest brief, simple topics; develop self-confidence within peer group.</p>	<p>Provides an excellent opportunity for young people to acquire self-confidence and recognition within peer group.</p>	<p>Presentations will be for a much wider audience, such as state or national groups; serve as models for younger members.</p>
<p>Discussions Emphasis should be group feeling and participation of all members, will require adult leadership and guidance.</p>	<p>Members will enjoy questioning and exploring; young people will want to know “why,” devote time to discussion and questions.</p>	<p>Use discussions extensively; provide alternatives rather than directions, high interest in coeducational activities.</p>
<p>Judging Plan for simple choices, closely related to daily experiences; members will enjoy simple contests where competition is not stressed.</p>	<p>Judging can be a significant way of providing success in the peer group.</p>	<p>Members will have high motivation in subject areas which relate to their career interests.</p>
<p>Trips/Tours Young people will be interested in new experiences and group activities.</p>	<p>Members will be interested in exploring beyond their own community.</p>	<p>Trips are excellent incentive instead of medals and ribbons; planning should be largely by youth; high interest in state and national events.</p>
<p>Exhibits Pins and ribbons are a big incentive; members need recognition from adults and older boys and girls.</p>	<p>Members will enjoy working with opposite sex who have similar interests.</p>	<p>Suggest activities of a service nature; activities designed for career exploration and development will be of high interest.</p>

Evaluating My Teaching Techniques

The following questions will help you evaluate your choice and use of teaching techniques:

1. Is there a variety of techniques at each meeting and from meeting to meeting?
2. Are the 4-H'ers actively participating in the learning situation?
3. Are the individual differences in 4-H'ers recognized?
4. Is the learning situation real, reasonable and useful?
5. Are the 4-H'ers enjoying the group sessions?
6. Are the 4-H'ers having success?
7. Are the techniques helping 4-H'ers develop the skills to use the information?

Adapted by Darlene Z. Millard, Ph.D., for use in Arkansas from material originally prepared by Linda L. Dearmin, Extension 4-H youth specialist, University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, and material developed by the University of Missouri - Columbia and Thomas Zurcher, Ph.D., president, Zurcher Educational Design.

Printed by University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Printing Services.

DR. DARLENE Z. MILLARD is assistant director - 4-H youth development, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, Little Rock.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas. The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

4HCJ2-PD-8-08RV