

4-H Record Keeping

Tips for Assembling Your 4-H Record Book

Record Book Cover and Section Dividers:

Use a standard Acco-type fastener in a stiff 8.5" x 11" binder. **Do NOT use a loose-leaf ring binder.** Section dividers are optional. **All state entries must typed.**

High School 4-H Members: Multiple Category Entries

High school students are able to submit multiple Record Books- one per category. Each 4-H Record Book should be submitted separately. Each book should be tailored to the specific project work/mission mandate area that you are submitting it for.

Significance to Youth Development

4-H project work is a portal to youth development. Through their projects, youth are invited to develop and practice technical skill sets. They are encouraged to share their newfound skills with others through various leadership and service learning opportunities.

Project work encompasses service or leadership opportunities related to the project topic- whether the project work is completed in 4-H, or not. For example, if photography is a youth's primary 4-H project and they volunteer to photograph a Beta Club event, this counts as project work.

Record-keeping is a fundamental life skill that 4-H members can use to set goals, track their progress and develop valuable life skills that will serve them well into adulthood.

Writing Tips

Write clearly and concisely, especially in the sections with the charts. Include details, such as numbers to help the judges understand the scope of your participation, leadership, community service and project work. Use action verbs throughout your book, as they are more descriptive and can help the judges to visualize and review your work more clearly.

Sample Action Verbs:

Accelerated	Eliminated	Maintained	Revamped
Accomplished	Enhanced	Managed	Revised
Achieved	Established	Mastered	Reviewed
Adapted	Evaluated	Modified	Scheduled
Administered	Expanded	Motivated	Simplified
Advocated	Expedited	Operated	Set up
Analyzed	Facilitated	Originated	Solved
Approved	Found	Organized	Structured
Built	Generated	Participated	Streamlined
Coached	Guided	Performed	Strengthened
Collaborated	Helped	Planned	Supported
Communicated	Increased	Pinpointed	Taught
Coordinated	Influenced	Prepared	Translated
Conducted	Influenced	Programmed	Utilized
Completed	Implemented	Proposed	Won
Controlled	Initiated	Provided	
Created	Instructed	Promoted	
Delegated	Interpreted	Publicized	
Developed	Improved	Recommended	
Demonstrated	Launched	Reduced	
Designed	Led	Reinforced	
Directed	Lectured	Reorganized	

Section 2: 4-H Project Overview

List the size and scope of your participation in your 4-H project(s). Use this space to give specific details about what you did in your 4-H project and remember to complete one of these for each project. Use numbers when appropriate to show size, growth, profits, losses or savings related to your 4-H project. For example, consider providing numbers on animals, dishes prepared, meals served, clothing made, repairs completed, pictures taken, workshops attended, interviews conducted, etc. **Report year(s) of project work based on your grade level. See details below.**

4th Graders: Provide a narrative summary, list, and/or chart that covers the project work you have completed in the past year.

5th Graders: Provide a narrative summary, list, and/or chart that covers the project work you have completed in the past two years, maximum.

6th-12th Graders: Provide a narrative summary, list, and/or chart that covers the project work you have completed in the past three years, maximum.

Section 2 Project Overview Example: Photography Project

Photography Taken	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	Total
4-H Events	59	65	82	206
Family & Personal	28	55	48	131
Other Clubs	20	43	93	156
Yearbook	36	48	55	139
Published Photos				
Local Newspaper	5	8	16	29
School Yearbook	3	2	5	10
Expenses				
Film	\$49.50	\$68.30	\$76.75	\$194.65
Miscellaneous	\$54.75	\$82.05	\$103.10	\$239.90
Slide/Video Show	1	1	2	4
Money Earned				
Prizes	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$50.00	\$75.00

Photographs: Used in school, Girl Scouts and Beta Club scrapbooks; family albums, insurance purposes; 4-H Week display; Parish 4-H Ag Expo; photo display on the "History of Louisiana 4-h Clubs" and displays at three banks and four public libraries.

Published Photos: Submitted photos and wrote news articles on Marsh Maneuvers; Parish Junior Leadership Club trip to the Louisiana State Legislative session; Parish Achievement Day contests and activities (3); and 4-H Community service projects (3).

Expenses: 12.1 megapixel camera was a gift. Camera cleansing cloths. Purchased prints, and the total cost of printing was \$81.65.

Slides/Video Shows: Slide shows include: "This is 4-H," "Jr. Leadership Happenings,"; 4-H Seafood Cookery Contest; Marsh Maneuvers. Video programs include: Let's Go to 4-H Camp (3 minute video) and 4-H Achievement Day Awards Program (30 minute video).

Money Earned: Photos were entered at the Louisiana State Fair, Morning Advocate Newspaper Favorite Photo contest and St. Patrick Church Fair Photo Contest.

Section 2 Project Overview Example: Citizenship Project

Community Service Activities	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	Total
Government Workshops/Seminars	2	6	12	20
Interviews w/ Govt. Officials, Service Jobs	1	4	12	17
Civic/Town Meetings Attended	1	2	6	9
Campaigns Organized	1	3	4	8
Visits with Congressmen/Senators (State, Nat'l.)	2(S)	2(S) 2(N)	3(S) 4(N)	7(S) 6(N)
Speeches Given	7	6	14	27
American History/Cultural Exhibits made	-	1	2	3
Political Debates	-	-	2	2

Section 2 Project Overview Example: Discovering the World of 4-H

4-H Section	Healthy Living Section	Citizenship Section	SET Section
The 4-H Pledge	Never too Safe	Be Your Best	Hooked on Fun
The 4-H Emblem	Fit as a Fiddle	Talk it Up	Beef & Dairy
4-H Fun Facts	Measure Up	Express Yourself	Chicken Scratch
	Stir it Up		Going Whole Hog
	Plan Your Meals		Be a Shutter Bug

Section 3: This Year's 4-H Project Summary

This 3- part section should include **only 1 year [the current year]** of your 4-H project work. Use the 3 charts in this section to record progress on your 4-H project(s) work.

Learning Experiences

List the opportunities you have had for learning. Include tours, interviews, demonstrations, camp/conference sessions, workshops, clinics and other sharing experiences that are related to your 4-H project.

Financial Summary

Include all information on expenses and income related to your project. Expenses include all items or services you paid for to support this project. Income includes all money received from the sale of services, products and/or premiums from this project- **if applicable**.

Project Accomplishments/Summary

List the major accomplishments or outcomes you made in this project this year. Describe the impact that your project work has had for you, your family, your 4-H club and/or your community.

Section 4: 4-H Leadership

In this section, include any time that you led an activity. Include times that you taught, coordinated, organized or guided others. Make sure to list 4-H officer position(s) held, committees served on or other positions held. If a leadership activity is directly relevant to your 4-H project work, place a check mark in the 'Project' column.

Elementary Grade Level Example:	Level	Project
<i>Led the 4-H Pledge at the September 4-H Club meeting for 25 club members.</i>	L	<input type="checkbox"/>

Middle School Grade Level Example:	Level	Project
<i>Collaborated with 20 fellow Jr. Leadership Club Members to plan and conduct a donut sale. All profits, \$565, will support a parish- wide 4-H culinary camp.</i>	P	<input type="checkbox"/>

High School Grade Level Example:	Level	Project
<i>Led and educational station at Achievement Day and presented information about honey bees to 750 4-H members over 4 hours.</i>	P	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Section 5: 4-H Citizenship and Community Service

In this section, list any time that you served others through 4-H. The level of work is based on the **final outreach** of the organization that the service or donation is going toward. For example, the Salvation Army is a national organization, so donations should be listed as "N." The Lion's Club is an international organization, therefore any donations or services to benefit this organization should be listed as "I." If an activity is directly relevant to your 4-H project work, place a check mark in the 'Project' column.

Elementary Grade Level Example:	Level	Project
<i>Volunteered at the Avoyelles Parish Food Pantry. Organized 250 canned goods with 2 other volunteers.</i>	P	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Middle School Grade Level Example:	Level	Project
<i>Prepared meals at the _____ Town Food Bank for 4 hours. Served 150 people.</i>	L	<input type="checkbox"/>

High School Grade Level Example:	Level	Project
<i>Organized playground beautification day. 13 high school club members attended, and we collected 12 bags of litter at 3 community playgrounds.</i>	L	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 6: 4-H Awards and Recognition

Elementary Grade Level Example:

Medal	Premier Exhibitor- Swine Division
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Middle School Grade Level Example:

Certificate	Commodity Ambassador Contest Winner- Sugar Division
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High School Grade Level Example:

Blue Ribbon	Parish Demonstration Contest- Saddling a Horse
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Section 7: Non-4-H Experiences and Activities

Leadership Example:

Captain	School Robotics Team
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Service and Civic Engagement Example:

Community Volunteer Work	Worked the Cake Walk station for 3 hours at the River Ridge School Fall Festival.
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Awards and Recognition Example:

Plaque	District Student of the Year Finalist
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Section 8: My 4-H Story

Emphasize your personal growth and development and highlight your involvement in the project area(s) in which you are submitting your records. Your story must be typed in Microsoft Word or a similar software program. Your 4-H story should be printed and inserted into your Record Book. **All stories should be typed in 12 point font and double spaced.** Use 8.5" x 11" paper with a 1.5" margin at the top and the left and a 1" margin at bottom and right of each page. **Use only the front side of the page.**

Your story is limited to:

- 4 pages [maximum] for 4th- 6th graders
- 6 pages [maximum] for 7th-12th graders

Recommended Strategy

1. Plan your story with an outline.

- a. List 5 or more highlights and experiences involving your project work.
 - i. Leave space under each experience to note skills that you learned.
 - ii. Expand on facts and figures by telling what your 4-H experience has meant to you and how it has impacted your confidence, attitude, etc.
 - iii. The story should NOT be a relisting of year-by-year accomplishments, as you have reported those elsewhere in your Record Book.

2. **Begin your story with a brief introduction of yourself and your family.** Briefly highlight participation in other school clubs, special honors achieved or academic awards.
(4th- 6th Graders recommended 1/4 - 1/2- page)
(7th-12th Graders recommended 3/4 page)

3. **Follow with paragraphs on each area of project work noted in the outline that you prepared. Examples are included below to help you get started.**
(4th- 6th Graders recommended 1 page)
(7th-12th Graders recommended 2-3 pages)

I have learned if you are going to have pets and animals, you are responsible for their care and well-being. I have learned the basics of dog care – feeding, exercise, disease control with vaccination and sanitation, control of internal – external parasites. Raising a litter of puppies is a lot of fun and very educational. I have learned how to train a dog to heel, sit and stay. Many dogs will come when I call them and they usually behave well. I am beginning to learn the basics of training a dog to herd cattle and sheep.

If I've learned anything from my citizenship work, it's that you must stand up for what you believe in and each person can make a difference. This certainly is the case with my latest "Let's Take A Stand" campaign. After hearing the news from Washington, D.C. that our flag, "Old Glory", could soon be legally torched by protesters, I decided that just maybe I could do something. The first thing I did was make a plan. I researched the history of our flag and what it actually stood for. I also interviewed a veteran and spoke to members of our local American Legion. They seemed quite upset and were willing to become involved.

In helping Dad with farming soybeans, my interest of insects broadened from home and garden to agricultural crops. I learned to scout fields for beneficial and harmful insects and decide on an effective insect control program. The tools a scout must use are his eyes, shake cloth, and sweep net. I have been on farm tours with an entomologist and talked to a crop duster about his job and safe use of insecticides. I have flagged for him on our farm. The things I learned on the farm carried over into a more in-depth study as my friend and I used scouting soybeans for a 4-H U entomology project.

This year my agent allowed me to take over the insect judging contest held on Achievement Day. This contest determines who will represent ____ Parish at 4-H University. Having participated in the state insect judging contest, I tried to model my test closely after the one I had taken two years earlier at Louisiana State University. I made a study guide for the participants and my agent distributed 300 copies to 4-H'ers around the parish.

Taking care of our swine operation is a big job, especially in the winter when it gets extremely cold. During the times when the water pipes freeze, it is a chore just to be able to keep enough water for our pigs to drink and try to keep the baby pigs in the nursery and farrowing houses warm so they don't freeze to death. We had an extremely bad time during the winter of "12 – "13 when we had several days of below freezing temperatures. Then on top of this we had a fire that destroyed an older barn, which we used to store feed, equipment, and also had a small feed floor and sow pens in. We lost a lot of feed, equipment and several pigs in this fire.

**4. Highlight other 4-H projects and activities. Examples are included below.
(recommended 1/2- 3/4 page)**

(4th- 6th Graders recommended 1/4 page)

(7th-12th Graders recommended 1/2 - 3/4 page)

In consumer education, I studied the art of advertising and how advertisements affect consumers. I present a workshop on this topic, as well as a radio spot to inform the public.

Public speaking provides me with the "vehicle" to make all my 4-H activities work. Speaking before groups of people no matter how large or small can be a terrifying event if one is not prepared for it. Through my experience in the public speaking project, I am better able to communicate with other 4-H'ers, teachers, governing officials, religious leaders, and community activators. Whether I'm speaking to someone on an international or community level, I know I am confident due to my 4-H experience.

Forestry is a project which I enjoy very much. I love nature and being out-of-doors. Being able to identify different trees is fun. If you work really hard, you can make a lot of money. My collections have all gone to the state fairs and won first place. I won \$ 67.00 on my collections this year and deposited most of it into my savings account. It does not cost very much to work on this project, but it is a good profit-maker.

My rabbit project has also been another rewarding project for me. I've been selected to enter state rabbit records and I am really proud of this accomplishment. I had a dream-come-true last fall when I was able to show rabbits for the first time and my Flemish Giant doe was named "best in breed" at the LSU Jr. Fall Show. In my five years in the rabbit project, I have raised a total of 164 rabbits and have a value over cost of \$162.40.

Since I enjoy working with people, I find Jr. Leadership a most rewarding project. While serving as chairman of the Community Service committee on my Jr. Leader Club, I have organized several activities in addition to the ones mentioned earlier. Some of which included: preparing food baskets for the needy at Thanksgiving and holding the Vehicle Identification Program (VIP) during the parish fair.

5. On the final pages of your 4-H Story, tell how you have benefitted from your 4-H experiences, including leadership and community service. (recommended 1- 1.5 pages)

(4th- 6th Graders recommended ½ page)

(7th-12th Graders recommended 1- 1½ pages)

- a. Note how these experiences have contributed to your school, job or career plans.**
- b. Explain how 4-H has impacted your leadership skills and ways that 4-H has increased your interest and participation in community affairs.**
- c. Highlight what you have learned from team and group efforts.**

4-H has given me the ability to be a better leader and citizen. It has also taught me skills which I think are important for adulthood: how to coordinate, accessorize, how to make the most of my appearance through grooming and presenting myself. Through my food and nutrition project, I have learned to prepare and eat the proper foods to help maintain body shape and to add that extra glow needed to present myself in front of others. My health project has taught me health practices such as exercise and aerobics. Through child development, I have taught children self-acceptance and how to express themselves through the clothing they wear as well as developing good manners and hygiene. I have found that all of my 4-H projects relate to my major project, fashion revue.

As a freshman, I was eligible to enroll in the Jr. Leadership Club. Through this organization, I've become involved in new activities, met new people and gained new self-confidence. This year I was one of nine (9) parish delegates who attended the State 4-H Jr. Leadership Conference. I have also, just recently returned from Washington, D.C. after attending Citizenship Washington Focus at the National 4-H Center. It really helped me to learn more about my country, about how our government works, and plus that, it was a fantastic fun trip!

I think I've grown a lot through 4-H in becoming a better person, leader and citizen. I have been on several committees, such as the Sr. Citizens committee, the Muscular Dystrophy Drive Committee and the Heart Fund Committee. I served as Community Service Chairman for the past two (2) years in the Jr. High Club and I was selected for this office again this year for the Sr. Club. I really enjoy this position because I can get the club interested in some of the projects that I used to do with my brother and sister, like picking up money for M.D. This past year we raised over \$ 700 . I enjoy being an officer and I try to do a good job.

4-H has helped me learn new skills and develop into a better leader and citizen. My projects have taught me how to work with others, to be alert at all times and to see a job through to completion. I have developed skills that allow me to get a job, earn money for the future and develop a good reputation as a hard worker. My experiences have influenced me to pursue a career in agriculture or agricultural engineering after I graduate from high school and college.

Through my experiences in the projects that I participate in, I plan to become a forest ranger, or perhaps work for the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. Being in 4-H has most definitely influenced this decision, in fact; it has been a way of life for me. Project awareness, citizenship activities, and leadership roles, are only a few qualities I have gained. Through the 4-H program I am ready to accept the challenge of tomorrow's world.

Overall, I would say 4-H has helped me become a letter leader and citizen by enhancing my abilities to develop and display such leadership characteristics as are expected by fellow 4-H'ers and citizens. It has forced me to accept responsibilities. I am thankful to have been selected to portray such an image.

4-H has helped me introduce ideas to different organizations, as well as develop better classroom activities in my school. It has made an impression on my goal to acquire higher learning. I plan to major in a field pertaining to math, chemistry, and/or agriculture. The career I would like to pursue most is that of a professional landscape architect. However, whatever career I pursue, I will always do my utmost to make my best better.

The things I have learned through this project will stay with me for the rest of my life, no matter what career I choose. Right now, I am planning to be a pediatrician. It will be important for me to have self-confidence and to dress effectively because it will affect the image I project. I will still sew my own clothes and accessories and coordinate my wardrobe because I enjoy it. All of the recognition I have received has made me feel a sense of accomplishment in myself. But I feel a greater sense of accomplishment knowing that I have acquired all of these skills and have the ability pass some of them on to others. I feel confident that I will be able to be a contributing member to society. 4-H is truly a new beginning for me.

Section 9: 4-H Photos & Supporting Materials

- The judges focus more on the content in this section, than on any decorative page elements. Make sure to use the front side of the paper, **not front and back**.
- Be sure to include candid photos, action shots and captions.
 - Photos should include project-specific activities, in addition to leadership and community service highlights.
- Either insert photos and type captions directly into a computer file to print and insert into your book, or print photos and glue or tape them onto pages with typed captions.
- **Exception:** 4-H Members who are entering Photography project work can include 10 **additional** pages of their photography samples.
- When writing captions, include detailed information such as presentation topics, audience numbers/participants, things that you learned.

Caption Writing Tips

Sourced from:

“Here I am by the Cow...” *FFA New Horizons*. 1995. Jan.- Feb. Page 7 and Page 28.

Supply judges with the interesting captions that help tell your 4-H story. Captions should:

- Help demonstrate what you know about the project
- Illustrate your involvement in the project
- Provide additional information from what is listed elsewhere in your book
- Detail the quality and size of your project and program participation

Use your caption to describe things that the judges cannot see in the photo. Explain important things about the photo that the judges may not be able to see on their own.

The following example is specifically about a beef project. Here are a few ideas of things to include in the captions:

- How are you involved with the cow?
- Do you have other cattle? If so, how many?
- What makes your cow stand out from others?

Use your words to give the judges important information and supporting evidence about your project and program involvement. Make sure the information in the captions is relevant to the photo. Grammar and spelling matter are important, so make sure to check for errors.

Photo Tips

- Action photos are preferred
- Crop out ‘background’ noise to focus attention on the subject of the photo
- Include high resolution photos, to ensure that they are not blurry or pixelated.