Do Your Own Thing

Project Book

Name: ____________________________ Age: ________

Club Name: _______________________ Years in 4H: _________

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Revised August 2006 by Vera Collins Lake County 4-H Secretary

Available on line at http://lake.ifas.ufl.edu/4-H/Projects.htm
The Self-Determined 4-H project is one in which you, the 4-H member make the decisions about:

What is it to be.
How you will do it.
How you will evaluate and report it.

We will call it a “Do Your Own Thing” project. Sound simple? Perhaps, it is, but making up your mind about the project can be challenging and a good exercise in decision making.

You can plan a long term project (several years) or one that can be completed in a few weeks.

You may select any topic that is of interest to you. It may be in a different direction than any 4-H project you have already taken. It may be on a topic completely unrelated to previous work, but one in which you are interested.

WHY?

The work we do can be much more worthwhile to us if we have a deep interest in the endeavor. The self-determined project will fit the project to the 4-H’er rather than fit the 4-Her to the project. The 4-H projects and project manuals cover many interesting topics but cannot possible cover everything that is interesting and worthwhile to young people today. New knowledge and new situations come to our attention daily that are appropriate for study and work in 4-H.

It is important to learn how to make sound decisions. You will have ample opportunity in this project to practice as you decide the nature of your project and how you will carry it out.

This project guide was adapted from the University of Nebraska bulletin, “Do Your Own Thing” and from a similar circular prepared by the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois
Selecting a Project

You may already have a topic in mind around which to build your self-determined project. If you have—good—go ahead and develop it. But before you make the final decision you may want to think about other possibilities as well.

One way to begin is to make an inventory of your interests, needs, aspirations and concerns. This should include everything that “could be” a project. From this list you can identify which “should be” and finally which “will be” your self-determined project this year.

If your project is to be based upon an interest, need, aspiration and concern, a definition will be of help in clarifying what is meant by each of these terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERESTS</th>
<th>NEEDS</th>
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<tr>
<td>An interest is something which excites your feelings and gains your attention or curiosity. It causes you to say, “Oh, I’d like to do that!”</td>
<td>A need is something, which you, your family, or community seem to be in want of, to lack or to require. You say to yourself, “Yes, I can see that it is necessary to do that.”</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>ASPIRATIONS</th>
<th>CONCERNS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your aspirations are strong, wishes, something you long for, desire with eagerness or seek to attain. Welling up in you is an ardent desire which causes you to feel, “Now I really want to try to reach that.”</td>
<td>Your concerns are those things which affect the welfare and happiness of yourself, your family, your club, of other people or of the community, society or world in which you live. A concern is of importance to you; you care.</td>
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Talk to others whom you know or who live in your community and make your list. They might be:

- Friends
- Leaders
- Teachers
- Engineers
- Doctors
- Business People
- Extension Workers
- Neighbors
- Farmers
- Specialists
- Mechanics
- Dentists
- Homemakers
- Parents
- Ranchers
- Clergymen
- Artists
- Laborers
- Counselors
Making up your Mind

Select the one topic you will use for your “Do Your Thing” project. The following criteria may help you decide.

1. What personal experience have you had in this area?
2. Where will you go to find background information?
3. How much will it cost?
4. Who could be helpful in planning or carrying out the project?
5. How worthwhile will the project be?
6. What will you learn from the project?
7. How will it fit into your home and family situation?
8. How will it benefit others?
9. How will it benefit you?

My Inventory of Interests

List ideas of topics suitable for your “Do Your Own Thing” project. Include ideas or problems you would like to investigate, something you would like to do, ways in which you could be helpful to other people, topics which could be helpful to you.

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________

To whom did you talk about your ideas in the above list?

1. ______________  2. ____________

Circle the topic above that seems to have the most promise.
A plan is simply “thinking ahead”; anticipating what you will do, how you will do it, possible difficulties, final results. The plan becomes more clear if it is written down. A time table will help you make progress in an orderly way.

The plan must include not only what you plan to do, but also what you plan to learn. You may need new information, facts, understandings. Your feelings and attitudes may change. It may be necessary to learn a new skill.

Consider:

Reviewing project plans with other people-your leader, parents, Extension Agent, teachers, friends, etc.
Write for literature and materials. Check costs.
Check the library and other sources of information.

Carry out your plan.

Experiment *** Investigate
Evaluating the Project

Progress is measured in terms of goals that you set at the beginning of the project. How well did you accomplish what you set out to do? Evidence of what you have accomplished can be collected in a number of ways.

You may want to:

<table>
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<th>Take Pictures</th>
<th>Have Records</th>
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<tr>
<td>Photographs, slides, even movies can tell a story. Before and after pictures are very effective. A series of pictures showing the steps or different stages in the development of your project can show progress.</td>
<td>You decide what kind of information you need to keep. A diary, outline, drawings, pictures can help tell your story. Your record should show:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. What you have done.</td>
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<td>2. What you have learned from the project.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. What did it cost?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. How has your project been of benefit to others?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. How has your project been of benefit to you?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Use your imagination. Let the records you develop be an exciting reflection of what your project means to you.</td>
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Tell Others

Further satisfactions and opportunities for growth come from sharing what you have learned with others. Sharing can also help you summarize, analyze, and further assess what you are accomplishing. These ways of sharing were suggested by young people:

1. Individual help, workshops, programs, meetings, and serving on committees.
2. Exhibits, window displays, bulletin boards, and fair booths.
3. Demonstrations, illustrated talks, dramatic scenes, and TV programs.
4. Talks, interviews, panel discussions and radio programs.
5. Tours and field trips.
6. Newspaper articles and features in magazines.
My Project Plan

Title & description of the project:

Why did you select this project?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I plan to do</th>
<th>Date to be done</th>
<th>What I want to learn</th>
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I have reviewed the above plan: ______

Comments:

_________________________  Leader signature
Record of Progress in My Project

Complete this section of the form when your project is complete.

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<th>Did you do all the things you planned? If not, why not?</th>
<th>Did you learn all of the things you planned to learn? If not, why not?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you do some things beyond those you planned? If so, what are they?</td>
<td>Did you learn some things beyond those you planned? If so, what are they?</td>
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</table>

What aspect of the project was most valuable? Why?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Leader's evaluation:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Date                         Signed
# Project Summary

## Leadership

List your accomplishments both in this project and as a member of your club, county council, etc.

*Ex: participate in TLC as the delegate to District VIII meetings.*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Please Describe</th>
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## Community Service

List in detail your individual or club community service accomplishments and the purpose for the service.

*Ex: Our 4-H Club saw a need for a food drive & collected 200 items that were delivered to the needy.*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities and Events</th>
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**PRESENTATIONS**

List in **detail** the demonstrations, speeches, exhibits, workshops where you presented. Also list the topic of your presentation & the level at which you participated at.

*Ex: County Events Demonstration - "How to prepare your Rabbit for Show" Check County*

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<th>Please check level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
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**CLUB ACTIVITIES**

What activities did you participate in with your 4-H Club.

*Ex: Workshops, fair, field trips, judging trips*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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10
NEWSPAPER Articles and/or Pictures of your 4-H Project

NEWSPAPER Articles are extra and will not be deducted.
If you or your 4-H club was in the newspaper please attach the article here.
For project pictures, be sure to include captions describing each photograph. If possible show The Beginning of your project work being done and your completed project.
(Minimum of 3 pictures). You may insert pages as needed.
Your 4-H Story

In your story include as many of the following as possible.
1. What 4-H work has meant to you.
2. What you have learned.
3. What safety practices you used in your project.
4. How you managed your project.
5. What you can do to improve your project next year.
6. About your trip to Congress, camp, the fair, etc.
7. What you did to “Make the Best Better”.
8. About any other 4-H experiences.