

California 4-H Discussion Meet Member Guide



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4-H DISCUSSION MEET WEBSITE:

[HTTP://4H.UCANR/4-H_EVENTS/4-H_DISCUSSION_MEET/](http://4H.UCANR/4-H_EVENTS/4-H_DISCUSSION_MEET/)

DRAFT – 7/15

THE INTRODUCTION

GOALS

The goals of California 4-H Discussion Meet are to:

- Provide educational experiences and activities for senior members to demonstrate, through their research and/or evaluative data, how to help deliver high quality 4-H programs through discussions on current events
- Inspire senior members to stay involved while building basic discussion skills
- Introduce opportunities for senior members to pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve current 4-H member issues
- Promote self-esteem through individual expression and leadership

OBJECTIVES

As a result of participation in California 4-H Discussion Meet, senior members will:

- Build self-confidence by stimulating logical thinking
- Expand inquiry, investigative, and analytical skills
- Develop a concise and direct manner of speaking which can be heard in a large gathering
- Improve the ability to listen while being a participant in a discussion
- Practice giving and receiving criticism in a helpful manner
- Increase the understanding of the value of compromise
- Extend skills for understanding and addressing for effective problem solving through group discussions

As a result of participation in the California 4-H Discussion Meet Committee, youth and adults will:

- Participate collaboratively in a Youth – Adult partnership
- Increase skills in leadership, written and oral communication, organization, team building, delegation, creative expression, and evaluation
- Develop lifelong friendships throughout California and remain in the 4-H family as current and future volunteer leaders
- Gain personal satisfaction from the accomplishment of difficult tasks while thinking outside of their sphere of influence

DEVELOPING SUBJECT MATTER AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

Youth development curricula are designed to help youth develop both subject matter skills and life skills. Life skills are improved during the process of doing an activity, and they are useful long after the member completes the project.

Youth development skills that are emphasized in the questions featured in California 4-H Discussion Meet are decision-making, planning and organizing thoughts and ideas. Some of the activities associated with California 4-H Discussion Meet also give senior members a chance to practice these youth development skills: processing information, practicing creativity, solving problems, learning to learn, achieving goals, and mastering technology, but most of all staying involved to the end with a project or task.

ORGANIZATION OF CALIFORNIA 4-H DISCUSSION MEET STATEWIDE COMMITTEE

The California **4-H Discussion Meet** Committee is composed of a partnership of youth, adults and staff from throughout the state who work together to create, organize, and put on the event. The needs, issues, and progress of each California **4-H Discussion Meet** will be assessed during face-face meetings, on-line communications, and conference calls multiple times during the development and implementation of this annual, as well as a summer retreat for an annual meet and greet, goal and meeting setting dates, etc.

Members of the committee contribute ideas and suggest modifications to enhance the learning experience for participants in California **4-H Discussion Meet**. Youth have major roles in the leadership and design of all phases of this project as well as its roadmap for the future. This manual is a living document and may be updated every year by the committee.

4-H DISCUSSION MEET COMPETITOR QUALIFICATIONS

- Competitors shall be senior 4-H members (age 14 – 19 as of Jan. 1 of the current year) in good standing with their county 4-H program.
- 4-H members younger than 14 may participate in the project meetings but are ineligible to participate as competitors in the Discussion Meets. They may serve as time keepers, moderators and/or room chairs during the Meets.
- Past and present 4-H Discussion Meet committee members are eligible to participate.
- Competitors will be enrolled in the 4-H Discussion Meet project and/or Public Speaking Project, Leadership Project, or Communications Project geared towards 4-H Discussion Meet.
- Competitors will join together at State 4-H Field Day to begin the competition. From the competitors present at State Field Day in May at UC Davis, the top four finalists will participate in the finale to determine the state winner.
- The four top competitors are eligible for scholarships. State winner will receive \$1,000. Second place will receive \$750. Third place will receive \$500 and fourth place will receive \$250.
- Individuals who have been named California 4-H Discussion Meet state winner or have participated in the final four are ineligible to compete a second time.

TEN COMMANDANTS FOR 4-H *DISCUSSION MEET* MEETING SUCCESS

1. Thou shalt come prepared to group meetings
2. Thou shalt seek common directions in working with others
3. Thou shalt share oneself as a resource in the group
4. Thou shalt be open to listen to the ideas of others
5. Thou shalt take the responsibility for helping the group make decisions and solve problems
6. Thou shalt speak only for oneself
7. Thou shalt help evaluate the group effort
8. Though shalt evaluate one's own contributions
9. Thou shalt help celebrate and honor success
10. Thou shalt do what follow-up is agreed after the meetings of the group

MEETING ONE

4-H DISCUSSION MEET

When doing research about the topic use books, the Internet, ask the leader, or even interview people knowledgeable in the topic. For this step, make sure to write down this information; or better yet keep a learning journal, writing down your search, both failures and successes as well as your finds. With this step you are learning to collect data and to keep track of it through the process of research.

The next step is to formulate an hypothesis. During this step, practice reasoning using the facts you have collected to re-formulate the question into a testable hypothesis.

This will encourage you to create yourself as a thinker as opposed to a youth who simply recalls information.

SOME LIFE SKILLS TO CONSIDER FOR THE 4-H DISCUSSION MEET PROJECT

- Stimulate logical thinking.
- Develop a concise and direct manner of speaking.
- Improve the ability to listen.
- Overcome stage freight.
- Practice giving and receiving criticism in a helpful manner.
- Consider the value of compromise.
- Develop leaders for effective problem solving through group discussion.
- Develop the self responsibility to carry out the research for accurate information.
- Improve problem solving skills.
- Practice contributing to the group efforts

4-H DISCUSSION MEET QUESTIONS 2016

1. 4-H has been successful in recruiting new members for years. How can 4-H make the best better by using successful methods from outside organizations to boost interest in 4-H and, therefore, increase membership in the modern age?
2. How can you help 4-Hers identify and analyze actions related to a water resource and its use?
3. How can 4-Hers develop the knowledge and skills necessary to address challenges relevant to the study of the environment?
4. How can 4-Hers learn by doing within the community to provide youth with field research experience, technical expertise, and an opportunity to reflect on their own development?
5. When nations make decisions about healthy living, what are some of the dilemmas and consequences that might impact people around the world? How can 4-Hers decrease some of those negative results and/or increase the positive results?

HELPFUL HINTS FOR MEMBERS IN THE 4-H DISCUSSION MEET PROJECT

- Study as much material as possible relating to the overall topic.
Sources: Internet, library; newspapers; magazines, 4-H Policies; county, state and National 4-H publications; and conversations with experts or knowledgeable people.
- Remember this is a discussion, not a debate.
- This is not a panel symposium wherein each participant, in turn, makes a presentation, with the moderator ending the session with a summary. Rather, it is an exercise in cooperative problem solving, with the question, answers and statements coming from any person at any time. The moderator plays an inactive role during the discussion.
- The discussion should not be “conversation” or aimless talk, nor should you take the role of a persuasive speaker. Try to cooperatively shed light on the problem and tentatively retain a flexible position.
- Be aware of the audience, but generally address the panel, though you need to speak loudly enough to be heard by the whole audience.
- Make use of statistics, quotes, and share sample solutions so judges know you did your homework.
- Use good listening skills – nodding, leaning in, and looking at speakers.
- Be prepared to ask questions, state facts and opinions, and urge others to be specific.
- On your notepad write the names of the other participants so you can call them by name without having to look at their name tags. Referencing the other competitors by name adds a personal touch.
- Make notes of key points as the discussion proceeds for use in your summary statement.
- Participate whenever your contribution will further the discussion. Do not monopolize the discussion.
- You will get one minute of quiet time to organize your closing statement, make sure you use it to put your notes in order. Include statements from other participants. Jot them down on your notepad.
- Stand and make your closing statement to the audience. Use accepted speech techniques and stay within the time limit.

HINTS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR RESPONSES TO THE DISCUSSION MEET QUESTIONS

START WITH THE OPENING STATEMENT.

A positioning statement is a concise description of your introduction as well as a compelling picture of how you want that group to perceive your opinions. Every statement you make regarding your opinions has to align with and support your positioning statement. A good positioning statement is a guidepost for your discussions. It helps you maintain focus on your opinion and its value proposition while you work on Discussion Meet strategy and tactics.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD OPENING STATEMENTS

What makes a good positioning statement? Here are six keys to keep in mind:

1. It is simple, memorable, and tailored to the Discussion Meet question.
2. It provides an unmistakable and easily understood picture of your opinion that differentiates it from your competitors.
- 3 It is credible, and your opinion can deliver on its promise.
4. Your opinion may not be the sole occupier of this particular position in the Discussion Meet but you can “own” it.
5. It helps you evaluate whether or not your decisions are consistent with and supportive of the particular position.
6. It leaves room for growth.

OPENING (OCCASION/POSITION) STATEMENTS

- Complex Sentence
- Occasion introduces your reason for writing
- Position states what you plan to prove or explain

An occasion/position statement begins with one of these words or phrases:

In order that	Before	As
While	Whether	Even if
If	So that	Even though
When	Until	Because
After	Whenever	Although
Even	Where	Wherever
Since	As long as	Unless
As if	Though	As soon as

POWER (NUMBER) STATEMENTS

- A sentence that contains a number word

Helpful Number Words:

Two	many	a couple of
Three	some	a number of
Four	a few	a myriad
Several	numerous	various

Example Sentences:

Tourists traveling to Rome will want to visit three spectacular sights.

The architect presented several options to the committee.

HOWEVER STATEMENTS

- Uses a conjunctive adverb to help you organize your thoughts
 - A **conjunctive adverb** is an adverb that connects two clauses.
- Conjunctive adverbs show cause and effect, sequence, contrast, comparison, or other relationships.

Some helpful conjunctive adverbs:

in fact	next	instead
likewise	nevertheless	meanwhile
consequently	furthermore	as a result
still	therefore	otherwise
accordingly	again	also
besides	finally	hence
henceforth	incidentally	moreover
namely	that is	thus

AND, BUT, AND OR STATEMENTS

Create a topic sentence using coordinating conjunctions.

- Coordinating conjunctions connect words, phrases, and clauses.
- Always use a comma before the conjunction.

There are seven coordinating conjunctions. Use the words BOY FANS to help you remember them.

B= because

O= or

Y= yet

F= for

A= and

N= nor

S= so

Example Sentences:

1. Some people find it difficult to program a VCR, but most will succeed if they just remember to follow these guidelines.
2. My grandmother likes to help others, so she volunteers at church, at the hospital, and at my school.

OTHER STRATEGIES

List Statement

- A common method for writing a topic sentence or thesis statement is to list the categories you will address in your paper.
 - A list of words
 - When I set out to buy my new car, I looked for a vehicle that was reliable, safe, and economical.
 - A list of phrases
 - Problems with the new school include: poor ventilation, small classrooms, inadequate lighting, limited parking.

To, Plus a Verb

- Try using an infinitive to start your paper. An infinitive is the main verb preceded by the word *to*.
- Some examples of infinitives are *to succeed*, *to accomplish*, *to finish*, *to win*, and *to teach*.
 - *To win* at chess, players need to master three skills.
 - *To succeed* in business, a person must establish clear but realistic goals.

Action Verb Topic Sentence

Create a thesis statement with a declarative statement that uses a strong verb.

- These are verbs that are not helping verbs or sense verbs.
- They show rather than tell what is going on in a sentence.
- Use of these verbs fosters better writing

THE E'S

The E's are the REDS.

- They support your topic sentence
- Make your writing interesting and believable
- Information to back up your reasons, details, or facts
 - (R-D-F)

Examples	Expert opinion
Explanations	Everyday life
Evidence	Effective illustrations
Events	Elaboration
Experiences	Excitement

TRANSITIONS

- Introduce key/star ideas
- Connect reasons, details, or facts.
- Help the write and the reader
- Does not need to be the first word in the sentence

These expressions are just a few of the many words and phrases you can use to help fellow competitors, judges, audience members follow your thoughts as you speak.

A bad	A worse	The worst
A good	A better	The best
First	Another	Next
In addition	Second	Third
Also	To Begin	A Final
First of all	Initially	Then
After that	Once	Also
Last	Finally	Equally important

CONCLUSIONS

When you write your conclusion, think of the following:

- Remind the listener of the topic
 - restate your position
- Use synonyms, new action verbs, or new descriptive words.

Try using one of these words or phrases

in fact	definitely
certainly	truly
overall	clearly
obviously	to sum up
surely	in conclusion

Avoid phrases such as

- as I have said
- as I proved
- as you can see

To help you focus the conclusion, you may want to:

- Summarize your paragraph
- Convince the readers of your position
- Challenge the readers to think about the issue
- Encourage the readers to take action

Vary the sentence structure

- If your thesis statement was an Occasion/Position Statement, use a simple statement in the conclusion.
- If you started with a Power (Number) Statement, make your conclusion and Occasion/Position Statement.
- You can also try any of the other thesis statement methods.
- In other words, change the conclusion sentence structure to a simple sentence, a complex sentence, or a compound sentence

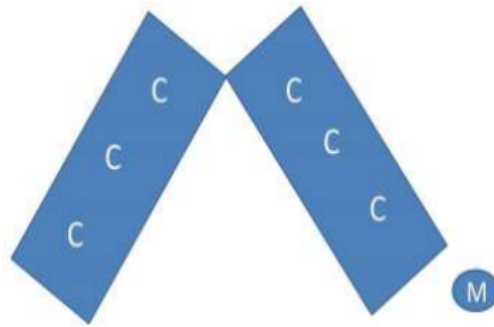
Using a quotation in a conclusion is almost always a plus. Make sure the quotation supports the position.

Imitate professionals, teachers, or fellow students. Listen to and look for good conclusions.

MEETING TWO

ROOM LAYOUT FOR DISCUSSION MEET

Room Layout



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x]xxxxxxxxT  xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx  xxxxxx]xxx
xxxxxxxx]xx  xxxxxxxxxxx
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M = Moderator C = Competitor J = Judge T = Timer X = Audience

FLOW OF COMPETITION

Generally speaking, the discussion should follow these steps:

1. State problem or need.
2. Explore, define, and understand problem or need.
3. Identify causes of problem or need.
4. Elaborate all possible alternative solutions.
5. Evaluate and compare alternatives.
6. Test and project what appears to be the best solution.
7. Arrive at ways to implement the solution.

MEETING THREE

COMPETITION

- The participants will discuss pre-selected topics with four, fundamental bases for the general discussion: cooperation, constructive criticism, problem solving and communication.
- The competitive event will consist of four rounds: one practice round, one Round Robin, Elite Eight and Final Four.
- All competitors will compete in the first two rounds. The top eight competitors based on judges' scores will move on to the Elite Eight round.
- The top two competitors in each of the third round rooms will move on to the Final Four round in order to determine the winner.
- Each round will begin with a 30-second opening statement and end with a one-minute closing statement by each participant.
- Participants will have 20-25 minutes of open discussion dependent upon the number of contestants, followed by one minute of quiet time.

MEETING FOUR

DEMEANOR AND DRESS

- Grooming, Smile
- Voice
- Sitting
- Avoid “trendy outfits” – keep business like
- Over-dressed always safer than underdressed
- Avoid “flashy accessories”
- Avoid low cut blouses, see through garments, skirts or shirts that are too tight or too short, or stained clothing.
- The devil is in the details! Set out what you are going to wear the night before to make sure it is pressed, clean and looks great.

WAYS TO BE A WINNER

- **Be Prepared:** Be prepared by thinking out the contest before it happens. Know where the Discussion Meet is going to be held and arrive 15 minutes early. Maybe even bring another shirt/blouse in case the one you are wearing gets dirty and you move to the next round.
- **Dress Appropriately:** Dress conservatively and it’s always good to over-dress instead of under-dress. Dress also includes not having too much jewelry or makeup and clean shaven for boys. **Remember details make the difference.**
- **Be Confident:** Smile and believe in yourself. If you believe in yourself, your discussions are more likely to be heard by others and not be dismissed just to get their points across. Be careful to not sound cocky or conceited, but take pride in your skills and knowledge that you researched for the question given. Make the judges feel you know your topic.
- **Make Eye-Contact:** This can be difficult when you are nervous, but this is one of the best ways to show confidence. Make eye-contact with the person you are talking with or asking a question to during the discussion meet and then make sure to make eye contact with the judges in the audience in your summary.

- **Show your Enthusiasm:** Be excited to be at the Discussion Meet! Show that you are eager and willing to learn, and excited about what the other members have to offer in order to 'make the best-better'. This is done both with your words and body language.
- **Know Your Facts:** If you have an idea that you believe in, make sure you have your facts down pat. Understand where 4-H fits into your idea and how their mission or goals can be connected. This will help you see the big picture and lead others to believe in your idea.
- **Practice:** Practice makes perfect. Sorry to say that over and over, but it's a fact. Don't memorize answers, but think about possible questions and how you might respond. Watch your non-verbal communication such as eye and facial expressions in the mirror or with a friend. You will be more confident and prepared if you practice.