Sheep
Helper's Guide

Sheep Group Activities

Name:

County:
Your Sheep Group Activity Guide

The 4-H Skills for Life
Animal Science Series

Welcome to the “Skills for Life” Sheep materials. This set of four activity guides and pattern for sewing a model lamb has been developed to provide you and the youth you support with ideas and activities to expand the sheep project. As a helper, you are a key person in making the youth’s experience both fun and educational. How you choose to be involved will often determine the success the youth has developing important life skills while learning about sheep. The youth’s interest in sheep is the vehicle leading to life skill development.

Sheep Project Outcomes
Through participation in this curriculum youth will:

- Practice the life skills of:
  - decision making
  - communicating with others
  - leading self and others
  - planning and organizing
  - learning to learn

- Identify and select quality sheep
- Demonstrate good sheep management and health practices
- Develop sheep fitting and showing skills
- Improve their lamb consumer skills
- Promote sheep products and the sheep industry

Your Role

- Become familiar with the materials in this series.
- Support the youth in his/her efforts to set goals and complete each level of the Sheep Achievement Program.
- Serve as a resource person to help connect youth with the community, resource materials, and other knowledgeable about the project.
- Provide a safe, supportive environment.
- Guide, encourage and reward progress.
- Evaluate to what extent the youth outcomes are achieved (see page 35).

Acknowledgements

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The 4-H Sheep Series
This series includes three youth guides, a Helper’s Group Activity Guide and a pattern to sew a model lamb.

Sheep 1 Rams, Lambs and You ............ BU-6367
Sheep 2 Shear Delight .................. BU-6368
Sheep 3 Leading the Flock .............. BU-6369
Sheep Helper’s Guide .................. BU-6370
Lamb and Kid Pattern ................. BU-7514

Youth Activity Guides

Each of the three youth activity guides is designed to be developmentally appropriate for grades 2–4, 5–7, 8–12 respectively, but may be used by youth in any grade based on their project skills and expertise.

The Sheep Achieve Program for youth to complete with your support is an important part of each guide. By striving to complete the program in each level, youth will be encouraged to learn more about sheep and the sheep industry while practicing and developing important life skills.

Sheep Helper’s Guide

The fourth piece in the series is written to assist you in your helper role with individual youth but also to work effectively with groups of youth interested in the sheep project. These learn-by-doing activities, as well as most activities in the youth guides, can be adapted to the family, the classroom or other groups. In this guide, you will also find helpful hints about characteristics of youth, life skill development, teaching experientially, project meeting ideas as well as answers to many of the activities in the youth guides. The activities in this guide will help you help youth:

- Prevent sheep diseases
- Examine a lamb and record observations
- Plan and conduct a sheep skilathon
- Demonstrate use of a piece of sheep equipment
- Tie a rope halter and tie knots
- Define 10 or more related to sheep
- Plan and conduct a sheep quiz bowl
- Plan a one-year program of sheep activities
- Plan and conduct L.A.M.B-S Bingo

Lamb and Kid Pattern

The realistic model lamb made from this pattern provides an excellent training aid for youth to use when giving demonstrations at project group meetings and fairs. The use of Velcro parts and application as a puppet contributes to its versatility.

The model can be used to learn to identify breeds and parts, recognize strengths and faults, judge, castrate, deliver, demonstrate care of the newborn, administer medication and much more.
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Lamb Kid Pattern
Use this pattern to make a realistic model kid or lamb.
Youth Learning Characteristics

The 9 - 11 Year Olds

Active is the word for this group! Activities should encourage physical involvement because 9-11 year-old boys and girls are anything but still and quiet. Hands-on involvement with objects is helpful. Children this age are still fairly concrete thinkers and will give adults more attention if they are both seeing and doing things. They also need many opportunities to share their thoughts and reactions to others.

Children at this stage are beginning to think logically and symbolically and are beginning to understand abstract ideas. As they consider an idea, they think it is right or wrong, great or disgusting, fun or boring. There is very little middle ground.

The role of the helper is crucial at this stage. These children look to adults for approval and follow rules primarily out of respect for adults. Individual evaluation by adults is preferred over group competition, where only one can be the best. Comparison with the success of their peers is difficult for these children. It erodes self-confidence. Instead of comparing children with each other, build positive self-concepts by comparing present to past performances for the individual.

This is also the age of the “joiners.” Boys and girls like to be in organized groups of others similar to themselves. They generally are concerned with immediate self reward. The satisfaction of completing a project often comes from pleasing the volunteer or parent rather than from the value of the activity itself. Often participation in community service projects is enjoyed because youth can see they are making a difference in another’s life.

These youngsters have a strong need to feel accepted and worthwhile. School and other pressures are demanding. Individual improvement should continue to be emphasized. Youngsters want to know how much they have improved and what they should do to be better next time. Individual evaluation and encouragement from an adult can have amazing results.

The 12 - 14 Year Olds

This developmental stage varies widely among young teens. Growth spurts beginning with adolescence occur at a wide range of ages, with girls usually maturing before boys. These rapid changes in physical appearance may make some teens uncomfortable. Faster-developing teens may feel thrust into a more adult world they didn’t choose. Slower-developing teen may be uneasy about their lack of changes.

Young teens move from concrete to more abstract thinking. Playing with ideas is as much fun as playing sports. Ready-made solutions from adults are often rejected by young teens in favor of finding their own solutions. Volunteers who provide supervision, support and minimal direction will do well with this group.

Small groups provide the best opportunity for young teens to test ideas. Justice and equality become important issues. Opinions of peers become more important than opinions of parents and other adults. Teens enjoy the social interaction and acceptance they receive in groups.

As puberty approaches, young teens begin a roller coaster ride of hormones and emotions. This time period seems to present the biggest challenge to a young person’s self-concept. These youngsters face so many changes that they hardly know who they are. Young teens begin to test values and seek adults who are accepting and willing to talk about values and morals. Adults can help by providing self-discovery activities leading teens to self-knowledge.

Continue to avoid comparing young people with each other and try not to embarrass them. They want to be part of something important and have opportunities to develop responsibility and demonstrate leadership skills.

The 15 - 18 Year Olds

Most teens of this age recognize their own special abilities and talents. In most cases, they have adjusted to the many post-puberty changes. By now teens tend to be wrapped up in themselves and their peer group rather than family, teachers and other adults. Relationship skills are usually more developed and dating increases. Acceptance by members of the opposite sex is of higher importance.

Mid-teens begin to think about their future and realistic plans. Their vocational goals influence the activities that they select. Teens set goals based on their personal needs and priorities. Any goals set by others are generally rejected. As they master abstract thinking, they can imagine new things in ways that sometimes challenge adults.

These teens can generally initiate and carry out their own tasks without supervision. They can help younger members plan and complete their projects. They should be encouraged to take on this leadership role. An adult volunteer can be helpful by arranging new experiences in areas of interest to teens, but must be sure to allow for plenty of input from the youth. The volunteer should play the role of advisor/coach for independent workers.

It is a lot of fun working together on our projects.
Life skills are defined in the Targeting Life Skills (TLS) Model (Hendricks, 1996) as "Skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life." As a volunteer working with youth in this project you have many opportunities to assist youth in developing life skills as they acquire project related skills and knowledge.

The TLS Model identifies and divides the major life skills targeted by 4-H youth development by the four H's from the 4-H Clover that represent Head, Heart, Hands and Health. These four are further divided into specific general life skills as shown here. The TLS Model handbook further divides each general life skill into separate learning opportunities to develop the skill.

As you capitalize on the youth's interest in this project, fun and friends, your challenge is to provide age-appropriate opportunities for youth to experience and practice these skills until they are learned and able to be used everyday. By using the experiential learning process to help youth fully internalize both the sheep content and the life skill practiced they gain the ability to apply both types of skills appropriately.

Acknowledgement: Targeting Life Skills Model, by Pat Hendricks, Iowa State U.

Each activity in this series shows both the project skill and life skills youth will practice and develop. A well-designed activity will involve the youth in the practice of several life skills. In one activity youth may practice decision making, communicating and goal setting. Only one is targeted for each activity so you can specifically discuss it with the youth when the activity is completed. "Show of Success" states what the youth would do to achieve the learner outcome for the activity. This indicator usually includes both the life skill and project skill. This is the goal for youth to achieve and for you to support their efforts to achieve.

Helping youth develop and understand important life skills while learning about their project is a challenge. However, the youth will appreciate your extra effort now and in the future when they look back on these experiences.

I'm here to help you when you need help.
Teaching and Learning Experientially

The 4-H Youth Development Program has promoted the five steps of the experiential learning model as an essential part of all educational experiences. You'll notice that each of the activities in this series, as well as those in all other curriculum products that have qualified for the National 4-H Collection, use this model.

There are several reasons the five specific and sequential steps of the model work well when the objective is to combine the development of project subject matter and personal life skills in a single activity or series of related activities. The experiential learning process engages the learners in the activity, encourages them to think more, work harder and ultimately learn more thoroughly than with traditional teaching methods such as telling or showing.

5. **Apply**
   What was really learned and can the youth express how they can use what they learned? Or better yet, can they actually show that they have mastered a skill by performing another activity that requires the new skill to be used again? The emphasis is placed on the life skill practiced rather than the subject matter skill.

4. **Generalize**
   In this step the discussion becomes more personal. So what? What did the experience mean to me personally? To my everyday life? The subject matter alone could remain the focus of the discussion in all five steps of the model. However, because the major outcome is to help youth develop important life skills, a major part of the discussion is shifted on the life skill the youth practiced while doing the activity or experience. If the method employed required the youth to work in teams to complete the activity then questions about team-work would be appropriate. If the methodology asks the youth to communicate then communications skills are discussed.

1. **Experience**
   Note the model begins with an experience. Action! This immediately focuses the attention on the learner rather than the teacher. When the learner is encouraged to learn by doing before being told or shown how, opportunities are presented for a wide variety of life skills to be practiced depending on the method used to engage the youth in the experience. As the group leader your challenge is to sit on your hands as much as possible during the experience step. You and the youth involved will quickly learn what the skill or knowledge level is. Many times you will hear, "We figured this out all by ourselves!"

2. **Share**
   As the model shows, sharing is simply asking the group or individuals: What did you do? What happened? What did it feel like to do (whatever)? This step should generate a lot of information to lead to the process step.

3. **Process**
   The questions and discussion now become more focused on what was most important about the experience. Common themes that emerge from the sharing session are explored further. Often the key teaching points related to the subject matter are discussed.
Chapter 7 Sheep Skill Activities

Show Box Fun

"Pass the number three card. Plug in the shears. Let's use a lamb saver." These may sound familiar to you, but anyone not familiar with sheep probably wouldn't know what you were talking about. Knowing what the many pieces of equipment used with sheep are called and how to use them makes everything easier and faster. This activity will help your group not only learn to identify and demonstrate the use of sheep equipment but also practice speaking on the spot or extemporaneously.

**Sheep Project Skill:**
Understanding sheep equipment

**Life Skill:**
Communicating with others

**Show of Success:**
Identifies and demonstrates the use of sheep equipment

**Time Involved:**
One hour

**Materials Needed:**
A live sheep and/or a cloth model lamb, paper, cards, pens or pencils, tape and equipment used with sheep that would normally be included in a tack box, e.g., hand shears, hoof trimmers, cards, brushes, curry comb, bucket, liquid soap, sheep blankets, spray bottle, towels, thermometer, halter, electric clippers

**Getting Started**
Ask the group members to each bring one or more pieces of sheep-related equipment to the meeting with their names taped on each. Write a matching number on a separate card. Also tape a number on each. The numbers should start with one and be consecutive. Put all the items in a box or at least out of sight.

1. Experience (Doing)

Put all the numbered cards in a hat. To provide some suspense, have everyone number off starting with one. When a number is drawn from the hat, the person with that number will be the demonstrator. The item demonstrated will have the same number and should be handed to the person. The person can then choose to explain and demonstrate how the piece of equipment is used alone or ask someone to help. Encourage questions following each demonstration from each person present. Limit demonstrations to three to five minutes. Follow a similar procedure for the next person. After everyone has had a chance to be "on stage" discuss the experience.

**Talk It Over**

2. Share (What happened?)

Q. What did it feel like to think on your feet and give a presentation with no time to prepare?

Q. What new things did you learn about the equipment?

3. Process (What's important?)

Q. What additional equipment should be included?

Q. Why is it important to keep a show box organized?

4. Generalize (So what?)

Q. Where else have you had to give an answer before you had time to think about what you wanted to say?

5. Apply (Now what?)

Q. How can you use what you learned about speaking here that will help you in the future?
Take the Lead

Making rope halters and learning to tie useful knots are fun and challenging learn-by-doing activities for group meetings. The group will enjoy the challenge and satisfaction the activity provides. The resulting products can also be used immediately. These type of activities also provide an excellent setting for youth and adults to practice their teaching and leadership skills.

Getting Started

To really enjoy the meeting yourself you may want to encourage the youth who are giving leadership to this meeting to collect the supplies and practice tying a rope halter and knots. The more people you involve in the preparation the more enthusiasm you will have.

1. Experience (Doing)

Depending how this activity is presented to the participants, the opportunity for life skill development can be high or low. If the experiential learning process is followed and the youth are encouraged to learn-by-doing, before-being-told-or-shown—how, exciting outcomes are possible. On the other hand if the youth are told how and only follow directions, the chance to develop skills such as risk taking, building team work, self esteem, learning together and helping others learn is often lost.

One way to quickly involved the youth is to divide the group into teams of two or three individuals. Give each team a length of rope and a picture and/or directions for tying the halter or knot (face down). Challenge the teams to work together to make a halter or a particular knot. Then step back and help by answering questions with questions as teams ask. If any teams are stuck encourage them to use the pictures as a guide. You may be surprised at how many halter makers and knot tiers you have in the group! You will also enjoy seeing the “we figured it out all by ourselves” expression of the teams. Follow the session with questions about the experience.

Knots for All Occasions

- Quick Release Knot
- Bowline Knot
- Double Half Hitch
- Honda Knot
Help the youth learn more about working as a team using ropes by conducting a group discussion. These questions will get you started.

2. Share (What happened?)
   Q. How did you learn to make a rope halter or tie the knots?
   Q. How did it feel to do it on your own without step-by-step directions?
   Q. What was most difficult?

3. Process (What’s important?)
   Q. Why is knowing how to make a rope halter and tie knots important?
   Q. What are important uses of knots?

4. Generalize (So what?)
   Q. Why is working together as a team often better than working alone?
   Q. What did you contribute to the team?

5. Apply (Now what?)
   Q. How do you think you could improve your leadership skills based upon this activity?

More Challenges

1. Involve several youth in leading activities involving knots such as knot relays; situation relays where a situation is presented that requires a knot and the youth needs to tie one that works; or catching, haltering and leading a sheep to a particular place.

Facts

Rope Halter Hints

1. Select a 10 foot piece of 1/8 poly rope (ski rope) to make a sheep rope halter.
2. Secure the ends with friction tape, strong string or by splicing.
3. Make a mark eight inches from the end of the rope to indicate the length of the nose piece.

4. At the point marked raise two strands and pass the long end through until the center on the loop is twice as long as the rope.

5. Raise two strands in the long end of the rope just outside the loop and pass the short end under these strands. Draw snug to form the eye loop.

6. Untwist the strands 2–3 inches from the end and push together until the strands form three separate loops.

7. Pass the long end of the rope through the adjustment loops to form the adjustable head stall.

8. Pass the long end of the rope through the eye loop and your halter is complete.
Skillathon Fun

A skillathon is a way of involving youth and their parents in a challenging, non-competitive, learning-by-doing activity. This teaching method helps youth develop both personal and project skills. The skillathon works well at a project meeting, group meeting, in the classroom or at a mall or fair.

A skillathon is a series of learning stations where teams are presented with realistic situations and tasks to do. The teams attempt to complete the tasks before being told or shown how. The operator at each station follows with questions to help the teams build on their experiences.

Getting Started

Setting up a skillathon is an excellent activity for youth to practice developing their leadership skills. People and materials need to be organized, decisions made and signs prepared. To help guide the planning committee, some of the tasks that should be considered are listed as well as examples of stations. A series of stations can be set up on almost any of the general areas listed in the Sheep Project Meeting Ideas in this guide.

Skillathon preparation

- Decide on the stations wanted, considering time and resources available
- Make up a realistic situation and task sign for each station so teams don't require additional directions
- Decide who will be in charge of each station
- Decide the equipment and supplies needed at each station
- Delegate responsibility for gathering supplies

Station operator

The role of the station operator is very important.

- Be familiar with the topic
- Develop several questions to ask
- Allow the team members to discover for themselves how to accomplish the task, instead of telling or showing them how
- Help the learning by using the steps of the skillathon model shown here

Sheep Project Skill: Developing sheep-related skills

Life Skill: Planning and conducting an activity

Show of Success: Plans and conducts a sheep skillathon.

Time Involved:

- Suggested
- Group Size: 10–100

Materials Needed:

- Station signs, situation and task signs, materials necessary for the team to perform the tasks at each station

1. Experience (Doing)

Once the stations are established, begin the skillathon. Depending on the size of the groups and the number of stations, divide the members into teams of two to four. Start each team at a different station. Allow about ten minutes at each station, then ask each team to select a station and give a short presentation on how they solved that task. Follow with questions about the overall activity. The “Talk It Over” questions will help the youth reflect on what they have learned.

Skillathon Model

1. Form teams of 2 to 5 members.
2. Make sure supplies are available.
3. Reinforce their efforts with praise.
4. Ask questions to help them think about what they presented.
5. Respond to teams' questions with questions so answers are their own.
6. Accept teams' solutions.
7. Listen to teams' presentations.
8. Have the teams build on what they presented.
9. Step back and allow the teams time to discover their own solutions.
2. Share (What happened?)
   Q. What was it like to plan and conduct a skillathon?
   Q. What was hardest for you to do? Easiest?

3. Process (What’s important?)
   Q. What did you learn from this activity that you didn’t know before?
   Q. What difference did you notice about how different teams did or did not work together?
   Q. Why is it important to take time to plan carefully?

4. Generalize (So what?)
   Q. How did teaching and learning this way compare to what happens in your classrooms?
   Q. What did you learn about being a leader that will help you in working with groups in other organizations or school?

5. Apply (Now what?)
   Q. What’s one thing you could do to improve your ability to plan?

More Challenge

1. Conduct a sheep skillathon at a county fair.
Let's Make Plans

Sheep project meetings offer exciting settings for youth to develop project and life skills. When they participate in planning, youth are developing an important life skill. You will find that these programs will more closely meet the needs of your youth when everyone is involved in identifying what to do, when to do it and how to do it.

This activity has been designed to help your group plan its year’s program with five or more project activities. You will explore ways to involve your group in the planning process. A list of meeting topics is found at the end of this guide.

Getting Started

Before the meeting, you may want to talk to the parents to see what they feel their children need and how your organization can help. At the meeting, ask the youth and their parents to discuss what they would like to learn and do. Suggest looking through the project literature and list of meeting ideas for additional topics.

Your role is to create situations in which the youth (and their parents) can develop both project and life skills. Helping a group plan a year’s program or just one meeting takes a lot of patience and the ability to “sit on one’s hands” while the members work together. Here is a technique for generating ideas and arriving at decisions.

1. Experience (Doing)

First ask everyone what the group’s goals should be for the year. The process described here for determining what the activities should be can also be used to set goals. Have everyone review the topics in the appropriate project meeting guide plus those mentioned in other resource materials. Then have each person write down ideas for project meetings and supporting activities (community service, farms, shows, petting zoos, promotions, etc.). Sometimes youth can generate more ideas by working together in groups of two or three, with one person writing down the ideas. Allow five to ten minutes.

Have each person share his/her ideas in round robin fashion. One person shares an idea, then the next person and so on until all ideas have been given and recorded on a blackboard or a large sheet of paper. List the ideas quickly without discussion. After all ideas are listed, provide time for the person who suggested the idea to clarify or explain it. Others can add support, questions or concerns. After a short discussion, move to the next idea.

From all the ideas generated and discussed (and possibly combined), have each person rate the items in the order of preference on a separate sheet of paper. You may want to have participants indicate their top five or ten choices. If ten choices are indicated, the top choice would receive a ten and the last choice a one. Read each idea and have all members give their ranking. Add up the numbers. Allow time to discuss the choices as they relate to the group’s overall goals. From the decisions made, make up the list of topics for the year’s program.
Deciding Who Does What
Now that the group has decided what they want to learn more about, be sure everyone shares in the responsibility of seeing that it happens. Give as many members (and families) as possible a specific job on the year’s program. Recreation, demonstrations, refreshments and hosting the main program are all possibilities. If the group is large, the team approach is encouraged.

Completing the Program
Write out an outline so everyone can see the plan taking shape. An example of a possible format follows. After the program is completed, make copies for each family. You might include a list of everyone’s name and phone number.

Project Group Goals for the Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Group:</th>
<th>Name of Leader(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

PROJECT GROUP GOALS FOR THE YEAR

1. Every member completes at least one-half of his or her achievement programs.
2. Practice the life skill of decision making.
3. Involve each family in activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Meeting Topic and Activities</th>
<th>Who Is Responsible</th>
<th>What to Do Before the Next Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 6 7 p.m.</td>
<td>Identifying parts of sheep, Recreation, Presentation, Refreshments</td>
<td>Dave and Haun, Mark and Jim, Mary, Peterson Family</td>
<td>Review judging terms and make drawing of ideal sheep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talk It Over

2. Share (What happened?)
   Q. What have you learned so far about planning?
   Q. What process have we been using to involve everyone?
   Q. How do you feel about this planning session?

3. Process (What’s important?)
   Q. Why is it important to have goals and plans?
   Q. Why are decisions made through consensus often more accepted than those made by voting?
   Q. Why is it important for youth, parents and leaders to work together on planning activities?

4. Generalize (So what?)
   Q. How will this experience help you plan family experiences?
   Q. How will it help you plan other areas of your life?

5. Apply (Now what?)
   Q. How will the way you plan your week or year change as a result of this experience?

More Challenges

1. Have the group use the same process (nominal group technique) to plan something else.

Acknowledgment: Minnesota 4-H Animal Science Notebook.