What's Happening?

Level

Rabbit Project Activity Guide

Name ____________________________

County __________________________
Note to the Adult Helper

Congratulations! A young person has asked you to be this/her rabbit project helper. As a helper you are in a great position to help youth grow and develop in positive ways as they learn about rabbits and themselves. You can nurture and cultivate their interest in this project by guiding their planning, helping them carry out their projects and recognizing them for a job well done.

Your Role

- Become familiar with the material in this activity guide and the Helper’s Guide
- Support youth in their efforts to set goals and complete each achievement program
- Date and initial the activities on the Rabbit Achievement Program as the youth completes them and the two of you discuss them
- Help them to get to know themselves, including their strengths and weaknesses
- Encourage the use of the experiential learning cycle described on this page

The Rabbit “Skills for Life” Series

This guide, What’s Happening?, is the first in the series of three for youth, that also includes Rabbit 2 Making Tracks, Rabbit 3 All Ears and the Rabbit Group Activity Helper’s Guide. The three youth guides have been designed to be developmentally appropriate for grades 3–5, 6–8 and 9–12 respectively, but may be used by youth in any grade based on their project skills and expertise.

All activities have several parts: A description of the skills to be practiced, discussion questions, suggestions for additional activities and other helpful information. The “Success Indicator” for each activity is an excellent way to evaluate the youth’s success. Classroom teachers can measure against the science standard listed for each activity. Each of the guides also includes an achievement program to encourage youth to learn more about rabbits while developing important life skills. In the Helper’s Guide you will find another evaluation piece titled “Evaluating the Impact.” Use this before beginning each level and after the youth has completed each level; this tool will help you assess the educational impact of each book of activities.

Each activity is designed so the young person has an opportunity to learn by doing before being told or shown how. Your challenge is to “sit on your hands” while the youth explores the activity and learns from the experience, even when it doesn’t work the way it’s expected to. You can help most effectively by listening as the young person considers the questions and draws conclusions. At times the activity may call for you to be a resource person for content or ideas.

The fourth publication in this series, Rabbit Helper’s Guide, provides additional learn-by-doing activities that can be adapted to the family, the classroom, after school child care, 4-H project groups, clubs or other groups. You’ll also find helpful hints about characteristics of youth, life skill development, teaching experientially, club meeting ideas, as well as answers to many of the activities in the youth guides.

Experiential Learning Model

This five-step model is utilized in each activity in this series.

1. Experience the activity; perform, do it.
2. Share the results, reactions, observations publicly.
3. Process by discussing learning of the experience; analyze, reflect.
4. Generalize to connect and link with prior experiences.
5. Apply what was learned in a similar or different situation; practice.


As you can see, the youth first attempt the activity on their own. After the youth do as much as they can and answer the questions, you then meet together and discuss: What did they do? What was important about what they did? How does what they did relate to their lives? And finally, how might they use the life and project skills practiced in the future? Your ability to ask additional thought-provoking questions and to clarify and expand the youth’s ideas will add to the educational experience.

Good luck in your helper role and thank you for contributing to the positive development of youth.

Acknowledgements

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What’s Happening?

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Rabbits and Crops

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Chapter 4

Rabbit Knowlidge and Skills

Question: Where
Answer: Where

Chapter 4

Rabbit Knowledge and Skills

Question: How
Answer: How

Chapter 4

Rabbit Knowledge and Skills

Question: What
Answer: What
Learning How This Book Works

Are you ready to learn more about rabbits?

You have many interesting and exciting activities ahead in this book. You'll learn about rabbit parts, breeds, costs of raising a rabbit, how to care for a rabbit and much, much more. If you don't have a rabbit, some of the activities will help you decide what kind of rabbit might be best for you. Don't be afraid to jump right in and don't give up if the activity doesn't work right the first time. You're still learning, right? The most important thing is trying.

Activities
Activities are a part of each lesson. You're required to do up to 21 of the activities and the More Challenges if you use this book for three years. You're required to do seven activities each year.

Talk it Over
Questions that will help you think through what you've learned and how it applies to your life.

Facts
Additional rabbit information to enhance the activity.

References
Other places to check for information that will enhance the lesson.

Bounding Ahead
These are ways to learn more about rabbit or life skills. These are optional activities that will add to your understanding.

Rabbit Trivia
Interesting facts that will expand your rabbit knowledge.

Your Project Helper
Your project helper is on your team, supporting you and making learning more fun. This person may be a parent, project leader or advisor, a neighbor or an older friend who enjoys rabbits. The choice is yours. As you do the activities, you'll discuss what you did and the questions in the "Bounding Ahead" part of each activity with your helper. Sometimes your helper will need to work with you to find people, groups, events, magazines and books to help complete an activity. Once you have successfully completed each activity, your helper will date and initial your achievement program.

Write the name and phone number of your project helper here:

My Project Helper______________________________

Phone #_____________________________________

E-mail_______________________________________

Good luck with Rabbit 1
What's Happening?
Rabbit Project Goals
(Beginning of Year)

Name _____________________________

# Rabbits ________ Breed(s) ________________

What I want to do and learn.

1. ____________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________

Rabbit Project Highlights
Date and list the exciting things you do and learn.

What’s Happening?
Achievement Program

Guidelines
• Do at least seven of the Required and Optional activities each year
• Complete at least 21 of the Required and Optional activities within three years to complete this achievement program.
• Have your helper date and initial the activities as you complete and discuss them with your helper.

Required Activities
Complete at least 11 of the activities.

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<th>Chapter 1 Rabbit Selection and Handling</th>
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<td>Hop On Board</td>
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<th>Chapter 3 Rabbit Health and Nutrition</th>
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<td>Recognizing the Normal Rabbit Situation</td>
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<th>Chapter 4 Rabbit Breeding and General Care</th>
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<td>Buck or Doe</td>
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<td>Rabbit Breeding</td>
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<td>Kits ‘N Kaboodle</td>
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<td>Baby Boom</td>
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Bounding Ahead
Optional Activities
Select and do any of the Bounding Ahead activities in What’s Happening? or make up your own. Record the page and number of each one you complete and have your helper initial.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper’s Initial</th>
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</table>
Chapter 1  Rabbit Selection and Handling

Hop on Board
In the rabbit project you will make decisions about housing, feeding and breeding. There are more than 40 breeds (kinds) of rabbits. Your first choice is to select your rabbit.

Hop to it!
Visit with your project helper, county Extension educator, local breeder and/or teen leaders in the rabbit project about various breeds of rabbits.

Pick 10 breeds from Rabbit Facts. Show in the chart what you discover about each breed. Tape or draw a picture of your favorite breed in the picture frame.

My Favorite Breed

I like this breed best because __________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Rabbit Breed Chart</th>
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<td>Breed</td>
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Rabbit Skill: Create a rabbit breed chart.
Life Skill: Decision making
Success Indicator: Uses decision making skills to select a rabbit project breed.
Science Standard: Characteristics of organisms
1. Visit a rabbitry or show. Make a list of the library and check out a book on your favorite kind of rabbit. How many breeds did you find?

2. Check our front and back covers. The breeds that were recognized in the U.S.

3. Apply What You Learned
   - How does making a chart help to make better decisions?

4. What other decisions did you make today?

5. Generalize to Your Life
   - How did you decide on this breed? If you choose this breed, what will you have to do to take care of it?

6. Share What You Did
   - Which breed did you like best? Why?

7. Process What’s Important
   - Why do you like the rabbit you chose?

Rabbit Breeds

Do You Know?

A rabbit note is a: a pet.

Bounding' Ahead

American Chinchilla
Creme Dwarf
English Lop
French Lop
Jersey Wooly
New Zealand
Netherland Dwarf
Polish
Silver Fox

Six Class Rabbit Breeds

(over 5 lbs.)

American Chinchilla
Black
Creme Chinchilla
Dutch
English Lop
Frisian Giant
Manx
Netherland Dwarf
Polish
Silver Fox

Four Class Rabbit Breeds

(2 to 5 lbs.)

American Fuzzy Lop
English Lop
French Lop
Netherland Dwarf

Three Class Rabbit Breeds

(over 2 lbs.)

American Shorthair
Dutch
English Angora
Easter Egg
English Lop
English Satin
Petite Chinchilla
Rhode Island Red
Silver Fox

Two Class Rabbit Breeds

(2 lbs. or less)

American Silky
American Rex
Copenhagen
Dutch Angora
English Angora
Frisian Giant
Harlequin
Netherland Dwarf
Petite Angora
Silver Fox

Medium

(over 6 lbs.)

American Shorthair
English Lop
French Lop
Netherland Dwarf
Polish
Silver Fox

Small

(2 to 5 lbs.)

American Fuzzy Lop
English Lop
French Lop
Netherland Dwarf

Three Class Rabbit Breeds

(over 2 lbs.)

American Shorthair
Dutch
English Angora
Easter Egg
English Lop
English Satin
Petite Chinchilla
Rhode Island Red
Silver Fox

Two Class Rabbit Breeds

(2 lbs. or less)

American Silky
American Rex
Copenhagen
Dutch Angora
English Angora
Frisian Giant
Harlequin
Netherland Dwarf
Petite Angora
Silver Fox

Lightweight

(over 2 lbs.)

American Shorthair
Dutch
English Angora
Easter Egg
English Lop
English Satin
Petite Chinchilla
Rhode Island Red
Silver Fox

Two Class Rabbit Breeds

(2 lbs. or less)

American Silky
American Rex
Copenhagen
Dutch Angora
English Angora
Frisian Giant
Harlequin
Netherland Dwarf
Petite Angora
Silver Fox

Breed Group: 

In the Zoo

Long-Ear Groups

Domestic Rabbit Breeds

Lop Ear Groups

Netherland Dwarf

Rex Ear Groups

Polish

Rhode Island Red

Professional Rabbit Breeds

American Fuzzy Lop

Commercial Rabbit Breeds

American Chinchilla

Lab Tested Rabbit Breeds

American Shorthair

Rabbits and Their Uses

American Giant

Prairie Life

American Rabbit

Life in America

American Lop


Furry Future

What do you want to be when you grow up? A doctor, a police officer, a rabbit breeder? These are all decisions you will make as you get older. Much like your life, you will also need to make decisions about the future of your rabbit project. Decide what you will use your rabbit project for. This will help you choose what to feed and where to have your rabbit live.

Hop to it!

Put the breeds of rabbits you found in the Hop On Board exercise in the first activity into the six (6) possible rabbit uses listed below. Some breeds may be used more than once.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses of Rabbit Breeds</th>
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<tr>
<td>Breading Stock</td>
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</table>

Rabbit Skill: Determine the use of your project rabbits.
Life Skill: Decision making
Success Indicator: Describes the use of various rabbit breeds.
Science Standard: Form and function

What is your breed used for?
Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did
• What is the use of each rabbit breed you picked?

Process What’s Important
• Which breeds were better when used for meat? Why?
• Which breeds are better for fur? Why?

Generalize to Your Life
• What other decisions do you make that are based on how you use a product?

Apply What You Learned
• How do you compare different brands or kinds of items before you buy one? (Ex. toothpaste, soft drink, toy, etc.)

Did you know?
A rabbit has five toes on the front feet and four on the back feet.

Rabbit Facts

Uses of Rabbits

Breeding stock
Rabbits raised for high quality offspring. Keep good records. Attend shows to have your rabbits’ breed characteristics judged. Maintain a high level of quality in your animals.

Meat Production
Rabbits raised to eat.

Fur
Rabbits raised for fur to be tanned and made into novelty, craft and consumer products.

Wool
Rabbits raised for wool. It is important for wool to be clean, durable and easily processed. The Angora rabbit is one breed raised for its wool. If you want to raise Angoras, learn where the wool can be marketed for a profit.

Laboratory Use
Rabbits raised to be used by laboratories for research. Licenses may be required.

Pets
Rabbits raised for companionship. Pet stores may be a place for you to sell extra rabbits.

Bounding Ahead

1. Talk to two local rabbit breeders. Decide what they use their rabbits for. Ask why they made that choice.

2. Visit someone doing something you would like to do when you grow up. Talk to them about their job. List what the person likes and doesn’t like about their job. Share your list with your helper.
Handling and Showing

It is important to learn how to pick up and carry a rabbit. Rabbits can scratch or bite when they do not feel safe. Your rabbit will have to be handled a lot to present it for show.

Hop to it!

1. Picking Up a Rabbit
Use a stuffed model rabbit to practice picking up a rabbit. When you are ready, show your helper or your parent how you do this with a live rabbit. Tape a picture of you holding a rabbit in the frame.

2. Removing from a Cage
Place the palm of your right hand under the middle of the abdomen and lift. Take the rabbit out of the cage with the backside first and the head last. When the rabbit is taken out of the cage, place your left hand around the hindquarters.

3. Turning a Rabbit
When you are showing or checking your rabbit you will need to examine the underside of your rabbit. Try this style of turning your rabbit.
* Have the rabbit face your left side and firmly hold the rabbit’s ears in the palm of your hand. Hold the head securely with a fold of fur and skin at the back of the neck between your fingers and the palm of your right hand.
* Lift the rabbit with your left hand cupped around the hindquarters. Support your rabbit with your left hand as you turn the rabbit over.
* Complete the turn, rest the hindquarters on a table so that your left hand is free to examine the rabbit. Finish the examination.
* Reverse the turn supporting the rabbit with your left hand on the hindquarters. Pose your rabbit after you set it down.

Note: Repeat the above process using the opposite hand listed if you are left hand dominant.

4. Showmanship
When participating in rabbit showmanship you will want to show that you and your rabbits can do all the required moves. You will also be demonstrating your knowledge and the ability to communicate to others. Sometimes the judge will ask all the participants to do the moves together as a group. Other times the judge will ask you to do them by yourself.

Science Standard: Organisms and environment

Rabbit Skill: Handling rabbits for show
Life Skill: Communicating with others
Success Indicator: Demonstrates how to hold and show a rabbit
Rabbit Showmanship Steps

1. Carry a Rabbit
To carry a rabbit, tuck the head under one arm and support the rabbit's weight by placing the other hand under the rump. One hand supports the weight of the rabbit, while the other hand controls the rabbit. Keep a firm grip since a rabbit dropped from this position can easily break its back. You may remove your hand when you feel confident about being in control. If the judge asks you to move to a different spot on the table, always pick up the rabbit for carrying before moving to a new location.

2. Pose Rabbit
When you arrive at the exhibit table place the rabbit on the table immediately and pose it. Pose the front feet even with the eyes. Rear feet should be firmly on the table with toes even with the haunch (thigh joint) with tail up. Facing left is the natural position for a right-handed presenter.

3. Checking Ears
Check the ears for bugs or sores, legible tattoo in rabbit's left ear, torn or missing portions of ears that distract from general appearance, ear carriage.

4. Check Eyes
Check each eye for signs of blindness or abnormalities. Check for watery eyes or moon eyes (this is an eye with a milky appearance), unmatched eyes (two eyes not of the same color), spots or specks in the eye, off colored eyes (eyes other than color called for in breed standard). Abnormal eye discharge.

5. Turn Rabbit Over
Turn the rabbit over, supporting the rabbit on the table or against your body. The rabbit will remain in this position until checking the tail.

6. Check Nose
Check nose for sign of cold. The animal shows a white nasal discharge when they have sniffles. Matted fur on inside of front legs may indicate presence of cold.

7. Check Teeth
With your hand over the area of the eyes, place a thumb and index finger on each side of the split lip and push back lips to expose teeth. You are checking for tooth defects such as malocclusion, broken or missing teeth.

8. Check Front Legs
Extend the front legs to check for straightness. Run your index finger and thumb the length of each front leg.

9. Neck Area
Check neck for a dewlap (some breeds do not allow a dewlap), fur mites, fungus and abscesses.

10. Check Front Feet
Check toenails by pushing thumb into center of paw. Push back fur with index finger if necessary to see toenails. Don't forget to check dew claws. You are checking for missing or broken toes, unclipped toenails on corresponding feet, (including dew claws), proper color toenails for the breed as stated in the breed standard.

11. Check Body for Rupture or Abscess
Run your hand over the chest and abdominal area to check for any abscesses, tumors, swollen glands, or abnormalities. Ruptures may appear as lumps or large bumps under the skin, normally in the belly area. Abscesses may appear as red lumps or sores in the belly, neck, or chin areas, or under the legs.
Check Rear Legs
Extend rear legs out straight by placing your cupped hand ahead of the rear legs and pushing toward the feet. Legs should not be bent, bowed, deformed or cow-hooked.

Check Gender
Check for the sex of the rabbit. Place your thumb below the vent area and push toward front of rabbit with the index finger. You are also checking for signs of vent disease (as indicated by a scabby, reddened sex organ), a split penis and testicles. All bucks in the regular show classes must show two normally descended testicles at the time of judging. Juniors must show both or neither testicles because juniors showing only one descended testicle at the time of judging would be disqualified from competition.

Check Hocks
Check the bottom of the hind feet for sore hocks. You are checking for sore, infected or bleeding areas. Bare areas may indicate fungal growth.

Check Tail
Return the rabbit to its posed position. Check to determine: if tail is straight, permanently set to either side or permanently out of line. A screw tail or bob tail will disqualify an animal from judging competition.

Check for Surface Color, Undercolor, Ring Color, Foreign Spots, or Smut
Check the fur for foreign colored spots (white spots in colored animal, or colored spots in white animal, unless specifically excepted in the breed standard). Inspect fur for smut on the usable portion of the pelt on a Pointed White, Californian, or Himalayan marked breeds and varieties. Check for color. Check surface color. Check undercolor and/or ring color by stroking fur forward or blowing into fur over the entire body. Tan Pattern: any tan pattern marking appearing in the marking pattern of Pointed White, Californian, or Himalayan marked breeds or varieties, is a disqualification. Wrong undercolor: color other than calted for in the breed standard, white hairs (excessive white hairs in a colored section) are also disqualifications.

Fur Quality and Cleanliness
Stroke fur toward rabbit's head to show fur going back into natural position, either flyback/rollback.
Check density (standing/upright fur) such as Rex, Mini Rex, Silver Fox, by patting and blowing into several areas. Some wool breeds, such as Angoras and Fuzzy Lops should be felt and blown into to check density. Stroke rabbit from head to rear for a molt condition. Check for stains on fur.

Evaluation of Overall Balance
Pose the rabbit for evaluation. Check front, rear and side views for overall balance. Locate each of the following with your hand: shoulders, ripspread and fullness of loin. Check hindquarters for fullness by stretching your hand across width and depth of the rump. Check hips for smoothness and fullness by running your hand over the top of the hip to the tail.
Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did
• What happened the first time you picked up a rabbit?

Process What’s Important
• Why is practicing during the cooler part of the day important? Why don’t you pick a rabbit up by its ears or legs? What did you learn about the rabbit by showing it?

Generalize to Your Life
• How did showing others how to handle and show a rabbit help you learn better?

Apply What You Learned
• How can you help others learn without telling them how?

Tips for the Participant

Appearance
You need to demonstrate good posture, keep eye contact with the judge throughout the presentation, smile, dress neatly, remove chewing gum, hat or cap. Pull long hair back and wear a long-sleeved shirt or lab coat.

Knowledge
Demonstrate quick, confident and correct response to questions asked about your rabbit.

Actions
Carry out actions in a confident manner, always being considerate of your animals, fellow showmen and the judge. Demonstrate a gentle and smooth flowing presentation.

Did you know?
You are expected to show the front, rear and sides of your rabbit in the order requested by the judge, so he or she can see the overall balance. If a judge asks you to move to a different spot on the table, you are expected to pick the rabbit up for carrying before moving to the new location.

Check this out!
You might want to use the model made from the National 4-H Curriculum Rabbit Pattern BU-07199 to practice your handling skills.

Bounding Ahead

1. Show your group how to handle a rabbit. Tell what you are doing and why.
2. Demonstrate proper showmanship techniques at a rabbit show.
3. Assist a judge at a rabbit show.