Making Tracks

Rabbit Project Activity Guide

Name________________________

County______________________
Note to the Adult Helper

If you were a project helper for one or more youth involved in completing Rabbit 1 you know what a great experience this important role is. As a helper you are in a perfect 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 Rabbit 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 they are completed and the two of you discuss them
- Help youth 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, Making Tracks, is the second in the series of three for youth that also includes Rabbit 1 What’s Happening?, Rabbit 3 All Ears and the Rabbit 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 in the guides have several parts: A description of the skills to be practiced; discussion questions; suggestions for additional activities; and additional helpful information. The Success Indicator listed 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.” Review this before the youth begins each level and after completing each level.

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 most effectively help 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 characterizing youth, life skill development, teaching experientially, meeting ideas and answers to many of the activities in the youth guides.

Experiential Learning Model

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

1. Experience the activity; perform, do it
2. Share hands-on, reactions, observations, policy
3. Process by discussing, react to the experience, analyze, reflect
4. Generalize to connect the experience to real-world examples
5. Apply what was learned to a similar or different situation; practice

Youth share how they will use the project and life skill practiced in other parts of their lives.

Youth describe the experience and their reaction.

Youth discuss what was most important about what they did.

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As you can see, the youth first attempt the activity without assistance. After the youth do as much as they can 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? Sample questions are included following each experience. 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

2004 Revision Team: Jim Adams, Coordinator and Liaison; Cindy Wickizer, WA; Jeff Dick, OH; Gary Michaud, KS; Cheryl Blackman, TX; Dana Koelzer, ID; Tyler Garfield, UT; Theresa Christen, WI; Nancy Searle, MA; Conall Addisson, KS; Megan Kline, OH.

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Design and Production: Northern Design Group, MN.

Special thanks to the American Rabbit Breeders Association

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Rabbit Resources
Let's get started!
This guide is an important part of the rabbit project. Rabbit 2 offers you new challenges and opportunities to explore a wide range of activities related to rabbits. You'll also have fun meeting new people, becoming better acquainted with your community and expanding your interests and goals. Like Rabbit 1, an achievement program is included to guide your efforts and provide you an opportunity to be recognized for meeting your goals.

Each chapter teaches skills about related topics. Through a short activity, you'll learn rabbit life and science skills.

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 activity.

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
The choice is yours! The person you choose to be your project helper needs to be willing to support your efforts to complete Level 2 of the Rabbit Achievement Program. Your helper will meet with you to help you set goals, plan activities, suggest resources to use and talk over each activity with you. He or she will date and initial your achievement program each time you have successfully completed an activity.

Write the name and phone number of your helper here:

My Project Helper

Phone #

E-mail

Good luck with Rabbit 2
Making Tracks
Track Your Goals

Name ____________________________

# Rabbits ________ Breed(s) __________

What I want to do and learn.
1. __________________________________
2. __________________________________
3. __________________________________
4. __________________________________

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

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<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
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<td>An Animal Career…Is It for Me?</td>
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</table>

Bounding Ahead
Optional Activities

Select and do any of the Bounding Ahead activities in Making Tracks or make up your own. Record the page and number of each one you complete and have your helper initial it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Write your own activity here.

Date ___________________ Helper's Initials _____________
Chapter 1

Rabbit Selection and Showing

You Be the Judge

When you take a test at school you need to have the answers ready in your head. The teacher has the answer key ready to grade. As a rabbit judge you have to have all the answers ready to go. You have to know the ideal conformation of a rabbit. This is the answer key for a rabbit judge. When you can judge a rabbit you can make good decisions that will increase the good qualities of rabbits in your rabbitry. These decisions will be based on the standards of the breed. By comparing and observing you will be able to decide which rabbit is the best one.

Hop to it!

Have a small judging contest with your friends. Using the pictures below write your placing and reasons on the score card and compare with your friend’s. After you have placed this class of rabbits, do this activity with live rabbits.

Score Card

Ideal Commercial Body Type

| a. | Compact body with depth and width that balance, tapering slightly from the hindquarters to the shoulders. |
| b. | Very plump and full over and around the hips. |
| c. | Size of head, ears and bone in proportion to the general composition for proper balance. |
| d. | Firm, meaty saddle carried as full and meaty as possible to nape of neck. Meaty over ribs and shoulders. |

Head: Well-shaped, well-filled face and jaws, set on a short neck.

Ears: Carried erect and well together, strong at base, rounded tips. Well furred.

Rabbit 1 | Rabbit 2 | Rabbit 3 | Rabbit 4
--- | --- | --- | ---

Check this out!

A copy of the Official Rabbit Score Card will help you learn more about judging rabbits. To get one, write to:

American Rabbit Breeders Association
P.O. Box 426
Bloomington, IL 61702
**Rabbit Rap**

**Share What You Did**
- How did you place the four rabbits?

**Process What’s Important**
- Why is it important to learn how to make good decisions? How did you decide what your placements would be?

**Generalize to Your Life**
- When you have to decide between two things, what decision making steps do you consider?

**Apply What You Learned**
- What type of information do you gather to help make important decisions?

---

**Rabbit Facts**

**Hints On Giving Reasons**

Most of the time you’ll have an opportunity to present reasons orally rather than in writing. How well you do will depend on these six items.

1. **Accuracy**
   - Point out the obvious and most important points in the class.

2. **Delivery**
   - Present your reasons confidently and sincerely about six to eight feet from the judge with hands behind your back.

3. **Organization**
   - Bring out the more important and general points first.

4. **Completeness**
   - Bring out all the major differences.

5. **Terms**
   - Use terms acceptable to rabbit breeders. Use comparative terms when comparing pairs of rabbits such as smoother, thicker, stronger arch, rather than smooth, meaty, thick, etc.

6. **Length**
   - Never go over two minutes in length for a class of four rabbits.

---

**Bounding Ahead**

1. Hold a mini-rabbit judging contest with two or three friends. Compare your placing.

2. Figuring your score. In a judging contest with four animals in a class, the judge will announce the placing for the class (e.g., 1-2-3-4) and the “cute” or differences between animals in each pair (e.g., 3-2-4). The larger the cut number (from 1 to 8 points) the more differences. The total of the three cut numbers cannot exceed 15. Given the following, see if you can figure the score out of the 50 possible points.

   **Your placing**
   - 3 - 2 - 1 - 4
   - 3 - 2 - 4

   **Official placing cuts**
   - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4
   - 3 - 2 - 4
   - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4
   - 3 - 2 - 4
   - 3 - 2 - 4

   **Total Lost**
   - 10 pts.

   **My Score**
   - 50 - 10 = 40 pts.

Given official placing of 3-2-4-1 and cuts of 5-2-4 what would your score if you placed the class 1-4-3-2? See if your answer is 20 points.
Is My Breed Four or Six Class?

1. Match the listed breed to the correct class. You will need to refer to the American Rabbit Breeders Association Standard of Perfection to determine the senior ideal weight.

2. Match the listed age and breed to the correct class.

5-month New Zealand
6-month Dutch
7-month Flemish Giant
8-month Chinchilla
19-month Havana

New Zealand Silver Marten
American Polish English Lop

Rabbit Breeds:

- Jersey Wooly
- New Zealand
- Silver Marten
- English Lop
- American Polish
- Dutch
- Flemish
- Chinchilla
- Havana

Is It a Good Idea to Breed Rabbits? Yes! Rabbits are a lot of fun! The show starts you cannot correct the mistake.

Junior
Intermediate
Senior

6 Class
4 Class

Rabbit Skill: Life Skills
Success Indicator: Makes decisions for own rabbits
Science Standard: Characteristics of organisms

Determine the correct class for your rabbits and judge them on their age or sex.
Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did
- How did you choose what classes matched?

Process What’s Important
- What classes do your rabbits fit into?
- Why are there several rabbit classes?

Generalize to Your Life
- How does being in groups help you learn better and have more fun?

Apply What You Learned
- What helps you decide which book to read or game to play?

Explore more at
www.4-hcurriculum.org
National 4-H Curriculum

Rabbit Facts

Show Ready

Be prepared. Rabbits are fun to show. To win takes a lot of planning and hard work. Winning rabbits must be at the top of their class. If you enter a rabbit in the junior class that is only two months old it will not compete as well as the rabbit that is five to six months in age. The five to six month-old rabbit will have firmer flesh, will be in good prime coat (not a baby coat) and will have had three to four more months of training. You will have also had more time to condition your rabbit with nutrients. To be the star of the show a rabbit must be the top of his class in the Standard of Perfection for rabbits.

Four and Six Class Rabbits

Four general classes are provided for all breeds whose senior ideal weight is under nine pounds. These breeds are considered “Four Class Rabbits.” Classes are:
- Senior Buck, 6 months and over
- Senior Doe, 6 months and over
- Junior Buck, under 6 months
- Junior Doe, under 6 months

Six classes are provided for all breeds whose senior ideal weight is nine pounds or over. These breeds are considered “Six Class Rabbits.” Classes are:
- Senior Buck, 8 months and over
- Senior Doe, 8 months and over
- Intermediate Buck, 6–8 months
- Intermediate Doe, 6–8 months
- Junior Buck, under 6 months
- Junior Doe, under 6 months

Some shows may have classes: pre-junior, meat pen, single fryer, roaster, stewer, breed fur and wool.

Did you know?
Rabbits have been mentioned in all of recorded history. They have been used for food in Asia for more than 3,000 years, and marketed for food in Europe for over 1,000 years. In some cultures, rabbits have been used in religious ceremonies.

Bounding Ahead

1. Visit a rabbitry or show that has several different breeds of rabbits and decide which classes they fit into.
Recognizing Rabbit Types

Do you know the different body types of rabbits? As a rabbit raiser you may already know most of them. In this activity you’ll have fun helping others learn them.

Hop to it!

Collect pictures of at least 1–4 breeds for each of the five body types listed under Rabbit Facts and Tips. Make a matching game or some other type of fun way to help others learn to associate breeds with their types. Place your favorite breed of each body type in the spaces on this page.

- Semi-Arch
- Full Arch
- Commercial
- Cylindrical Type
- Compact
Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did

• What is the difference between the various types?
• Which type is most difficult to identify? Why?

Process What’s Important

• How did you help others learn the types?

Generalize to Your Life

• What did you learn about helping others learn?

Apply What You Learned

• How does knowing the type help you select better rabbits?
• Where, in your daily life, might you use this learning strategy? How?

Rabbit Types

Full Arch

This group is easily recognized by an arch which starts at the back of the neck to the base of the tail. Full arched rabbits are much deeper in body height than width. They have long limbs and a long body. Full arched rabbits have a racy appearance. Full arched breeds: Belgian Hare, Checkered Giant, English Spot, Rhinelander, Britannia Petite, Tan

Semi-Arch

These rabbits are sometimes referred to as Mandolin type. They are well arched, but starting behind the shoulders instead of the back of the neck and continuing to the base of the tail. Semi-arched breeds: American, Beveren, English Lop, Flemish Giant, Giant Chinchilla

Compact

These rabbits are considered good meat type but are smaller than commercial. Some are round or tubular, while others are the conventional brooder type. The width, depth and length are controlled by differences in weight. Compact breeds: English Angora, Standard Chinchilla, Dutch Florida White, Havana, Lilac, Netherland Dwarf, Polish, Silver, Dwarf Hotot, Jersey Wooly, Mini Rex, American Fuzzy Lop, Mini Lop

Commercial

Most of the meat producing breeds belong to this group. These breeds excel in width and depth of body, fullness of loin, roundness of hips and rump and hardness in flesh. Commercial type rabbits have the smallest amount of waste when dressed. Most are medium length rabbits. Commercial breeds: French Angora, Champagne D’Argent, Creme D’Argent, Californian, Cinnamon, American Chinchilla, French Lop, Harlequin, Hotot, New Zealand, Palomino, Rex, Sable, Satin, Silver Fox, Silver Marten, Satin Angora, Giant Angora

Cylindrical

The body is slim, round and long enough to show off markings. Head rather slim and long: legs fine in bone and long; body should lie snake like upon the judging table. The only breed of this type is the Himalayan.

Bounding Ahead

1. Attend a rabbit show and talk with one breeder of each of the five types of rabbits about the characteristics of their favorite breed.

2. Use flash cards of breed pictures to identify types.

Acknowledgments: Adapted from Kansas 4-H Rabbit Curriculum Notebook
# Rabbit Coat Types

What's on the outside is just one way that rabbit breeds may be different from one another. You know how breeds may vary by body type, size and color. Now you can explore how their coats may also differ.

**Hop to it!**

Draw a line from each fact to the coat type/s it describes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACT</th>
<th>COAT TYPE</th>
<th>FACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparent hair shaft</td>
<td>NORMAL</td>
<td>Ideal length of 5/8 inch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be harvested 3–4 times a year</td>
<td>REX</td>
<td>The most common coat type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has guard hairs</td>
<td>Has an undercoat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes rollback &amp; flyback variations</td>
<td>SATIN</td>
<td>Plush like feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber chambers make it a good insulator</td>
<td>WOOL</td>
<td>Has a glossy sheen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More brilliant colors</td>
<td>Guard hairs are shorter</td>
<td>Stand upright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat may be plucked or sheared</td>
<td>Result of a mutation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rabbit Rap

Share What You Did
- Which coat type was hard to identify? Why?
- Which of the four coat types does your favorite breed have?

Process What's Important
- What management or health issues may be related to the rabbit's coat?
- What is a possible use of each coat type?

Generalize to Your Life
- How does grouping information help you learn?

Apply What You Learned
- When is it helpful to separate items into similar groups?

Fur Types

Normal Fur
The majority of rabbit breeds have "normal" fur consisting of guard hairs and underfur.

The guard hairs are the longer, coarser projecting hair of the coat. Guard hairs offer protection to the underfur and they give resilience to the coat. The underfur is softer and shorter than the guard hairs. Within the normal furred breeds, most breeds have what is termed as flyback fur. This means that if you stroke the coat from the hindquarters to the shoulder, the fur should return quickly to its natural position (it "flies" back to normal). Other normal furred breeds have what is called rolled back coat. This means that if you stroke the coat from the hindquarters to the shoulders, the fur returns to its normal position more gradually.

Rex Fur - Rex fur is short and plush-like. Rex fur stands upright and has guard hairs almost as short as the undercoat. This fur feels extremely smooth to the touch. The ideal length for Rex fur is $\frac{1}{8}$ inch. It is a disqualification if Rex fur is less than $\frac{1}{8}$ inch or more than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch long. Rex fur should be extremely dense and have a springy resistance to the touch.

Satin Fur - This fur is fine, silky and very soft and dense. The special feature of Satin fur is its glossy sheen. Satin fur looks glossy because of the gloss-like hair-shaft and its ability to reflect light. The greater transparency makes Satin fur appear more brilliant in color compared to normal furred rabbits. Like normal and Rex fur, Satin Fur consists of guard hairs and underfur. Ideal length for Satin fur is one inch.

Wool - Angora breeds produce a high quality wool that can be made into very soft, warm garments. Angora rabbit wool is much finer than sheep's wool. Angora wool can be harvested 3–4 times a year. The wool can be plucked or sheared. Angora rabbits raised for wool can produce $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of wool each year.

Bounding Ahead

1. Invite members or breeders to bring breeds with each of the coat types to a club meeting. Compare how each feels, measure how long the fur/wool is, look at characteristics such as rollback and flyback, resiliency, and sheen.

2. Attend a rabbit show and observe the judging of the fur and wool classes. Listen to the judges comments and make a list of words that the judge uses to describe the entries.

Acknowledgement:
Written by Nancy Searle