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B.C. 4-H

Communication Manual

Educational Displays

Purpose

An educational display is a visual method of presenting information quickly. It is an educational exhibit of objects, pictures, lettering, etc., which when viewed, should:

- Stop the viewer
- Hold his attention
- Give him a lasting impression

The obvious purpose of building an educational display is to provide a message. Educational displays can develop the interest of those who see them, influence their attitude, increase their knowledge and stimulate their action.

Building educational displays is also a great benefit to you the 4-H club member. Through building displays you can:

- create new interest in 4-H
- develop new ideas
- learn team work and cooperation
- utilize your project knowledge
- have FUN making the display
- enter competitions

Planning

The most successful displays are those that are original and reflect the 4-H'ers own ideas and own form of expression. A display should be a club project and as many members as possible should be involved in the planning and construction of it. Consider the following steps in planning your educational display:

Select a Topic

An educational display should present "one idea" to the viewer. Remember, you have only about 1/2 to 1 minute to get your message across'.

Select the Purpose

Define the purpose of your exhibit. What do you wish to accomplish—arouse interest, seek support, give information, promote action?

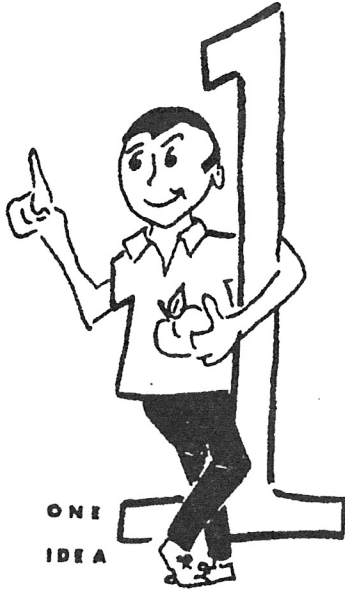
Gather Material

There are many sources of materials and information for your educational displays. Some sources are: 4-H manuals, agricultural publications, libraries, magazines, commercial displays and advertisements. You should review your material and decide what is useful and what is not. Be selective and use only pertinent, factual information.



Choose a Title

People at a fair or rally are in a hurry - they have only a little time to see many things. To have them stop, view and understand your exhibit) you must have a catchy title.

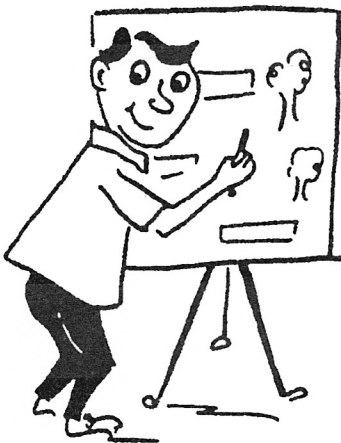


Design of Display

Your design attracts the viewer to your educational display and guides his eyes to what's important in the exhibit. There are several "standard" types of displays and these are:

- *Contrast and Comparison*
This type contains two ideas—the old and new, before and after or the good and the bad. Remember to make all situations realistic and don't go to opposite extremes.
- *Related Series of Panels*
This type of display lends itself to telling the important steps in a process or a series of consecutive steps.
- *Miniatures and Enlargement*
Though life size objects are preferable, they are often not too practicable. Miniatures (in proportion) can be used effectively and enlargements can attract attention and bring out detail.

Your panel can use any of these types individually or combine them to produce a more original exhibit.



Preparation

Sketch a Plan

Take time to sketch the "idea" for your display. You don't need to be an artist to make a sketch. Use stick figures for people. Circles, squares and simple outlines are enough to provide a general outline. The important point is to put your ideas down on paper to help and let the sketch stimulate continued thought and suggestions for improvement.

Size of Displays

Generally speaking most educational displays are built to be entered into competitions at rallies, and fairs. The *maximum* size for such competition is:

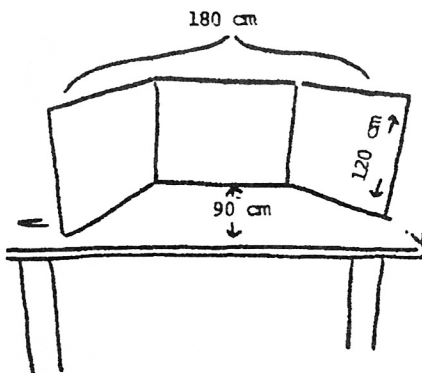
180 cm in width × 120 cm in height × 90 cm in depth

The standard education display consists of three panels that form the blackboard. These panels are usually hinged together and may be of equal size or vary in size.

Materials

You can choose from hundreds of materials to build your educational display. Wood, wood products and cardboard usually provide the basic structure. Some of the interesting materials you might consider are:

- enlarged photographs
- posters and charts
- maps and graphs
- paintings
- fans
- sample pamphlets
- music or sound device
- push buttons



- cartoons
- green growing plants
- models and miniatures
- lights and flashers
- Plasticine
- paper mache
- toys and dolls
- paint and wallpaper
- cellophane
- turntables
- small animals (rabbits, chickens)
- styrofoam
- dyed sawdust
- coloured sand
- moss
- trees of painted sponge or cotton batten
- mirrors
- clear plastic sheets

Centre of Interest

A good design has a focal point called "a center of interest". In an educational display this center of interest is the heart of the message and every other object is secondary. Remember to start with the center of interest *and then* place the other objectives or lettering in the display.

Spacing

Give yourself lots of room. Don't "Crowd" your display. The viewer usually looks first at the center panel, and then the right panel and finally the left panel. Use lines, pointers, arrows, ribbons, etc. to lead the eye towards the center of interest.

Attractiveness

Use an orderly, neat arrangement with clear lettering, clean charts and placards. Leave large amounts of open space so the display is easily viewed and read. Always include the 4-H club emblem and the name of your club on your display.

Balance

Arrange the objects; in your education display so that the design is balanced. Balance can be:

- *Formal*: One half is balanced the same as the other half.
- *Informal*: Is used to balance shapes and objects that are not alike. Informal balance allows for more creativeness and is usually more interesting.

Proportion

Printing and pictures should be in keeping with the size of the display. Objects should be the right size in relation to each other and to the space of the exhibit.

Harmony

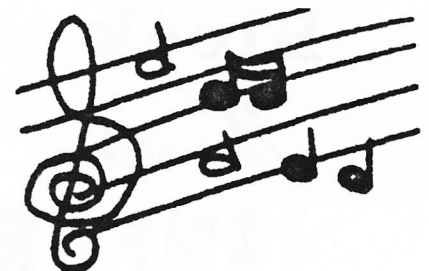
There should be harmony in all visual aids, between the them or idea, printing and colour, size and shape. When all objects and materials used seem to belong together and have a feeling Of unity, then they are in "harmony."

Rhythm

Good rhythm mans that the design carries the eye easily through the display. Rhythm can be achieved by repetition of colour and shapes or through lines, arrows, pointers, etc.

Unity

Stick to one idea, don't wander away from your message. This is unity of purpose.





Keep it simple

Choose objects to display that go well together, not only colour wise, but in size and shape. This is unity of design. Wagon wheels go well in an exhibit of livestock or flowers, but not so well with kitchen appliances. Light, feminine-looking letters are appropriate for food and clothing displays, heavy letters for displays in farm machinery and safety displays.

Simplicity

Before you jam your educational display with armloads of this and that or with too much lettering, stop a moment and take note -there is nothing wrong with empty space. The less clutter in your display, the more likely the viewer will see what you want him to see.

If five jars of canned goods can make the point as well as fifteen, settle for five. If you can tell the story of dairying in your community just as well without displaying trophies won by your 4-H Dairy Club, leave them out. Before putting an object into your display, ask yourself "does it help tell the story?"

Lettering

Lettering is a visual part of most educational displays. It is very important that it be easy to read. A few well-chosen words can effectively speak the message of the display to the viewer. Certain things to note in lettering:

Capital Words Are Much Easier To Read If The First Letter Of Each Is Capitalized And The Rest Are Small Letters. Capitals look more important and forceful than small letters—COMPARE THIS LINE WITH THE NEXT LINE FOR EASE OF READING. Capitals are more difficult to read than small letters.

Colours can make objects appear larger or smaller, closer or farther away. These colour combinations will make the lettering stand out.

- Dark Blue on White
- Black on Yellow
- Green on White
- Black on White

Raised letters of cardboard, wood, styrofoam, etc. attract the eye.

Variation in the lettering, e.g. block style, slant, written, etc. can emphasize certain key words. Keep your variations to a minimum for effectiveness.

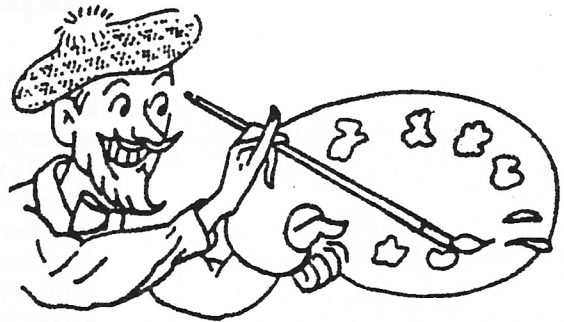
If you use stencils, choose one that is large and easy to read. Stencils that have divided or broken letters are hard to read and should be filled in to be solid.

Block	<i>Script</i>	Old English
<i>Written</i>	Bold	OUTLINE
INFORMAL		Chisel

Colour

Colour affects everyone—it adds interest, beauty, emotion and appeal to your education display. Choose a colour “scheme” that is effective and appropriate for your display. A colour “scheme” is a combination of two or more colours:

- that go together, and
- that are appropriate to the subject



Dark rich colours are appropriate for industry, livestock, safety. Light soft colours are best for homemaking and feminine subjects. Yellow, greens and browns work well for agricultural subjects.

Some colours are “warm,” aggressive, stimulating, cheerful, exciting and loud, such as yellow, orange and red. They are advancing colours and make things appear larger. Other colours are “cool,” calm, restful and depressing, such as violet, blue and green. They are receding colours and make things appear smaller. In nature colours are “softened” by mixing with brown. “Soft” greens, blues and browns appear in large masses in nature. Bright bold intense colour dots the landscape in small amounts. A good rule to follow is to use “soft” colours for backgrounds and large masses in your educational display. Use bright, intense colours for smaller areas and possibly for the center of interest.

When combining colours, there is no hard and fast rule to follow. Colour should be balanced, light and dark, warm and cool, bright and dull. Two or three colours are enough.

Competitions

Examining the educational display score card and using it to evaluate your display provides a good check list to improve your display.

Resources

- Kit #8, *A Guide to Educational Displays*.
- 4-H #1805, *Communications Leaders Guide*.
- 4-H #148 (C), *Educational Display Score Card*.

