

**4-H Action Center  
Instructions and Ideas  
from the 2001 Wisconsin 4-H  
Southern District  
Leadership Team**



A packet compiled by the youth of the 2001 4-H Southern District Leadership Team to enhance the effectiveness for other youth leading action centers and other hands-on activities.

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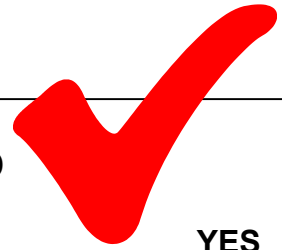
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# ACTION DEMO

## CHECKLIST FOR A GOOD ACTION DEMO



### TOPIC

- |  | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Was the topic interesting to general public causing them to stop, watch, or participate? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the topic stimulate questions from the audience?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Was the topic of suitable length?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the topic include something "hands-on" for the audience to do?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### ORGANIZING THE CONTENT

- |   |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Was the topic organized into short "show and tell" segments which are done repeatedly?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Were segments presented in logical order?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Were segments explained so that the audience understands "why"?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Was it evident that the 4-H'er had studied the subject in depth and could answer questions from the audience? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did visuals, pictures, posters, or actual objects clarify the important ideas?                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### PRESENTING THE DEMONSTRATION

- |  |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Did the 4-H'er seem enthusiastic?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the 4-H'er encourage audience involvement by having a "hands-on" activity? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the 4-H'er speak directly to the audience?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the 4-H'er show evidence of practice and experience?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the 4-H'er show she/he enjoys talking to the audience?                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the 4-H'er show enthusiasm, friendliness, and business-like manner?        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Did the 4-H'er tell about what they learned through this 4-H project?          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## HOW CAN I GET THE AUDIENCE INVOLVED?

The first thing you need to do is be enthusiastic and attract people's attention as they walk by your table. You might have a colorful tablecloth or poster to spark their interest. You might ask them a question like: "Would you like to play this game?" or "Have you ever made pretzels? Would you like to try?" The best way to attract their attention is having people around your table doing something. People love to do hands-on activities, so once you get a few people at your table, they will attract others.

### Involve the audience by having them:

- do what you are doing
- do a "hands-on" activity
- judge the quality of various items
- play a game
- answer questions

***Just remember the key to a good action demo is getting your audience involved.***

## HOW LONG DOES MY ACTION DEMO HAVE TO BE?

Your action demo may vary in length. The demonstration itself should only last 3-5 minutes and you do it over and over again with different members of the public during your assigned time period.

## WHAT IS AN ACTION DEMO?

*An action demo is a fun, new way to share what you have learned in your 4-H project with others. It's kind of like the "Show and Tell" you may have done in school, but with more action. Action means you need to get the audience involved in doing what you are doing, not just showing them.*

*An action demo is not like a regular demonstration where the audience sits and listens to a prepared talk. An action demo lets the audience get involved.*

*An action demo is given anywhere there are a lot of people, such as a county or state fair, shopping mall, street fair, or 4-H event. Your job as the demonstrator is to interest them in your topic so that they stop and try their hand at what you are doing.*

## HOW DO I CHOOSE A TOPIC FOR MY ACTION DEMO?

An action demo can be on almost any subject. The topic should be something you like and feel confident talking about. Here's a few questions to ask when choosing a topic:

- Is it something that can be done in 3-5 minutes?
- Can it easily be repeated over and over again to fill the assigned time?
- Is it something that would interest the general public?
- Is there something "hands-on" for the audience to do?
- Can the supplies for the "hands-on" activity be used over and over again or will they have to be replaced every time? *(Note: If they have to be replaced, this will add to the cost.)*

A fun way to share your project with others!

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Bag Puppet

## Targeted Age Group

- Elementary School Age Mostly

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-10 minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 3-4

## Materials/Resources Needed

- White Craft Glue
- Small Brown Paper Bag
- Construction Paper
- Yarn
- Child Safety Scissors
- Markers

## Directions:

1. Draw puppet's eyes, nose and mouth on to the bottom flap of the paper bag.
2. Glue on yarn for the puppet's hair.
3. Put a hand inside the bag to move the puppet's mouth.
4. Use scissors to cut out things such as bow ties and buttons from the construction paper. Glue them onto the bag for puppet's costume.
5. These are just general directions. Directions can vary for different people.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Licorice Straws

## Targeted Age Group

- Anyone

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- Doesn't Matter

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Licorice
- Some Kind of Drink

## Directions:

1. Bite off each end and use it for a straw.

Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Cookie Stacking

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 10-15 seconds

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Cookies
- Optional Prizes
- Stop Watch

## Directions:

1. Have all cookies laid out on the table. (You can have 3-5 people compete at one time.)
2. Give them 10 or 15 seconds to stack as many cookies as they can.
3. When they are done, count the cookies.
4. The winner can have the prize.

## Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

- Don't let them eat the cookies!!!

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## **Activity Name or Project**

- Stress Balls with 4-H Balloons

## **Targeted Age Group**

- Any Age Group

## **Approximate time required to complete this activity**

- A Few Minutes

## **Number of Helpers/Assistants needed**

- 1 or 2 people per 10 projected participants

## **Materials/Resources Needed**

- Balloons—Medium size, doesn't have to be 4-H related
- Flour—Many bags
- If not flour, corn starch
- Funnel

## **Directions:**

1. Put the funnel inside the neck of the balloon.
2. Pour the flour or cornstarch in the funnel.
3. Fill up to moderate amount.
4. Push out any extra air and tie the balloon.

## **Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

- Use heavy-duty balloons.
- Try to prevent water from getting near the flour.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Straw/Tinfoil Boat Contest

## Targeted Age Group

- 8 (with help) and up

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 10 minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 3

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Tinfoil
- Bendable Straws
- 60 Marbles
- Tub of Water—6 Inches Deep (Rubbermaid Container)

## Directions:

1. Give each person 3 straws and on 1 x 1 tinfoil sheet.
2. The object of the game is to make a boat that will float with as many marbles in it as possible.
3. Give prizes to top boat makers every 10 minutes.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- 4-H Balloons and Tattoos

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5 Minutes or Less

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Balloons
- Strings
- Helium Tank
- Temporary Tattoos
- Sponge
- Pie Tin with Water

## Directions for Balloons:

1. Using helium tanks, fill balloons with helium.
2. Tie the balloon.
3. Tie a string to the bottom of the balloon.
4. Tie a slipknot at the end of the string (to be able to put on wrist).

## Directions for Tattoos:

1. Put a sponge in water.
2. Read temporary tattoo directions.
3. Apply the tattoo to the body (arms, hands, etc.)

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Story Telling

## Targeted Age Group

- Younger Children

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- However Long the Story Takes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 (*To read the story*)

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Selection of Books
- An Area for People to Sit Down

## Directions:

1. Read the story.
2. Allow the kids to see the pictures.
3. Stop and discuss the story and pictures.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Rubber Blubber Balls

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-7 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 Helper for Every 3-5 Kids

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Water
- Borax
- White Glue
- Food Coloring
- Plastic Bags
- Disposable Cups
- Disposable Spoons
- Large Container for Water

## Directions:

1. Combine one quart of water with 1 tablespoon of Borax in a large jar. Stir and let stand.
2. Fill a disposable cup  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the way with the Borax solution.
3. Stir in a few drops of food coloring (combine primary colors to get secondary colors.)
4. Add a thin, steady stream of white glue. Stir continuously.
5. Check to see if there are air pockets with glue remaining inside. If so, pop them and return to the Borax solution and stir a little more.
6. Pull the mass of the spoon and drop into a container of cold water.
7. Remove the rubber blubber, squeeze and play.
8. Store in a plastic bag.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Whirls of Run

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 2-3 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1-2

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Sheet of paper
- Scissors
- Paper Clips

## Directions:

1. Cut out a  $6\frac{1}{2}$  by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  wide strip of paper. (Use pinking shears for best results.)
2. Starting at the top, cut a 3 inch slip down through the middle of the strip to form a pair of "wings".
3. Fold down the "wings" in the opposite directions.
4. Attach a paper clip to the bottom of the strip for a weight.
5. Drop the finished gyrocopter and watch it spin to the ground.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- 4-H Wheel of Fortune

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 1 Minute or More

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Large Wheel with Pegs and Labels for Different Prizes
- Prizes (4-H Promotional preferred, but any prize works).

## Directions:

1. Spin the wheel.
2. Give the prize out according to color that it landed on.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Tie-Dye Banner

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-20 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 2-5

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Cloth
- Green Dye
- 2 Tubs
- Water
- Rubber Bands
- Permanent Black Markers
- Plastic Grocery Bags

## Directions:

1. Take permanent markers and draw the 4-H logo, or anything related to 4-H on cloth.
2. Tie numerous rubber bands in different areas. You may twist cloth so it turns out in "designs".
3. Put cloth in the dye for about 1 minute, or less.
4. Squeeze out excess dye.
5. Undo rubber bands.
6. Put banner in plastic bag to take home.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Paper Flowers

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-10 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1-2

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Tissue Paper
- Pipe Cleaners
- Scissors

## Directions:

1. Select 8 pieces of tissue paper.
2. Fold the pieces together using accordion style (back and forth).
3. Put a piece of pipe cleaner around the middle of the folded paper.
4. Fold the paper in half.
5. Shape the rough edge into a round circle-like shape.
6. Unfold.
7. Pull the pieces upward one at a time.
8. Shape into a flower.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Origami Butterflies

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-10 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 2-3

## Materials/Resources Needed

- 6 x 6 Inch Piece of Paper
- 1 x 4 Inch Strips of Paper/Curling Ribbon
- Glue
- Scissors
- Googly Eyes
- Markers

## Directions:

1. Fold origami paper in half to form a triangle.
2. Fold in half again.
3. Unfold the second triangle.
4. Fold each side so that it crosses the center crease at a right angle.
5. Unfold.
6. Curl ends of the paper strips using the edge of a scissor.
7. Glue on the curled paper strips and googly eyes.
8. Decorate with markers.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Jolly Jumpers

## Targeted Age Group

- 5 or Older

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 10-15 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 2-3

## Materials/Resources Needed

- 10" Pipe Cleaners
- Green Paper Plates-6" (2 pieces)
- Fabric Glue
- Green Felt-1" x 12" (2 pieces)
- Googly Eyes
- Markers
- Green Construction Paper Circles
- Elastic String
- Chopstick/Wood Doule

## Directions:

1. First, paint two 6 inch paper plates green.
2. For each leg, sandwich a 10 inch piece of pipe cleaner between 1 x 12 inch strips of green felt.
3. Join the felt pieces with fabric glue.
4. Glue legs in place around the inside edge of one of the plates.
5. For eyes, add black paint and googly eyes to 2 green construction paper circles and glue them to the inside edge of the plate.
6. Knot one end of a length of elastic string and glue it between the frog's eyes.
7. Glue the second plate a top the first and use paint or markers to give your frog a wide smile.
8. Finally, tie the elastic to a chopstick or wooden doule.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Coloring

## Targeted Age Group

- Anyone

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-10 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Picture to Color from the Coloring Book
- Crayons
- Markers

## Directions:

1. Give people a piece of paper to color.
2. Let them color away.

Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## **Activity Name or Project**

- Making Cutting Boards

## **Targeted Age Group**

- Any Age Group

## **Approximate time required to complete this activity**

- 5-10 Minutes

## **Number of Helpers/Assistants needed**

- 1-2

## **Materials/Resources Needed**

- Wood Cut into Squares
- Sandpaper

## **Directions:**

1. Give kids a board.
2. Tell them to sand until smooth.
3. You have a completed cutting board.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Face Painting

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 3-15 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- The more the better (speeds things up)

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Face Paint
- Brushes
- Poster of examples of what you can do
- Paper Towels/Wet Wipes
- Glass for Water

## Directions:

1. Paint the person's face.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Pasta Doodles

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 20 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1-3

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Construcion Paper
- Cooked Pasta
- Wax Paper

## Directions:

1. Boil pasta. Make soft, but not mushy.
2. Drain and rinse until cool enough to handle.
3. Place noodles on paper and shape into pictures.
4. To keep: cover with wax paper and top with a heavy book so it can dry flat.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Tent Building

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 20 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1-2

## Materials/Resources Needed

- A Tent

## Directions:

1. Tell family (this is a family team building activity) to put the tent together.
2. See how long it takes to put it together.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Ping Pong

## Targeted Age Group

- Old enough to be coordinated

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- Continuous presentaiton

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 player (decent Ping-Pong player required)
- 1 ball retriever

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Big Table
- Portable Net
- Ping-Pong Balls
- Mallets

## Directions:

1. Teach people how to hold the racket. (The different techniques and proper form.)
2. Proceed to play Ping-Pong with them for a short period of time.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- 4-H Mobile

## Targeted Age Group

- Elementary Age

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 15 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1-2

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Green and White Paper
- Wire Clothes Hanger
- Scissors
- String
- Clover or 4-H Models

## Directions:

1. Cut out 4-H and clover shapes from paper.
2. Poke a hole in the top of each shape; thread the string through each hole.
3. Tie shapes onto wire hanger with string.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Clothing Design

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Little People
- Things that need clothes
- Fabric of Different Kinds

## Directions:

1. Put fabric on the person to make them have different clothes and types.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Spaghetti Tower = Teamwork

## Targeted Age Group

- 7-70

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-10 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 for every three groups

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Hard Spaghetti Sticks
- Mini Marshmallows
- Masking Tape
- 3-5 People in Groups
- Ping-Pong Ball

## Directions:

1. Have the groups compete to make a tower that holds the Ping-Pong ball at the top without falling and without taping it on.
2. Use everything to make it.

## Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

- Add other materials like gumdrops and toothpicks.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Ice Cream in a Bag

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 5-10 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1-4

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Sugar
- Milk or half and half
- Rock Salt
- Ice
- Pint Size Zip Bags
- Gallon Size Zip Bags

## Directions:

1. Fill the large bag half full of ice and add the rock salt. Seal the bag.
2. Put  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of milk or half and half,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon vanilla, and 1 Tablespoon sugar into the small bag and seal again carefully.
3. Place the small bag inside the large one and seal again carefully.
4. Shake until mixture is ice cream (about 5 minutes).
5. Wipe off the top of the small bag, then open carefully and enjoy!

Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## **Activity Name or Project**

- Drumming (Must have experience playing the drums)

## **Targeted Age Group**

- Any Age Group

## **Approximate time required to complete this activity**

- Continuous Presentation

## **Number of Helpers/Assistants needed**

- It would be easier to have two people, moderately experienced.
- One to lead the session, and one to give individual help.

## **Materials/Resources Needed**

- 1 Drum
- A lot of drum sticks or practical substitute (rulers)
- A lot of drum pads or substitutes (anything you can beat on)

## **Directions:**

1. One drummer leads the group. He/She directs everyone to play different simple one-measure rhythms.
2. The other volunteer assists people one-on-one teaching proper technique.

## **Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**

- At the beginning do a short demo on proper technique and simple rhythms.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Guess Jar

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 10 Seconds

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 or None

## Materials/Resources Needed

- A Jar
- Some Item (that fits in a jar)
- A Box to Put in Guesses

## Directions:

1. Have everyone guess how many things are in the jar.
2. Winner gets a prize.

Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Draw Buttons

## Targeted Age Group

- Everyone

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 2-3 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 or 2 (1 to cut out circles and 1 to make buttons)

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Paper
- Button Circle Cutter Machine
- Button Maker
- Button Parts
- Markers

## Directions:

1. Cut Circle
2. Draw Picture in Circle
3. Make Button

## Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

- Do anything you want, it is simple and fun for everyone.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Making Picture Buttons

## Targeted Age Group

- Any Age Group

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 2-3 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 3 (1 to take pictures, 1 to run the compute and printer, and 1 to run the button maker and cutter)

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Digital Camera
- Computer
- Printer/Printer Paper
- Button Circle Cutter Machine
- Button Maker
- Button Parts

## Directions:

1. Follow the directions on camera and button maker.
2. Take the picture.
3. Put in the computer
4. Print out.
5. Cut circle.
6. Make Button.

## Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.

- Do anything you want, it is simple and fun for everyone.

# ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

## Activity Name or Project

- Sewing Card

## Targeted Age Group

- 4-7

## Approximate time required to complete this activity

- 3-5 Minutes

## Number of Helpers/Assistants needed

- 1 or 2 if you are expecting a lot of younger children

## Materials/Resources Needed

- Tag board—Many colors
- Paper Hole Punch
- Scissors
- Yarn—Many colors
- Masking Tape

## Directions:

1. Cut out shapes out of the tag board and punch holes around the perimeter of the shape.
2. Have the child pick yarn and shape and show them how to tape the yarn end to the back of the object. Then wrap tape around the other end of the yarn. Show the child how to "sew" the yarn through the holes and then tape that end down.

**Any other information, suggestions, variations, etc.**