Level I

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Identifying Parts of a Rabbit
Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• How to identify body parts of the rabbit

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• Importance of understanding their preferred learning style

Materials Needed:
• Activity Sheet 1, Rabbit Parts Match
• Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 1, Rabbits Part Match
• Live rabbit (optional)
• Rabbit parts poster and labels (Copy before using)

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Let us see how well you know parts of a rabbit.

Can you identify the parts of a rabbit?

Parts of a Rabbit—Definitions — Key for Leaders

BELLY—The lower part of the body—abdomen. From the bottom of the last rib to the pelvis. Contains the intestines.

CHEST—The front portion of the body between the forelegs and neck—the breast.

CHEEKS—The sides of the face below the eyes.

FOREHEAD—The front part of the head between the eyes and the base of the ears.

HIND (Rear) LEG—Consists of the foot, hock, stifle (knee), and hip joint; the portion behind the attachment of the hind leg to the pelvis.

HINDQUARTERS—The rear portion or section of the body; composed of the loin, hips, hind legs and rump. From the last rib posterior.

HIP—The joint that attaches the hind legs to the trunk of the body.

HOCK—The joint in rabbits that corresponds to the ankle in humans. The joint below the stifle.
KNEE—The second joint of the hind leg—connects the thigh to the leg. Also known as the stifle.

LOIN—The portion of the back on each side of the vertebrae from the last rib posterior to the hip joint.

NECK—The part of the rabbit connecting the head to the body.

NOSTRILS—The two openings of the nose leading to the internal structures of the head.

RIBS—The curved portions of the sides immediately back and under the shoulders and above the belly.

RUMP—The upper, rounded part of the hindquarters.

SHOULDERS—The upper joint of the foreleg, connecting it to the body.

DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. What parts of the rabbit are biggest? Smallest?
2. What parts of the rabbit are easiest to identify? Hardest to identify?

Process:
3. How many of the rabbit’s parts can you remember?
4. Why is it important to know the rabbit’s parts?
5. What rabbit parts have distinct shapes?
6. How does the shape of a rabbit’s part change as it gets older?

Generalize:
7. How do shapes help you identify other non-animal objects? (Example: stop signs, etc.)

Apply:
8. Did you prefer the game or the matching activity? Why?

GOING FURTHER:
• Attend a Rabbit Show
REFERENCES:
*American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) Standard of Perfection,*
  Box 426, Bloomington, Illinois 61702

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P.
Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State
University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
IDENTIFYING PARTS OF A RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 1, Rabbit Parts Match

Draw a line from each term to the correct number on the rabbit outline or write the correct number beside each term.

Hock
Knee
Tail
Rump
Loin
Saddle
Belly
Foreleg
Foot

Nose
Forehead
Eye
Eye Circle
Ear
Dewlap
Breast
Body
Neck
Shoulder
Toes
IDENTIFYING PARTS OF A RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 1, Rabbit Parts Match

Draw a line from each term to the correct number on the rabbit outline or write the correct number beside each term.

Hock  Nose
Knee   Forehead
Tail   Eye
Rump   Eye Circle
Loin   Ear
Saddle Dewlap
Belly   Breast
Foreleg Body
Foot    Neck

1 Nose  11 Belly
2 Forehead  12 Saddle
3 Eye  13 Loin
4 Eye circle  14 Rump
5 Ear  15 Tail
6 Dewlap  16 Knee
7 Breast  17 Foreleg
8 Body  18 Hock
9 Neck  19 Foot
10 Shoulder  20 Toes

7-Rabbits, Level I
IDENTIFYING PARTS OF A RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Poster, Rabbit Parts

Trim edge and overlap pages to make rabbit poster for use in front of group.
IDENTIFYING PARTS OF A RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Poster, Rabbit Parts

Note: Parts for group or individual to use with large poster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nose</th>
<th>Belly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forehead</td>
<td>Saddle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye</td>
<td>Loin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Circle</td>
<td>Rump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear</td>
<td>Tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewlap</td>
<td>Knee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breast</td>
<td>Foreleg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>Hock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck</td>
<td>Foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder</td>
<td>Toes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identifying Breeds of Rabbits
*Rabbits, Level I*

**What Members Will Learn . . .**

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**
- How to identify at least 10 breeds of rabbits
- How to select a breed to raise for the project according to purpose

**ABOUT THEMSELVES:**
- The use of rules for identification purposes

**Materials Needed:**
- Pictures of various breeds of rabbits
- A short description of each breed
- American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) Standard of Perfection or a reference book on rabbit breeds
- Large cardboard, paper or chalkboard
- Live rabbits, if possible

**ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED:** 30 TO 45 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

The choice of a breed of rabbit often is determined by the purpose for which one wishes to raise rabbits—fur, meat, fancy, show or pets. The American Rabbit Association recognizes more than 40 breeds. Some breeds have over 20 varieties. With a little understanding of some of the more common breeds, you will be able to wisely select a breed of rabbit to raise.

**Leader Notes**

See how many breeds the group can name in two minutes. Keep a list of the breeds named on a large sheet of paper.

Select 10 breeds of rabbits to discuss. Show picture of breed and discuss purpose (fur, meat, fancy); weights; general description.

Divide the group into teams of three or four members. Provide each group with pictures, names and descriptions of at least 10 breeds. Descriptions should be separate from pictures. Have the teams match pictures and descriptions. Allow five minutes for the teams to complete this task.

After teams have matched pictures with descriptions, discuss the breeds as you check the group’s placings for correctness.
Leader Notes

Give each team pictures and names of at least 10 breeds and have them identify breeds for primary use (meat, fur, fancy).

After the teams have categorized the breeds into meat, fur or fancy breeds, discuss as you check the group’s classification. (Note that all rabbits can be classified as show rabbits and some are used for both fur and meat.)

Ask each member to select a breed that they would be interested in raising.

Each member will tell the breed of rabbit selected and why.

**DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:**

**Share:**
1. How many breeds were you able to identify in two minutes?
2. What was the easiest breed for your team to identify? Hardest? Why?
3. What breed of rabbit would you be interested in raising? Why?

**Process:**
4. What are some ways rabbit breeds are identified?
5. What are some of the purposes of raising rabbits?

**Generalize:**
6. How is rabbit identification different from other project animals?
7. What do rules tell us about measurements that various animals must meet?

**Apply:**
8. What are other examples of rules you might use in your everyday life?

**GOING FURTHER:**
- Visit a rabbit show to view different breeds of rabbits.
- Have members categorize breeds based on weight, color, etc.

**REFERENCES:**

Lessons On:
- Identifying Parts of A Rabbit
- Using Rabbit Breed Standards
- Judging Rabbits
- Identifying Types of Rabbit Fur

*Standard of Perfection*, American Rabbit Breeders Association, Box 426, Bloomington, Illinois 61702

**Author:**
G. Lee Baeth, County Extension Agent, Minnesota; Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

**Reviewed by:**
Rabbit Design Team

Cooperative Extension Service
Kansas State University
Manhattan

All educational programs and materials are available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.
Beginning to Set Goals in Your Rabbit Project

Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• How to set project goals

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• The importance of setting goals

Materials Needed:
• Chalkboard or flip chart
• Rabbit Member Guide and Annual Report (MG-16)
• Member Handout 1, Learning Topics

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Each year you will set several goals to accomplish during the project year. Goals help you get where you want to go.

If this is your first year, you might want to have just one goal, to select your project rabbit. Remember that before you select a rabbit, you must decide the purpose of the rabbit (meat, fur, show, pet or a combination).

List one or two goals (MAP Step 1) on page 2 for this project year.

Breaking a goal into steps (MAP Step 2) helps you better understand the action needed to make that goal a reality. Some goals have many steps, some have a few.

With each step you need to set a deadline (MAP Step 3). Deadlines are when you expect to have that step of your goal done. As you meet the deadline you set for each step, you need to use an energizer (MAP Step 4). Energizers encourage you to move toward your goals by offering a small reward for meeting your deadline.

Now complete MAP Steps 6 to 7. You have set your goals for Year 1 of your rabbit project.

Leader Notes

Put participants into groups of three or four. Mix new project members with youth who have had some experience with rabbit or other animal projects.
Hand out Member Guide and Annual Report (MG-16) plus Member Handout 1, Learning Topics. Let them help each other decide what their goals for the year will be.
Allow time for them to share their goals with a project friend and sign each other’s MAP Worksheets.
**Leader Notes**

**DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:**

**Share:**
1. What is your first goal for the project year?

2. What goal do you like best? Why?

**Process:**
3. Why are these goals important?

4. Why is it important to set goals?

**Generalize:**
5. What are the advantages of working in a group when setting goals?

**Apply:**
6. What other groups have you worked in where you needed to set goals to help you make decisions?

**GOING FURTHER:**
- Use the goal setting process to set group goals

**REFERENCES:**

Lessons on:
- Selecting Your Project Rabbit
- Identifying Breeds of Rabbits
- Handling a Rabbit

**Author:**
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

**Reviewed by:**
Rabbit Design Team
Place a check mark next to five of the most interesting topics you would like to learn about in your rabbit project.

- [ ] Identifying Parts of a Rabbit
- [ ] Identifying Breeds of a Rabbit
- [ ] Handling a Rabbit
- [ ] Selecting Your Rabbit
- [ ] Feeding Your Rabbit
- [ ] Identifying Watering Devices
- [ ] Selecting Rabbit Equipment
- [ ] Caring for Rabbits During Extreme Weather
- [ ] Sanitizing Your Rabbit Cage and Equipment
- [ ] Preparing for a Rabbit Show
- [ ] Grooming Your Show Rabbit
- [ ] Showing Your Rabbit
- [ ] Preparing Your Rabbit for Kindling
- [ ] Caring for the New Rabbit Litter
- [ ] Determining the Sex of a Rabbit
- [ ] Tattooing a Rabbit
- [ ] Weaning the Rabbit Litter
- [ ] Giving a Presentation

**Think Back:**
Please write one or two things you have learned about rabbits so far. What is something you have learned about yourself while studying rabbits?
Handling a Rabbit
*Rabbits, Level I*

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
- How to properly pick up a rabbit
- How to handle a rabbit

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
- How to work in a gentle and calm manner
- How to treat others with respect

Materials Needed:
- Rabbits (Have each member bring a rabbit if possible)
- Carpet for table

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 15 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Steps to Pick Up and Carry a Rabbit:

1. Grasp the loose skin over the shoulders, enclosing the ears with one hand. Put your other hand under the rabbit’s rump.

2. Lift the animal and pull it toward you so its body rests on your forearm and against your body.

3. Tuck the rabbit’s head under your arm, while still grasping the neck skin for security.

Many people prefer not to pick up a rabbit by the back of the neck as this can cause the fur to break. You can gently place a hand under the belly of the rabbit, lift up and at the same time place the other hand under the hindquarters to support the rabbit. This method should only be used on a gentle rabbit—you don’t have as much control of the rabbit and it can easily scratch you. You may want to try this method when you become more experienced.

Leader Notes

Let youth practice or try different methods with a stuffed animal (rabbit) or model. Ask the members how they would move a rabbit from one hutch to another?

After youth have handled a stuffed rabbit, demonstrate with a live rabbit how to pick up a rabbit and carry it.

Have the members practice picking up a rabbit and carrying it.

Demonstrate how to pick up a rabbit without grasping the fur back of the neck.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. How do you pick up a rabbit?

2. How do you carry a rabbit?

Process:
3. Why do you tuck the rabbit’s head under your arm?

4. Why do you continue to grasp the neck skin when picking up the rabbit?

5. Why is it important to handle a rabbit the correct way?

Generalize:
6. What other animals require special handling? Why?

7. Why is it important to be gentle and calm when handling animals?

Apply:
8. Why is it important to treat all animals with care?

GOING FURTHER:
• Attend a rabbit show

REFERENCES:
Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, The Ohio State University

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
Selecting Your Project Rabbit

Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• The qualities of the ideal rabbit
• How to select a project rabbit

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• Importance of doing things in a specific order

Materials Needed:
• Member Handout 2, Selecting Animals for Replacement or Show
• Live rabbits
• Carpet to put on table

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Steps in selecting a rabbit:
1. Decide for what purpose you will raise rabbits—pet, show, meat, fur, or a combination.
2. Select a breed to suit your interest, financial means, and one you feel you will enjoy.
3. Check with your club leader, county extension agent, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association, or a local rabbit breeder about where to find the breed you want.
4. Buy from a reputable rabbit breeder near your home, if possible.
5. Buy a rabbit free of defects and disease.

Leader Notes
Give members Member Handout 2, Selecting Animals for Replacement or Show, to discuss.

Have each member tell what breed they plan to raise and why.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. For what purpose(s) did you decide to raise a rabbit?

2. What are two ideal qualities of a good rabbit?

3. What are two undesirable qualities of a rabbit?

Process:
4. Why is it important to follow the steps for selecting a rabbit in the order discussed?

Generalize:
5. Why is doing things in a specific order sometimes necessary?

Apply:
6. What are some examples in your life where doing things in a specific order is important?

GOING FURTHER:
• Attend a rabbit judging contest or school.

REFERENCES:
Lessons on:
  Identifying Rabbit Faults and Disqualifications
  Identifying Rabbit Breeds
Pacific Northwest Cooperative Extension Service
Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, The Ohio State University

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
SELECTING YOUR PROJECT RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Member Handout 2, Selecting Animals for Replacement or Show

What to Look for in a Rabbit

You can spot potential problems by taking a careful look at breeding stock before you buy or keep a rabbit. If a rabbit has weak characteristics, such as low shoulders or narrow head and body, those traits can be transmitted to the young. Eliminate potential problems at the beginning. The American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) has a standard of perfection for each breed, which is available for purchase. Senior rabbit raisers can give you the address of the ARBA.

Your rabbits should be free from defects or diseases. Do not buy or keep a rabbit with a twisted tail, rupture, buck teeth, flop ears, crooked legs or bad eyes. These defects can be inherited by the young.

Meanwhile, such conditions as ear canker, “snuffles,” sore hock, scour (diarrhea), vent disease and others can be due to harmful bacteria. If these diseases are brought into your rabbitry, they can spread and harm your rabbits. Remember, meat rabbits should be well developed in the important parts: the hind legs, hips and loin. The accompanying drawings show what to look for when you make a visual inspection.

In addition, the wise breeder selects his or her breeding stock from animals that have a history of being vigorous and healthy.

Points to Check When Selecting Breeders

The Ideal Rabbit

Well-balanced rabbit throughout, good head, well-carried ears, good bone, good type.

Good depth or rise to hips, very nice and smooth.

Strong, straight limbs.

Correct tail carriage.
Avoid These Problems

- Belled ears, pear-shaped head, double dewlap, back too flat and straight, sloped rump, cow-hocked.
- Broad hips but a little flat and not enough rise.
- Narrow head, open-carried ears, dip in back, cut-off hips, pot-bellied, side-carried dewlap.
- Protruding hip bones or rough hips.
- Screw tail.
- Side-carried tail.
- Inward-bowed legs.
- Outward-bowed legs.
Feeding Your Rabbit
*Rabbits, Level I*

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
- What kind of feed to use
- When to feed the rabbits

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
- What food does for us
- The importance of quality as well as quantity of food

Materials Needed:
- Samples of rabbit pellets
- Samples of rabbit supplements (oats, Calf Manna, Rabbit Glow)
- Good-quality hay
- Cup to measure feed
- Activity Sheet 2, Good Rabbit Food/Good People Food
- Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 2, Good Rabbit Food/Good People Food

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 15 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

Good-quality feed should be fed in the proper amounts at regular hours each day for best results. Since the rabbit eats in the late evening and night, it is best to feed your rabbit its ration in the evening. It is best to feed a commercially prepared, complete feed rather than a mixture of grains and hay. This ensures that your rabbits are getting the proper nutrients. Most feeds contain the correct amount of salt for your rabbit, and generally you should not add salt unless it is recommended by the feed manufacturer. As a treat, you may feed your rabbit apples, carrots, or bread. However, you should not feed it grass or leafy vegetables because this could cause diarrhea.

Generally, it is not necessary to feed hay, however, some breeders feed hay regularly. Other breeders give their rabbits hay if the rabbits are not eating their regular feed.

Four to 6 ounces of feed is adequate and should be adjusted according to the size of your rabbit. Netherland Dwarfs will need about 3 ounces or less, while a Giant Chinchilla will need about 9 ounces of feed. Resting does, all bucks and young over four months of age must not be overfed or they will become fat. These rabbits should clean up their feed within 12 hours. If they don’t, you are probably feeding too much.

Does with litters and young rabbits under four months need to have as much feed as they will eat.

**Leader Notes**

Discuss ounces as a unit of weight. Explain the difference between ounces and fluid ounces. Provide various objects and have the members guess whether the object weighs more than, less than, or the same as a given weight in ounces (one, or four, etc.) Have the member’s examine the various feeds and practice measuring a certain amount (4 ounces for instance).
You can easily make some type of measure for feeding your rabbits. A frozen orange juice can (6-ounce size) will hold about 4 ounces of rabbit pellets. A small tuna can also makes a good measure. The amount of feed a rabbit needs depends on several factors. You will need to experiment with your rabbits to see what is best for them.

Note: Brand names are used as an example and do not imply recommendation of a specific product.

DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. What are two important things to remember when feeding a rabbit?
2. What are some good “treats” for your rabbit?

Process:
3. What did you learn from this activity about feeding rabbits?
4. Why is it important to measure and become familiar with how much food we should give rabbits?
5. Why do different sizes or kinds of rabbits require different amounts of food?

Generalize:
6. Why is what an animal eats as important as the amount it eats?

Apply:
7. Why do different types of animals require different types of food?

GOING FURTHER:
• Visit a local feed store to find out what types of rabbit pellets are available in your area.

REFERENCES:
Cooperative Extension Services of the Northeast States
The University of New Jersey

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team

Hand out Activity Sheet 2, Good Rabbit Food/Good People Food.

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24-Rabbits, Level I
FEEDING YOUR RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 2, Good Rabbit Food/ Good People Food

Write the following foods where they belong in the diagram. If a food is good for both rabbits and people, write it in the space that belongs to both circles. If it is not good for either, write it outside both circles.

cheese    grain and hay mixture    lettuce    nuts
spinach    water        soda pop    bread
rabbit pellets    hamburger    carrot    potato chips
apple    candy bar    orange

Think Back:
What do you remember most about handling, selecting, or feeding a rabbit? Why?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
FEEDING YOUR RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 2, Good Rabbit Food/ Good People Food
Identifying Watering Devices

*Rabbits, Level I*

**What Members Will Learn . . .**

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**
- What equipment is used to water rabbits
- How to decide which watering method is best for their project

**ABOUT THEMSELVES:**
- The importance of water in their lives

**Materials Needed:**
- Water Crocks of various sizes
- Water bottles
- Activity Sheet 3, Water Use

**ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED:** 30 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

Rabbits need a lot of clean water all year—winter and summer. For a few rabbits, water crocks or water bottles are the best equipment. If you develop a large rabbit operation you may wish to invest in an automatic watering system. However, since most members will not have this many rabbits we will look at the two best choices. Water bottles are excellent except when the temperature gets to freezing or below. Crock can be used throughout the year. The size of the rabbit will determine the size of crock you will want to use. Use larger crocks with the larger breeds. Use a half-gallon or a gallon crock for commercial does and litters.

Rabbits need a constant supply of water. Usually, it is sufficient to water in the morning and again during the evening, however, if the rabbits are consuming more water, you will need to provide larger watering devices or water more often.

In the winter, you can have two sets of crocks. While one set is in the cages, the other set can be thawing out where it is warm. This way, you will always have ice-free crocks to put water into. Some breeders have purchased plastic crocks with which you can pop out the ice with very little effort. This way, ice-free crocks are available without carrying them into the house each day.

The amount of water a rabbit drinks will vary. However, those animals that drink the most are usually in better condition. A Doe and litter may consume as much as a gallon of water per day.

**Leader Notes**

Have the members look at the crocks and water bottles and decide which would be best for their rabbitry.

Show a gallon container.
Leader Notes

Hand out Activity Sheet 3, Water Use, to do at home or do during this meeting as a group.

**DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:**

**Share:**

1. Which watering devices do you use? Why?

2. What are the best two choices of equipment to use when watering a rabbit?

**Process:**

3. How can you tell if your rabbit is getting enough water?

4. Why is it important for your rabbit to get water?

**Generalize:**

5. Why are water requirements different in the winter than the summer for most animals?

6. When do you drink lots of water? Why?

**Apply:**

7. Why is water important to all living things?

**GOING FURTHER:**

• Visit a rabbitry with an automatic watering system.

**REFERENCES:**


**Author:**

Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

**Reviewed by:**

Rabbit Design Team
IDENTIFYING WATERING DEVICES
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 3, Water Use

Directions: You may need help for some of these answers.

1. Water Use or Consumption: Figure out the water use of a rabbit and a person from the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>350-pound Calf</th>
<th>Rabbit</th>
<th>Person*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of drinking water used daily</td>
<td>1 to 5 gallons</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water used for non-drinking</td>
<td>0 gallons</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1 to 5 gallons</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Which uses the most water for drinking? (Check one)
   _______ calf
   _______ rabbit
   _______ person

3. Which uses the most non-drinking water? (Check one)
   _______ calf
   _______ rabbit
   _______ person

4. Which has the highest total water use? (Check one)
   _______ calf
   _______ rabbit
   _______ person

5. How much non-drinking water do you use in a day? _______ gallons

* Water Use of People
   Drinking = 1½ to 2 quarts a day (about ½ gallon)
   Toilet flushing = 5 gallons per flush
   Dishwasher/washing machine = 18 gallons per load
   Shower/bath = 6 gallons per minute
   Open running faucet = 6 gallons per minute

29-Rabbits, Level I
Selecting Rabbit Equipment

*Rabbits, Level I*

What Members Will Learn . . .

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**
- What size and type of cage is necessary
- What type of feed equipment is best

**ABOUT THEMSELVES:**
- Measurement skills
- Various space needs

**Materials Needed:**
- Different size cages
- Feed crocks
- Metal feeders
- Sheet of graph paper for each member (½ inch)
- Activity Sheet 4, Spaces

**ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED:** 60 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

First, you need to decide where your rabbits are to be housed. Will they be in a building or will they be outdoors? If the rabbits will be inside, all metal cages are best. However, if the rabbits are to be housed outside, a combination of wood and wire is needed to build a proper hutch.

You will need a cage 30 inches deep, 36 inches long, and 18 inches high for a doe and litter of a medium breed. Small breeds can use smaller cages and larger breeds will need a bigger cage. Bucks and young show rabbits will do fine in cages 18 inches wide, 30 inches deep and 18 inches high.

Automatic metal feeders are best for does and litters. The feed is kept clean and the feeder will hold a day’s supply of feed. Crock is fine for feeding individual rabbits.

**Leader Notes**

Have the members pretend they are rabbits, and decide what size cage will they need. Not all will need the same size cage.

Use a tape measure to demonstrate measurement. Have members estimate length of various objects in inches.

Discuss the various cages that are present.

Demonstrate the take-home activity using a ruler or a yardstick and an appropriately sized room.

Hand out Activity Sheet 4, Spaces.
Leader Notes

DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. Talk with a partner or small group about rabbit hutches you have seen. What were some good and bad points about each one?

Process:
2. Why is it important to have a good rabbit hutch when beginning your project?
3. Why is the size of the hutch important for different sizes of rabbits?

Generalize:
4. What space requirements might other animals need?

Apply:
5. What kinds of space and spaces do you have in your home to move around in?

GOING FURTHER:
• Take your group to an outside and inside rabbitry.

REFERENCES:
Lesson on:
Identifying Watering Devices

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team

Cooperative Extension Service
Kansas State University
Manhattan

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32-Rabbits, Level I
SELECTING RABBIT EQUIPMENT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 4, Spaces

1. Measure the floor space of your bedroom in feet. On the graph paper below, draw an outline of your room. (1 square = 1 foot). Label this “My Room.” Color your total space.

   Now draw a rabbit hutch on the paper below. It would be approximately 3 feet by 2 1/2 feet. Label this “Rabbit Hutch.” Color the rabbits space.

   Remember, you have an 8-foot ceiling, rabbits have a 1 1/2-foot ceiling.

2. Who has the most space? ________________________________

   What other space is available to you? ________________________________

   What other space is available to the rabbit? ________________________________

DRAW HERE
1 square = 1 foot
Caring for Rabbits During Extreme Weather—Hot/Cold
Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• How to care for rabbits during winter and summer
• How to recognize a rabbit in distress

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• How we adapt to extreme weather

Materials Needed:
• Activity Sheet 5, Temperature
• Red pens or pencils
• 2-liter plastic soda bottles
• Carpet

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Every animal must adjust to changes in the environment. It pants or sweats if the temperature is too high, and shivers if it’s too cold. The animal’s heartbeat increases and it breathes faster when it runs or is under stress.

If the change in the environment or the amount of stress isn’t too severe, an animal usually can adapt quite well. However, if the changes or stresses are too great, it won’t be able to adjust. Animals that are healthy can endure short-term or minor stresses, but long-term or severe stresses will eventually be dangerous.

As summer temperatures rise your rabbit’s fur coat becomes a problem. Wild rabbits can seek the comfort of their burrows in the cool earth during hot weather, but tame rabbits in hutches don’t have that option. They rely on us to provide relief from the heat. Domestic rabbits need more protection from the direct sunlight, radiating heat and high temperatures of the summer months than they do from the cold wind and snow of winter.

The rabbit’s normal body temperature is 102 to 103°F. Its “comfort zone” (the outside temperatures at which rabbits process feed most efficiently and gain weight the easiest) is 60 to 65°F. When temperatures become above 80°F, rabbits use more energy to remove heat from their bodies. Since rabbits don’t perspire, they lose body heat through their breath and from air movement across their bodies.

Leader Notes

Divide the group into teams. Ask one team what they would need if they were a rabbit in a cage and the temperature was very hot. Have the other team decide what they would need if they were a rabbit in a cage in very cold weather. Have each team share their answers with the group.

Ask members how a rabbit can help cool itself when it is hot?
A rabbit’s ears also help control its body temperature. As its body temperature rises, the blood vessels in the rabbit’s ears expand and the blood flow through the ears increases. Rabbit ears are large and have very short fur on the outside and almost no fur on the inside. This combination of increased blood flow and the lack of fur means that more body heat can escape from the ears than from any other part of a rabbit’s body.

When the temperature is above 90°F for four or five days in a row, it is too hot to try to breed the rabbits.

If the weather becomes too hot, rabbits may suffer from heat prostration. Fat or excited rabbits and does that are about to kindle are most likely to develop heat prostration. Rabbits with heat prostration have blue lips, tongue and ears; increased heart and breathing rates; wet nose and mouths; frothy, blood-tinged discharge from the mouth; and they pant heavily.

If a rabbit is suffering from heat prostration, lower its body temperature quickly or it may die. Put the rabbit in cool (not cold) water for a few seconds. (Be sure to hold the rabbit’s head out of the water. A seriously ill rabbit may not be able to hold its own head up.)

There are several ways you can keep your rabbits cool in the summer. Use a sprinkler system to water the roof to keep the rabbitry cool. Use fans to move the air without creating drafts. You may set up awnings over outdoor hutches for shade. If it is extremely hot, put large plastic bottles filled with ice in the hutches. Put pieces of carpet or rags that have been soaked in cool water in the cages. Nursing bunnies can be put in wire nest boxes. If your rabbit is showing signs of stress, put it in an all-wire carrier and put in a dry, cool place. In the summertime, handle your rabbits in the cooler morning or evening hours.

There are several ways you can help keep your rabbit warm in the winter. You must protect the rabbits from direct contact with cold winds, snow, and rain. Face your hutches to the south or east. Setting the rabbitry next to a building, solid fence or woodlot, or covering the hutches with lightweight plastic sheeting also will provide a barrier against winter weather. Does and newly kindled kits, or does that are about to kindle, need extra attention in winter. Save clean, dry fur to help cover bunnies whose mother hasn’t pulled enough fur to cover them. If the nest material becomes wet, replace it. Cold temperatures increase the energy needs of rabbits. This means you will need to provide plenty of proper feed and water for your rabbits to help them replace the body heat they lose. You need to water your rabbits two or three times per day when the temperature is below freezing.

Ventilation is important year-round, though you should avoid drafts. If insects such as flies are a problem, use insecticides, fly bait, or insect lights. Also, clean the rabbitry regularly.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:

Share:
1. In what type of weather do rabbits thrive?
2. What are ways to keep rabbits cool in the summer?
3. What are ways to keep rabbits warm in the winter?

Process:
4. How does a rabbit’s ears help control its body temperature?
5. Why is it important to keep rabbits comfortable in hot or cold weather?

Generalize:
6. How do other animals keep warm in the winter or cool during the summer?
7. What are ways that you keep comfortable when it’s hot or cold?

Apply:
8. What are ways that we control the temperature in our homes?
9. How are houses made differently for hot and cold climates?

REFERENCES:
Selecting Rabbit Equipment lesson
Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
CARING FOR RABBITS DURING EXTREME WEATHER—HOT/COLD
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 5, Temperature

For each item below, use a red pencil or pen to show what the temperature might be when you would do the activity listed. Remember, summer days usually are around 95°F and the winter days around 35°F.

1. Sprinkle water on the roof of the hutch.

2. Turn fans on hutch.

3. Face the hutch south.

4. Put the hutch in shade.

5. Use a wire nest box.

6. Place hutch next to a solid fence.

7. Cover the hutch with plastic.

8. Cover bunnies with clean, dry fur.

9. Place water-soaked rags in the hutch.

10. Put large, plastic bottles filled with ice in hutch.
Sanitizing Your Rabbit Cage and Equipment
Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• What items to use to sanitize equipment
• How to sanitize the cage and equipment

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• The importance of cleanliness

Materials Needed:
• Rabbit cage
• Wire brush
• Soft brush
• Bucket
• Chlorine bleach
• Rabbit crocks
• Rabbit feeder
• Spray bottle

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 15 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Clean cages and equipment help prevent diseases in rabbits.

The rabbit equipment should be sanitized every month or whenever your rabbit has had a disease. The equipment is sanitized using a chlorine bleach solution.

Put 1 cup of chlorine bleach in a gallon of water. Use this solution to wash the crocks and feeders.

Then, after you have removed fur and manure from the cage using a wire brush, put some of the chlorine bleach in a spray bottle and spray the entire cage. Let it dry before you return the rabbits to the cage. If the cage has a wooden floor, it needs to be cleaned out every day and sanitized every week. Other disinfectants can be used, but you must make sure they will not irritate the rabbit.

Leader Notes
Given the cage and equipment, ask the members to speculate about how to go about cleaning the cage. Then repeat the process according to the following steps.
Leader Notes

DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. What did you use to sanitize your rabbit cage and equipment?
2. What was the most difficult part to clean? Why?

Process:
3. What is the correct measure of bleach to water?
4. Why is it important to sanitize the cage after your rabbit has had a disease?
5. Why is it important to use bleach and not other types of disinfectants?
6. What are some other ways that you keep the area around your rabbit cage clean?

Generalize:
7. What other animal cages would you clean similarly? Differently? Why?

Apply:
8. Why is it important to keep living areas clean?

GOING FURTHER:
• Have the members go home and sanitize their cages and rabbit equipment.

REFERENCES:
Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team

Think back:
Have members share in small groups what they remember about use and care of rabbit equipment? Some members may want to record these thoughts on a piece of paper. Others may want to create a jingle or rap to remember.

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40-Rabbits, Level I
Preparing for a Rabbit Show
*Rabbits, Level I*

What Members Will Learn . . .

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**
- How to prepare for a show
- How to enter a show
- Proper conduct at a show
- What to expect at a show

**ABOUT THEMSELVES:**
- Why we have rules and the importance of following rules

**Materials Needed:**
- Entry blanks for each member (state, local or American Rabbit Breeders Association)
- Comment cards for each member (state, local or American Rabbit Breeders Association)
- Show catalogs

**ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED:** 30 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

Rabbit shows in the United States began in the late 1800s. More people enjoy the competition and fellowship of these events every day. Rabbit shows give you a chance to display your rabbits and have them rated against those of other exhibitors. You can have fun and learn more about your rabbits at a rabbit show.

Every exhibitor wants his or her rabbit to win. However, you must remember that only one rabbit in each class will win. Always be a good sport, even if your rabbit doesn’t place as you think it should have. Congratulate the winning exhibitors.

When you enter rabbits in a show, you agree to follow the rules of that show. The rules govern not only show procedures but proper conduct for show officials, exhibitors and visitors as well. Show rules will vary but the following “do’s and don’ts” apply to most rabbit shows.

**DO**
- . . . fill out your entry form neatly and completely, and send the form and entry fee to the show secretary BEFORE THE ENTRY DEADLINE.
- . . . prepare your rabbits for the show by handling and posing them often.
- . . . be sure your rabbits are the proper breed, variety, age, sex and weight for the class or classes you’ve entered them in.

**Leader Notes**

Hand out entry blanks and let the members practice filling them out neatly and completely.
. . . bring your rabbits to the show in carrying cages that are the proper size and construction for your rabbits. Leakproof bottoms are a must on carrying cages.

. . . tattoo your rabbits in the left ear to identify it. The label should be easy to read and permanent.

. . . if the show provides cages, accept the feed and water provided at the show or bring your own.

. . . have your rabbit on the judging table promptly when its class is called.

. . . stay with your rabbit at the judging table while it is being judged.

. . . pay attention to the comments given by the judge. You can learn valuable tips on how to improve your rabbit or keep it in top form.

. . . respect the judge and his or her opinion. You asked for the judge’s opinion when you entered the show.

. . . groom your rabbits often before coming to the show.

. . . pick up any award you have won at the show.

. . . be courteous and understanding when problems occur. Avoid negative comments.

. . . compliment the judge and show committee on jobs well done.

DON’T

. . . hesitate to show your rabbits because you’re a beginner. Everyone has to start sometime.

. . . expect the show secretary to accept late entries. (Some shows allow the late entries, but not all. Read the show catalog.)

. . . bring diseased or injured animals to a show.

. . . bring animals other than rabbits into the showroom.

. . . handle exhibits other than your own unless you are a show official or you have the owner’s permission.

. . . attempt to breed rabbits in the showroom.

. . . stand behind the judge’s table when judging is in progress unless you are a show official.

. . . try to take your entries from the showroom if you enter rabbits in a show and don’t exhibit them.

Pass out the comment cards and discuss how to fill them out and what the comment taker will put on the cards.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING

Share:
1. Why do people attend rabbit shows?
2. Why do you want to enter your rabbit in a show?

Process:
3. What are three important things to remember to do before you get to the show?
4. What are three important things to remember to do after you get to the show?
5. What would a rabbit show be like if there were no standards identifying what a rabbit should look like?

Generalize:
6. What types of rules and standards are used in other animal shows? Why?
7. Why do you think it is important to have rules and regulations for participating in various activities?

Apply:
8. What are some other activities that you participate in that have a series of rules and regulations? Why are rules needed?

GOING FURTHER:
- Grooming Your Rabbit
- Handling Your Rabbit
- Building a Rabbit Carrier

REFERENCES:
American Rabbit Breeders Association Secretary’s Book
Cooperative Extension Service, Michigan State University

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team

Leader Notes
Let members take turns role playing as the judge and the exhibitors to learn about rules, sportsmanship, and how it feels to win, lose or make those types of decisions.
Grooming Your Show Rabbit

Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
- How to groom their rabbit
- Why they should groom their rabbit

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
- The importance of good grooming

Materials Needed:
- Rabbits (Have each member bring a rabbit)
- Carpet for table
- Rags
- Water
- Cornstarch
- Nail trimmers (fingernail or dog nail clipper)

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 15 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

How can you remove the loose hair from your show rabbit? Answer: Use either a damp rag or damp hands to go over the fur. Combs and brushes can and will break the skin and cause sores, spread infection and break down the fur shafts that give the animal its beautiful finish.

How could you remove stains on a white rabbit? Answer: If the rabbit isn’t too stained, you can rub cornstarch into the stain and then brush it out. Peroxide or similar bleaching agents can be used, but must be carefully done.

You also can help your rabbit stay clean by keeping the cage clean. If cages get rusty, rabbits will become stained. Rusty wire should be replaced.

A rabbit with long nails can get them caught in the wire and injure itself or you. The nails on wild rabbits wear down naturally, but those of domestic rabbits should be clipped. There are five nails on each front foot and four on each hind foot.

The nails should be clipped whenever they are long, sometimes every six months. You may need some help from an adult. Dog nail trimmers or regular fingernail clippers can be used. The nails should be cut back to just in front of the cone, which is the part with the blood vessels and can be seen when held up to the light.

Leader Notes

Demonstrate how to groom a rabbit for show.
1. Remove loose fur by running a damp rag over the fur, then using your hands, go over the fur. The loose fur will stick to your hands. Rub your hands together to remove the fur from your hands. Be sure to rub the rabbit’s fur from head to tail.

Demonstrate how cornstarch can be used to remove minor stains.

Have the members groom their rabbits.

Demonstrate how to examine the nails of a rabbit.
What should you do if you cut the blood vessel or cut the rabbit’s flesh? Answer: Stop the bleeding by holding a clean rag or cotton ball to the nail.

**DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:**

**Share:**
1. What are some grooming practices you use for your rabbit?
2. What other practices do you use to get ready for a show?

**Process:**
3. How can you remove the loose hair from your show rabbit?
4. How can you remove stains on a white rabbit?
5. Why do you trim the nails of a rabbit?

**Generalize:**
6. What are some good grooming practices you use with other animals?
7. Why do you think good grooming practices are important?

**Apply:**
8. What are some good grooming practices that keep you healthy? Why?

**GOING FURTHER:**
• Attend a rabbit show and observe grooming techniques.

**REFERENCES:**

**Author:**
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

**Reviewed by:**
Rabbit Design Team
Showing Your Rabbit

Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• How to handle a rabbit
• The disqualifications and faults for the breed of rabbits raised
• How to examine a rabbit like a judge

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• Importance of practice in their lives

Material Needed:
• Rabbits (have each member bring a rabbit)
• Carpet for the table
• American Rabbit Breeders Association Standards of Perfection
• Member Handout 3, Rabbit Handling and Showing
• Member Handout 4, Showmanship Scorecard

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

The purpose of rabbit showmanship is to help members become better acquainted with their animals and to learn to handle their stock. In fact, when you participate in showmanship and demonstrate how to handle your animal, you are attempting to display your animal’s physical characteristics at their best. From this knowledge, you will learn what to look for and how to check over an animal when selecting future stock.

The time and practice that you spend with the animal before you get to the showmanship table will be of great value, not only for you but for your rabbit. Practice with your animal in the proper position that you expect it to perform on the show table. That is, do not allow the rabbit to stretch out when you want it to pose, or run around the table when you want it to remain in a posed position. Your animal should be clean—free from stains, and loose hair (called moult). The animal’s coat should be well groomed. Your animal’s condition also will relate to the firmness of flesh, which you control to a great extent by the feeding habit you and your rabbit develop. This condition cannot be obtained in a few weeks. Many weeks of routine, good management are needed for good, firm condition.

Like your rabbit, you should be well groomed. You should wear either a white coat or a long-sleeved white shirt. This will protect your arms as well as presenting a neat appearance. You should exhibit a courteous attitude towards others and be prepared to follow the instructions that the judge gives on the first command.
Showmanship starts the minute the rabbit is picked up. Carry the rabbit to the table and set it on the table. With the rabbit in the sitting position, your animal should be checked for ear canker and blemishes over the body. Check the front legs for crooked bone and check the tail to be sure it is carried properly. Then turn the rabbit over on its back and check its eyes and teeth. Look for blemishes on its belly and sores around the neck, check the hind legs for straightness, and check the toenails. Check the sex. Return the animal to the sitting position and pose the rabbit in its correct position.

Help the animal to show its proper body type by grooming the fur, posing the ears, and being sure that the tail is erect and carried straight. Next, pose the rabbit so that it will maintain the pose while you step away from the judging table. Listen to the judge for any further commands that might be given, for instance, they will probably ask you to move the rabbit into different poses. The judge might ask you to show where the loin, shoulders or any other part of the body is located. The judge may quiz you on your knowledge of the rabbit breed that you are exhibiting as well as general knowledge of all breeds. You should be well informed on general disqualifications and faults. Showmanship is not to trip you up, but an opportunity for you to exhibit the knowledge that you have acquired both in book learning and handling.

**A judge may ask the following questions:**

1. What breed of rabbit are you exhibiting?
2. What sex is your rabbit?
3. In what class would you enter your rabbit?
4. Is your rabbit a four-class or six-class rabbit? (Four-class rabbits are smaller with the ideal weight for a senior being under 9 pounds.)

**DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:**

**Share:**

1. Why do you like to show rabbits?
2. What is the most difficult/easiest step when showing your rabbit?

**Process:**

3. What does the judge look for when your rabbit is in the sitting position? Why?
4. What does the judge look for when your rabbit is on its back? Why?
5. Why is regular handling of your rabbit important when getting it ready to show?
6. Why is regular grooming of your rabbit important when getting it ready to show?
7. Why is practice necessary before showing your rabbit?
Generalize:
8. Why is practice important when preparing for special events or activities?

Apply:
9. What other activities or events do you participate in that require practice?

REFERENCES:
Your 4-H Rabbit Project, Pacific Northwest Cooperative Extension, PNW 163
Lessons on:
   Handling a Rabbit
   Grooming Your Rabbit
   Sexing a Rabbit
   Identifying Rabbit Disqualifications and Faults

Authors:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; Marilyn Rodgers, 4-H Volunteer; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
SHOWING YOUR RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Member Handout 3, Rabbit Handling and Showing

1. Carry rabbit—With rabbit facing you, place right hand underneath rabbit’s chest and stomach. Balance rabbit on right hand and lift up slightly. Place left hand underneath rump of rabbit until rump is resting on hand. Move rabbit forward until head is securely tucked under left arm. Remove right hand or gently lay right hand on back of rabbit for added security while moving. Always pick up rabbit if asked to move. If moving, step back and behind the other showperson.

2. Pose rabbit—Pose rabbit on table with the head facing forward. Smile. A proper pose is with the front feet even with the eyes, rear feet firmly on the table, toes just even with the haunch (thigh joint). There should be a slight rise from shoulder to loin, just over haunch, and a rounded hind quarter. Rabbit should be trained not to move. You should stand straight with your hands at your sides. Turn the animal to the left before beginning the next movement.

3. Check ears and ear tattoo number—Open right ear so judge can see deep into the ear. Then pick up rabbit and place it in the opposite direction to show left ear. (ear canker)

4. Check teeth—Pick up rabbit, palming the weight of the rabbit under the left arm. Place the thumb and index finger on each side of the split upper lip and push back lips to show teeth. (tooth defects)

5. Check nose—Show judge the nose area and the front feet. (signs of snuffles)

6. Check eyes—Let judge see both eyes. (blindness, spots in iris)
SHOWING YOUR RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Member Handout 3, Rabbit Handling and Showing, continued

7. Check sex—Roll the rabbit back on its rump and clamp the tail with the index and second finger. Place thumb below vent area and push toward front of rabbit. (vent disease) Check testicles if male.

8. Check toenails and front feet—Push thumb into center of front paw. Push back fur with index finger if necessary. Also show dew claw. (color, length)

9. Check chest and abdomen—Run hand over chest and abdomen area. (abscesses, tumor or abnormalities) Check for blemishes.

10. Check rear legs—Force rear legs out straight by placing cupped hand ahead of the rear legs on the stifle joints and pushing toward the feet. Point outstretched legs toward judge. (straightness) Check toenails.

11. Check hocks—Show bottom of both feet and underside of rabbit to judge. (sore hocks)

12. Check front legs—With rabbit facing the judge, grasp ears and fold them over back. Rabbit’s hind feet are on the table. Raise forequarters 6 or more inches and extend each front foot with free hand by sliding thumb and first finger down side of the leg bone. (straight, crooked, bowed)
SHOWING YOUR RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Member Handout 3, Rabbit Handling and Showing, continued

13. **Check tail**—Show rear of rabbit with tail showing to judge. (crooked, wry tail, screw tail)

14. **Check fur**—Stroke fur toward rabbit’s head to show fur fly back and cleanliness. Stroke rabbit from head to rear showing your clean hand to judge, which indicates the rabbit’s fur is not in a molting condition. If a Rex, pat the fur to feel the density.

15. **Pose rabbit**—Show front, rear and side so overall balance can be seen. Feel shoulders, rib area, loin, rump, etc., if asked to do so. (desirable fleshing) Show marking if asked to do so. Take one step back after finished.

16. **Showperson’s appearance**—Clean, neat, long sleeves. Clothes color contrasts with rabbit color; long hair tied back.

17. **Showperson’s attitude and actions**—Alert, watching both judge and rabbit, courteous, confident, smooth-flowing presentation.

18. **Showperson’s knowledge**—Ability to answer general questions about rabbits, the rabbit industry and what you’ve learned—parts, faults, disqualification, eliminations, breed and variety, breeding, feeding, managing rabbits, common terms, symptoms and treatment of common illnesses and ailments.

**Think Back:**
What do you remember most about preparing for a rabbit show? Why?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contestant Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Score Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE</th>
<th>CONTESTANT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I. Carrying rabbit to and from the table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>II. Examination of rabbit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>III. Condition of animal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>IV. Appearance of showperson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5. Change to any position as directed by judge.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### I. Carrying rabbit to and from the table.

- 10

#### II. Examination of rabbit

- A. With rabbit in sitting position.
  - 1. Check ears for canker and ear mark.
  - 2. Run hand over body to check for blemishes.
  - 3. Check front legs for crooked bone.
  - 4. Check toenails (If you prefer, you may wait to check the toenails after you have turned the rabbit on its back).
  - 5. Check tail for defects and proper carriage.

- 10

- B. Turn rabbit over on back.
  - 1. Check eyes.
  - 2. Check teeth.
  - 3. Run hand over body to check for blemishes.
  - 4. Check sex.
  - 5. Check rear legs for straightness.

- 20

- C. Return to sitting position.
  - 1. Groom by brushing with hands.

- 10

- D. Pose rabbit.
  - 1. Show ear marks to judge.
  - 2. Place animal in natural position.
  - 3. Show body type.
    - a. Brush down fur with hands.
    - b. Be sure tail is carried properly.
    - c. Straighten ears to give rabbit an alert appearance.
  - 4. Maintain pose position keeping animal as still as possible.

- 20

#### III. Condition of animal.

- A. Appearance–clean.
- B. Free from moult.
- C. Lack of defects.
- D. Body type.
- E. Healthy appearance.

#### IV. Appearance of showperson.

- A. Neatness.
  - 1. Neatly dressed.
  - 2. Well groomed.
  - 3. Clean.

- B. Actions.
  - 1. Natural.
  - 2. Graceful.
  - 3. Confident.
  - 4. Polite.

#### TOTAL SCORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSSIBLE</th>
<th>CONTESTANT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Top three individuals may be called back for an interview.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Interview:

- A. Background and experience.
- B. Achievements.
- C. Ability to thoroughly answer questions and give information.
- D. Attitude.
  - 1. Politeness.
  - 2. Confidence.
- E. Appearance.
Preparing Your Rabbit For Kindling
*Rabbits, Level I*

**What Members Will Learn . . .**

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**
- How to feed a pregnant doe
- How to prepare the nest box for kindling

**ABOUT THEMSELVES:**
- Their space needs

**Materials Needed:**
- Nest box
- Nesting material (straw, hay, etc.)
- Activity Sheet 6, Pregnancy Conditions Quiz

**ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED:** 30 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

A pregnant doe needs more feed than a resting doe. After you are sure the doe is pregnant, gradually increase her feed. However, you do not want to overfeed because a fat doe has trouble kindling (giving birth).

A nest box should be put in the doe’s cage on the 28th day of pregnancy. You need to use clean straw or other nesting materials. During the winter you will want to put 4 to 6 inches of bedding in the nest box. Also, a sheet of Styrofoam can be placed between the bottom of the nest box and a solid floor to help keep the box warm in the winter. But during the summer months, 1 to 2 inches of bedding is sufficient. The nest box should not have a top on it. If it does, the doe might sit on top of the box, allowing urine to collect in the box. If the doe fails to have a litter, the nest box should be removed on the 34th day after mating.

**Leader Notes**

Discuss the size of nest box needed.
Small breeds will need smaller boxes than the larger breeds.

Hand out Activity Sheet 6, Pregnancy Conditions Quiz.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING

Share:
1. What type of nest box do you use or plan to use? Why?

2. What type of nesting material do you use with a pregnant doe? Why?

Process:
3. Why is it important to vary the amount of nesting materials in the winter and summer?

4. Why is the size of the nesting box important?

Generalize:
5. What types of space are needed for other pregnant animals?

Apply:
6. Do your space needs change for different activities that you might be involved in? Why?

REFERENCES:
Lessons on:
- Making A Rabbit Nest Box
- Determining Pregnancy in Rabbits
- Feeding Your Project Animal

Official Guide To Raising Better Rabbits, American Rabbit Breeders Association

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team

Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 6, Pregnancy Conditions Quiz
Correct 4, 7, 9, 12
Which of the following pregnant does is being properly cared for? Circle the number that has the correct series of conditions. There may be more than one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Large Breed</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>2” Hay</th>
<th>Normal Ration</th>
<th>Small Nest Box</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Summer</td>
<td>6” Hay</td>
<td>Extra Ration</td>
<td>Small Nest Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Large Breed</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>2” Hay</td>
<td>Extra Ration</td>
<td>Large Nest Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Large Breed</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>2” Hay</td>
<td>Extra Ration</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Large Breed</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>6” Hay</td>
<td>Extra Ration</td>
<td>Large Nest Box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Small Breed</td>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>6” Hay</td>
<td>Extra Ration</td>
<td>Small Nest Box</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Extra Ration</td>
<td>Large Nest Box</td>
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</table>
Caring for the New Kits
*Rabbits, Level I*

**What Members Will Learn . . .**

**ABOUT THE PROJECT:**
- What to do after the kits have been kindled

**ABOUT THEMSELVES:**
- Importance of accepting responsibility

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**
- If possible, visit a rabbitry where kits were recently born for the members to see how to care for the newly born litter.
- Activity Sheet 7, Rabbit Maturity Time Line

**ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED:** 30 MINUTES PLUS RABBITRY VISIT

**ACTIVITY**

When a mother rabbit gives birth to her litter, we say she has kindled. The babies are called kits.

As soon as the doe has kindled, you should check the nest box and remove any bloody masses and dead kits. The nest box should be checked every day during the summer months. During the winter, the nest box should be checked often but not during days when the temperature is near zero. The nest box should never be allowed to be damp.

During the summer, you may need to put the kits in a wire nest box in order to keep them from getting too warm. Sometimes, you may need to remove fur from the nest box in order to prevent the young kits from becoming too warm. In the winter, you will want to cover the kits with the fur after you have checked them. If necessary, the kits may be handled. The doe will not neglect her kits because they have been handled.

Cut down on the feed to the doe for a couple days then gradually increase it until about the 10th day she is getting all the feed she wants. This way the doe will produce more milk when the kits are ready to consume it.

If your doe has 12 kits but can only feed six to eight, you will want to foster off four to six of the kits. If there are no does available to foster the kits to, you will have to attempt to hand-rear the extra kits. At least six of the kits will be lost if all 12 are left with the mother. Often, the doe will end up losing more than six if too many kits are left to nurse.

[Consult Level III lesson on raising orphan rabbits for details.]
Remove the nest box when the young are 3 weeks old. If the young start coming out of the nest earlier than three weeks, remove the nest box so all young will get a chance to nurse. During extremely cold weather you may wish to leave the nest box in for four weeks.

**DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:**

**Share:**
1. What’s the most difficult part of caring for new kits? Easiest? Why?

**Process:**
2. Why should the nest box be checked every day?

3. Why is it important to decrease the amount of feed to the doe immediately after kindling?

**Generalize:**
4. What are some of the new duties you took on when you began caring for new kits?

**Apply:**
5. What are some events (times) in your life when you had to take on new responsibilities or were depended upon to finish a job?

**REFERENCES:**

Lessons on:
- Preparing Your Rabbit for Kindling
- Weaning the Rabbit Litter

*Official Guide To Raising Better Rabbits*, American Rabbit Breeders Association

**Author:**
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

**Reviewed by:**
Rabbit Design Team

Hand out Activity Sheet 7, Rabbit Maturity Time Line, to do now or take home and bring back for discussion.
CARING FOR THE NEW KITS
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 7, Rabbit Maturity Time Line

The following is a time line for your rabbit. Pick one rabbit to watch mature. Place important events that show the kit is maturing (grew fur, opened eyes, left nest, weaned) on the time line.

Rabbit Age in Weeks

Think back:
Share with a friend a special memory you have about the kindling process or caring for a new litter of kits. Record your thoughts.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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61-Rabbits, Level I
Determining the Sex of a Rabbit
Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• How to hold the rabbit in order to determine the sex
• How to determine the sex of 4- to 8-week-old rabbits

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• Improve observation skills

Materials Needed:
• You will need 4- to 8-week old rabbits of both sexes

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 20 MINUTES

ACTIVITY
It is important to be able to determine the sex of rabbits for the following reasons:
1. To know what sex of rabbit you are raising.
2. To mate rabbits.
3. To prevent unwanted breeding from occurring.
4. To be able to enter rabbits in the proper classes at the shows.
Before sexing your rabbit, be sure you are wearing a long-sleeved shirt to avoid being scratched.

Q. How would you hold a rabbit to determine its sex?
A. With your left hand, hold the rabbit in a sitting position on the table. Using your right hand, place the thumb behind the right hind leg and have each member use the index and forefinger to demonstrate how to depress the tail backwards and downwards. Then use the thumb to gently depress the area in front of the sex organs to expose the reddish membrane.

Q. How do you tell the difference between a buck and a doe?
A. On the buck, the organ will protrude as a well-rounded tip (penis). On the doe, the membrane will protrude to form a slit (vulva) with a depression at the end next to the anus.

Q. Is it important to separate littermates?
A. If you do not, the rabbits will fight, destroying their fur. Sometimes the rabbits will injure themselves; often the rabbits are unfit for showing. The rabbits may breed if not separated since some rabbits are fertile at eight weeks. If a doe becomes pregnant at this age her growth will be stunted.

Leader Notes
Divide the group into teams of two to three members. Before you have told and shown the members how to determine the sex, have the teams see if they can determine the sex of the rabbits. Each team will need one or two rabbits.

Discuss how to determine the sex of a rabbit. Have the members try to determine the sex of several rabbits. If a member is having problems, have an older member help.

Demonstrate how to sex a rabbit.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. How easy or hard was it to determine the sex of a rabbit?

Process:
2. Why is it important to know the sex of a rabbit?
3. Why is it important to separate littermates by sexing at weaning?

Generalize:
4. Why is the sex of your rabbit important when choosing rabbits to show?

Apply:
5. When is it important to be able to know the sex of a rabbit to plan for future breeding programs?

GOING FURTHER:
• Visit a commercial rabbitry and see how they use records to cull.

REFERENCES:
Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
Tattooing a Rabbit

Rabbits, Level 1

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• What equipment is needed to tattoo a rabbit
• How to tattoo a rabbit

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• Importance of identification

Materials Needed:
• Tattoo pliers
• Tattoo numbers and letters
• Tattoo ink
• Vaseline
• Paper towels
• Tattoo box
• Cardboard
• Rabbits
• Carpet
• Activity Sheet 8, Determining Ownership
• Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 8, Determining Ownership

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 TO 45 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

Learning to tattoo a rabbit is an important and necessary management skill. All animals shown or registered in the American Rabbit Breeders Association registration system must be tattooed. This practice also provides positive identification for the purposes of record-keeping and protection against theft.

If you plan to show your rabbit at the county fair, one of the rules is that all rabbits must be tattooed in order to be shown.

A tattoo can have up to five letters or numbers that are used to identify your rabbit.

The best time to tattoo a rabbit is when it is about 8 weeks old and ready to be weaned. Steps to follow when tattooing are:

1. Put numbers and/or letters in the tattoo pliers.

2. Tattoo a piece of cardboard or paper first to make sure it will say what you want it to.

Leader Notes

You may wish to divide the group into teams and ask them to demonstrate how they would tattoo a rabbit. Give the teams a few minutes to work out the task. Using cardboard instead of a live rabbit, have the teams demonstrate how to tattoo a rabbit.

Demonstrate how to tattoo a rabbit using the tattoo box.
3. Put rabbit in tattoo box. If you don’t have a tattoo box, have someone hold your rabbit while you tattoo it.

4. Puncture the left ear with the tattoo pliers.

5. Rub tattoo ink into the puncture holes. Roll-on ink bottles are easy to use. If ink gets on the fur it usually is best to just let it wear off.

6. Apply a small amount of Vaseline and wipe the ear clean with a paper towel.

If the tattoo is not satisfactory, you may either make a second tattoo or repuncture the holes with a sharp needle and repeat the inking process.

DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:
Share:
1. Pretend that you don’t know how to tattoo a rabbit, have a group member explain it to you.

2. What are two tools needed to tattoo a rabbit?

Process:
3. Why is 8 weeks of age a good time to tattoo a rabbit?

4. Why is it important to individually identify rabbits?

Generalize:
5. What are some methods used to identify other animals?

Apply:
6. What are ways that people identify their possessions?

REFERENCES:
Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
TATTOOING A RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Activity Sheet 8, Determining Ownership

Use the following clues to help you decide which rabbit below belongs to which child.

1. Pat uses only odd digits (1,3,5,7,9) and letters on his tattoos.
2. Nancy always puts her initial in the middle of her rabbit’s tattoo.
3. Joey’s tattoo always begins with an M if his rabbit is a male.
4. Rosa put a 3 on the end of her rabbit’s tattoo since it was her third rabbit.
5. Joey’s rabbit is a female.

M5A93        M2NY3        F7X73        M6N18
TATTOOING A RABBIT
RABBITS, LEVEL I
Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 8, Determining Ownership

M5A93   M2NY3   F7X73   M6N18
Pat     Rosa   Joey   Nancy
Weaning the Rabbit Litter

*Rabbits, Level I*

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
- When to wean rabbits
- How and why to cull rabbits from a litter

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
- Strategies to use in making decisions

Materials Needed:
- American Rabbit Breeders Association Standard of Perfection
- Three or more rabbits (weaning age)
- Rug to put on table for activity

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

**ACTIVITY**

Weaning is when a young rabbit is separated from its mother. It is like when babies begin eating solid food at about the age of 1 or 2 years.

The best time to wean the rabbit litter is when they are 8 to 10 weeks old. At this time, you must decide what use each rabbit will be to you. Rabbits may be raised as pets, for breeding, show or meat. A list of disqualifications and faults will help you decide if you want to raise a rabbit for show.

Most members have room for only a few rabbits. Some members of a litter will be culled, or separated from the others, and raised for meat. These can be put together in a pen and kept until they are processed, when they weigh 4 to 6 pounds.

The others should be separated into individual pens. Then they cannot fight, injure or pull hair from each other. This also will keep them from breeding at too early an age.

Before you can decide which rabbits are good and which will be culled, you must determine the breed type, the fur quality, and breed markings. You need to know the standard for the breed.

When you wean the litter, follow these steps:
1. Sex
2. Cull
3. Tattoo
4. Place showing or breeding rabbits in separate cage.

**Leader Notes**

Lessons on sexing, culling, judging and tattooing should be done before or in conjunction with this lesson.

Demonstrate the steps needed to wean a litter.
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:

Share:
1. What does “weaning” a rabbit mean?

Process:
2. What are the different characteristics you should consider before culling your rabbits?

3. Why is it important to follow the procedures of sexing, culling, tattooing and placing rabbits in separate cages?

4. What decisions should you make about each rabbit after it is weaned?

Generalize:
5. What are some other decisions you have had to make? Why?

Apply:
6. Who helps you make daily decisions? Why?

REFERENCES:

Lessons on:
- Recognizing the Ideal Rabbit
- Parts of the Rabbit
- Talking Like a Rabbit Judge
- Determining the Sex of a Rabbit
- Recognizing General Faults and Disqualifications
- Selecting Rabbit Equipment

American Rabbit Breeders Association Standards of Perfection, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Rabbit Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team
Giving a 4-H Presentation
Rabbits, Level I

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT:
• What information should be included in a project presentation

ABOUT THEMSELVES:
• Communication skills

Materials Needed:
• Have each member bring a rabbit
• Carpet for table
• Activity Sheet 9, Good Speaker Tips

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED: 30 MINUTES

ACTIVITY
Tell the members that they are going to give a project talk about their rabbit project. One at a time, have members take their rabbit to the table. Then ask the following questions:

1. What breed of rabbit do you have?
2. How old is your rabbit?
3. What sex is your rabbit?
4. What do you feed your rabbit?
5. How often do you feed your rabbits?
6. How many rabbits do you have?
7. What is the best thing about having a rabbit?
8. For what purposes do people raise rabbits?

Leader Notes
As each member arrives, pin a rabbit term on each member’s back. Have the members try to guess what the term is on their backs. Members may ask questions that can be answered as yes or no. After the group has had a chance to guess the term on their backs, take off the terms and see how many guessed the correct term.

After the member has answered all the questions, tell them that he/she has given a project talk. The member may need some help in answering the questions. Continue until all members have had a chance to give their presentations.

Explain that there are a lot of other questions that can be answered in a project talk. For example, how many varieties does your breed have? What type of fur does your rabbit have?
DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING:

Share:
1. How easy or difficult was it to determine the rabbit term on your back?

2. Which did you enjoy the most—asking or answering rabbit questions? Why?

Process:
3. What did you learn about rabbits during this activity?

Generalize:
4. What did you learn about yourself during this activity?

Apply:
5. What will you do differently the next time you prepare for a presentation?

REFERENCES:
Lessons on:
- Identifying Breeds of Rabbits
- Feeding the Show Rabbit
- Selecting Your Project Animal

Author:
Clarence W. Linsey, Kansas State Breeders Association; James P. Adams, Extension Specialist 4-H Youth Programs, Kansas State University

Reviewed by:
Rabbit Design Team

Leader’s Key, Activity Sheet 9, Good Speaker Tips

What every speaker enjoys:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>S</th>
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<td>8</td>
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### GIVING A 4-H PRESENTATION
**RABBITS, LEVEL I**
**Activity Sheet 9, Good Speaker Tips**

If the statement is something a good speaker does, circle the first letter. If the statement is not something a good speaker does, circle the second letter. Then put the circled letters in the blanks to find out what every speaker enjoys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MA</th>
<th>1. Reads everything so he/she doesn’t make a mistake.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>2. Speaks quietly to get done earlier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>3. Speaks loudly and clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OL</td>
<td>4. Leans back against the wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN</td>
<td>5. Looks at the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UB</td>
<td>6. Stands straight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS</td>
<td>7. Chews gum during the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>8. Has prepared the presentation ahead of time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What every speaker enjoys:

```
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
--- --- --- --- --- --- ---
```