

## Tips for County Fair Judges – Home Environment



Wisconsin 4-H recommends that you use the following criteria to judge home environment entries at county fairs.

### Home Environment Judging Criteria

1. Construction – difficulty; time involved in the project
2. Workmanship
3. Relationship of project to child's age and number of years in the project

### **Judging for Elements of Design**

1. Color – should be an eye-catching feature in a design. For example, accessories are usually small, so they are often suitable in brighter colors than would otherwise be used in a room. Color should also suit the mood of the item or object. For example, clear vivid colors are often suited to contemporary or primitive objects while pale, soft colors may be more suited to historical or older designs and softer shapes.
2. Line – should be simple and related to the overall shape of the object. Look for lines that have variations of one line or a few lines repeated; add to the usefulness and attractiveness of the object; and carry the eye easily from one point to another and around the object.
3. Shape – should be in good proportion to each other. Look for shapes in different parts that are related by repetition or an interesting variation and shapes that serve the purpose for which the object is intended.
4. Texture – tells us how an object or a surface looks, feels and handles. Properties of the basic material should be used naturally. For example, plastic is not naturally textured to look like wood. Objects should also have surfaces that can be cared for or maintained with reasonable ease.

### **Judging for Principles of Design**

1. Balance – deals with the placement of “visual” weights (dark colors seem to weigh more than light, rough textures appear to be heavier than smooth, shiny ones). Balance creates a feeling of steadiness, of things looking as if they belong where they are in a room or space.
2. Emphasis – refers to the center of interest in a design, the one main focal point. A center of interest will call attention to itself because of its size, contrast of color or texture, or addition of something different. Other parts of the design should complement the center of interest. Each design and grouping should have emphasis.
3. Proportion/scale – proportion refers to the relationship of parts within an item; scale refers to the size relationship of objects to each other and the space they fill.

4. Rhythm – when the elements of design are arranged to make the eye travel from one part to another, the design has movement. If the eye moves smoothly and easily from one part to another, the motion is rhythmic. There are several kinds of rhythm that can be used in a design.
5. Unity – the feeling that all parts belong together. Unity occurs when color, texture, line, shape or form, rhythm, emphasis, scale and proportion have been combined to create a unified space, a visually balanced environment.

### **Judging Decorations Applied to an Accessory**

1. Follow the structural lines of the object.
2. Strengthen the shape of the article.
3. Be suited to the purpose of the article.
4. Cover the surface “quietly.”
5. Be as simple as possible.

### **Judging Plans for Placing Accessories in a Home**

1. Place accessories close enough together to create only one area of interest.
2. Choose accessories that repeat architectural features or furnishing lines in a room.
3. Use accessories to fill a vacant spot.
4. Use accessories within a grouping that complement each other in color, texture and line.

### **Wall Hanging, Decorative Item or Arrangement, Bulletin Board Judging Criteria**

1. Appearance
  - a. Overall effect
  - b. Condition
  - c. Originality
2. Design
  - a. Color selection
  - b. Texture
  - c. Line and shape
  - d. Rhythm, movement
  - e. Balance
  - f. Suitable emphasis
  - g. Harmony of ideas and material used
3. Selection of materials
  - a. Suitable for purpose
  - b. Skillful use of materials
  - c. Appropriate frame and mat
  - d. Finishing details: backing, hanger, etc.
  - e. Worth the investment in time, energy and money
4. Workmanship
  - a. Neat
  - b. Techniques suitable to materials and objects
  - c. All edges finished

Source: *Montana 4-H Guide for Judges*

### **Wood, Wicker or Metal Item Judging Criteria (New, Refinished, Recovered, Antiqued)**

1. General appearance
  - a. Color of finish and/or fabric
  - b. Finish: smooth sheen

- c. Hardware, if used
- d. Originality
- 2. Design
  - a. Basic structural design
  - b. Line and design
  - c. Proportion
- 3. Selection
  - a. Suitable for purpose
  - b. Ease of care
  - c. Durable
  - d. Suitability of fabric and trim (when used)
  - e. Suitability of finish
  - f. Hardware
  - g. Worth investment in time, energy and money

Source: *Montana 4-H Guide for Judges*

### **Cloth Item Judging Criteria**

- 1. General appearance
  - a. Design, overall effect
  - b. Condition clean, well pressed
  - c. Originality
- 2. Design
  - a. Scale to size of article
  - b. Scale to space in room
  - c. Printed or woven on grain line
  - d. Decorative design
  - f. Color
  - g. Line and shape
  - h. Texture
  - i. Use of space
  - j. Balance, rhythm, emphasis
  - k. Enhances structural design
- 3. Selection of materials
  - a. Suitable for purpose
  - b. Color
  - c. Ease of handling
  - d. Durability; ease of care
  - e. Trim appropriate for fabric and item
- 4. Workmanship
  - a. Cut on grain line
  - b. Construction process: skillful, suitable
  - c. Seams finished, if necessary
  - d. Selvages clipped or removed
  - e. Machine stitching even, proper length, well-adjusted tension

Source: *Montana 4-H Guide for Judges*