



LEADING CLUB RECREATION

Intended Audience:

- 4-H Club members, leaders and parents

Learning Objectives:

4-H Club members, leaders and parents will:

- Recognize the differences between poorly and well planned and led recreation activities
- Compare being involved in a confusing recreation activity to an activity with better directions
- Develop a list of tips for leading recreation

Target Essential Elements:

Recreation contributes to members and families sense of *belonging*.

Time: 20-30 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Kitchen timer or stopwatch
- Clothesline or rope long enough for everyone to hold
- Cloth strip to tie on rope
- Note cards, pencils and flipchart (optional)

Handouts

- Tips for Leading Recreation
- Evaluation

Do Ahead:

- Gather supplies.
- Make copies of handouts.
- Before giving directions to the second activity, tie the knot on the rope. Lay the rope in a circle large enough for everyone in the group to participate.

BACKGROUND

What past recreation activities by our 4-H club have been really fun? What made them fun? We're going to experience two recreation activities. Then, we'll talk about what worked and what needed improvement.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: How Not to Have a Knot Race

(Do not tell participants that giving bad directions is your goal. Lay the rope in an "S" or curving shape around the room.) For this activity, everyone is going to participate in a "knot race." Now grab the rope. We're going to pass the knot around as fast as possible. Who has the knot?

(Give participants a few moments to realize that you don't have a knot in the rope.) Oops, I forgot to put a knot in it. I'll tie this cloth on it instead.

(Pull a piece of cloth from your pocket and tie it to the rope.) When, I say "Go," pass the knot around as fast as possible. Everyone needs to pass it twice. (Ideally, people aren't standing in a circle. Thus, the person at the end of the line has no one to give the knot to. Start timing them.)

Has everyone passed the knot two times? (When everyone has passed the knot twice, announce their time. Write that time down.)

Activity: A Better Knot Race

(Before giving directions, tie the knot in the rope. Lay the rope in a circle large enough for everyone in the group to participate.) We're going to do the knot race again. Please stand in a circle, single file, around the rope.

(Make sure everyone is in the correct position.) Now face the rope, pick it up and hold it with both hands. Our goal is to pass the knot as quickly as possible around the circle, twice, to your right. I'm going to time you. Pass the rope by sliding your hands along the rope quickly. (Demonstrate how this is done.)

The person who starts the rope will need to pick up the end of the rope from the person to their left. Try to keep the end of the rope next to the beginning. When I say "Go," it's time to start. Go! (Start timing them. Announce their time. If time permits, ask the group if they would like to try for a faster time. If so, repeat the activity.)

Tips for Leading This Activity:

- Have all supplies ready and in place (missing cloth, rope knot in place the first time).
- Move people into needed spaces before giving directions.
- Give one step at a time.
- Demonstrate how to do the activity before participants start.



Sources:

- Created by Linda Kustka, Professor Emeritus, Department of Youth Development, UW-Extension.
- Adapted from “It’s in the Bag: Team Builders for Any Group” by John de Montmollin, Kenosha County UW-Extension, June 2004.

Closing

Recreation adds fun, energy and interaction at our meetings. It can be confusing and frustrating if the activity isn’t well planned and led. Following the ideas for good recreation that you developed will help you have lots more fun in the future.

Your reactions to this session help us evaluate its effectiveness. Please take the time now to complete this short evaluation.

TALK IT OVER**Reflect:**

- How did you feel about the first activity? What went wrong?
- What was poor about the directions you were given?
- Did the second activity work better? How?
- How did you feel about the activity with different directions?

Apply:

- How should directions be given for an activity?
- What other situations could use these tips?

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**Enhance:**

- To encourage independent thought, give everyone a note card and pencil to write down what went well and what needed improvement before you lead the discussion. Encourage sharing of their observations.
- Reinforce the strengths and weaknesses shared by writing them down on a flipchart or blackboard.
- If you are used to leading activities that go well, it may be difficult to give “botched” directions. Feel free to give the directions to “How Not to Have a Knot Race” in a way that is even more confusing.

EVALUATION

It is important to use an evaluation that is consistent with your teaching objectives. The short evaluation in the handouts can be modified to meet your needs. An alternative to a written evaluation is to record the Reflection discussion under “Talk It Over.” Recruit someone ahead of time to take notes while you are leading the discussion. Remember to share the evaluation results with 4-H Youth Development Extension staff in your county.

ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

- “Ohio 4-H Club Officer’s Guide: Recreation Leader,” 4-H 936, Christy M. Fisher Leeds, Niki Nestor McNeely and Betty Wingerter, The Ohio State University, 1986, at www.ohio4h.org/product/files/4H_936.pdf.
- “Recreation/Creative Play” by Rose Mary Bergmann and Betty Ann Smith, New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, 1994, at www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/pubs/pdfs/4h/e148/443-446.pdf.
- The following web sites have examples of icebreakers that you could use with your 4-H club:
 - Center for Disease Control & Prevention: www.verbparents.com/. This site features suggestions to encourage physical activity.
 - Fun-Attic – The Great Game List: www.funattic.com/game_list.htm.
 - Games Kids Play: www.gameskidsplay.net/.
 - ZOOM Games: www.pbs.org/wgbh/zoom/games/.

**Finalized by the Strengthening 4-H Club Leadership Work Team:
September 2005.**



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Tips for Leading Recreation

Recreation can help people:

- Have fun
- Get to know each other
- Learn to cooperate with others
- Learn new skills
- Better understand themselves

Ideas to Be Successful When Leading Recreation

- Plan the program
- Show enthusiasm
- Involve everyone
- Practice
- Be prepared
- Show how
- Be the leader
- Stop while you're still having fun

Adapted by Linda Kustka from Ohio "4-H Club Officer Guide: Recreation Leader," 4-H 936, written by Christy M. Fisher Leeds, Niki Nestor McNeely and Betty Wingerter, The Ohio State University, 1986.

Leading Club Recreation

Evaluation

1. How useful is this information for helping your club lead recreation for members?
(Circle one response.)

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not Sure Not Useful

2. Do you feel better prepared to plan fun activities for the club?

Yes No

3. What will you do as a result of this program?