

Head, Heart, Hands, Health

Skills: Language Arts, Social Studies, Math

Objective: Students will learn about one of the oldest youth organizations and use that information to compare and contrast other organizations and historical events.

Background

American agriculture had entered its golden age by the 20th century. In less than 100 years, American farmers had conquered the Atlantic to the Pacific, mastered the climate and soil from east to west and created the world's most productive agriculture enterprises. Products were carried by rail, wagon, and ship throughout the world. Specialization in agriculture gave rise to cattle zones, cotton belts, corn belts and milk sheds. Agricultural prices returned to farm labor an equivalent to that of other forms of investment.

But all was not calm on the home soil. Something was missing. By 1870 young people were finding employment in nonfarm jobs, and rural Americans were feeling the loss of their children to the cities. With the course of national development in factories and industrialization, rural Americans saw their numbers declining. Four-H began around the start of the 20th century as a means to reach these young people.

The beginnings of 4-H came about as many rural educators were questioning the relevance of public schools for country youngsters. While education in agriculture was advancing at the university level it was not reaching the public school. The 4-H idea of a practical and "hands-on" learning experience came from the desire to connect public school education with rural life. Early programs combined public and private resources for the purpose of helping rural youth.

The first meetings were held on Saturday mornings. While parents shopped and visited in town, boys were involved in corn clubs. In corn clubs, boys were asked to test the soil on their farms with litmus paper and select the best seed corn from their father's crop for future planting in test plots. Researchers at land grant colleges and the US Department of Agriculture recognized that new agricultural discoveries were not readily accepted by adult farmers in the communities. Educators found that youth would "experiment" with these new ideas and, in turn, share their experiences and successes with adults. The rural youth programs became a bridge to introduce new agriculture technology to the adults.

In 1898 corn clubs were introduced by handing out midwestern seed collections, and youths were offered a one dollar premium for the best yield of corn produced. That year 500 young men requested seed for the contest. By 1904 there were 50,000 entrants.

P.A.S.S.

GRADE 3

Reading—2.1; 4.1a,2a,3ab;
6.1c,2b

Writing—2.1,2

Oral Language—1.1; 2.5;
3.1,2

Social Studies—1.1; 4.4

Math Process—1.2; 2.2;
3.1,3; 4.4; 5.1,2

Math Content—5.1abc

GRADE 4

Reading—1.1; 3.1b,2a,3c;
5.1a,2c

Writing—1.2; 2.6

Oral Language—1.2; 2.2
3.1,2

Social Studies—1.1,2,3;
4.2; 5.2

Math Process—1.2; 2.2;
3.1,3; 4.4; 5.1,2

Math Content—5.1ab

GRADE 5

Reading—1.1a;
3.1b,2ab,3b; 5.1a,2d

Writing—1.2; 2.1

Oral Language—1.2; 2.3

Social Studies—1.1,2; 7.2

Math Process—1.2; 2.2;
3.1,2; 4.4; 5.1,2

Math Content—5.1abcd

GRADE 6

Reading—1.1; 3.1b,2a,3b;
5.1ab,2a

Writing—1.1,2; 2.2b,4a,7

Oral Language—1.2; 2.1

Social Studies—1.2,3; 3.1

Math Process—1.1,2,3,5;
2.1; 3.3; 4.1; 5.1,4

Math Content—5.1,2

Continued on next page.)

P.A.S.S. (Cont.)

GRADE 7

Reading— 1.1; 3.1a,2a,3a;
5.1ab,2a

Writing— 1.1,2; 2.2a,3a,8

Oral Language— 1.2; 2.1

Social Studies— 1.1; 2.2;
4.1; 5.2

Math Process— 1.1,2,3,5;
2.1; 3.3; 4.1; 5.1,4

Math Content— 5.1

GRADE 8

Reading— 1.1;

3.1a,2ab,3b; 5.1a,2a

Writing— 1.1,2; 2.2b,5a,8

Oral Language— 1.2; 2.1

Social Studies— 1.1,2,3
2.1

Math Process— 1.1,2,3,5;
2.1; 3.3; 4.1; 5.1,4

Math Content— 5.1

Resources Needed

library/internet access

journal/writing paper

graph/computer paper

From its many beginnings, club work had included young women. There were sewing and baking exhibits at local and state fairs as well as corn and animal exhibits. Girls were also encouraged to be in poultry clubs. Unlike the boys' clubs, girls' clubs had no technological goal. In the beginning they were confined to canning, sewing, baking and the like, but in time they changed to "demonstration" clubs. Girls' canning clubs were soon introducing new canning techniques and safety procedures. By 1912 there were over 23,000 canning clubs throughout the south.

In the southern US the main objective for 4-H clubs was to break the one-crop cotton economy. Corn was the first break in the cycle. With a feed grain available, farmers could introduce livestock, garden vegetables and poultry.

With the success of the corn clubs in Mississippi, livestock was introduced. Young men under 18 were invited to enter a pig-growing contest, using instructions from the land-grant college, with prizes and cash awarded for the most successful effort.

Early clubs were segregated not just by gender but by race as well. As with other institutions in the first decades of the 20th century, programs for blacks and whites were kept rigidly separate. In the 1960s gender or ethnic divisions were erased and groups were combined into a single integrated program.

In the mid 1950s, 4-H was extended into urban areas and also grew to include an International Farm Youth Exchange. Later, the basic 4-H focus became the personal growth of the member. Life skills development was built into projects, activities and events to help youth become contributing, productive, self-directed members of society.

The growth of 4-H around the world has been impressive, with clubs existing in at least 80 countries. These clubs have a total membership of over 4 million young people. It is hard to travel to any corner of the globe and not see the familiar clover symbol. There are nearly 50 million Americans from all walks of life who have been 4-H members.

Resources: Wessel, Thomas, and Marilyn Wessel, *4-H: An American Idea 1900-1980, A History of 4-H*; *Cowboy Journal*, Oklahoma State University; National 4-H Headquarters, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, USDA; Oklahoma 4-H Foundation, Oklahoma State University; National Collegiate 4-H Organization

Activity 1

1. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
2. Provide copies of the timeline included with this lesson.
 - Discuss the timeline as a class.
 - Students will use online search engines or library references to create a timeline comparing other historical events to this timeline. Some examples may include:
 1. Agriculture in the 20th century
 2. Advances in agricultural machinery and technology

3. Century of Oklahoma history

4. Century of American history

—Students may choose any form of timeline to complete this activity.

—For younger students, limit their timelines to between 5 and 10 events.

Activity 2

1. Provide copies of the “Oklahoma 4-H Fact Sheet” included with this lesson.

—Students will select an appropriate graph and create a graph of one or more categories of information. (For a summary of graph types, go to the “Graphs” link found in the “Additional Resources” section of the website.)

—For younger students, teachers may choose the type of graph to be used by the students and also the category of information.

—Display the graphs and look for patterns.

—Extend this activity by looking at this same information from the 1970’s, 1980’s, or 1990’s to see other patterns of change.

2. Students will use online search engines and library resources to gather additional information about 4-H to use for a graph.

Activity 3

1. Students will find the 4-H motto, emblem, and pledge on the timeline included with this lesson.

—Students will reflect on the background information to determine how the motto, emblem and pledge relate to experiences of club members in the early 4-H clubs? (The National 4-H organization includes a fifth “H” for home.)

2. Students will use online search engines and/or library resources to research the origins of other youth organizations (FFA, Girl and Boy Scouts, youth sports, YMCA, etc.)

—Students will research the reasons for the organization, how and where it began, its growth in the US and world, and other interesting highlights, such as symbols, mottoes, pledges, etc.

—Students will report on the research orally or in written form.

Extra Reading

Faulk, John, Elizabeth Donovan and Rosalie Woods, *Free-Choice Science Education: How We Learn Science Outside of School*, Teacher’s College Press, 2001.

Kehret, Peg and Greg Farrar, *Shelter Dogs: Amazing Stories of Adopted Strays*, Albert Whitman and Company, 1999.

Lee, John B., *Head, Heart, Hands, Health: A History of 4-H in Ontario*, Ontario 4-H Council, 1995.

White, E.B., *Charlotte’s Web*, Harper Trophy, 2004.

Vocabulary

ambassador—an official representative of an organization or movement

aquatic—connected with, consisting of, or dependent on water

auspices—with the help or support of a person or organization

Cooperative Extension Service—agricultural education; formal or nonformal system designed to educate youths and adults about such subjects as animal and plant production

enrichment—to improve the quality of something, usually by adding something else to it

kafir—a type of sorghum harvested for its grain

land grant colleges—institutions of higher education established in the United States under the provisions of the Morrill Acts

milkweed—a flowering plant that secretes a milky latex and has seed pods that burst open to release silky-tufted seeds

motto—a short saying that expresses a rule to live by; “To make the best better”

score—a group of 20 years

technology—the study, development, and application of devices, machines, and techniques for manufacturing and productive processes

Timeline of 4-H in Oklahoma

1896	First nature clubs are organized on the east coast.
1898	First Corn Clubs are organized.
1907	First known Corn Club in Oklahoma was organized in Orlando with 50 members.
1907-8	First emblem used with a three-leaf clover. The three leaves stood for head, heart, and hands.
1911	Fourth “H” added for “hustle,” which was later changed to “health.”
1912	Girls’ Canning and Tomato Clubs were formed and special interest clubs started for Dairy, Cotton, Kafir, Peanuts, Pigs, Poultry, Horticulture, and Better Bread.
1914-18	4-H’ers contributed food and clothing for soldiers around the world and earned the name “soldiers of the soil.”
1916	An “After Dinner Club” organized at Oklahoma State University became the first Collegiate 4-H Club.
1921	The first Oklahoma 4-H Roundup was held at Oklahoma A & M College.
1924	Boys’ and Girls’ Club work became known as 4-H. The 4-H emblem was adopted as a national trademark. The official 4-H emblem is a green four-leaf clover with a white ‘H’ on each leaf. The Hs stand for “Head,” “Heart,” “Hands,” and “Health.” The 4-H colors are white, for purity, and green, for youth, life, and growth.
1927	The 4-H motto, “To make the best better,” was adopted at the first national 4-H camp. The 4-H pledge, written by Otis Hall of Kansas in 1918, was adopted at the same time. <i>I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service and my health to better living, for my club, my community, and my country.</i>
1938	The 4-H Clubs and Student Activities Building, now named Gallagher-Iba Arena, was dedicated on the OSU campus.
1942	The “Feed a Fighter” campaign challenged each member to produce enough food to feed one World War II soldier for a year. Four-H’ers also collected milkweeds for use in parachutes and sold liberty bonds to support the war effort.
1950’s	Special-interest programs such as Auto Safety, Flower Gardening, Public Speaking, Community Development, and Photography were added to target urban youth.
1960’s	Clubs combined into a single integrated program rather than gender or ethnic divisions.
1973	The words “and my world” were added to the end of the 4-H pledge.
1988	Langston University Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development Program initiated. Goat and Fish Clubs organized in under-served areas. Beginning of aquatic and goat school enrichment programs.
2007	134,141 youth enrolled in 4-H programs in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma 4-H Fact Sheet

Youth in Oklahoma 4-H (2006 statistics)

134,141* youth, principally K-12 grades, participated in 4-H in 2006.

4-H ENGAGES YOUTH

30,910were members in 998 clubs
48,803.....were members of 1,530 special interest groups
10,989.....participated in 569 4-H camping programs
74,170.....participated in 1,397 4-H school enrichment programs
84.....enrolled in 4-H individual study programs
1,519.....entered 91 school-aged childcare programs
309.....enrolled in 4-H instructional TV/Video programs

4-H REACHES DIVERSE POPULATIONS

77%Caucasian
8%African American
17%American Indian, Alaskan Native
7%Hispanic
1%Asian or Pacific Islander

Of the total number of youth in Oklahoma 4-H, 29 percent are from minority or racial/ethnic groups.

4-H MEMBERS SPAN ALL GRADE LEVELS

41.9%grades K-3
32.1%grades 4-6
15.1%grades 7-9
7.7%grades 10-12
1.2%post high school
1.7%out of school
0.3%special

Of the total number of youth in Oklahoma 4-H, 52 percent are girls and 48 percent are boys.

4-H MEMBERS LIVE IN URBAN AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS.

14%live in central cities 50,000+
6%live in suburbs of cities over 50,000
28%live in towns and cities of 10,000 to 50,000
27%live in towns under 10,000 and in open country
25%live on farms

4-H PROVIDES A VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES

Oklahoma 4-H youth participated in the following subjects/projects/learning experiences:
4,793.....Citizenship and Civic Education
15,662.....Communication and Expressive Arts
7,780.....Consumer and Family Sciences
16,478.....Environmental Education and Earth Sciences
35,996.....Healthy Lifestyle Education
13,930.....Personal Development and Leadership
53,322.....Plants and Animals
20,892.....Science and Technology

Youth may participate in more than one subject/project/learning experience.

4-H ATTRACTS COMMITTED VOLUNTEERS.

Volunteers are essential to the successful delivery of 4-H programs to youth. In 2006, 4,003 volunteers worked directly and indirectly with youth.

*total youth in Oklahoma 4-H with duplications eliminated.