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So You Are Reporter of Your Club (Was 4H 510C4)  
Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service  
4-H Club Bulletin  
N.A.  
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**So you are  
reporter of your  
club...**



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4-H Youth Programs  
Cooperative Extension Service  
**Michigan State University**

You, and all officers of 4-H clubs, are representatives. You represent not only the local club, but the whole 4-H program throughout the state. Your skills and abilities, standards and ideals, grooming, speech, and even smiles represent Michigan 4-H. Representing others is one of your most important responsibilities because it exists at all times—not just while you are at the 4-H meetings. Those who are not acquainted with 4-H judge it by its officers.

## Checklist for Reporters

- \_\_\_\_\_ I will try to tell the 4-H news in an accurate and interesting way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will write an article before the meeting to invite people to the meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will consult the club secretary if I need meeting information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will take accurate notes at each club meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will write a news story promptly after each meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will take or send the news article to the newspapers and radio stations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will try to include pictures with some articles for the newspapers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will read other 4-H and general news articles and try to improve mine.

## Guidelines for Reporters

1. The first paragraph of the article is the most important. It sums up the rest of the article in one sentence.
2. The first paragraph tells **who, what, why, where, when** and sometimes **how**. Decide which point (who, what, why, where, when or how) is most important, and start the sentence with that point.
3. After the first sentence, tell more about each of the points in the first sentence—the who, the what, the why, where, when and perhaps how.
4. Use simple language in brief sentences. Include only those details that are necessary to the article.
5. Use first and last names and the town in the person's address, such as Susan Bates, Grand Rapids, and Tom McCall, Ada. Be absolutely certain all names are spelled correctly.
6. Report only recent news. Old items are not new, so they aren't news.
7. Be accurate.
8. Rewrite or type your final draft of the news article.
9. At the top of the article, in the upper left corner, write the name of the club, then below that, your name, the 4-H office you hold (reporter), your address and telephone number, and "For Immediate Release."

\_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club  
(name of your 4-H club)

\_\_\_\_\_, reporter  
(your name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your phone number)

(Skip a line)

For Immediate Release

(Skip four lines)

Start the article here. If you type the article, double space it. If you write it by hand, write on every other line of lined paper.

10. After the article is typed or recopied, immediately take it or mail it to the newspapers and radio stations. At the newspaper, give or send it to the news editor. At the radio station, give or send it to the news director.

11. Keep a list of the places to send the news articles.

Name of the news editor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

Address of the newspaper \_\_\_\_\_  
(street)

\_\_\_\_\_ (town) \_\_\_\_\_ (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

Deadline of the newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of radio station news director \_\_\_\_\_

Name of radio station \_\_\_\_\_

Address of radio station \_\_\_\_\_  
(street)

\_\_\_\_\_ (town) \_\_\_\_\_ (state) \_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

12. Address and stamp several envelopes at the beginning of the year so that when the article is recopied, it can be mailed immediately.

## How This Sample News Article Was Developed

An example of a good 4-H news article follows. This is the way it should look when it is sent or

taken to the newspaper and radio stations. (Instead of being typed, it could be written by hand on every other line of lined paper.)

Lincoln True Blue 4-H Club  
Mel Berkland, reporter  
101 Morrill Road  
Any Town, MI 44444  
555-0000

For immediate release

The Lincoln True Blue 4-H'ers painted picnic tables at the Lincoln Town Park as a community service project on May 17 and 24. They bought paint and supplies with money they earned during the year.

Organizers of the community service project were Bob Jones and Carol Walker. 4-H'ers who helped were Chris Brown, Bill Ross, Ann Clay, Barb Green, Steve Olsen, Judy Wright, Greg White, Pam Smith, Mel Berkland and Paul Black. Volunteer 4-H leaders are Gene Glen and Lyn Wisser.

The 4-H'ers swept dirt from the tables, scraped peeling paint, and scrubbed and rinsed the tables. Then they painted all seven tables dark green.

To organize the community service project, Bob Jones and Carol Walker talked to the mayor of Lincoln in March to find out what needed to be done in Lincoln that the 4-H'ers could do. At the April 4-H meeting, 4-H'ers voted to paint the tables and continued to make plans.

Money to pay for paint and supplies came from the chili supper they sponsored in February. The profit was \$134.73. The Lincoln Hardware Store donated some of the supplies.

The Lincoln True Blue 4-H Club will hold their June 2 meeting in the Lincoln Town Park. It will be a 7:30 a.m. breakfast. The mayor and city council will be special guests to hear a report by the 4-H'ers on the community service project.

For more 4-H information, contact the Story County Extension Office in Any Town or call 555-5555.

### Notes on Lincoln True Blue 4-H'ers

The sample article was written from the following notes:

Painted picnic tables May 17 and 24 in Lincoln Town Park.

Used chili supper profit (\$134.73). Held in February.

Picnic table project decided on after talking to mayor in March to find out what services Lincoln needed. Find out what 4-H'ers could do. Took vote in April to paint.

Dark green paint

Hardware store donated some supplies.

All 7 picnic tables

Brushed, scraped, scrubbed, rinsed tables.

Organized by Bob Jones and Carol Walker.

Painters—Chris Brown, Bill Ross, Ann Clay, Barb Green, Steve Olsen, Judy Wright, Greg White, Pam Smith, Paul Greene, Mel Berkland. Volunteer 4-H leaders—Gene Glen and Lyn Wisser.

Next meeting June 2, 7:30 a.m. Lincoln Town Park. Breakfast. Program—report on community service project. Mayor and city council special guests.

To write the article, notice that the following sheet of paper first was divided into six boxes. Each part was labeled with one of the five Ws and the H that are important for news articles. The five Ws and the H are who, what, why, where, when and how.

The main information was taken from the notes and written in each of the six boxes. Then the reporter decided which of the six parts was most important. That box was given the number one. The reporter decided which part was next most important and numbered it two, and so on, for all six boxes. Then the first sentence was written by putting the information in number order.

Where (3)	When (5)	Who (1)
<p><u>Lincoln Town Park</u></p>	<p><u>May 17 + 24</u></p> <p>June 2 meeting at Lincoln Park 7:30 a.m. breakfast Mayor and city Council as special guests Report on community service project</p>	<p><u>Lincoln True Blue 4-H'ers</u></p> <p>Organizers: Bob Jones and Carol Walker Helpers: Chris Brown Bill Ross Ann Clay Barb Sheen Steve Olsen Judy Wright Greg Hite Pam Smith Mel Berkland Paul Greene Volunteer 4-H leaders: Gene Glen Lyn Hiser</p>
Why (4)	What (2)	How (6)
<p><u>Community service</u></p> <p>Organizers talked to Mayor of Lincoln in March to find out what service was needed that 4-H'ers could do. April meeting voted to paint.</p>	<p><u>Painted picnic tables</u></p> <p>Brushed Scraped Scrubbed Rinsed Painted all 7 tables dark green</p>	<p><u>Raised money</u></p> <p>Chili supper in February Profit of \$134.73, Lincoln Hardware Store donated some supplies.</p>

## How to Decide What to Write

You report 4-H news so others will know about 4-H and 4-H'ers. People like to know about other people. So make people the subject of your first sentence. Then use the people's action for the verb.

Here's an example of another first sentence using the same information from the six boxes on page five, but arranged in a different order than in the sample article on page four. "Picnic tables were painted May 17 and 24 at the Lincoln Town Park as a community service project of the Lincoln True Blue 4-H'ers."

The sentence in the sample article on page four is better because it uses people as the subject of the sentence instead of picnic tables.

To decide what is most important, and therefore what should be reported early in the first sentence, also think about this: what would be most interesting for people to know if they had not attended the 4-H event that you are writing about? (The fact that your 4-H group met would seldom be the most interesting thing for someone to know about at the beginning of an article.) Instead, write about an action that the 4-H'ers took at the meeting: 4-H'ers decide, 4-H'ers learn, 4-H'ers elect, 4-H'ers do things for other people. Choose this type of information for early in the first sentence.

After writing the first sentence for the sample article on page 4, the reporter went back to the six boxes and wrote a few more notes about each of the WWWWWH. Then paragraphs were written on each of those and added to the article. The paragraphs were added in the same order as the topics were mentioned in the first sentence. For example, in the sample article, the second paragraph told more about the "who" part of the first sentence; it told names of the 4-H'ers and leaders. The third paragraph told more about "what" 4-H'ers did; the "what" was the second part of the first sentence; etc.

Then the last paragraph was added. It should be on all articles.

## Practice for News Reporters

### Steps to Your Finished 4-H News Article

1. Take notes; get other information from secretary.
2. Divide paper into six boxes for WWWWW and H.
3. Add brief information from notes to boxes.
4. Number boxes in order of importance.
5. Write first sentence.
6. Add details from notes to boxes.
7. Write paragraphs from information in boxes.
8. Add last paragraph.
9. Recopy article.
10. Send or take article.

### Notes:

Here are some notes taken at a Clover Clan 4-H meeting. Use them to write a news article following the procedure shown on page 5 and completing the steps listed above.

Clover Clan 4-H Club met at Jane Richard's home in Ada on May 6.

The president, Tom McCall, was at camp so Bill Thompson, vice president, led the meeting.

Fourteen of the 18 members were present.

An IFYE, Hans Schmidt, from Germany, visited the meeting.

Susan Steed's two little sisters, Amy and Sara, visited the meeting.

The bake sale committee asked to buy poster board and markers.

The bake sale will be May 27 at Fareway Grocery in Ada from 9 a.m. to noon.

Bill Jones gave a presentation on how to use chop sticks.

Anne White showed how to make fortune cookies and then each member made a dozen cookies.

Members visited people at Maxwell Retirement Home on April 23.

Recreation was led by Mike Ball. A relay game was played.

Next meeting will be at Sally Jones's home in Kentwood on June 7 at 2:00 p.m.

Leaders are Jolene Jones and Marvin Doe.





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For more 4-H information, contact the \_\_\_\_\_ County Extension Office in  
\_\_\_\_\_ or call \_\_\_\_\_.  
(town) (number)

Now what should you do with the news article? \_\_\_\_\_

When should you send or take the recopied news article? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Article to write to announce the meeting**

\_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club  
(name of your 4-H club)

\_\_\_\_\_, reporter  
(your name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your phone number)

### **For Immediate Release**

#### **4-H'ers to Meet**

\_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club will meet at \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of your 4-H club) (location—home or building) (address)  
on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ p.m./a.m.  
(date) (time)

Volunteer 4-H leaders for \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club are  
(name of your 4-H club)  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(name) (hometown) (name) (hometown)

For more about 4-H, call the \_\_\_\_\_ County Extension Office at \_\_\_\_\_.  
(phone number)

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