

4-H Story Tips

Here are a few additional tips for writing your 4-H Story:

1. **NUMBER OF STORIES.** Juniors – include information on all of your projects in one 4-H Story. Intermediates and Seniors – focus your story on one project; each project will have its own story.
2. **PAPER.** Use one side of the paper only. Do not print double-sided.
3. **SIGNATURE.** You do NOT need to sign your story. You may sign at the end, but it is not required.
4. **SPACING.** Seniors should double space the story. Intermediates and Juniors may use single spacing. Juniors may hand write their story.
5. **STORY LENGTH.** Junior stories may only be one page long. Each year, your story will lengthen as you increase the number of projects and the amount of activities and project work you take on. Senior stories may be up to 6 pages long.

4-H Story Examples

JUNIOR (AGES 7-9)

Hello, my name is John Smith. I belong to the Gotta Luv 4-H Club in Alma, Kansas. I have an older brother and sister that also belong to the Gotta Luv 4-H Club and this is my first year in 4-H. My older brother is Frank who is thirteen and Jane who is ten. It doesn't seem like this is my first year because I have been involved in many of our family's 4-H activities ever since I can remember.

My favorite things about my 4-H year were showing my bucket calf, Daffy, at the fair and getting to launch the rocket that I had made. I was enrolled in beef, horse, rabbits, and rocketry. I also got to do my first 4-H presentation this year. I gave a demonstration on how to transplant plants into a clay pot.

This year my bucket calf's name is Daffy. She is an Angus heifer, which means that her breed is Angus. She is all black and she is a young female calf. I have had Daffy ever since she was two days old. She was a twin born to one of the cows on our ranch. We were afraid that she wouldn't get enough to eat from her mother, so she came to live at the barn with me feeding her milk replacer every day. After feeding her with the bottle for about a month, we started feeding her hay and grain. By fair time she was totally weaned from the bottle.

She is a really good calf and was pretty easy to halter break. I showed her at the fair and I received a blue ribbon. Even though this was my first year to show in 4-H, I have had several bucket calves and this was my fourth year to take a bucket calf to the fair. Hopefully I can do it again next year.

I have a pony named Peanut that I can ride and I have started riding one of the family horses, Sox. I didn't get along with Peanut very well because he really didn't want to do what I wanted him to do. My parents didn't think I was ready to ride Sox at any of the horse project meetings, but I was going to show him at halter at the fair. As my luck would have it, my dad ended up having to take him shipping during the fair, so I will have to wait until next year. Maybe next year I will be ready.

I really like the rocketry project. I went to two project meetings where we went over the parts of the rocket and worked on sanding the fins. Since my older brother Frank has been in Rocketry for five years, he helped me a lot on my rocket. I liked making it and especially the painting. Most of the time I don't get to use spray paint! We must have done pretty well on the construction and the painting because I got a purple ribbon for my rocket and this was my first year!

Getting to launch my rocket was really fun. We had a rocket launch for all of the club members in rocketry at the end of our 4-H club tour. It was fun because not only did I get to launch my rocket, but I got to see everybody else's rocket get launched, too.

I'm not sure what projects I will take next year, but I know they will be fun.

John Smith

INTERMEDIATE (AGES 10-13)

Hello, my name is John Smith. I belong to the Gotta Luv 4-H Club in Alma, Kansas. I have two older siblings that also belong to the Gotta Luv 4-H Club and this is my fourth year in 4-H. My older brother is Frank who is sixteen and my sister is Jane who is thirteen. It doesn't seem like this is my fourth year already!

It was my third year to go to 4-H Camp. It was really fun and I definitely want to do that again next year. One of the things that made it so much fun was that two of my friends from school also went.

This was my third year to participate in Wabaunsee County 4-H Day. Since this was going to be my first year in Entomology, I wanted to give a talk on Entomology. So, I gave an Illustrated Talk on "Identifying the Parts of an Insect". I learned a lot about that project when I was preparing for my talk. I received a blue ribbon on my talk at Wabaunsee / Pottawatomie County 4-H Day. I also participated in a skit called "The Fishing Game". We received the top blue for our skit.

I was enrolled in several projects this year: Entomology, Rocketry, Photography, Shooting Sports – BB Gun, and Market Swine. I was so busy doing other activities, I did not get any insects pinned for the fair, but I did collect several specimens. I really want to do this project, so I have been collecting specimens and I am going to try to work on that this winter when we are not so busy.

I really like the rocketry project. I went to two project meetings where we went over rocket construction and worked on sanding the fins. Since my older brother Frank has been in Rocketry for eight years, he helped me finish making and painting my rocket. I like making it and especially the painting. Most of the time I don't get to use spray paint! My rocket this year was called "The Express". I painted it high gloss black. Since this was my fourth year in rocketry, I decided to try a level 2 rocket. It was a lot harder than the ones I had made in the past and this was my first year to compete in the intermediate division. This rocket even had eight fins! I spent quite a bit of time sanding and painting. I guess I should have spent more time sanding because that was what the judge really counted me down for, especially in the joints. My rocket received a blue ribbon.

Getting to launch my rocket was really fun. We have a rocket launch for all of the club members in rocketry at the end of our 4-H club tour. That was really fun and my rocket did great! I really like the rocket launch they have at the fair also. They have an altitude contest during the fair rocket launch. Winners get to choose first from a selection of rocket kits. Hopefully, I can start on my rocket earlier this winter when I can't play outside. I'm definitely going to do rocketry again next year.

This was my third year in the photography project. I discovered that I really liked it. Our club had several project meetings. The one most helpful for me had a speaker who talked about taking good pictures and using your surroundings to make pictures more interesting.

Most of my pictures were taken around my house and ranch. I took several pictures of my favorite subject, our 6-month old border collie mix named Sam. I exhibited five pictures in the 4-H division and two in the open class. I was really excited when all five of my pictures received purples! I sent my favorite picture of Puddles to the state fair where it received a blue ribbon. Our family vacation is to Yellowstone this fall. I am hoping to take some of the pictures I took there to the fair next year.

I did participate in Shooting Sports – BB Gun this year for the second time. I practiced a little at home and went to practices one night a week from November thru April. This year I shot well enough to go to three matches, including the Kansas State 4-H Match which was held in Alma this year. I am going to practice more and try again next year.

My siblings had been in the market swine project the past two years, so I decided to give it a try this year. I was almost surprised to find out that I really liked it. Working with the pigs was not too hard and it was kind of fun, especially when I was doing it with my siblings. I had two pigs, a crossbred barrow and a Hampshire gilt. My biggest accomplishment was that I made the first cut in Showmanship in the Intermediate Division and this was the first time I had ever shown a pig in competition! I received a blue in Showmanship, a blue on my Crossbred barrow, and a red on my Hampshire gilt. We knew she was a little small, but did not want to leave her at home by herself.

I'm not sure what projects I will take next year. I have been thinking about adding a couple of new ones. I know whichever projects I choose will be fun!

John Smith

SENIOR (AGES 14-19)

Hello, my name is John Smith. I belong to the Maple Hill Hustlers 4-H Club in Maple Hill, Kansas. I am fifteen years old and this is my ninth year in 4-H. I am the youngest of three kids and we have been very active in 4-H over the years. It seems like I have always been in 4-H because I have been going to all kinds of 4-H activities since before I was even old enough to join.

I have always enjoyed going to 4-H Camp. As a matter of fact, I went to camp as a camper for seven years. For the last two years, I have been selected to go as a 4-H Camp Counselor. It was definitely a highlight of my 4-H year and summer. It may have even been the most fun I have ever had at camp. I hope to go again next year. I also went to Discovery Days this year for the first time. It was actually more fun than I thought it would be. I just need to sign up earlier next year to get a better choice of classes.

I was enrolled in just three projects this year: Photography, Market Swine and Leadership. In the past I have also done wildlife, horse and bucket calf. Since I have gotten older, it has become harder and harder to keep up with 4-H and all of my other activities. In addition to the two summer camps above, I also play summer baseball, summer basketball, attended summer basketball camp, lift weights and help with my church's Vacation Bible School. With trying to fit everything in, it just gets crazy!

I feel like I have really expanded my leadership skills this year. This past year I have served as our club's President for the first time. I did attend the Wabaunsee County 4-H Officer Training, but it seems like that each meeting brings a new learning experience. It is a little harder conducting a meeting than I expected it to be.

Our club has tried a couple of new community service projects this year that I helped with. Our club did a Valentine's decorating day with members at the local Senior Center. You might imagine that it was not my favorite activity, but I think they really appreciated our club's efforts. Also, as a club, we did our own fair grounds clean-up day before the Wabaunsee County Water Conservation Day at the fairgrounds. Our members always seem to have a conflict with the county wide fairgrounds work day, so we thought this would be a good way for us to contribute our services.

Probably my favorite community service project occurs over the Memorial Day Weekend. For the past five years, our club members have assisted the local American Legion and Auxiliary by helping set up the individual flag markers and putting the large poles and flags up that line the front of the cemetery. There are 32 of them to be exact and it takes some strength to put them up and take them down. They look really cool once they are all in place. Since I have gotten a lot bigger, I have helped with this part of the process. With the declining membership and age of our local legion membership, I know they really appreciate our help.

This was my fifth year to be enrolled in the market swine project. Working with the pigs is not too hard and it is kind of fun, especially when I was doing it with my brothers. I had two pigs this year, a Hampshire Crossbred barrow and a Duroc gilt. Once again, I had a scheduling conflict with the Spring Swine show. Although I was unable to show in that, my dad and I took our pigs up and got them weighed and tagged. Although I didn't get to show my pigs at the spring show, I continued to care for them and work on showing them. My Duroc gilt weighed 190 at the spring show which was close to my target weight of 200. My Crossbred barrow surprised me by weighting in at 214. My goal was to have them weigh in at 290 by fair time.

The Duroc weighed a little less than that at 280. However, the Crossbred was right on the money at 293. They both received blue ribbons in their respective market classes. I put my Crossbred through the sale ring and got \$750 dollars premium plus base price of \$228.54. Then I sold my Duroc back to the breeder for \$200 dollars plus base price of \$218. My total expenses were \$1,149 including the cost of the pigs, feed and wormer. After expenses, I cleared \$245.54. All in all it was a successful year in the swine project.

This year I was very fortunate to go to Washington DC for a week with a school group. It was a great week and we went to many historical places in our nation's capital. One of my favorite parts was the tour of the monuments. As a result, I took a lot of pictures while I was there. Needless to say, many of my entries for the fair in the photography project were ones that I took in DC. I took 10 photos to the fair: 5 in open class and 5 in the 4-H division. I got mostly purples, and was very happy with how my pictures did. I picked my favorite picture that received a purple and sent it to the Kansas State Fair. I was rather disappointed that it received a red ribbon, but I hope to try again next year.

For the first time this year I decided to try a Photo Album of the pictures I had taken of my trip to Washington DC. The judge had a lot of comments on the pictures and really liked several of them, but my book received a blue. I am not sure I will try that again, but I do have a nice full size photo album of my pictures from the trip as a result.

I had a fun and successful 4-H year and hope that next year will be just as much fun!

John Smith