

# 4-H Consumer Choices



4-H Youth Development Staff

## Consumer Choices helps 4-H'ers:

- Learn a process to make wise decisions based on current information
- Learn critical thinking skills
- Learn to verbalize and defend choices to others
- Develop observation skills
- Learn to express ideas clearly and concisely
- Meet new people and learn from them
- Enjoy friendly competition
- Generalize the decision making process into everyday decision making

Consumer Choices is an educational opportunity for 4-H members to make decisions as an individual and as a team member. It can help you learn to make decisions based on information you have learned and studied during this process. It also can help you learn to defend the decisions you make to others. Consumer Choices helps you practice making decisions by matching your knowledge, skills and abilities against that of others. Your success depends upon how well you are willing to observe, process what you have observed and evaluate what you have seen.

## Study Guides

Each year a set of study guides is written in three different categories. These sets of study guides help you learn more about what you will need to know to make informed choices during practice sessions, and again in the contests in which you participate.

For example, when choosing sunglasses, picking lenses that block out ultraviolet rays, both A and B, abbreviated as UVA/UVB, to prevent eye injury and cataracts as years go by is important. That information is provided for you in the study guides and will help you make more informed choices when participating in Consumer Choices.

**NDSU**  
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As technology advances, additional information and Web site addresses may be provided for you to learn more about the Consumer Choice categories each year. Only three standards may be listed in the situation statement for the 8- to 10-year-old participants, while as many as six may be in the teen classes.

## Classes

Classes are put together to give you the opportunity to test the knowledge you gained from learning the standards. A class will contain a situation statement, standards, class items, placings, cuts and reasons. The contest event will include six classes, two from each of the three categories of study guides. An oral set of reasons is given for three of the classes.

For you to know what to look for in each class, the class begins with a situation statement. A situation statement is a story that helps you determine what to look for in a certain situation. The most important things are always listed first. The least important things are listed later. For example:

*Elizabeth wants a new pair of sunglasses. She wants lenses that block 100 percent of UVA/UVB sunrays. She wants colored lenses that do not distort color and she wants a durable frame.*

If you have read the study guides, they will help you make a choice for Elizabeth because you will know which color lenses do not distort color and what types of frames are more durable. Her standards are:



1. Block 100 percent of UVA/UVB rays
2. Nondistorting lens color
3. Durable frame

Each class will contain four similar articles, such as four pairs of sunglasses, four yo-yos and so on, with characteristics that vary. The class will be placed according to the standards in the situation. Having 100 percent UVA/UVB protection for her eyes is more important to Elizabeth than having durable frames. Durable frames are important, too, but not as important as protection for her eyes.

Most Consumer Choices events allow a certain number of minutes (usually 12) for placing the classes. A timekeeper should give a two-minute warning before the group leader calls for the judging cards.

# The Judging Card

At an event, each contestant receives a judging card for each class. The cards should be filled out completely and accurately.

PD600			
<h2>Judging Card</h2>			
<u>John Smith 108</u> (Number or Name)		A 1234	
<u>Sunglasses</u> (Class)		B 1243	
<u>Elizabeth</u> (Class)		C 1324	
Placing Score _____		D 1342	
Reason Score _____		E 1423	
		F 1432	
		G 2134	
		H 2143	
		I 2314	
		J 2341	
		K 2413	
		L 2431	
		M 3124	
		N 3142	
		O 3214	
		P 3241	
		Q 3412	
		R 3421	
		S 4123	
		T 4132	
		U 4213	
		V 4231	
		W 4312	
		X 4321	

Standards	1	2	3	4

Look at the grid and compare the numbers. Choose the first place first. Many others choose the last place next and then the middle pair are put in order or placed. Look at the grid. The items with the X's on the top line are considered the best. If all items have an X in the top line, go to the next line to compare and so on. It is not necessarily the number of X's on the grid, but where they are placed. Remember, in the situation statement, the most important things are listed first.

## Reasons

After you have decided on placings, it is time to prepare for reasons. You give reasons to compare the differences and to tell why you placed the class as you did. At an event, scratch paper on which to write your reasons will be provided for you. Use the grid you made to help you write your reasons. When giving reasons, you must know them well enough so that you can look at the reasons judge. The more judging experience you have, the more you should know your reasons without referring to the reason notes.

Look at the information requested on the card. First is the contestant's name or number. Without that information, you will not get credit for the placing score.

The next line is the class line. This refers to the class being judged, such as sunglasses, yo-yos, Web sites, etc. Since there are two classes for each set of standards, putting the name of the person from the situation statement on the card also is important.

Along the right side of the card are numbers in various orders; this is where your class placing should be recorded. Do this by darkening the section behind the numbers that are in the order of how you placed the class. If the placing is 2, 3, 4, 1, then color in the box beside that number.

The tabulators and the reasons judge will fill in the placing score and the reasons score.

## Placings

Placings are the order in which you rank the choices of items in the class. To help you make your decision, draw a grid on scratch paper. Standards from the situation statement are listed on the left and the class items that are numbered go across the top.

## Suggested Training Form for Organizing Oral Reasons

I place this class of

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_.  
 (Name of class) (Placing of numbers here)

I place \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ because:

Compare — reasons why the first is better than the second; list in order of importance of standards

Grant — any comparisons where the second excels the first; *in some pairs there may be nothing to grant*

I place \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ because:

Compare

Grant

I place \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ because:

Compare

Grant

I place \_\_\_\_\_ last because:

Statements of fact

For these reasons, I place this class of

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_.

When using the form to practice, not writing out complete sentences may be best — just jot thoughts and words so you will recall the reasons easily. When discussing each class, first compare, then grant, only if the second article is better than the first. For example:

I place 2 over 3 because 2 has 100 percent UVA/UVB protection from the sun, while 3 has only 50 percent protection.

Grant: 3 has green lenses, which do not distort color.

Compare in a positive way. I place 3 over 2 because 3 is made from wood, 2 is made from plastic.

When presenting reasons, keep the following in mind:

- Correct grammar should be used and words should be enunciated properly.
- Practice “seeing the class” in your mind’s eye when you are giving reasons.
- Have your reasons well-organized and present them in a logical sequence.
- Follow the 4-H dress code.
- Be neatly groomed.
- Stand in a straight, comfortable position.
- Present your reasons in a pleasing and confident manner.
- Your reasons should be convincing, impressive, interesting and sincere, but brief.
- Speak with a convincing tone, placing greatest emphasis on the most important words.
- Be accurate in your statements.
- Your voice should be clear and loud enough to be heard.

\*Notes: Can be referred to but not relied on.

The following values are assigned to the different aspects of giving reasons:

Correctness of information .....	30
Presentation (manner of speaking) .....	15
Appearance .....	5
PERFECT REASONS SCORE .....	50

**A reasons guide may be:**

- 46-50 ..... Accurate, thorough reasons; proper terminology; logical organization; excellent voice quality and poise
- 40-45 ..... Accurate reasons with less organization and thoroughness
- 35-40 ..... Accurate reasons; not well-organized or thorough; delivered in less than smooth manner
- 30-35 ..... Inaccurate reasons; well-organized and delivered
- 25-30 ..... Inaccurate reasons; less organized and less thorough
- 20-25 ..... Follows reasons order but with little information other than class name

## Sample Class

**Situation:** Elizabeth needs a new pair of sunglasses. Her eyes water from the ultraviolet rays of the sun, so she needs 100 percent protection from both UVA and UVB rays. She wants a lens color that does not distort other colors. She wants a durable frame. She has saved \$45 for a good pair.

**Standards:** 100 percent UVA/UVB protection  
Nondistorting lens color  
Durable frame  
\$45

- Class Items:**
1. Blue plastic lens, 45 percent UVA/60 percent UVB protection, wire-rimmed frames, \$60
  2. Green polycarbonate lens, 100 percent UVA/UVB protection, rubber frames, \$39.95
  3. Brown plastic lenses, 100 percent UVA/UVB protection, metal frames, \$15
  4. Yellow plastic frames, 90 percent UVA/UVB protection, titanium frames, \$43.99

The study guide sheet tells us that green and brown colored lenses do not distort other colors. It also tells us that polycarbonate lenses have 100 percent protection from UVA/UVB rays. Rubber and titanium frames are very durable and can be twisted and go back to their original shape. That information can assist you in placing this class.

Fill in your name or number in the judging class, put the name of the class, sunglasses and Elizabeth’s name on the class line on the judging card.

List standards or what she is looking for in this situation on the side of the scratch paper. Put class item numbers across the top. Study the four items and place check marks by the standard that each item meets. When necessary, put in prices, fat grams or other important numbers to help you decide on placings.

Now look at your judging grid. To find the top placing, compare items to find the one that meets the top standard or standards. Continue comparing until one item exceeds the other with one of the standards. Compare the two remaining items and select one that best meets the top standards. Another method for placing a class may be to select the top two and the bottom two items. However, always remember to consider the standards in order of importance.

Standards	1	2	3	4
100% UVA/UVB protection	45%/60% UVA/UVB protection	100% UVA/UVB protection (X)	100% UVA/UVB protection (X)	90% UVA/UVB protection
Nondistorting lens color	Blue	Green (X)	Brown (X)	Yellow
Durable frame	Wire	Rubber (X)	Metal	Titanium (X)
\$45	\$60	\$39.95 (X)	\$15 (X)	\$43.99 (X)

Look at the grid. Nos. 2 and 3 meet the first standard, so 1 and 4 move down to the bottom of the class. Compare 2 and 3. They both have lenses that do not distort other colors, but 2 has a more durable frame, so our first choice is 2 and our second is 3. Let’s compare 1 and 4.

Neither one has 100 percent UVA/UVB protection and both have lenses colors that distort colors, but 4 has a more durable frame. It also is in Elizabeth's price range. So 4 would be placed next and 1 last. In addition, Elizabeth does not have enough money to purchase No. 1, so in real life she couldn't choose those anyway.

Our placing for this class 2-3-4-1. Color in that space on the judging card. Now let's do reasons.

I place this class of sunglasses 2-3-4-1.

I place 2 over 3 because it has a more durable frame while 3's are less durable.

I place 3 over 4 because 3 has lenses that offer 100 percent UVA/UVB protection, while 4 has a lens that offers only 90 percent UVA/UVB protection.

3 has a lens color that does not distort other colors, while 4 does.

Grant: 4 has a more durable frame.

I place 4 over 1 because it has more durable frame, titanium vs. wire.

4 costs less than \$45, while 1 costs more at \$60.

I place 1 last because it does not offer 100 percent UVA/UVB protection.

It has lenses that distort color.

It does not have a durable frame.

It costs more than \$45.

For these reasons, I place this class of sunglasses 2-3-4-1.

A perfect placing score is 50.

A perfect reasons score is 50.

The following is recommended for the young 4-H member's use.

Standards	1	2	3	4

I place this class of

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_.

I place \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ because:

I place \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ because:

I place \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ because:

I place \_\_\_\_\_ last because:

For these reasons, I place this class of

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_.



Visit North Dakota 4-H on-line at: [www.ext.nodak.edu/4h/4-H.htm](http://www.ext.nodak.edu/4h/4-H.htm)



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