

Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging Manual

GE**RGIA**

4-H

How the Contest Works

You've already proven you're a sharp decision-maker, just by deciding to learn about the 4-H Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging contest! You're going to do well in this activity. We can tell already!

You're eligible to compete in the 4-H Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging as part of a Junior team for Cloverleafs and Juniors, or as part of a Senior team for Senior participants. Your county may have a maximum of 20 Junior team members and 20 Senior team members.

We developed this program because we want to help you learn how to:

- Understand the importance of cotton as an agricultural commodity.
- Promote cotton in communities.
- Make knowledgeable, rational decisions when purchasing goods and services.
- Select, use, maintain, and dispose of goods and services in ways that maximize resources.
- Obtain clothing, goods, and services to meet needs and reflect lifestyles, personal values, and goals.
- Act as responsible consumer-citizen with an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the consumer, business, and government.
- Learn to communicate reasons for choices made.

The Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging contest is designed to see how well you have learned to do the above skills. The contest is made up of two competition areas: Classes and presentations (advertisements/commercials). You will judge 4 classes of items. Each class contains 4 similar items- numbered one, two, three, and four- and has an accompanying situation statement. This statement describes a consumer and gives the needs to be considered when he/she makes a decision to purchase the item. Factors influencing these needs include the person's age, gender, available money, lifestyle, school, or job status, preferences or other requirements that depend on the item given and the individual in the situation.

The Judging Procedure

For each class, you read the situation statement, examine the four items, and make a decision on the placing. You should rank the items in order from best to worst choice; then mark the placing on a standard judging contest card which you can get from your adult leader.

All contestants give reasons on one class. You will judge classes one through four and then give oral reasons on class four. You will be given adequate preparation time to organize your reasons. Points are deducted if notes are used.

Presentations: Commercials and

Advertisements

Presentations are done in-person at an area contest.

Juniors prepare a poster (no larger than 14x22) that promotes cotton and use that poster in presenting a 30-second cotton commercial. A penalty is given if notes are used. Be creative and learn something about cotton.

Seniors prepare and present a 90 second speech/advertisement about cotton. A penalty is given if notes are used.

Contest Class Scoring

The contest official determines the correct answers or rankings in each class of items. These rankings are called placings and they become the basis for scoring. In addition to placing, the official determines the cuts. Cuts include how close the official feels the pairs were (the lower the cut, the closer the pair), so cuts determine the penalty a contestant receives when his placings do not agree with the official.

How Consumers Make Decisions

Decisions; we make them every day. Major decisions, such as which college to attend, may have longer lasting effects than minor decisions, such as what color coat to buy. Some decisions are made hastily while others are thought out and planned step-by-step. It is important to make the right decision and learning how to be a qualified consumer judge will help you. Listing all options, viewing the facts objectively, and determining which option is best for your situation is what it takes to be a smart consumer.

We've compiled this manual in order to help you better understand the process of decision making and how to make the wisest decision. Let's begin by looking at the basics, the driving factor behind consumer decisions, needs versus wants.

Needs Versus Wants

Needs should be your first priority when making a decision. There are basic human needs essential to each of us:

- Survival: food, clothing, shelter
- Safety and Security: physical, economic
- Social: a sense of belonging
- Self-Esteem: sense of self-respect, worthiness
- Fulfillment: use of talents and creativity; meeting goals through your own efforts.

More often than not, however, many of the daily decisions we make are made on our wants/desires instead of considering our needs. There are several factors that influence our wants and the lifestyle we wish to live. These factors do not consider the basic human needs and instead result in our personal preferences. These factors behind why consumers buy are:

- Values: The ideas that are important to us.
- Goals: The aims we set for ourselves. Goals can be long-term (3-5 years or longer), medium term (1-4 years), or short-term goals (3- 6

months).

- Age and Gender: Your age and gender may influence interests and preferences.
- Peer Pressure: Peer Pressure increases the need for self-esteem and the desire to belong. Purchasing the latest trend often fulfills the want to fit in.
- Family Influence: Preferences often develop as a result of family heritage and opinions of family members. These preferences are often beneficial because they are often based on previous experiences.
- Advertising: Decisions are greatly influenced by ads which seem to meet your own needs and desires. Some are image builders."These are ads which use famous movie or TV stars to endorse products. When you buy those products, you feel better about yourself because a certain famous person used it. Some use association"with famous people, such as sports stars. For instance, if you eat a certain cereal, you'll become strong like a popular athlete. Some build on snob appeal," where only the best will do for you. Others use the down-home strategy, appealing to a natural lifestyle, no-frills person.

As you can see, quite a few factors influence your wants and needs. Sometimes, these factors can take your wants to extreme levels. It's very easy to make ourselves believe that some of our wants are truly our needs. This is called rationalization." Think about each of these influences before you make a decision and realize the impact they have upon your own wants and desires.

The Process

General Consumer

Cotton Boll and Consumer

Application

Judging

1. Identify the situation

1. Identify the consumer situation.

1. I'm to judge a class of
-----.

(Example: shirts)

2. Analyze the situation

2. Study the situation to see the important factors to be considered

2. What important factors need to be considered for the consumer situation? Quality, price, style, appropriateness, care required, and needs of the individuals are all some things to think about.

3. Identify and examine all alternatives

3. Study the possible consumer alternatives

3. The alternatives for this class are 4 very similar dress shirts.

1. 100% cotton pinpoint oxford cloth; \$26.00
2. 60% cotton, 40% polyester oxford cloth; \$15.00
3. 60% cotton, 40% polyester oxford cloth; \$18.00
4. 65% polyester, 35% cotton oxford cloth; \$11.00

4. Weigh the alternatives and choose the best one based on your knowledge and the resources available

4. List the pros and cons

4. When considering quality, price, appropriateness, and care required, shirt #3 seems to be the best buy for the situation.

5. Select the best alternative.

5. Select the best alternative based on your knowledge, the resources, and the available alternatives.

5. "I place this class of shirts 3-2-4-1 for the following reasons."

Consider Your Options Before You Buy

In today's society, the number of places to shop has become endless along with the variety of products one could purchase. Before making your final decision on which product and where to buy, consider these options first:

- Department Stores
- Discount Stores
- Specialty Shops
- Shopping Malls
- Secondhand Stores
- Factory Outlets
- Mail-Order Catalogs
- Home Parties
- Classified Newspaper Ads
- Auctions
- Garage/ Yard Sales
- Estate Sales
- Internet
- Closeout Sales

Once you have compiled a list of places to purchase the product, it is then time to compare the different products available. An easy way to do this is to use a comparison chart. You can find a sample chart on the next page. This chart provides an easy format to use for the comparison of several products and key factors of those products, such as:

Cost: Cost can be compared between stores and between the product varieties.

Quality: How the product has been constructed, features, and accessories.

Availability: Is the product in stock or does it have to be special ordered?

Discounts: Does the store offer a discount or rebate on the purchase of this product??

Assembly: Is the product ready to use or is some assembly required: are other skills or tools needed for assembly and how long will it take?

Warranty/Guarantee: Is the warranty full or limited? A full warranty should always be written and covers the repair of the object with no cost to the consumer. A limited warranty

only covers certain parts listed in the warranty itself.

Return Policy: Does the store have a return policy?

What is the return policy? Is a receipt needed or can a store credit be issued if the receipt is lost? What is the time period after a purchase in which the product can be returned?

Reputation of the Dealer: Is the dealer knowledgeable about the product? Is the dealer well respected within the community?

Sources of Information on Products

When comparing products, consider these sources for possible product information:

- Family/ Friends
- Product Website
- Recall Lists
- Previous reviews
- Stores
- Advertising
- Manufacturers
- Consumer Awareness website
- Better Business Bureau
- Food and Drug Administration
- Reviews from previous buyers
- Consumer Product-Testing Organizations
- Seals of Approvals—such as the American Gas Association, the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers, and Good House Keeping are given to products that meet certain criteria standards set by industries or other private organizations.

Why Do People Shop Where They Do?

People’s shopping patterns may be influenced by:

Time: Shoppers may choose certain stores because they can get in and out quickly.

Prices: Some shoppers choose a store because of the low prices, double coupons, or bonus bucks. These shoppers are known as bargain hunters.

Convenience: Location plays a large role in where some shoppers choose to buy. The prices may not be the lowest in town, but the store is in a location that is more convenient to the consumer.

Service: Courteous and friendly staff that deliver excellence service is the reason why many people shop where they do.

Status: Prestige or status is important to some shoppers who need reassurance about their taste or need to be seen in the “right” place.

Credit: The ability to use a store credit card or to cash checks persuades some shoppers to shop where they do.

Individuality: Unique, unusual, or rare items influence some people to seek out certain places that are normally out but that satisfy their desire for these products.

Sample Comparison Chart:

Do's and Don't When Shopping

Do's:

- Do* Shop around. Compare different products and services in order to find the best price. Use comparison tools online to compare items between different companies. This saves time and money.
- Do* Research the product before you buy. Use the internet, consumer reviews, and all other available resources to find the best product for you.
- Do* Get the facts before you buy. Read labels, seals, and instruction books. Keep the information for future reference in order to properly care for the product.
- Do* Read and understand contracts completely. Once you sign, you are obligated to that contract. Ask questions and don't sign unless you agree with everything completely.
- Do* Return a purchase that is damaged. That is your responsibility.

Don'ts:

- Don't* make a hasty purchase. Hasty decisions cause you to spend money you might not need or have to spend. Consider your needs and wants before buying.
- Don't* buy the trendy or in"things just to be popular. Trends end and leave you with items that are no longer popular. You will spend mega bucks on items that no longer contain any value.
- Don't* try to Keep up with the Joneses." Purchase items that are important to you, not items that are expensive and may impress people.
- Don't* be afraid to say "no." Peer pressure or pressure from a salesperson often results in you buying things you really didn't want to begin with.
- Don't* buy a product just because it's newer. The older version is just as good as the newer one and many times a free upgrade can be found that updates the older version.
- Don't* buy based solely on the brand name. Sure, the Apple computer may be cool, but a less expensive laptop can be purchased that would be just as useful.

Advertising Advice

Advertising provides consumers with a tremendous amount of information. Advertising serves to introduce a new product, inform consumers about differences, upgrades, or improvements, and persuades consumers to visit the store or online website to buy the product. Remember, the purpose of advertising is to make a profit. Advertisers capture the interest of consumers through various techniques, such as emotional appeals. Emotional appeals include:

- Popularity: to be one of the “in crowd”
- Escape conformity: Be the real you; be unique
- Experience real life
- Save money
- Social Status
- Feel safe and secure from buying a certain product
- Support a charity
- Be trendy

The pictures or visual aids used by advertisers also influence the response consumers have to advertisements. Many times the photos or visual aids are used to engage consumers in a story that is being told, demonstrating what the consumer’s life could be like *if only they had that product*. Many times, advertisements aim at our deepest desires or fears, causing us to rush out and buy the product being advertised. As a teen you are the target for much of this advertising. To intelligently and productively use advertising you should:

- See beyond the “glitz” of the advertisement and find the useful facts
- Realize that most ads list only the desirable qualities of the product and omit any additional terms, conditions, or additional accessories that the consumer may require for that product.
- Understand the reasons behind what makes an effective advertisement.

Notes

How to Be an Expert Judge

You use your best judgment every time you make a decision. Factors such as time, energy, price, quality, need, and possible consequences are considered when making any decision, consciously or subconsciously. A level of importance is placed on each of these factors and the most important factors determine your decision. This process is similar to making a pro and con list, and based on the list, making the best decision. The same procedure is used in judging: you learn the standards of quality for the goods and services and then make comparisons. The adage “practice makes perfect” is applicable when learning the judging procedure. The more you practice judging various materials, the better judge you become, until finally, knowing the appropriate standards and criteria, you can judge any category.

The Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging Contest teaches the principles and methods of evaluating goods and services. The skills are used daily by anyone making a purchase or choosing a service. Training as a consumer judge will help you become a better consumer. Evaluating goods and services, weighing the important factors, and making the right decision for you are skills that you will use for the rest of your life.

Future success depends on your ability to make the right decision at the right time. Judging helps develop your decision making skills. Other skills developed and enhanced by the judging process include thought organization, problem solving, and oral presentation practice.

Judging helps you develop:

1. Decision-making skills
2. Recognition of standards and quality
3. Self-confidence in oral presentations
4. Logical order of thoughts and reasons
5. Ability to think and speak spontaneously
6. Consumer skills that will be used in many aspects in the future

Judging team participation develops a competitive spirit between team members and different teams. Competition inspires people to be better consumers while rewarding you for study and preparation while building self-confidence, improving observation skills, and stimulating memory. Judging and competition build an interest in production, trends, and opportunities in the area of clothing and other consumer products.

To become a good consumer judge you must learn to develop:

- A clear, definite idea or mental picture of characteristics of items.
- Quick and accurate observation skills.
- Sound judgment- ability to weigh and evaluate what you see objectively.
- Self-confidence
- A competitive spirit
- Ability to give good reasons.

Judging How-To

The judging process consists of small learning stages that develop in a logical, consecutive order so that knowledge can be built on previous lessons. An important step in the judging process is envisioning an ideal product and then judging the product based on that image. Judging forces you to expand and improve your observation skills.

The basic principles of judging are the same for any item, even though the characteristics may vary by product. When judging, look for the strengths and weaknesses in each product and so you are able to spot them in future products you may judge. An able judge is always objective, never biased or prejudiced, and only considers the facts. An honest appraisal of the differences between items and a decision based on sound reasons are the heart of judging.

In judging you do your own work and learn to depend on your own judgment. Developing self-confidence is one of the most important aspects of judging. If you are confident in yourself others will be too, and you will have a stronger presentation. There are several steps in judging:

1. Information

When judging, be completely informed about the product and its intended use. Learn the parts, appropriate names, and functions so that you may use them when making comparisons and presenting your findings. Understand the differences between the products, economic variations, and advantages and disadvantages of each product.

Now you're ready to begin judging a class. A class is made up of four items. A situation

statement will accompany each class and help you determine the needs of that consumer.

2. Observation

Take an overall view of the class as a whole so that you can get the big picture. Look for items or characteristics that stand out. Then examine each item individually, observing them carefully, and evaluating the item on the requirements necessary to fulfill the situation of the consumer. It is important to observe if the product meets the standards set in the situation statement of the class. As you examine the items, make a mental picture of each.

3. Comparison

When judging a class items, you should have five items in mind: the four class items presented to you and the ideal item described in the situation statement. Remember the most desirable features of the items you have seen, then compare each item in the class to establish differences and similarities.

A class of items may be broken down several ways: an obvious top, middle pair, and bottom pair or an obvious top and bottom item. When evaluating the advantages and disadvantages, differences and similarities, all items should fall into place. When placing items, it is often easier to find the top or bottom item first. Don't place items based on small differences; look for large differences that affect cost and use. When you have selected the top item, place the others in order that they measure up to the top one.

4. Conclusion

Arrive at a logical placing for the items in the class based on the usefulness of the qualities each item has for the situation. Assign the items either 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th place. These rankings reflect the order you feel most accurately reflects the success at which these items meet the criteria of the situation statement. When considering placing, ask yourself:

- Were there differences and grants to note for each pair?
- Are there enough points to justify your placing?
- Did you change your placing after you began taking notes?

Judging a class is not the easiest job. It takes time to learn how to properly observe and place a class of items. Developing a routine to gather information needed to place a class makes the judging process easier.

To help you learn how to place a class here are some helpful ways to evaluate the items:

- First impressions are often correct. Quickly scan the items and write down your initial placement of the items. Stick with your first impression unless a closer look at your notes gives you a good reason to change the placement. If the class has an easy (close) top or bottom pair, note it and spend more time on the difficult placings.
- Take notes. Spend about a minute on each item and write down the useful characteristics and the disadvantages. Then, place the items based on these characteristics. Compare your two placings. What did you notice on your inspection that reinforced your initial impression or changed your mind?
- Place the class based on the characteristics required by the situation statement. Spend one minute evaluating the item's characteristics: its advantages and disadvantages.
- Place the class on the above findings. Compare this placing with the other two and, once again, ask yourself: What did you notice on your inspection that reinforced your initial impression or changed your mind?
- Spend a few minutes taking notes on the class based on your final placing. Write a brief description of each item in order to recall the class, two to four definite differences in each pair and a list of all grants.

The Judging Procedure

Don't worry. You already know the basics of judging competition and garment item selection. This activity will help you combine these two types of knowledge.

Identify Class

When you judge a class of items follow a logical sequence. What's the class you're going to judge? Once you have identified the class, consider the general characteristics of this type of garment, the places it might be worn, and the utility it might be expected to give.

Analyze the Situation Statement

Read the situation statement carefully. Pick out the standards set for the class given by the statement. If cost and construction for garments aren't included in the situation statement, add them. The following are some things to look for as you read a situation statement.

Who: Age, sex, or any description of the person

Use: What will the item be used for? Where will

the item be worn? What will be done while wearing the garment? Features that would be needed or useful.

Care: What costs are involved? What amount of time is available? What equipment is available? What care skills does the person have? For garments: How often will care be needed based on color, how often worn, and the purpose or occasion for which it is worn?

Cost: How much money is available? A lot, not very much? Did he/she save to buy just what he or she wanted? Would he/she rather have one/few of high quality?

Life or Wear Expectancy/Warranty/ Guarantee: Full or Limited Warranty. Fast-growing child or teenager. Invest in clothes and expect to last several seasons. Wears often.

Comfort (for clothing and shoes): Season of the year to be worn. Special needs or activities for which worn. Places or location worn.

Quality: An indicated preference for quality such as well-made, durable, etc.

Pretend you are judging a class of men's dress shirts. Here is a sample situation statement. Notice how information has been identified, giving standards by which you can evaluate the class.

CLASS 1

Men's Dress Shirt

1. Age
2. Use
3. Value for \$
4. Appearance
5. Care
6. Comfort in
Warm/hot Weather

Rob is a ¹high school student. He is buying a dress shirt to ²wear with his new suit. He wants a ³good buy for his money. But the shirt ⁴must look good. Rob wants a ⁵easy to care for shirt that is ⁶cool and comfortable for spring and summer weather.

Quality of construction may not always be the most important standard. When not mentioned in the situation statement, use it to differentiate between close pair. *Remember that a ready-to-wear garment isn't necessarily the perfectly constructed and the quest for perfection may hinder selection.* On very limited money, consider only those construction points that can't be changed. For instance, a seam may be re-stitched or threads clipped. However, unmatched plaids or an uneven or puckered collar

can't be changed.

Cost should be considered in relation to the situation and value or return for the money spent. For instance, two blouses may be of equal quality and cost, but one has more needed style details like pockets, and thus is a better buy. Cost-per-wear is also a good value of measure. Care cost, particularly if dry cleaning is required, should also be considered.

Determine the Placing

Use the situation statement and your knowledge of clothing or consumer items to decide how you would place the class. Sometimes it's easy to pick the top item first. At other times, you might identify the lowest placed item quickly. Compare each item to the standards set in the situation statement. This is Step 4 of the decision-making process. Here's what you can observe about the four men's dress shirts in our example.

	Garment # 1	Garment # 2
Fiber Content	100% Cotton	60% Cotton, 40% Polyester
Care Label	Machine Wash No Bleach Tumble Dry Iron	Machine wash, warm Tumble dry, low Remove promptly Use non-chlorine bleach as needed
Price	\$26.00	\$15.00
Color	White	White
Style Details	Button-down collar Patch pocket Three-hole button Yoke Back pleat Long set-in sleeves Standard placket with 1 button 1-button cuff Top stitched	Button-down collar Patch pocket Yoke Back pleat Long set-in sleeves Standard placket Top stitched collar, lapel, cuffs
Other Description	Excellent quality fabric (best of class) Very good construction (best of class) Will need much care Most comfortable (absorbent)	Moderate quality fabric Fairly good construction Needs moderate amount of care

	Garment # 3	Garment # 4
Fiber Content	60% Cotton, 40% Polyester	65% Polyester, 35% Cotton
Care Label	Machine wash, warm gentle cycle Whites bleach when needed Colors/stripes only non-chlorine bleach when needed Tumble dry, medium	Machine wash, warm Tumble dry Only non-chlorine bleach when needed Touch-up ironing may be required
Price	\$18.00	\$11.00
Color	White	White
Style Details	Button-down collar Patch pocket Yoke Back pleat Set-in sleeve with cuff Double button cuff Top stitched collar, cuffs, plackets	Button-down collar Patch pocket Yoke Back pleat Set-in sleeves with cuff and placket Double button cuff Top stitched collar, front placket, cuff and standard sleeve placket
Other Description	Good quality fabric Good construction Needs moderate amount of care	Poorest quality fabric Poorest construction Stitched long Seams not smooth Easiest to care for With 65% polyester will probably be: Least absorbent Thus hot to wear Most likely to pill

Mark the Judging Contest Placing Sheet

When you decided on the placing:

- Find the section that corresponds with the class you are judging (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Find the section that begins with the number of the garment you placed first.
- Then, find the placing of the other garments.
- Example: You placed the shirts 3-2-4-1. Find the combination of 3-2-4-1 and circle your choice

Prepare and Give Reasons

Giving reasons for your decisions is an important part of CLOTHING JUDGING. When you explain your placing, you're giving reasons. You will need to

- Have a clear picture of the entire class in mind.
- Know the qualities or standards for the judged class.
- Be able to compare the good and poor points for each choice.
- Make notes and study them before giving reasons.

Making Notes

Your reasons will be easier to develop if you follow an orderly system. Begin by making good notes. They should be short, simple, and easy to use. Here is an example that will help you.

Reasons for Placing	Admit or Grant	Faults
3/2 Good quality for \$. Easy enough to care for. Good quality fabric. Good construction. Good features/details.	2/3 Same fiber content. Similar care. Cost \$3 less.	2 Moderate quality, fabric, and construction.
2/4 Good quality for \$. Fairly good construction & fabric. Good features/ details.	4/2 Least expensive. Good value. Easiest care.	4 Needs touch-up ironing. Poor construction. High polyester content. Not/non-absorbent May pill
4/1 More in line with budget. Easiest to care for.	1/4 Best quality fabric. Best construction. Most comfortable.	4 Too expensive. Must be starched and ironed or sent to laundry.

Giving Reasons

There's a basic format for giving reasons. The format helps you organize your thoughts for presenting reasons and helps the person listening to the reasons.

The following four steps will help you to plan your reasons.

- 1. Opening Statement:** Give the name of the class and order of placing. *Example:* "I placed this class of dress shirts 3-2-1-4."
- 2. General Statement:** Give a general impression of the class. *Example:* "This was a somewhat difficult class to judge, with a close middle pair and an obvious bottom shirt."
- 3. Explanation of Reasons:** Tell why one choice was placed over the next by comparison. Explain the major differences between the top pair, the middle pair, and the bottom pair.

Example: "I place 3 over 2 and at the top of the class for its overall good quality for the price. Both fabric and construction are of good quality. It meets the easy care requirements for Rob and will have good appearance with the suit. Style features and details are typical of a dress shirt. I admit that 2 had the same fiber content and similar care instructions. It also cost three dollars less. However, I fault 2 for lacking the quality fabric and construction details of shirt 3."

"In the middle pair, I place 2 over 4 because the overall quality is better. In general appearance, fabric and construction, it is superior to shirt 4. Granted, shirt 4 is the least expensive, a good value for the money and easy to care for. I fault it for having poor quality fabric, poor construction, and general appearance. The high polyester content will make it hot to wear and could result in pilling."

"I place 4 over 1 because the price, \$11, is more in line with the budget and the high polyester fabric content makes it easier to care for. I grant that shirt number 1 is the best quality, best construction, and with 100% cotton fiber content the most comfortable to wear in warm or hot weather. I fault shirt 1 because of the high cost, even on sale, and the care required. 100% cotton needs starching and ironing or commercial laundry care. Price and easy care were important to Rob."

- 4. Closing Statement:** Repeat the opening statement, but begin with "therefore" or "for these reasons." *Example:* "Therefore, I placed this class of dress shirts 3-2-4-1."

Tips for Oral Reasons

In the preparation of oral reasons, you are trying to inform the judge that you saw and analyzed the items in relation to the given situation. When you are being scored on your oral reasons what you say will have the greatest influence on the judge. However, the way you present your reasons also influences the judge. Your reasons will be scored on:

- **Accuracy and Completeness:** the placing and facts given. An accurate statement about the garments you judged.
- **Confidence:** used the decision-making process and believe your placing is correct.
- **Experience:** knowledge and use of the specific terms for the specific garments or items.
- **Poise:** at ease, good use of grammar and speaking skills, wide awake and alert.

For the class on which you are to give oral reasons, you should:

- Have in mind a **clear picture** of the entire class.
- Know the qualities or **standards** for judging that particular class.
- BE able to compare the good and poor **qualities** of each garment/item.
- Make **notes** and study them ahead of time. (DO NOT READ YOUR NOTES.)

Remember, the basic format for giving oral reasons is:

- **Opening Statement**
- **General Statement**
- **Explanation of Reasons:** choice was placed over the next by comparison. Explain the major differences between the top pair, middle pair, and the bottom pair.
- **Closing Statement:** repeat the opening statement, but begin with therefore or for these reasons.”

Here are some additional guidelines and terms you may find useful as you prepare and give your oral reasons. You should:

- Be serious but pleasant. A smile is always welcomed.
- Use good posture. Stand on both feet and keep your hands relaxed DON'T FIDGET!
- Have confidence in yourself
- Look at the judge.

What you say:

- Speak clearly and convincingly.
- Use short sentences that contain one thought. Do NOT “run together” sentences.
- Put them most important reason first.
- Use comparative terms. Example: “more,” “better,” “less expensive,” or some words ending in “er.”
- Be specific. For example, instead of saying, “This shirt is better than,” say This shirt is of better quality because it will last longer due to its durability.”
- Be complete but not repetitious.
- Don't skip around. Follow a logical order. For example, on shirts—start at the collar, then move on to the shoulder seams, down to the sleeves, buttons, and hem. This is starting at the top of the shirt and moving downward.
- After giving reasons for your placement, admit the advantages of the “lesser desired” garment. Use words such as: “I grant,” “I admit,” “I acknowledge,” “I recognize,” “concede,” and “on the other hand.”
- The term “today” is often used in livestock judging. It is not appropriate for clothing. Animals may change from day to day, but clothing items don't.

Following this pattern, a sample class of reasons should be:

“I placed this class of _____, 1-2-3-4. In the top pair I placed 1 over 2 because 1 is

I grant 2 is

_____is also _____, than 2.

In the middle pair, I placed 2 over 3 since 2 is

_____.

2 is

I fault 3 for

_____than 2.

Moving to my bottom pair I placed 3 over 4 because 3 is

3 is _____

I placed 4 last and at the bottom of the class because it is

For these reasons (or therefore) I place this class of

_____ 1-2-3-4.”

Don't Say...	Instead Use...
Item	Specific Name
I would like to see...	I criticize 2 because...
Kinds of; types	Item number
Number 2 over number 1	2 over 1
It	Item Number
Lacks, an item lacks something	The item is (point out fault)
In the order of 2 over 1	2 over 1
I am placing	I place
I am criticizing	I criticize

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