

## **SOUTHWEST DISTRICT CONTEST**

### **CONSUMER DECISION MAKING CONTEST**

In addition to the guidelines listed in the 4-H Decision Making Bulletin, the following rules and instructions apply to the Southwest District and supersede the bulletin:

1. A total of four (4) classes will be judged and selected from the Consumer Decision Making Contest Handbook.
2. Novice Division will give reasons in one class.
3. Junior Division oral reasons will be given on two classes with two minutes allowed for reasons on the class. Contestants will not be allowed to look at class when giving reasons.
4. The Superintendent will note which classes reasons will be given on.
5. A total of four (4) items will make a class.

References and materials are listed in the Consumer Decision Making Contest Handbook (100 H-12)

Score Sheets: 300 D-8 and 200 D-9

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#### 2020 Consumer Decision Making

- Fast Food
- Active Wear (no shoes)
- Beverage Appliances
- Carry On Luggage

Reasons classes will be:

- Fast Food
- Carry-On Luggage (Jr. Only)

Study Guide can be found on the State 4-H website:

<https://aces.nmsu.edu/4h/conference.html>

Revised 2020

## Introduction

The Consumer Decision Making Contest teaches how to observe, compare and make decisions based on facts collected. It also provides experience in organizing thoughts and defending decisions with oral reasons.

In this contest, 4-Hers learn to rank articles or products over others based on standards and quality. 4-Hers will evaluate consumer items and tell why they think one is better than another.

### How the Contest Works

The judging contest will begin with registration and an explanation of how the contest will proceed. It is important to be on time.

Contestants will make consumer decisions by deciding which item in each class is best, second best, etc., for the given situation. The number and kind of classes may vary from one contest to another. Generally, county contests have four classes. The state contest uses six classes. At the county and district contest oral reasons may be given on either one or two classes. The state contest requires two sets of oral reasons.

A specified amount of time is allowed to place each class. The contest superintendent will set the amount of time, generally eight to twelve minutes per class.

After placing all the classes, there will be time to study notes. Then oral reasons are given to a judge explaining why the class was placed in that order. Scores are given on placement of classes and oral reasons.

After the scores have been tabulated, a judge or superintendent will explain how the classes were officially placed.

### Definitions

**Contestant** – Participant in a contest.

**Contestant's number** – The number assigned to a contestant during registration and used as identification throughout the contest. This is used rather than the contestant's name.

**Class** – The articles of one kind to be judged. Four similar products make a class. For example: four sleeping bags, four checks, four toys, or four snacks.

**Situation statement** – For each class, a problem is presented. This problem describes a hypothetical set of circumstances. To place a class, consider which item is the best for the situation described.

**Placing** – The contestant examines the articles in class and ranks which is best, second best, third best, and poorest. This process is called placing.

**Placing card** – A placing card is a scorecard with the name of the class and the contestant number. The placing card has a listing of all possible combinations in which a class of four items can be placed or ranked. The score is determined on how accurately the items are ranked.

**Standards** - Information or criteria on which items are judged.

**Cuts** – A numerical value assigned to distinguish the amount of difference between the top pair, the middle pair, and the bottom pair. This amount can range from one to ten points. The cut is then subtracted from the total score when the contestant's placing is incorrect.

**Oral reasons** – An explanation of why the articles are placed as they are. An official will listen to the reasons and will score on accuracy, information present, and delivery.

### Placing

Before the contest, study standards for the classes.

Each class will have four similar items. Contestants should, read the situation, look over the entire class carefully, then decide on how to place the four articles. They should make a decision within the time limit based on both the situation statement and the standards. If the situation indicates a price limit, add tax. Then rank the items best, second best, third best, and poorest.

*Example using the situation statement:* In a class of toys, a dart game may sound like fun. But, based on the situation, the toy is for a five-year old and darts are too dangerous for a child of five.

*Example using standards:* For the place setting class, you may like the knife, fork and spoon placed to the right side of the plate. However, the decision must be based on given standards which say forks are placed to the left of the plate and the knife and spoon are placed to the right.

### Taking Notes

Contestants should make notes on the classes that require reasons. These classes will be announced before the contest.

As they place the class they should make a set of notes to help recall details. Notes should be short, simple and easy to use. Small cards will be provided for notes. Remember, most contestants take too many

notes. An example of notes is shown on page five of this book.

### Scoring

Before the contest, each contestant will receive a placing card for each class. If the cards are not already numbered, instructions will be given for numbering. (See the sample *Placing Card for 4-H Judging Events* in Appendix A.) The placing card has a listing of all possible combinations in which a class of four items can be placed. Find the correct placing and put a check mark to the right of it.

For example, if the contestant places item 3 first, item 4 second, item 1 third, and item 2 last, then place a check mark beside 3, 4, 1, 2 on the placing card. A score of 50 points is given if it is placed correctly. If errors are made, the score is determined in proportion to the seriousness of the errors. The judge decides the correct placing of the class and determines the cut that should be used for grading the placing cards. See definition of cuts. After placing each class, turn in the card to the person in charge.

Points are also given for oral reasons. The judge scores on accuracy, information presented and delivery. Fifty is the highest possible score for one set of oral reasons. (See Appendix B for a sample of the *Consumer Decision Making Contest Score Sheet for Oral Reasons*.)

The total score will be the sum of points for each class plus the points for reasons. Suppose the contest has four classes and the contestant received scores of 45, 40, 50, and 35. The reasons score was 40. The total score for the contest would be 210 out of the possible score of 250.

Contestants can compete in the contest in two ways: as a team or as an individual. A team consists of 3 or 4 members.

The team score will be the total of the three highest scores. Individuals and all team members compete for the high point score.

#### Classes:

Six Classes for the annual state contest will be announced by the Contest Superintendent each January.

## Oral Reasons

In this contest, reasons explaining why the items were ranked first, second, third, and fourth (based on situation statement and standards) are given to a judge. Two minutes are allowed to present reasons to the judge. It usually takes less than two minutes.

The key to success in giving reasons is practice. This is the only way to develop a good, smooth delivery. Practice aloud with someone listening. Give reasons pleasantly, and make them easy to understand. Have a clear mental picture of the entire class and know the differences between the items to tell why they were in that order. Remember, decisions are based on both the situation statement and specific standards.

Contestants are allowed to take a note card with them when they give reasons. However, only use it as a cue card. DO NOT READ notes to the judge.

Good organization makes a set of reasons easy to follow. One way to organize reasons is to divide a class of four items into three pairs: a top pair, a middle pair, and a set bottom pair. Here is a basic outline for a set of reasons.

First is the introduction. Contestants give their contestant number, the name of the class, and how they placed it. For example, *Good afternoon, I am contestant 7a. In the class of toys, I placed the etch-a-sketch first; the ball second, the push toy third and the view master last.*

Next, present reasons. Tell why one product was placed over another. Present reasons using pairs.

### Top Pair

Contestants tell the most important reasons for placing the top choice first.

*I placed number 3, the etch-a-sketch, first because it can be enjoyed by an eight-year-old who has no brothers and sisters. These characteristics were mentioned in the situation statement.*

*Although I placed number 3 first because the price and creative value were the most suitable for the situation. I grant number 3 might not hold his interest after some time.*

Give reasons for placing the first choice over the second choice using comparative terms. Make the comparison as complete as possible.

*I placed number 3 over number 4, the baseball, because it takes two people to play ball. Number 3 can be used alone.*

If the second choice has any advantages over the first choice, grant them at this time.

*I grant that number 4 is probably a more popular toy but it cannot be used indoors or outside during bad weather.*

Use the same procedure on the middle and bottom pairs. The contestant can introduce these two pairs by saying:

*In the middle pair, I placed number 4 over the push toy, number 1, because... and in the bottom pair, I placed number 1 over the view master number 2 because...*

With this organization, contestants can follow the same procedure in discussing each pair.

### Middle Pair

Give reasons for placing the second choice over the third choice.

Grant that the third choice has advantages over the second.

### Bottom Pair

Give reasons for placing the third choice over the last choice.

Grant that the last item may have advantages over the third choice.

In the closing statement repeat the name of the class and the ranking: For these reasons, I placed this class of toys 3, 4, 1, 2.

The judge may ask questions about the class. Answer them as correctly as possible.

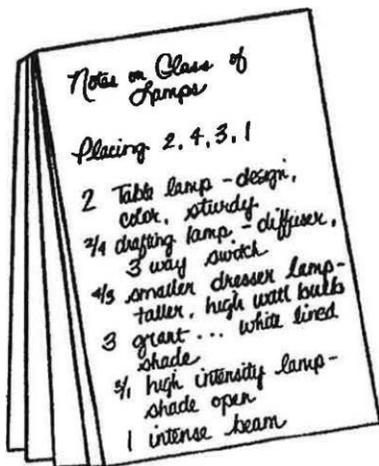
### Pointers

Contestants should learn to use the proper terms for comparison when organizing a set of reasons.

Avoid such words as *good*, *nice* and *better*. They are too general for comparisons. Be specific. Avoid the phrase *I like*. Use specific terms that relate to the standards or the situation rather than personal preferences. Make reasons short and definite.

When giving oral reasons contestants should remember to:

- Stand erect in front of the judge.
- Establish eye contact with the judge.
- Be neat and clean.
  - Avoid chewing gum or wearing a cap or hat.
  - Present the set of reasons in two minutes or less.
  - Speak loud enough to be understood without shouting or talking too rapidly.
  - Vary the voice so that important points are emphasized.
  - Use correct enunciation, pronunciation, and grammar.
  - Use comparative terms when justifying the placing's.



**Sample of notes for a class of lamps.**

### Sample of Oral Reasons on a Class of Lamps

The following example illustrates an entire set of reasons for a class of lamps.

*Good afternoon, I am contestant number 10b. In the class of lamps, I placed the table lamp first; the drafting lamp second, the small dresser lamp third and the high intensity lamp last.*

*I placed number 2, the table lamp, first because the design, sturdy construction and color are suitable for the study situation. The shade is shaped to distribute a maximum amount of light for the task of studying. The base is solid and flat to prevent tipping, and the 150-watt bulb is adequate for the task. The construction of this lamp is superior to that of the other lamps.*

*I placed number 2 over number 4, the drafting lamp, because it has a diffuser and the three-way switch provides flexibility.*

*I placed number 4 over number 3, the small dresser lamp, because it is taller than the dresser lamp which allows it to shed light over a larger surface. It also has a higher wattage light bulb. I grant that the dresser lamp has a white lined shade to disperse light through the shade.*

*I placed number 3 over number 1, the high intensity lamp, because it has a shade that is open at both the top and bottom.*

*I placed number 1 last because it focuses an intense beam of light upon a small surface, which can cause eyestrain when reading. For these reasons I placed this class of lamps 2, 4, 3, 1.*

**Reference: Oral Reasons Video.  
NMSU - Agricultural Communications.**

## Consumer Decision Making Contest – Superintendents Guidelines

The Consumer Decision Making Contest is a fun judging event which enables 4-H'ers to learn more about making choices in the marketplace. When organizing a contest, remember to make it an enjoyable experience for 4-H'ers. In doing so participation will increase. Take time to organize the contest. The following are some suggestions to help organize the contest.

### Advanced Preparation for the Contest

#### 1. Persons to Assist

- Superintendent (Extension Agent or leader)
- Judges to hear reasons (Locate reasons judges in separate rooms so contestants cannot hear other contestants giving reasons)
- Volunteers to help with registration.
- Tabulators to calculate placing and reason scores (They need to be familiar with the use of a Hormel Slide)
- Timekeeper
- Runner to take placing cards to tabulators.

#### 2. Equipment

- Sufficient room to work without interference.
- Final score sheets
- Tables that are numbered (one class per table).
- A Hormel Slide for tabulation.
- Pencils and placing cards (Each contestant will receive one card for each class to be judged).
- Stop watches or timing devices: one for the timekeeper and one for each reasons judge.
- Cards for taking notes.
- Contestant badges.
- Four items for each class to be judged.

- One situation statement for each class
- Labels for each class item
- Calculators for tabulation that includes a number (one through four) and the item name.

#### 3. Classes to be judged

First, determine the number and kind of classes to be judged. **Classes and class standard for the state contest will be announced each January.** Each of the four items in a class should be selected so there is some important difference between each article. In a regular contest, four to six classes are judged.

Arrange to borrow items from retailers or friends or use items from your home. If items are not new, inform the contestants so normal wear and tear isn't a factor in their decision.

#### 4. Situation Statement

Each class should have a hypothetical problem presented in a situation statement written by the contest superintendent. The situation should give information which will enable the contestant to make a consumer decision. A buying problem should indicate who is buying the product, the buyer's age, budget allowance for purchase and use of the product after purchase.

Following is a sample situation statement for a class of toys:

*Jane, 16, will purchase a toy for her five-year-old nephew, Tom, who lives in New York. The toy, a birthday present, will be mailed. Tom is an only child and lives with his family in an apartment. Tom has a vivid imagination and enjoys creative play. Select a toy for Tom. Jane has \$5 to spend.*

## 5. Assign Contest Numbers

Contestants can enter the contest as a team **(three or four persons per team)** or as an individual. Assign a contestant number to each team member or individual as shown below. Each team has the same number and the team members are designated by letter.

| EX:         | Contestant Number | Contestant Name                     |                          |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Star Club   | 1A<br>1B<br>1C    | Betty Doe<br>Ann Jones<br>Jo Martin | Team                     |
| Cactus Club | 2A<br>2B<br>2C    | Sam White<br>Bill Snow<br>Steve Fry |                          |
| Hill Club   | 3A<br>3B          | Becky Law<br>Pattie Rey             | Individual<br>Individual |

At registration, give each contestant a badge with his/her contestant number and letter.

## 6. Prepare Classes to be judged

Label the articles of each class 1, 2, 3, and 4 without regard to quality and include an item name such as jeans or toys. For checks and place settings only a number is needed. Add a price tag to each item if necessary. For comparison, arrange the four articles of a class conveniently close together on a table in good light.

### Conducting the Contest

#### 1. Placing the Classes

- Ask judges to review the classes before the contest so they are familiar with the official placing of each class. The official placing record should be kept by the superintendent.
- Do not allow the contestants to see the classes until the contest begins.

#### 2. Preparing the Contestants

- Record the name and county of contestants and give each a badge.
- Give each contestant a pencil, a placing card for each class, to be judged, and a card for taking notes.
- Divide the contestants into groups so that an equal number will judge at each class. Team members should not be in the same group.

#### 3. Instructing the Contestants

- Explain that the contestant number is to be used on the placing cards throughout the contest instead of their names. Have contestants write their number and the name of the class to be judged on all placing cards before beginning the contest. The contestant number should also be used when giving oral reasons, instead of their name.
- Explain the system of rotating groups. The system of group rotation will vary in county and state contests. Group A will judge toys, B will judge snacks and so on. At the end of the allotted time, the groups will change places. Continue to rotate groups until all classes have been judged.
- Explain that each contestant will hand the placing card to the timer after they finish judging each class. The timer will send the cards to the tabulators for scoring.
- Announce the amount of time allowed for judging each class. A two-minute warning is given before the time is up. At state contest eight minutes are allowed for each class.
- Ask contestants to handle the products carefully so that the quality will not be changed or the labels removed. Place setting items should not be touched.

- f) Emphasize to contestants there is to be no talking during the contest. They cannot leave the room during placing.
- g) Explain the rotation procedure for reasons. Two minutes are allowed for each set of reasons.
- h) At the end of the contest, the judge or superintendent will be available to discuss the official placing.

#### **4. Scoring**

The Consumer Decision Making Contest allows 50 points for a perfect placing on each class and 50 points for each set of reasons. Reasons are usually given on two classes.

- a) Reasons: Grading reasons is something that requires careful handling on the part of the judging. The judge must examine the classes before hearing the reasons, and must have the classes and the official placing clearly in mind. Judges enter scores on the *consumer Decision Making Contest Score Sheet for Oral Reasons, 300 D-8*. See Appendix B.