



Poster Tips

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Posters provide 4-H members the opportunity to express their ideas, promote 4-H, and communicate to others through self expression. Some people enjoy expressing themselves through writing, music or singing, and some by painting, drawing, building or working in groups. Like all of these examples, poster making allows one to communicate through self expression visually to others. Posters can be used for exhibits, stand alone or be part of 4-H demonstrations or action exhibits.

How does a poster communicate?

A poster usually suggests action. It tells you to act NOW, unlike charts that usually require a person to explain them. A good poster is self explanatory - it speaks for itself. Posters make people STOP, READ and REMEMBER.

Poster Rules - There are three main rules when developing a poster:

- 1) **Readable** - All letters should be well drawn and all words spelled correctly
- 2) **Simple** - Each poster should contain **only** one idea. This one idea should be expressed by one drawing and as few words as possible. Plan before you start - choose the drawing first then pick the least number of words needed to get your idea across.
- 3) **Well Designed** - The drawing and the words should be put together in such a pattern that both will be pleasing to the person who looks at the poster.

Hints for Planning your poster -

There are several elements to consider when making a poster:

- e Make your poster say something.
- e Consider size requirements. (If the poster is to be in a contest see rules for exact size.)
- e Carry one idea- simplicity gets attention.

- e Who will be your audience?
- e What do you want your audience to know or do?
- e What materials or tools will you use (crayons , poster paints, watercolors, paste, photographs, paper, computer etc.)?

There Are Three Elements You Want to Be Sure You Consider for Your Poster.

- 1) **Information** - Posters are a colorful way to arouse interest and catch the attention of a person long enough for them to get a brief important message. The message must be short so that the lettering can be bold and large and seen at a distance. The idea of a poster is to “telegraph” a short message as fast as you can and one that can be read at a distance.

When developing a theme does the poster attract attention, focus interest on one idea or motivate the viewer to take action? Is the message brief and direct? Is the poster limited to one idea and readable at a glance?

- 2) **Art Design** - Tell one story per poster. Use generous blank white space. One third of all the space on the poster should be blank. This emphasizes your message. Several methods can be used for emphasis: change of color, change of letter style and size, use of all capitals, or all lower case lettering, underlining**CAUTION**.....do not overdo! Avoid dead center as the major point of interest.

Informal arrangement is more interesting than formal balance. When the design looks the same on the right side as it does on the left, that’s formal balance. Balance gives a design stability. You can have asymmetrical balance, which is a variation on either side of the center or bi-symmetrical design where the balance is the same on both sides.

Plan your **lettering**! Be neat and consistent. Lower case letters are easier to read than capitals. Fancy lettering is harder to read. Lightly draw pencil guidelines and remember to erase them. Poor lettering can spoil a poster. (Posters 14 x 22, should have letters from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches high) Is ratio of letters height to width (usually 5 to 3) adequate? Are letters well spaced to be able to read? Space the words to use the entire poster. If there is a lot of lettering, it should be grouped together to form your message. Check to be sure your words can be read from 10–15 feet. Use colors which are effective. There are 3 ways to make your colors visible at a distance. One is size! The larger the design element, the farther it can be seen. The second is the strength of the colors you use. Yellow, orange, red can be seen at the greatest distance. **The third way** is contrast; dark items against a light background or light objects against a dark background. Of course, black on white or white on black, provides the greatest contrast. Do not use too many colors. Use a combination of colors that are closely related. Two colors and a neutral provide for one of the two colors to predominate and the other color to serve as accents.

REMEMBER...Visuals must be visible. Use the following table to choose letter size and thickness, colors of letters and background.

Letter Size for Visibility*

Distance	Letter Size	Line Thickness
10 feet	1/2 inch	3/32 inch
20 feet	3/4 inch	1/8 inch
50 feet	2 inches	5/16 inch
100 feet	3-1/2 inches	11/16 inch
300 feet	11 inches	2 inches

*assuming good light, good eyes, and good color

Color Combinations for Visibility

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Black on Yellow | 16. Navy Blue on Orange |
| 2. Black on Orange | 17. Yellow on Black |
| 3. Yellow-Orange on Navy Blue | 18. Scarlet-Red on Yellow |
| 4. Bottle Green on White | 19. Yellow on Navy Blue |
| 5. Scarlet-Red on White | 20. Purple on Yellow |
| 6. Black on White | 21. Purple on Orange |
| 7. Navy Blue on White | 22. White on Emerald Green |
| 8. White on Navy Blue | 23. Bottle Green on Yellow |
| 9. Yellow-Orange on Black | 24. Scarlet-Red on Orange |
| 10. White on Black | 25. Emerald Green on White |
| 11. White on Bottle Green | 26. Yellow on Purple |
| 12. White on Scarlet-Red | 27. Orange on Purple |
| 13. White on Purple | 28. Bottle Green on Orange |
| 14. Purple on White | 29. Emerald Green on Yellow |
| 15. Navy on Yellow | 30. Orange on Yellow |

3) Construction - Needed equipment and tools

What materials are you going to use to develop your poster? Poster paints, crayons, pencil crayons, markers, (wide and thin), water colors, acrylics, ink, charcoals, oils, collage or computer generated? Poster Board - use a full size if possible.

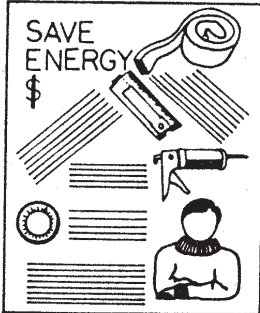
Tools you may need include a ruler, gum erasers and rubber cement.

When doing a poster, plan enough time to make your poster, keep it simple and always do a draft on paper before putting onto the finished piece so you can check for correct spelling, placement and layout. One of the worst things that could happen is to find out after it is completed, you misspelled one word or miscalculated some of the measurements. Be sure your hands are clean, you have plenty of work space and think *CREATIVELY* in communicating your message.

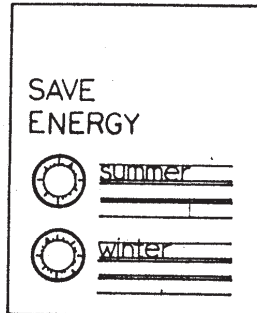
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Too many ideas on one poster



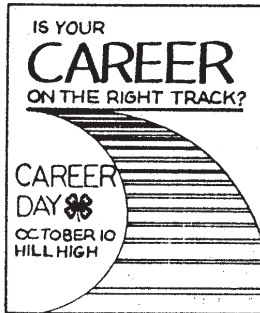
One idea is more effective



Good use of body copy



Poor use of body copy



Lines or shapes direct the eye to a point of interest



Illustration dominates design



Lettering dominates design



Placement of objects determines balance



Symmetrical composition



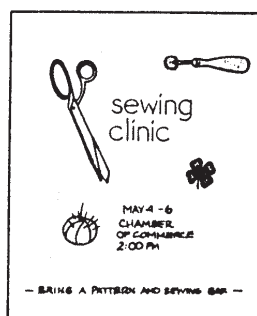
Asymmetrical composition



Scattered composition



Grouped composition



Lettering/art too small



Lettering/art in proportion