



Experiential Learning Process Questions

1. EXPERIENCE—The hands-on action step. Youth do their activity/project before they are shown or told how to do it. Remember it is important to not rob youth of their discoveries. Youth must experiment with new ideas, interests, projects, etc., first-hand.

The following ideas for questions can help you utilize the whole experiential learning process.

2. SHARE—Describe what was done.

Promote discussion by asking the following:

- What kinds of hopes and dreams did you have for your 4-H experience this year?
- What did you do? Where did you go? What was your goal for this project/activity when you began?
- What did you do to plan your project/activity? Tell me about your most/least favorite things about working on your project/activity.
- What did you learn while doing this project/activity? How did you feel? What was easiest? What surprised you?
- What did you learn about yourself? How did you share your project/activity with others?

3. PROCESS—Identify common themes and discover what was most important (the life skill) about the project, activity, or service opportunity.

Use the following process questions:

- What did you learn about yourself by doing this project/activity? How did others help you?
- How did you make your decisions? What steps did you take?
- What did you learn about making decisions?
- What made this a good project/activity?
- What were some of the common themes or thoughts you had?
- What problems came up over and over? How did you handle them?
- What would you do if _____?
- What was the most challenging part of your project/activity? Why? How did you solve it? What did you learn from this project/activity that you didn't know before?
- What suggestions would you have for someone else who wanted to do a similar project or activity?
- Why does it matter (to you or anyone else) that you did this project/activity?
- What life skill(s) were you developing through your project? Why is the life skill important?
- What did you learn through sharing with others?
- What new questions do you have about yourself and others?

4. GENERALIZE—So what?

Identify how to use what's been learned in real life. These questions transition the experience or "product" itself to the skill being practiced in real life. They explore the nature of the life skill and help participants reflect on how the life skill has been developed through their experiences. Generalizing sets the stage for applying the life skill in new situations.

- What key points have you learned?
- Have you had similar experiences related to this project/activity?
- Where have you faced similar challenges in your life?
- How is this life skill important to you?
- Where might this situation occur in the future?

- Discuss another time when you had fun and learned new things at the same time.
- Why is it important to have plenty of information before making decisions?
- Describe what you learned about your decision making skills?
- What did you learn about your own skill in communicating with others?
- How would you describe your skills regarding _____?
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to learn about this life skill?

5. APPLY—What's next?

These are the questions the experiential learning process has been building toward. Adults can help youth show that they have gained knowledge and practiced the life skills learned rather than solely focusing on the subject matter.

- How do you think the project/activity relates to your everyday life?
- Why was this project/activity important to you?
- What have you learned about yourself? Others?
- Are there principles or guidelines you can use in real-life situations?
- What similar situations have you experienced?
- How can you use these skills in different situations?
- In what ways do people help each other learn new things?
- How will you act differently as a result of this experience?
- List some ways you can learn new things?
- What are qualities that you think are important in a leader?
- If someone helped or mentored you in this project, what would you tell him/her you learned and what difference it has made in your life? How would you express your appreciation?

Adapted from the Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development Programs – 4-H National Headquarters and 4-H National Council and from the 2005 Minnesota 4-H Curriculum Committee.

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