



**Ohio 4-H**  
*News*  
*Reporter's*  
*Record Book*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Age (as of January 1) \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Club Name \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Advisor \_\_\_\_\_



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



# Author

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We are indebted to the author of the original version of this publication, **Barbara Carder**.

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# References

Adapted from Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service *The 4-H Reporter*; Huron County *4-H News Reporters' Manual* written by Bonnie Malone, Extension Educator; *Ohio 4-H Club Officer's Guide News Reporter*.

Is this your first year serving as news reporter? More information is in the *News Reporter's Resource Guide* available at [ohio4h.org/officerresources](https://ohio4h.org/officerresources).

# News Reporter

## Welcome

Congratulations on your new role as your 4-H club's news reporter. Your club members have bestowed upon you both an honor and a responsibility—and an interesting and fun job! You will find a list of responsibilities for your office as well as activities, ideas, and websites in this book to help you fulfill your duties. Good luck!

## Your Role as a News Reporter

You are being given the opportunity to raise awareness about the 4-H program in your county—the work your members are doing, the fun your club members are having, and the help your members are giving to the community. And, as a 4-H club officer, you represent your club, your county, and the 4-H program throughout Ohio.

As the club's news reporter, you will:

- Submit announcements for events planned by your club, as appropriate.
- Prepare a news article after each meeting, event, or activity, and submit it to the news media in a timely manner.
- Keep a notebook with all your written articles and related clippings from the newspaper.

## Getting Started

### *News Story Format*

- The first time you refer to a person, use their full name (and title if appropriate).
- The next time you refer to a person *under* age 18, refer to them by their first name. The next time you refer to a person age 18 and *over*, refer to them by their last name.
- Write in the third person. This means you use the words he, she, him, her, they, them—NOT the words I, you, or we.
- Use simple language. Don't use a long word when a short word will do. Sentences should be short and easy to read. Paragraphs should contain no more than two or three sentences.

### *The 5 W's and the H of News*

The important parts of a news story are the five W's and one H. Explain each one and your story is complete!

WHO is the story about?

WHAT is the story about?

WHEN will (did) it happen?

WHERE will (did) it happen?

WHY will (did) it happen?

HOW will (did) it happen?

And **these facts must be accurate!** Check and re-check names, titles, dates, times, costs, etc.

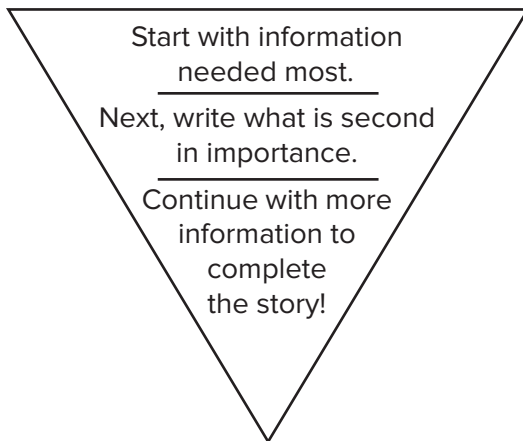
## *The Upside-down Pyramid Format*

The upside-down pyramid format puts the facts in “news order” so that the story starts with the most critical information that the reader needs and works down from there.

The first paragraph should contain enough information to give a good overview of the entire story.

The rest of the story explains and provides additional information.

You must assume that the story might be cut due to space limitations, so ask yourself if the story is satisfactory if the editor decides to include only the first two paragraphs. If not, rearrange it so that it does!



## News Reporter Duties

### *Contact Your Local Newspaper*

Ask to speak with the staff person to whom you will be submitting your news stories, or “copy,” and request detailed instructions on how copy should be submitted, such as:

- Electronically—be sure to get the e-mail address of the person who should receive your story.
- Hard copy—does it need to be typed or is handwritten copy acceptable?

Ask your contact if they accept photo submissions and what file format is acceptable: jpg, png, tif. Standard resolution for newspapers is 300 dpi or dots per inch. Check the properties on your image before sending.

### *Write Club Meeting Reports*

- Write club meeting reports like a news article in paragraph form—not like a secretary’s report with bullet items.
- Keep the article interesting and brief.
- Avoid slang and abbreviations.
- Begin your article, or “lead” with, the most important part of the meeting.

# My Officer Goals

After reviewing this record book and the resource supplement, develop a plan for what you will do as the news reporter this year. Select activities from the items listed below. Feel free to be creative and add your own activities.

Activities	Plan to Do (✓)	Plan to Complete By	Date Completed
Discuss with club leaders various social media outlets and if any of these tools are right for your club. Check with your Extension office regarding photo releases for 4-H members.			
Develop a list of all the media outlets in your area, including deadlines for news stories, contact person for submissions, and contact information.			
Use photos. Posts and articles with photos get more readers than posts with words only. Make sure you have permission from everyone in the photo.			
Write a news story promptly after each club meeting.			
Once published, clip the story from the newspaper and add to your notebook of clippings. If your story is not published, give a copy of the story you wrote to the secretary.			

Things to Do on Your Own	Plan to Do (✓)	Plan to Complete By	Date Completed
Attend an officer training program.			
Make a poster or exhibit for the club booth.			
Give a speech at a county speaking contest.			
Give a demonstration at a county demonstration contest.			

# News Reporter Summary

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Media Contact Information:

Media Outlet newspaper, radio, social media, etc.	Contact Person	Email or Website Address	Deadline

Record news and publicity activities below.

Event or Topic	Submitted to	Date Submitted	Date Published

# Meeting Report Form

*Make a copy of this form for every meeting and use it to keep notes. If necessary, work with the secretary to verify your information. Refer to this form when writing club meeting reports for the newspaper.*

Name (name and position): \_\_\_\_\_

Club name: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting date, time, and location: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of members present: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of guests present: \_\_\_\_\_

Pledges led by: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the three big events that happened at your meeting that would interest readers? (election of officers, speaker, demonstration field, trip, etc.)?

Big Items	1	2	3
Who?			
What?			
When?			
Where?			
Why?			
How?			

Other details you want to include in your story: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Quotes are great, but only if they are correct. Make sure to include the name of the person who said the quote and any office or title. For example, "4-H is fun," said Perry Prez, Coming Up Clovers 4-H Club president.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Now write your story and make it interesting!*

At the end of your story, include information to help people get in contact with 4-H Educators in your county, such as “For more information about 4-H, contact [*Educator name*] in the [*county name*] County office of Ohio State University Extension in [*city, town*] by calling [*phone number*]. Or visit [*county office website URL*].”

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Once your story is written, think of a good headline that highlights the main event in the article. For example: Local Business Owner Shares Experience with Green Clover 4-H Club. Sometimes this can be the hardest part!

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**Good luck in your new role as news reporter!**



I pledge  
My **head** to clearer thinking,  
My **heart** to greater loyalty,  
My **hands** to larger service, and  
My **health** to better living,  
For my club, my community,  
my country, and my world.

**ohio4h.org**

This publication and other officer resources can be found at **ohio4h.org/officerresources**. For more Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development publications, contact your local OSU Extension office or purchase online at **extensionpubs.osu.edu**. Ohio residents get the best price when they order and pick up their purchases through local Extension offices.