

## 4-H Self-Determined MT3300B

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### Introduction

The 4-H Self-Determined Project enables you to develop your own project. It may include working on a more advanced phase of an existing project or in an area where no project already exists. The topic you choose should be developed from something you are interested in, would like to do research or experimentation on, or want to learn about.

This advanced project enables you to set your own goals and objectives, design a plan of action and carry out a project based on your topic of interest. Because you are unique, your program should be designed with your talents and interests in mind.

The objectives of the self-determined project are:

- to develop an individual's resourcefulness and creativity
- to enable a member to select a topic of interest to him or her, not developed through existing units
- to provide youth more experience in setting goals and making decisions in regard to their own interests and needs
- to enable youth to assume responsibility for their own decisions, and
- to determine the relationship between the member's project experience and the development and future application of life skills.

### Step 1 Select a Topic

The most difficult part of this project may be selection of your topic. The following five factors will be helpful to consider as you select and design your project:

- your personal interests, talents and resources available to complete the project
- the degree of challenge provided by the project
- whether the project will bring you satisfaction when completed
- your ability to be original and creative in the project design, and
- how you will measure your success.

Begin by making a list of projects of interest to you. They need not be in an specific order, simply ones in which you would like to learn more about.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_



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Eliminate those that you cannot accomplish based on the amount of time you have to devote to the project, resources available and your family situation. Avoid learning experiences already provided through other 4-H projects.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

List the topic you selected:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 2 Define the Topic

Now that you have selected your topic, it is time to set your goal. The goal helps you clarify what you want to accomplish in this project.

A goal is defined as the desired result. It defines that which you wish to achieve, reach or capture.

An example of a goal may be to learn to speak Spanish fluently.

What is your self-determined project goal?

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Objectives identify how you plan to reach your goal. They must be measurable to the point that you can easily tell whether you have accomplished them or not. Well written objectives help direct your project and define your accomplishments.

An example of an objective is to receive a C or higher grade in Spanish class.

Review your project goal. Write at least three objectives that will help you reach your goal.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

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### Step 3 Develop Your Plan of Action

To reach your objectives and ultimately your goal, you must identify a specific plan of action. Determine what you need to do, what resources you need to accomplish your plan and by when. Visit with your parents, volunteer leaders or other adults and review your plans with them. Ask for suggestions to enhance your own ideas.

Set up a chart to organize your action plan. Carefully consider the amount of time each step will take, what resources you will need and who might help provide additional resources.

Steps	Resources Needed & Source	Completion Date

Is your plan realistic? Can you accomplish your plan with the resources available to you? Does the plan lead you to completion of your goal and objectives?

Transfer your goal, objectives and action plan to a notebook (no larger than 9"x12"). You will add a report and an evaluation of your project to your notebook after your action plan is complete.

### Step 4 Carry Out Your Plan

It is time now for you to carry out your plan! Use the steps in your action plan to guide your progress. Change your plan if necessary to reach your end result.

Record your progress as you go along. What was accomplished, what did you learn, what resources did you use, did you make any changes?



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## Step 5 Evaluation

Evaluation helps you determine how well you reached your goals and if the process you used worked effectively. Go back and review each of your objectives. Did you accomplish what you had planned? If not, why? What would you do differently if you were to do the project again? What changes did you make? Did they help you reach your objectives with fewer resources? Was your project challenging, interesting, satisfying and fun?

Record your findings in your e-record.

### Life Skill Development

You develop life skills when you participate in the 4-H program. Life skills focus on the four H's from the 4-H Clover that represent, head, heart, hands, and health.

Head	Heart	Life Skills Hands	Health
Manage Resources	Communication	Master Technology	Be Responsible
Make Decisions	Interact Socially	Practice Community Service	Develop Self -Esteem
Solve Problems	Cooperate	Volunteer	Manage Self
Learn to Learn	Share	Be a Responsible Citizen	Practice Integrity
Think Critically	Resolve Conflict	Work in a Team	Manage Stress
Keep Records	Value Diversity	Exercise Leadership	Make Healthy Life-Style
Plan and Organize	Build Relationships	Motivate Self	Choices
Achieve Goals	Care for Others		Practical Personal Safety
Be Resilient	Be Empathic		Manage Feelings
			Prevent Disease

You are to:

- reflect on your self determined project
- select one life skill from the list above and develop or enhance it with your project and share how
- identify why that life skill is important to you, and
- share how you will use the life skill in another situation.



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## Exhibit

Share what you learn through your project with others via a demonstration or talk for your club or other group, and an exhibit or display at your local library, school, 4-H exhibit day or county fair.

The exhibit should include the following:

- A. A written description of your project including your goals, objectives, action plan, accomplishments and evaluation of the results. You may use pictures or any records you kept to provide evidence of your accomplishments.
- B. A self report of developed or enhanced life skills through completion of the Self-Determined project. This report is to include:
  - The identified life skill
  - how the project helped develop and enhance the life skill, and
  - how the life skill will be useful in another situation
- C. Optional: A article or item made as a part of your project. Check with your Extension office, school principal, or librarian for space requirements or limitations if you include this as a part of your display.



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## RECOMMENDED EXHIBIT FORMAT

### Section 1

- A. Describe your topic and why you selected it
- B. List the goal for your project.
- C. List the objectives you planned to accomplish to reach your goal.

### Section 2

- A. Provide your action plan (the steps, resources, and time line you developed).
- B. Share who you contacted to review your plan.
- C. Indicate what changes, if any, were necessary to make your action plan more workable.

### Section 3

- A. Show how you carried out your action plan.
- B. Report the results. Share any problems you experienced.
- C. Indicate any changes you made in your action plan after you started your project.

### Section 4

- A. Share your evaluation plan.
- B. Indicate what worked well and what didn't.
- C. Report the objectives and goals you achieved.
- D. Provide your personal evaluation of your project including how you felt about your project, what you learned from the experience, what life skills you gained and how you can use those skills with another project or in another situation.

### Section 5

- A. List the life skill developed or enhanced via the self determined project.
- B. Provide a brief statement as to how this occurred.
- C. Indicate why the life skill is important to you and how you will use it in the future.

