

# 4-H Impromptu Topics

Below are some hints to help you organize your impromptu list as well as some sample topics. If you wish to add impromptu topics to the list, please email them to [Cameron Horner](mailto:Cameron.Horner@4h.ab.ca).

## Preparing impromptu topics:

- Have lots of variety in the topics. Many organizers select three categories and create topics under each category. Examples of categories are: current events, 4-H, humor, pop culture (TV, books and movies) or objects.
- Create separate topics for younger speakers.
- Ensure you have enough topics so that every competitor has a choice of three, plus a few extras.
- Topics should be matched to the age levels and competence of speakers.
- Choose topics that differ from those used in previous years.
- If coordinating topics for a competition, obtain impromptu topics from previous competitions and ensure there are no repeats.
- Eliminate any impromptu topics that duplicate prepared speeches.
- Gather all necessary supplies such as topics, blank cards, pencils and a stopwatch.
- Time the selection and preparation time for the speaker. Allow the speaker 15 seconds to choose the topic and one minute to prepare the speech.
- Inform the Emcee of the topic which the member has chosen.
- Show the audience the three choices and selected topic.
- If you are having trouble thinking of topics:
- Check newspapers and on-line news sources for topics on current events and popular culture.
- Ask each member and leader for two or three topics at the beginning of the year.
- Visit the 4-H website at [www.4h.ab.ca](http://www.4h.ab.ca)

## A suggestion for organizing impromptus:

Group three topics together on a half sheet of paper and have each member select one sheet. Use three categories to create topics from. This allows you to make sure that each member selects topics of equal difficulty. With individual slips, it is possible for members to find out what topics remain from previous speakers. Also, by the end of the competition, only the "hard" topics remain.

## Sample Topics:

### One Word Topics

- Art
- Crutches
- Garbage
- Laziness
- Showmanship
- Bananas
- Curling
- Gardening
- Love
- Sisters
- Baseball
- Dances
- Gophers
- Mars
- Skating
- Bicycling
- Dentists
- Graduation
- Education
- Horns
- Procrastination
- Tobogganing
- Snow
- Buttons
- Dishes
- Hair
- Perms
- Parents
- Sports
- Camp
- Dogs
- Hats
- Pets
- Teachers
- Money
- Skiing
- Books
- Diamonds
- Grandparents
- Mothers
- Smoking
- Brothers
- Discrimination
- Guns
- Music
- Friends
- Budgeting
- Disease
- Hair Cuts
- Opera
- Snowshoeing
- Doorknobs
- Health
- Pillows
- Telephones
- Careers
- Doughnuts
- Hobbies
- Pollution
- Television
- Cars
- Dreams
- Homework
- Poverty
- Time
- Characters
- Jewellery
- Consumers
- Jogging
- Christmas
- Eggs
- Horses
- Pyramids
- Vegetables
- Cleanliness
- Fathers
- Hospitals
- Radios
- Commitment
- Fishing
- Imagination
- RRSP's
- Water
- Communications
- Fitness
- Inflation
- Scissors
- Words
- Computers
- Flying
- Internet
- Racism

### Animals/Beef/Pets and so on

- Tobacco sponsorship of sports
- First bike ride
- Are animals useful?
- Exotic vs. Standard Breed
- A visit to the zoo
- Milk - the best drink ever
- Beef Marketing
- Rodeo on television
- Cruelty to animals
- The usefulness of a horse around the farm
- Million dollar cow
- How is production in the beef industry affected by the show ring?
- Experiments on animals
- How important is the S.P.C.A.?
- Endangered animals
- My favorite animal is...
- Mutton and the Consumer
- How games began
- My favorite pet is...
- Which do I like better, cats or dogs?
- My first pet
- Pets are people because
- My favorite farm animal is...

## 4-H Questions

- Multi-judging - good or bad
- Should 4-H meetings start on time?
- The most important thing I have gained from 4-H.
- Why I like 4-H camps?
- What has 4-H given you that will mold the rest of your life?
- Why should senior members hold office?
- Should "Happy" be added to the 4-H's
- Why is judging a benefit to me
- Public speaking is great for me
- 4-H scholarships - Are they necessary?
- Value of 4-H
- Favorite 4-H camp
- Does 4-H help family ties?
- How do you explain the 4-Hs to people
- The role of your general leader which makes your club special.
- Is the use of helmets for horse projects, really necessary?
- What does the 4-H Pledge mean to you?
- How does 4-H help you with school?
- How will 4-H help you as an adult?
- A funny thing happened on the way to 4-H
- Most Memorable 4-H Experience
- What is 4-H?
- How would I promote 4-H to a friend?
- Are 4-H Exchanges important to the program?
- My 4-H project
- I joined 4-H because . . .
- Our 4-H club
- How I have benefited from 4-H
- My first 4-H project
- A 4-H leader is . . .
- Should 4-H projects be related to mini business techniques?
- The one thing I would most like to improve about my 4-H club is . . . and why?
- When I return to my 4-H club, I hope I can help with the communications in the following way . . .
- 4-H clubs should/should not have Peewee members. Why?
- The most important thing I learned from years in 4-H is . . .
- By the end of 4-H I hope to have accomplished
- Public speaking in 4-H
- 4-H Achievement Day
- What I like best about 4-H
- What 4-H does for the community
- Sponsors should greatly increase their grants to the 4-H program
- 4-H is only good for pre-teen age groups
- 4-H should double the number of projects it has in it
- The value of a 4-H meeting
- What is the best part of 4-H?
- 4-H philosophy - do you believe in it?
- How to run successful 4-H meetings
- What 4-H has done for me
- 4-H in the year 2050
- Benefits of the 4-H centre
- Why has 4-H been around for 90 years
- Getting up to feed my project

- Cleaver, the 4-H beaver
- An ideal 4-H project
- Is 4-H all cows and cooking?
- How should 4-H Achievements be recognized?
- Does 4-H help family ties?
- A 4-H program or camp I have attended
- Interclub activities in 4-H
- Why I joined 4-H
- Should 4-H develop university credit programs?
- Should 4-H be fun or strictly educational?
- What do you think the long-term goals for 4-H should be?
- Should 4-H members be required to change projects after 3 years?
- The age limit for attendance at provincial 4-H programs should be lowered
- 4-H is of no value to urban people

### Adages

- What does "Learn to do by doing" mean to you?
- Curiosity killed the cat
- Don't count your chickens before they hatch
- When the cat's away, the mice will play
- All that glitters is not gold!
- Dare to be different
- Back to the basics
- To be or not to be
- A women's place is in the home
- A rolling stone gathers no moss
- Familiarity breeds contempt
- Actions speak louder than words
- Honesty is really the best policy

### Family

- If I had to make dinner.
- My favorite book and why.
- Grandma's cookie jar
- Should my Play station time be limited?
- Explain how 4-H influences your family ties.
- Should you be able to choose what chores are your responsibility?
- What is the best way to train our parents?
- Is 10:00 curfew satisfactory?
- Mom, can you drive us to . . .
- Is there a generation gap?
- My mother made me . . .
- Is competition in 4-H sports good?
- I feel I have been a mentor to \_\_\_\_\_ and why.
- My mentor has been \_\_\_\_\_ and why.
- The person who has helped me the most is \_\_\_\_\_ and why.
- Are computers a useful tool in the home?
- Should women have careers outside of the home?
- Good manners make life easier
- Someone you look up to.
- Going fishing with my grandfather . . .
- Looking after my brother and/or sister for a day

- You need more money to buy something. How would you get the money from your parents?
- What mom means to me
- Is family history important?
- My ethnic heritage
- Is father still the head of the house?
- Does our family eat more than is necessary?
- My brother/sister . . .
- The trouble with parents is . . .
- Going to visit relatives
- Allowance: How much is enough?
- Is the family farm doomed?
- Time to be a family
- Be proud of your ethnic background
- My Dad's farm
- Teaching my parents
- Today's family versus yesterday's
- Why I enjoy being from a large/small family
- Christmas - a family time
- My parents driving skills
- Who gives credit to their parents
- Moving away from home
- The perfect size of family is . . .
- Parents are too . . .
- Breakfast time at our house
- I cook better than Dad
- My families' most embarrassing moment
- Should parents buy their 16 year old a car?
- A lesson my parents taught me
- Is my family physically fit?
- When I become a parent
- Working mothers in a family
- The importance of family

### **Fantasy/Future**

- How old I would like to be
- If I could meet a famous person it would be \_\_\_\_\_
- What I would do if I could walk in someone else's shoes?
- A career I am interested in.
- If I could control the weather.
- The age I would like most to be.
- The best thing about getting up early
- Put me in an envelope and mail me to . . .
- Trip of a life time
- Why do ducks fly upside down?
- The best way to spend \$10
- If I could fly I would be . . .
- Describe your favorite vacation?
- What would you like to be when you have grown?
- If you could travel anywhere in the world, where?
- What would it be like to be two feet tall?
- If you could take a trip to another planet, where would you go, what would you see and do?

- If you could sit and talk to President Bush what would you tell him?
- If you could give money away who would you give it to?
- If I had a million dollars I would . . .
- If you had an experience to relive, what would it be . . .
- If I could be a cartoon character, I would be . . .
- If I were Premier of Alberta . . .
- If I had only six months to live
- The one thing in the world I would most like to learn how to do is . . . and why?
- How I would like to spend a rainy day
- A person I would like to meet
- My ideal future
- If I could live anywhere I wanted, it would be . . .
- If I could have invented something . . .
- To see an U. F. O.
- If I could do it again . . .
- What I would do if I won the lottery
- If there was one thing you could change about yourself, what would it be?
- If I could be in the Olympics . . .
- What would happen if . . .
- 2020 A. D.: What will it be like?
- A trip into the future
- If I had my own farm I would
- The car I want to own is . . . and why?
- Life without electricity

## General

- A person who is important to me.
- The most fun I ever had
- My favorite musical group is \_\_\_\_\_
- A funny thing that happened to me
- How important is volunteering to you?
- The importance of respect for one another.
- The importance of humor in my life.
- Who is your role model?
- What does "Canadian" mean to you?
- How agriculture changed in five years?
- Why I like computers?
- Should the news media change the way they televise world crises?
- November 11 - why should we remember?
- Why we have municipal elections every three years?
- Graduated driver licenses - will they save lives?
- ILO's good or bad? why?
- Why should you buy brand productions that use child labor during production?
- Natural gas supply into the new millennium.
- Using cell phones while driving.
- What happens when you are late for a meeting?
- Gun control (my opinion)
- Road rage
- How would you describe the color red to a blind person?
- How to set up a room for presentations or meetings.
- Terrorism how it effects your surrounding area.
- The ripple effect of terrorism.
- Should there be one currency for North America?

- Borders - Are they necessary between USA and Canada?
- Bioterrorism - Should I be worried?
- Should anyone under 18 be allowed to vote?
- If it is illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone less than 18 years of age, should it not be illegal to smoke them in public places?
- Should school buses have seat belts?
- Is "FOIP" really necessary?
- Do the police have enough power to go after terrorist suspects?
- Is genetically altered food safe to eat?
- Is free trade working for Canada?
- Is photo-radar actually a source of income for police?
- Terrorism - should we retaliate?
- Do you think Canada's immigration laws should be changed?
- What are your feelings on Canada assisting the USA in their war against anti terrorism?
- Should the Canadian government put more money into the military?
- What were your feelings about the planes crashing into the two towers in New York?
- How do you feel the events of Sept. 11 have changed your life?
- What can you do to help the children poverty?
- Should the age that an individual is able to obtain a driver's license at be raised? or lowered?
- Should the legal drinking age be raised to 20 or 21?
- Are trophies good awards?
- Are computers here to stay?
- The most useful piece of farm equipment
- My first broken bone
- My first long trip away from home
- What are northern lights?
- Is our climate changing?
- Going shopping with \$20
- How would I spend \$100
- R. C. M. P. - who are they?
- How did "Junk Food" get its name?
- My chores at home
- What makes people interesting?
- Public speaking is . . .
- Peanuts or popcorn?
- My favorite sandwich
- Can music change a person's mood?
- When I graduate I will . . .
- How far is up?
- Fitness - is it overemphasized?
- The most ridiculous thing I ever did was . . .
- Is Christmas too commercialized?
- Go with the flow
- When I'm 16 I want to . . .
- Life after death - reincarnation
- How to sneak into the house after curfew?
- How to keep up with fashions
- Invisible friends
- How to eat an ice cream cone
- The farmer's wife
- Canadians need less organized recreation
- Heroes that should be put to rest
- A gift I could have done without
- A great Canadian statesman

- The things I really need now are
- What is a farmer's most valuable resource?
- The science of making after school snacks
- My most rewarding experience
- Foods to eat with your fingers
- The great country life
- Comic strip heroes are essential
- It must have been fate
- How to live to be 100 years old
- Rock videos are bad for today's youth
- The quality I admire most in a person is \_\_\_\_\_.
- What is your opinion of today's economy?
- Do you think our police are properly trained?
- My home town
- The comedy of meetings
- Winning versus losing
- The value of museums
- Is there a generation gap?
- Minority ethnic groups should share their culture with other cultures in Alberta
- How to get a date with a perfect stranger
- Are we eating ourselves to death?
- Pioneers in Alberta
- We should return to the "simple" life
- Is the 4 day week a thing of the future
- The world's babysitter
- Benefits of youth exchange
- How to avoid a population explosion
- How to prevent forest fires?
- . . . but its in fashion!
- A visit to the lake
- Green spiked hair
- The man on the moon
- Nutrition - the doughnuts versus the apples
- The farmers and the tax man
- The eyes are the mirror to the soul
- Today's young people - tomorrow's leaders
- Children are forced to grow up too fast
- Farming for the future
- Squeezing those dollars
- I get by with a little help from my friends
- Time - use or abuse?
- What I can expect when I do something bad
- Do carrots really help the eyesight?
- Should people have to dress up if they really don't want to?
- East-West relations: Are they getting better?
- I took a chance
- I had no idea
- Cabbage patch kids
- Using make-up Int. Policy
- What is the best holiday of the year?
- My green thumb
- Playing with fire
- At what age should a person marry?
- Making a peanut butter sandwich
- Visiting the beauty salon

- Wearing glasses
- What my roots mean to me
- I would like to have been a pioneer
- A career in Agriculture
- Canadians are too materialistic
- Marriage contracts should be renewed every five years
- Where my wool sweater came from
- As a young person, do you feel you have enough rights?
- Does your favorite rock star/group influence your life?
- What I expect from a summer job
- Should you get paid for working on the farm?
- How can we help the starving people in our own country?
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Your view on the Provincial Government
- What I like most about winter
- Television Commercials
- Should town be able to have a teenage curfew?
- Should capital punishment be reinstated?
- Should Canada be selling their non-renewable resources to the U.S.?
- Should there be another referendum on Quebec's separation?
- Should Canada hold a referendum on Quebec's separation?
- If Quebec separated, what should and shouldn't they be entitled to?
- Should individual regions be allowed to stay part of Canada if Quebec was to separate?
- Should there be a limit to the number of exports to the U.S.?
- Should the Canadian Wheat Board be optional?
- Should people that were instrumental during war be still held accountable for war crimes?
- Should Princess Diane be able to rest in peace? Or should she continue to be in the press constantly?
- Should the UN be involved in peacekeeping missions such as the former Yugoslavia?
- Are the proposed Canadian gun laws too strict?
- Should Provincial Parks be privatized?
- Should you be able to sell lease land?
- What is your opinion on agriculture subsidies?
- Should the Internet be censored?
- Does the U.S. have too much control over the U.S.?
- What is your opinion on the legalization of marijuana?
- Marijuana and medicinal purposes?
- Is Hemp the crop of the future?
- Should National Parks be open for development?
- Should the right to own property be ensigned in the Constitution?
- Should Canadians support more Canadian entertainment?
- Should national television personalities be held accountable for what they say?
- Should private health care be allowed to adopt children? Get married? Have same sex benefits?
- Should automated bank machines take the place of bank employees?
- Should there be an elected senate?
- Should multino (photo radar) ticket give you demerits?
- Should the drinking age be raised in Alberta?
- Should there be a national drinking age?
- Biological warfare, Is it becoming more of a reality?
- Should Canada continue to pursue high rates of immigration?
- Should smoking be banned in public places?

## Hobbies

- The kind of books I like to read . . .
- Why I like to cook
- Why I like hiking in the mountains
- My favorite book
- My favorite nursery rhyme
- How I would plan a hay ride
- Our use of leisure time
- The first time I rode a horse
- Taking it easy

### **Likes and Dislikes**

- My best friend
- Why I like school
- Favorite TV show
- Why I like school dances
- My favorite month of the year and why
- Why I like winter
- Why I like summer
- Why I like spring
- Why I like fall
- My favorite season is . . .
- My most dreaded hour in the day
- Where I would like to go for a holiday
- I love/hate to write letters
- A person I would like to meet
- The one thing in the world I would most like to learn about
- The most important thing in the world
- A country I would like to visit
- My favorite season
- My most embarrassing moment
- My favorite television show
- What I like about country life
- My favorite flower
- My favorite song
- I would like to own a snowmobile
- My favorite food
- Why I hate public speaking
- A favor that was not appreciated
- My favorite movie

### **Social Issues**

- Driving safety
- Why I am proud to be Canadian?
- Peer pressure
- Strangers - who are they?
- What does it mean to be cool?
- Gum chewing
- Are manner still important?
- Should we spend more time participating in domestic and homemaking duties?
- Women's Liberation - Has it happened?
- If I was a judge . . .
- Abortion Laws

- Solar heat - Is it good for Alberta
- Inflation
- Our Apathetic Society
- All children on farms should have to go to a farm safety course.
- Is aids a scare to you?
- Should coyotes be protected?
- Should speed limits be reduced?
- Does England really need the monarchy?
- Drinking and Driving
- Will there be a cure for aids in the next year?
- Should Canada receive more immigrants with the present economic situation?
- Are you in favor of capital punishment?
- How can we feed the world?
- Should public service be allowed to strike?
- Has women's lib gone to far?
- Guns in the home
- Should businesses be allowed to operate on holidays?
- Body Piercing and tattoos.
- Has television become too violent?
- What should the punishment for vandalism be?
- What do you think of men curling their hair, wearing makeup and carrying handbags?
- Importance of agriculture in today's society.
- The age of majority - should it be raised to 19 (20)?
- Canadians should be given preference when competing for Canadian jobs.
- Is peace possible?
- Impaired drivers should be given jail terms.
- Unemployment and today's youth.
- Why our second language should be French?
- Working mothers - good or bad?
- Wages and prices - should/should not be controlled?
- Morality, love and marriage?
- Should marijuana be legalized?
- Does racism exist in Canada?
- The right to a painless death
- Politicians should consult their constituencies more when making major political decisions.
- People should leave the business of farming to the farmers
- United Nations: Is it really a peacekeeping force?
- Impaired drivers on the increase
- Highway speed limits should be lowered
- Canada should implement preferred trade agreements with the developing countries?
- The drinking problems among teenagers
- School buses need more regulations
- Teenage marriages have little chance of success
- Are we heading for another depression?
- Should land use be strictly controlled?
- Preserve our wildlife
- Should there be police officers in the high school?
- Should the legal driving age be raised to 18?
- How to lessen Canada's dependence on petroleum?
- How to improve Canada's political system
- Will Quebec separate from Canada?
- Penitentiaries - are they serving a need?
- Are superpowers spending too much money on defense?
- As a Canadian what do you think of the situation our dollar is in?
- Divorce - should it be easier or harder to obtain?

- What do you think Albertans should do with the heritage trust fund and why?
- How do you think governments should deal with terrorism?
- Should we limit the amount of foreign owned industry in Canada?
- Should doctors be allowed to extra bill?
- Do people obtain their learners license at too young an age?
- Are men and women finally equal?
- Should liquor be sold in Alberta grocery stores?
- Are the number of school hours reasonable?
- Agriculture chemicals - friend or foe?
- Should Alberta have a sales tax?
- Summer fallow - saving money or destroying the land?
- The ozone breakdown
- Canada - melting or mosaic?
- Should farmers be licensed to farm?
- Hospital's users fee?
- Stress on the farm
- The green house effect
- T. V. aggression
- Abortions - should they be legalized?
- Should the death penalty be returned for killers of policemen?
- Are Canada's wheat exports worthwhile
- Is a third world war inevitable
- Separation and Quebec
- Canada will/will not eventually unite with the U.S.A.
- Centralization in the school system
- The three Prairie provinces should/should not unite into one province
- Are too many trees being lumbered from our forests?
- Does Canada need a governor general?
- Should retirement become compulsory at age 65?
- Is minus population growth a good thing?
- On what basis should Canada accept foreign refuges?
- Is Canada too dependent on the U. S. A.?
- Sex education belongs in the school or the home
- Should women in the armed forces be eligible for combat duty?
- Is the devalued dollar hurting Canadians?
- What is the most important industry in western Canada?
- Are assistance programs necessary for a farmer?
- Is more advertising needed for Agriculture products?
- Water - the farmers valuable resource
- What can be done to improve the image of the farmer?
- Should government aid young people to start a farm operation?
- Are fertilizers & pesticides harmful or useful?
- Should Northern Alberta's water be diverted south?
- Keeping in step with fashion - fun or foolish?
- Is the cost and labor of farming really worth the effort?
- Should farmers be allowed to drain their swamps for agricultural use or leave them for waterfowl?
- Credit and the problem it creates
- Is violence on television excessive?
- The chances of World War 111 and the chance of surviving
- Are we leading into another depression?
- Teenage marriages have little chance of surviving
- Alcohol problems among teenagers
- "No Smoking" signs - do they go against human rights?
- Penalties for impaired driving

- Missing children - How would you handle the problem?
- Do gun laws have to get tougher?
- Should seat belt legislation be law?
- Should young offenders have to go to jail?
- In a divorce, how much say should involve the children?
- Should television be censored?
- What sort of laws should there be for drinking and driving?
- Do you think there should be a 9% sales and service tax?
- What is literacy?
- Who are the illiterate?
- Why are people illiterate in today's world?

## **Sports**

- Is competition in 4-H sports good?
- What can be done to clean up the sport of hockey?
- Should professional athletes be allowed to compete at the Olympics?
- Professional athletes, hockey, basketball, baseball make a lot of money are they worth it?
- How to show good sportsmanship
- Professional athletes and the Olympics
- Women body builders
- Should Canada subsidize professional sports?
- Your favorite sports team.
- Should athletes be stripped of medals over illegal substance abuse?
- My favorite sports are . . .
- My favorite hockey player is . . .
- Should hunting be allowed as a sport?
- Should females be restricted in sports?
- Should school sports exist that contain only the best players?
- The value of school sports
- Is there too much violence in sports?
- My favorite winter sport is
- My favorite summer sport is
- First bike ride
- How to show good sportsmanship
- Eddie the Eagle - Olympic ski jumper
- The Edmonton Eskimos
- The World Hockey Association
- Hot air ballooning
- There should be more sports on television
- Do professional athletes deserve the high salaries they get?
- Individual versus team sports
- Wayne Gretzky - what has he done for Canadian sports?
- Should the Olympics be held in Russia?
- Riding a horse
- Trikes/quads - machine or toy
- Every child should learn how to skate
- Everyone should learn how to swim
- Should minor sports leagues be open to both boys and girls?
- How does politics affect sports?

## **School**

- Should French be compulsory in school?
- Violence in our schools.
- What is a balanced diet for college/university?
- All students should/should not have to learn a second language.
- Riding the school bus.
- Do you think you should attend college and why?
- If you were principal for the day . . .
- Should there be dress codes in school?
- What should you do about drugs in your school?
- What school means to me.
- Are you planning on attending post-secondary education? Why or Why not?
- Should there be more agriculture education schools?
- Post-secondary education - how will you pay for it?
- My favorite teacher
- My favorite subject in school is . . . and why?
- What school subject is most useful in every life?
- Should junk foods be abolished in schools?
- The best kind of teacher - strict or easy going?
- If adults started working four days a week, should students go to school only four days a week?
- Should all schools contain a cafeteria?
- Should school holidays be extended for another month?
- Should there be dress restrictions in school?
- Is cheating at school a problem?
- If I was a teacher for a day, I would . . .
- When I graduate I plan to . . . and why?
- All students should/should not have to learn a second language
- Students should consider education as a basic right
- Education is life itself
- Dressing for school
- Is there life after high school?
- Is there employment after university?
- Should school be compulsory?
- Should there be more options in school subjects?
- Students should/should not be allowed to strike?
- Riding the school bus
- Should summer vacation only be a month long?
- Computers in the classroom
- Instead of homework I would rather . . .
- My favorite school lunch
- Teachers should/should not be allowed to strap students
- Should teachers be allowed to strike?
- Should school buses have tougher regulations?
- In today's economic situation, what do you think the best career choice is?
- What occupation would you like to enter after high school?
- Should snowball fights be allowed at school?