

Contests provide opportunities for mastery

The definition of “mastery” clarifies why it is an important part of 4-H. Mastery is defined as “possession of a skill, and full command of a subject of study.”

In 4-H, leaders are always trying to help youths develop skills, and we encourage and empower them to practice those skills until they are mastered. We include youths in the planning process so they are engaged in learning, and we encourage them to continue to use and practice skills so the youths have the opportunity to master those skills. There are many other ways that the concept of

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mastery applies to our work in 4-H.

Every time 4-Hers practice a speech for the speaking contest, walk an animal for the fair, or make a coffee cake 10 times before getting just the right one, it is a great example of youths developing their sense of mastery.

Let’s keep encouraging our youth to strive to do the best they can and to develop and master many skills for life. Heidi Massa is doing just that with knitting. Here’s her story:

Knitting

By Heidi Massa, 12, member of the Hi-Los 4-H Club in Tomahawk

The reason I chose to learn to knit was not because I wanted to enter

a knit item in the fair, but because I thought it would be a hobby that I wouldn’t get tired of, was fun and was easy to learn. And I was right! Knitting is as easy as it looks, it is fun, and you don’t get tired of it.

To learn to knit, basically you only have to learn four simple steps. Those steps are getting your yarn on your needle to begin your knitting, the knit stitch, the purl stitch and removing your knitting from the needle. Knitting only consists of the knit and purl stitches. This makes it easier to learn and remember how to do than some other hobbies. After you learn the four simple steps, you can knit a lot of simple things. Then, after you get the

hang of knitting, you can learn how to make designs in your knitting.

Other than being a hobby, you can earn some extra money by selling the items you knit. People often pay high prices for hand-knit items because of the time and material you put into them.

When you contemplate learning to knit, think of the benefit it gives you. When you grow old and are sitting in front of the fireplace on a cold winter evening, you can either be doing nothing or you could be knitting. Which sounds more fun to you? I know my answer, what about you?

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PHOTO COURTESY LINCOLN COUNTY 4-H
Heidi Massa enjoys knitting, a lifelong hobby she learned through 4-H.