

# The Perfect Fire

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Imagine with me...deep in the forest, there is a clearing where the green grass is growing. There is a circle of rocks in the middle and ashes remain from a fire that once was there years ago. It takes careful work and hours of dedication to get a good fire burning that will last as long as you need it. Once the fire starts, a yellow burst of flame begins to flicker...very soon it will turn into a deep, warm, comforting and secure fire...this is the beauty of the perfect fire. Sitting in front of a campfire is a great way to look at your reflection to perfection.

The idea of 4-H, like the idea of a fire, has to be started with someone giving you the foundation to build your fire. In 4-H you will be surrounded by family, your agent and new friends that you will make who are cheering you on as you begin this new journey. You begin with essays, poster competitions, electing class officers, and getting involved in your community by doing small service projects. These are all fun things that will light your interest and help you build a burning desire to continue in the program.

Once you've gotten your interest sparked in 4-H, you add bigger things to make it grow. This represents the 26 different projects that 4-H offers you. These possibilities can be explored by participating in various competitions like speeches, demonstrations, bigger service projects and career interviews.

Leadership and Citizenship help build a person into being a perfect future leader of the world. Some people stop adding logs to their fire around this point and their fire quickly dies, sometimes in 4-H people stop getting involved and drift out of the program. At this point in time, it is very important to keep yourself dedicated to working on your fire, and improving yourself as a person.

Once you've gotten yourself the perfect fire you have a decision to make...will you let it burn for a little while or maintain what you've built for a lifetime? As a person, you must learn to make your fire last for a long period of time; you never know who is counting on you to keep them safe and warm.

Another thing that a fire is often associated with is reflecting. As you head toward the end of your journey in 4-H you need to take time to reflect. Think about where you've come from, what you've accomplished during your time in 4-H and most importantly...where you are going.

In 4-H you have the opportunity to work on yourself as a person, but in the process you can affect a lot of lives and change them for the better. Will you choose to let your life become a burning flame...a perfect fire...to help others along their journey? Let your life be a perfect fire to shine on others and keep your flame shining for a lifetime!