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***LIVESTOCK JUDGING: NOTE  
TAKING AND REASONS  
FORMAT***



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## ***WHY TAKE NOTES IN LIVESTOCK JUDGING???***

- During a judging contest, you can judge anywhere from 8-12 different classes of different species and reasons are given later that day
  - Effective note taking can help you remember certain traits and identifications of individual animals
- Taking organized notes aid in reasons format and delivery of your thoughts
- Write down brief descriptions, identifications of each individual animal, notable differences in the class
  - Which female is the soundest?
  - Which bull is the heaviest muscled?
  - Which animal is the worst balanced?

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## ***REASONS FORMAT***

- **Introduction-** Statement saying how you placed the class
  - I sorted the market steers 4321
  - I liked the performance Angus heifers 1342
  - I placed the Simmental bulls 2413
- **Opening Statement-** describing overall class dynamic or logic
  - 4's easily the heaviest muscled, biggest bodied option. I like the stoutest steer to start
  - White flanked 1 heifer's blend of functionality and balance wins
  - There's a top pair of bulls who are extremely practical, I preferred the added power of the 2 over 4's eye appeal
- **Top Pair Discussion**
  - Compare
  - Grant
  - Criticize
- **Middle Pair Discussion**
  - Compare
  - Grant
  - Criticize
- **Bottom Pair Discussion**
  - Compare
  - Grant
  - Criticize

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## ***NOTE TAKING FORMATS: REASONS PREPARATION***

1. Brief Descriptions and IDs of 1		
2. Brief Descriptions and IDs of 2		
3. Brief Descriptions and IDs of 3		
4. Brief Descriptions and IDs of 4		
<b>Opening Statement:</b>	<b>Class Name:</b>	<b>Placing:</b>
1/2- Advantages for 1 over 2	2/1- Grants for 2 over 1	Criticism of 2
2/3- Advantages for 2 over 3	3/2- Grants for 3 over 2	Criticism of 3
3/4- Advantages for 3 over 4	4/3- Grants for 4 over 3	Why 4 Placed Last

Class Number and Name		Class Placing	
1	2	3	4
<b>Opening Statement</b>			
<b>Top Pair Discussion</b> (Comparison of first place animal over second place)		<b>Grant Of Second Place Animal</b>	
		<b>Criticism of Second Place Animal</b>	
<b>Middle Pair Discussion</b> (Comparison of second place animal over third place)		<b>Grant of Third Place Animal</b>	
		<b>Criticism of Third Place Animal</b>	
<b>Bottom Pair Discussion</b> (Comparison of third place animal over forth place)		<b>Grant of Fourth Place Animal</b>	
		<b>Criticism of Fourth Place Animal</b>	

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## BEGINNER REASONS FORMAT

Insert YOUR placing

I (placed, like, sorted) the \_\_\_\_\_ **(name of class)** \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.  
For me, **(first place animal)** wins. He/she is the

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. I'll admit that **(second place animal)**  
is \_\_\_\_\_ however, he/she  
is \_\_\_\_\_, so I elected to keep him/her second.

However, in the middle pair I still sort it \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_. **(Second place animal)** is  
\_\_\_\_\_. No doubt, **(Third place animal)** is \_\_\_\_\_, however,  
he/she is \_\_\_\_\_. I decided to leave him/her  
third.

Lastly, in the bottom pair I marked it \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_. **(Third place animal)** is  
\_\_\_\_\_. Sure, **(Fourth place animal)** is \_\_\_\_\_ In this class, he/she is  
\_\_\_\_\_ and I put the \_\_\_\_\_ last.

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## ***HELPFUL TIPS FOR THE REASONS ROOM***

### **Do:**

- **Greet the official taking reasons**
  - Saying “Hello, how are you?” or a short greeting can be an effective first impression when first entering the room!
  - Greeting the official allows you to determine if you should louder or softer with your voice
    - Your tone should be slight above a conversation voice
- **Make eye contact with the reasons official**
  - Helps show confidence
- **Use the same name for the class that was given to you**
- **Vary Delivery Voice**
  - Positive tone when highlighting advantages
    - Want to sound excited!
  - Disappointed tone when discussing faults/criticisms
  - Implement pauses
- **Utilize facial expressions**
  - Helps emphasize key points
  - Slight head gestures, other body movements can be distracting
- **Include Identifications and correct gender of animals**
  - Incorporating ID’s are extremely effective for both you and the reasons official!
  - Having ID’s can help you really paint the picture of that animal
- **Make sure your reasons fall within 1:30 but not to exceed 2 minutes!**
- **It is okay if you mess up, just take a breath and keep going!**

### **Don’t:**

- **Introduce yourself**
  - Only identify yourself with the contestant number given
- **Try not to stand too close to the reasons official**
  - This depends on room size but a good standard rule is standing about 6 feet away!
  - Once stopped, stand with your feet about shoulder width apart

- **Don't sway or move around**
  - Keep feet planted in a stance that is comfortable for you
  - Place hands behind your back
  
- **Avoid saying:**
  - "Number 2"
    - Use the animal's number as if it was their name
    - Instead say the "2 is" or " 4 is"
  - "One"
    - Unless identifying the 1 animal
    - Often times judges want to say "the massive one" or "the most complete one". This can cause confusion about which animal you are referring.
  - "Animal" or "Individual"
    - Replace these words with specie-specific terms such as steer, heifer, bull, gilt, barrow, boar, wether, ewe, doe, or ram
  
- **Try not to use your notes**
  - Even if you stumble, power through. Often times you'll get a higher score than using your notes
  
- **Avoid a number mix-up**
  - Mistakes happen, if you catch yourself mixing up your numbers, try to correct yourself!
  
- **Abbreviate breed names**
  - Never say "Simmi" for Simmental
  - Or "Char" for Charolais

***In order to improve your reasons, you must practice!!!!***

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## *REASONS EXAMPLES*

I like the Angus Heifers 2-3-4-1. There's a top pair of high-quality females that are totally different in their type and kind. For me, I sided with added skeletal integrity of 2 over 3's extra power. The white flanked heifer is by some margin the soundest female that lays her shoulder in smoother, comes back to a more maternal sweep to her flank, and is designed the most attractive out her hip and hind leg. No doubt, the broody 3 is the source for power. Big footed heifer is massive in her rib and body and the widest in her pin set; however, she's coarser about her shoulder and navel. Going away, I'd like to square her up from hock to ground.

In the middle pair, 3's brood cow potential overwhelms 4. From the side, I have to appreciate 4's presence and balance. Long fronted female ties her neck higher out of a neater shoulder and hooks in stronger right behind it. Plus, I like the fact that the more feminine heifer is refined in her teat shape. But, get behind the cattle and flatter sided heifer gets out massed and reads more average in her foot and bone size.

On bottom, practicality sorts it 4/1. Structurally, she's equipped with more flexibility off-both ends. Plus, she's the more maternal option that's softer ribbed. Up high, slick haired 1 reads bolder in her upper rib shape and comes with more natural thickness out of her hip, but on the move I can't stand the straightest made heifer. She is the most restricted, so I left the shallowest bodied heifer last.

I sorted the performance Angus Bulls 4-3-1-2. It's 4's blend of power and structure that wins. It's impressive that the range ready, most masculine bull offers the most muscle and dimension and still takes an extremely long step while keeping his hock square. To top it off, biggest testicled bull is my pick to generate low input daughters. No doubt, highest indexing 3 reads with more direct growth and is extremely functional in his build; however, he doesn't balance up as nice. The tighter in his forerib bull gets easy behind his shoulder and shorter hiped.

Middle pair is close, I marked it 3 over 1. Wider constructed 3 has the upper hand in natural thickness and upper body shape. Even more so, set the cattle into motion, big footed bull sets down with more cushion to his pastern and flex out of his hock. From the side, 1 has the edge in balance and eye appeal. He's the long-fronted, neater chested option that's strong topped and comes back to a squarer hip. Compared to the two bulls ahead, he's narrow constructed, flatter in his body shape and lower stifle.

Regardless on bottom, I am more confident in 1's build to last in production and mark him over 2. Up front, the more moderate bull is more laid by in the angle of his shoulder and knee. Sure, the calving ease sire is certainly smooth made and extended, but he's the straightest shouldered bull that is the most rigid in motion plus offers the least power and dimension. I'll keep the low performing bull last.