



Writing Narrations



An informative 4-H style revue narration can be a great aid to both the model and the audience. The narrator can use it to tell the model when to appear on stage, what fashion details to emphasize, and when to leave the stage. The commentary can also be used to tell the audience the model's name, the garment style, the special features of the garment, and other interesting features.

In general, it is a wise idea to write light, lively, and informative descriptions. The following suggestions may be helpful in writing an imaginative 4-H narration.

- ❖ Remember that the commentary, which should have an opening, middle, and conclusion, should not be longer than the length of time the model is on stage. Usually the model walks to center stage, goes to each side, and exits.
- ❖ Descriptions of a style revue should begin with a lead sentence introducing the model by name and his/her town/county, followed by a general description of the outfit. This sentence is the most important and should be snappy to catch audience attention.
- ❖ Descriptions on the pattern envelope can give some ideas, but may include more information than necessary. Avoid the obvious; for example, "has three buttons down the front".
- ❖ Tell more than what the audience can readily see, however. People are usually more interested in what they can't see.
- ❖ Use questions as well as "fashion" adjectives, words, and catchy, active phrases like "Stepping out is ..." and "Ready for ...".
- ❖ Include what the model has learned about selection or construction techniques, the accessories s/he selected, the original ideas the model used in techniques and trims, and the 4-H background and special interests of the model.
- ❖ Include information about the garment, for example, how it reflects the current fashion scene, its fiber and fabric content, the amount of money saved by sewing the outfit, and the special advantages or features of the garment, such as where it could be worn, its versatility and ease of care, etc.
- ❖ Mention the leader's name so that s/he will receive the recognition they deserve.
- ❖ A narration in tune with the theme of the show helps to set the mood. A good example is complementing the following theme, "Color My World" by saying "Suzie has added a bright dimension to her wardrobe by choosing to make a scarlet red skirt. Her snowy white cowl neck sweater is color coordinated to accent the A-Line skirt" ... instead of saying "Suzie has made a red skirt".

To find examples of catchy words and phrases, look through magazines, catalogs, cosmetic brochures, etc., for help and use your imagination. The following words may give you some ideas.

feminine	midcalf	textured	crinkly	frilly	complementary
luscious	gleamy	tiered	intimate	lacy	finishing touch
soft	appealing	nostalgic	seasonal	focus on ...	attention-getter
crisp	casual	practical	smooth	boxy	old-fashioned
simple	striking	glittery	jazzy	sensational	multipurpose
pale	formal	elegant	creative	teamed with	neatly tailored
basic	snappy	lavish	natural	wearability	eye-catching
subtle	classic cut	Victorian	delicate	rolled sleeves	tartan plaid
fresh	spirited	versatile	flashy	street length	separate ways

Other catchy phrases that could be used are "... can wear anytime, anywhere", "for after five", "easy to care for", "a real winner", "easy to wear", "romantic as a garden in spring", "... has so much going for it", "to put it all together", "mad about plaid", "a girl's best friend", "to 'top' it off", "classics – here today and here tomorrow", "a big sweater for little evenings", "sprinkled with flowers", "for the career women", "looking good from top to toe", "new blazer shapes get double takes", "vest-dressed list", "takes a new twist", and "simple but elegant".

Catalogs and magazines are also good to check for examples of color adjectives you could use. Another good source is the color charts of car and paint dealers and yarn companies. The following descriptions may be helpful in making up 4-H commentaries.

White	creamy white	antique white	vanilla	pearl white	snowy white
	pure white	cotton	milky	cloud	ivory
Beige	neutral	fawn-colored	khaki	tawny	buff
	camel	natural	mushroom	ecru	tan
Brown	chocolate brown	taupe	spicy brown	tweed	cinnamon
	coffee brown	walnut	auburn	copper	sandy brown
Orange	burnt orange	apricot	copper	peach	coral
	rust	tortoise	russet	autumn rust	brick
Green	lush green	mint green	apple green	campus green	lime green
	emerald green	kelly green	jade green	Nile green	moss
	field green	avocado	4-H green	olive	summer green
	shamrock	celadon	jungle green	asparagus	fern green
Blue	royal blue	powder blue	denim	teal blue	turquoise
	Monaco blue	Copenhagen blue	sky blue	aqua	misty blue
	parakeet blue	azure	cornflower	cerulean	periwinkle
Purple	plum	violet	grape	lavender	orchid
	wine	fuchsia	eggplant	lilac	magenta
Yellow	sunny lemon	golden yellow	chartreuse	maize	goldenrod
	lemon yellow	sun yellow	saffron	amber	mustard
Red	cherry red	scarlet	ruby red	Christmas red	atom red
	barberry red	burgundy	berry	crimson	pomegranate
Pink	sugar pink	rose	dusty pink	pale raspberry	cherry blossom
Blends	tartan plaid	flower-strewn	pastels	rainbow colors	striped

The following commentaries may provide some insights into what can be said at your 4-H fashion revue.

Ready for school is Mary Model, a first year 4-H member from Lansing. Her denim skirt in the popular wrap style is easy to wear and was fun to make. Mary learned to put on a waistband and finish seams during the project. Today she chose a bandanna print blouse to accompany her skirt for a fresh country look.

One thing Mary Model knows she can depend on is a gray flannel suit. Her designer blazer with a notched collar and welt pockets is a good investment of her sewing time. The fully lined skirt is accentuated by box pleats. Today she completed the look with a burgundy bow blouse. Of course, with this suit she has many fashion options; a soft mohair sweater or a pretty pastel blouse would also look smart. Mary is a senior at Lansing High School and intends to be a registered nurse. Thank you, Mary.

Stepping into the college scene, Martin Model of Lansing has chosen to wear a versatile camel tweed jacket which is accented with deep pockets and false welts. It is also lined to give it a clean finish. The tie accents his sky blue shirt made of broadcloth. As a finishing touch, Martin has added a pair of classic cut chocolate brown pants with scoop pockets. Besides Martin's interest in clothing, he is also active in baseball and hockey.