



## 4-H Postmark Collecting

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service • Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

### Postmark Collecting

Postmark collecting is an inexpensive hobby, which will furnish many hours of enjoyment and challenge to the 4-H member. It is closely kin to stamp collecting or philately. With postmark collecting, it is the postmark or cancellation that is collected not the stamp. Although the stamp is generally suggested to be with the cancellation, it is not required. The cancellation shows where the item was mailed from, the date mailed, zip code, and usually if mailed in the AM or PM.

### How to Start a Collection

Generally, you start a collection by saving envelopes sent to your family. Having friends and family saving envelopes will help your collection grow faster. Be sure that envelopes are opened on the left end so that the cancellation is not damaged. A good source of envelopes is last year's holiday cards as many envelopes are not sealed and commemorative stamps and/or cancellations are used. Many businesses, church, fraternal orders, county offices, and others will save envelopes for you if you ask and tell them that it is for a 4-H Club Project.

### What Size to Collect

A popular size for presentation and storage is the 2" X 4" size. Other sizes are 2" x 2"; 3/4" X 1 3/4"; or round. However, to preserve the value of the envelope/card we encourage not cutting. The complete envelope/card would become part of your exhibit. It is suggested that you use the same size throughout your book for a better presentation.

### Exhibiting Information

All postmarks should be mounted on either 8 1/2" X 11" notepaper or photo album pages of any color. It may be illustrated in any way. Books should be limited to 30 sheets of paper with the option of using both front and back. The 30 sheets do not include the required introduction or a cover page (see Criteria for Judging). 4-H'ers may enter one exhibit per class in their age group in the County and State Fair. At least 1/3 of each exhibit must be collected during the current 4-H year and not been part of a previous fair exhibit by any exhibitor in any fair.

#### Beginning Level – Ages 9-11

Class	Description
1	10 Postmark from surrounding area
2	30 Oklahoma postmarks
3	20 Topical (any category)
4	25 Metered cancellations

#### Intermediate Level – Ages 12-14

Class	Description
5	30 Hand Canceled
6	10-30 Postmarks that Tell A Story
7	30 or more Different Slogans
8	30 Topical (any category)
9	30 Metered cancellations

#### Advanced Level-Ages 15 & Over

Class	Description
10	100 Hand Cancelled
11	30-75 Postmarks that Tell A Story
12	50 or more Different Slogans
13	50 or more Topical (any category)
14	50 Metered cancellations

#### NOTE:

Meters should not be used in any class except metered class. If a hand or machine cancellation is with a meter cancellation it can be used but not recommended. A meter cancellation is used by a business and will not indicate the location of origin. To trace the location of origin, the meter number would have to be used. Each meter machine has its own identification number. Meters should not be used as a topical category.

Slogans - different slogans means you can not have more than one slogan saying the same thing. Exception would be if you have a topical book of all the same slogans. (i.e. Mail Early for Christmas from different, days, years, locations.)

Story - using a name or part of a name of a town or state within a cancellation in place of a word or words within a sentence. Use the required number of cancellations in a series of sentences to make a story. A cancellation is used within a sentence the same way a picture is used in a pictogram.

## Criteria for Judging

1. Brief written description telling purpose or objective of your collection is required in each exhibit. The introduction must include the exhibitors name, address, club, age, grade in school, and county.
2. Appearance and neatness. The number of pages must not exceed 30 sheets with the option of using front and back of page. This excludes the introduction and a cover page. Illustrations are not required but enhance an exhibit. The selection of paper and font will affect appearance.
3. Readability. Judge must be able to read the cancellation.
4. Material relates to chosen topic.

### NOTE:

Each category is worth 25 points. If you fail to include required information in introduction it cannot be determined if you followed chosen topic, therefore, you will not receive points for introduction nor keeping with topic.

## Related Information

Enclosed you will find examples of topical exhibits. You may use any of the examples or create your own.

Local post offices have zip code books. It will list every post office by state and in alphabetical order. If the post office has old editions of the zip code book, you may be able to get one if you explain your project.

Post offices also have a list of all special cancellations. These cancellations can be requested up to 30 days after issue date.

## National Invitational Fair

The National Invitational 4-H Postmark Fair is held every year in the month of October. Any postmark book may be entered in the National Fair and does not have to be entered in a county or state fair to qualify. The categories are history, topical, or story. The books are grouped by the following age divisions: 9-11 year olds, 12-14 year olds, and 15 and over. Books that are entered in the OKC State Fair and the Tulsa State Fair that include a transfer form (see attachment) will be entered in the National Fair. Any other book will need to be sent to the National Fair Superintendent.

Criteria for judging shall be the same as in the state contest.

Topical exhibit - Generally, it should be related to only one topic or subject. Topics that go together would be like boys and girls names, presidents and their wives, etc. You may also select a topic relating to other 4-H projects. The introduction to your exhibit should reflect this in describing the purpose or objective of the exhibit. The following are suggestions only. You are not limited to any subject. Any topic may be illustrated.

- |                |                   |                    |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| -A-            | food              | music              |
| actors         | forks             | mythology          |
| actresses      | foreign cities    |                    |
| anatomy        | foreign countries | -O-                |
| animals        | French names      | opposites          |
| apparel        |                   |                    |
| apostrophe's   | -G-               | -P-                |
| authors        | gems              | parks              |
|                | girl names        | plants             |
| -B-            | golfers           | presidents (wives) |
| ball players   | grains            | ports              |
| Biblical names |                   |                    |
| birds          | -H-               | -R-                |
| botany         | heads             | river              |
| boy names      | hills             | rocks              |
| brand names    | holidays          |                    |
| bridges        | house plants      | -S-                |
|                | humor             | saints             |
| -C-            | hyphenated        | scientist          |
| camps          |                   | seasons            |
| cars           | -I-               | springs            |
| Christmas      | Indian:           | sports             |
| colleges       | chiefs            | statesmen          |
| colors         | names             | story books        |
| cowboys        | tribes            |                    |
|                | insects           | -T-                |
| -D-            | inventors         | trees              |
| drinks         | islands           | twins              |
| dog breeds     |                   |                    |
|                | -L-               | -V-                |
| -E-            | lakes             | valleys            |
| explorers      |                   | vegetables         |
|                | -M-               |                    |
| -F-            | military          | -W & Z-            |
| falls          | mills             | water              |
| famous people  | minerals          | weather            |
| fish           | missions          | zoology            |
| flowers        | mountains         |                    |

# Postmark Book Transfer Form

**Place this form inside the front of each entry that you want to transfer from the OKC or Tulsa State Fair to the National Invitational 4-H Postmark Fair.**

I hereby authorize the transfer of my OKC or Tulsa State Fair entry in the postmark section to the National Invitational 4-H Postmark Fair. I understand that my book will be returned to my District 4-H Specialist following the National Fair. The 4-H Program, nor the State Fair, nor the National Invitational Postmark Fair nor any of their superintendents or employees can assume responsibility for entries, although all due care will be taken during the transfer, judging and return of books.

Please print the following information:

County \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

State Fair Class Number \_\_\_\_\_

Age as of 1/1 of this calendar year \_\_\_\_\_

What category do you want this book entered in at the National Fair?

\_\_\_\_\_ History      \_\_\_\_\_ Topical      \_\_\_\_\_ Story

\_\_\_\_\_  
4-H Member's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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