

## GUIDE TO WRITING FASHION COMMENTARY

### Purposes:

- ◆ Give information about the model and the outfit
- ◆ Make both the model and the outfit sound great

### Ideas on Developing Commentary:

- ◆ Give information about the model and his/her interests, such as club, other 4-H projects, years in 4-H, future plans, summer job, etc.
- ◆ Give reason or occasion for which outfit was planned. This could be the theme for the commentary. (Traci had the first football game of the fall in mind when she chose this autumn plaid. She'll be cheering...)
- ◆ Keep sentences short and easily readable.
- ◆ Use questions and exclamations to give more variety to tone of voice.
- ◆ Use alliteration (words beginning with the same sound), such as "flirty flounce" for a ruffle.
- ◆ Create an appealing mental picture with descriptive words. (Ice creamy tones of raspberry and lime...)
- ◆ Avoid the obvious or make it more interesting. (Rather than saying "yellow dress", make it "sunny" or "lemon"; rather than "it buttons up the front", say "buttons brighten the front", etc.)
- ◆ Use ACTION words as much as possible. (Buttons march, belts circle a waistline, a flaring hem swings, etc.)
- ◆ Tell the biggest problem you encountered in sewing the outfit. Tell new sewing techniques you learned. Saying you put the sleeve in six times can encourage some of your audience who are less skilled.
- ◆ Add some humor, something amusing that happened while sewing (In her rush to finish the dress, Sue put the zipper in upside down).
- ◆ If there are two parts to your outfit, such as a coat and dress, mention the outer layer first.
- ◆ Read copy (description of clothes) in fashion magazines and pattern envelopes.
- ◆ As you complete your commentary, go over it to see where it could be made more cheerful, complimentary and interesting.
- ◆ Read it aloud when completed. Does it flow smoothly?

### Suggestions for Practice:

Go over the above suggestions at a project meeting, then break up in twos or threes. Pick one person's outfit, even if it's jeans and a T-shirt, and write a fashion commentary that makes the outfit and the model appealing. Read aloud while the person models. Near Fashion Revue time, bring outfits, even if not completed, and again write commentary about them working in groups.

### **Which is Better and Why?**

“And here is Mary Jane Smith modeling a red, white and blue suit. The cardigan jacket has a round collar, long sleeves and buttons down the front. The blue dress underneath has red pockets, a back zipper and features the ever so popular A-line silhouette. Mary Jane accessorized her outfit with navy shoes and purse. Thank you.”

OR

“It’s the 4<sup>th</sup> of July for Mary Jane Smith every time she wears this patriotic suit. And she has a right to celebrate! The jaunty jacket sports shiny star buttons on the roaring red wool. And what a great idea! The scraps from the jacket turn into patch pockets on the military blue dress. Mary Jane has six years of 4-H sewing and foods projects, but always finds a new challenge. She made this suit during a thunderstorm, finishing just before the electricity went off.

Can you imagine how great the outfit will be at UCLA, where Mary Jane will be a freshman this fall?”