

Sharpen Your Judgment



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Judging Is Fun . . . and a challenge

Don't miss this opportunity to mix with other boys and girls in friendly competition. It's a lot of fun—comparing notes, giving reasons and arguing classes with your friends. Judging team members often remember unusual classes for years and rehash them whenever they get together.

One nice thing about a judging event is that all participants are on an equal footing—it's strictly your skill against that of others. The only advantages one judge can have over another are practice and training and all members have an opportunity to gain those in 4-H.



It's Priceless Training . . .

Judging is a sport, in a sense—but a highly educational sport. To "Make the Best Better" in your 4-H projects, you must learn to recognize quality in your products. That's where judging comes in. Through judging you learn to recognize good and bad points in products, make close observations, select wisely and to improve your work. Though you may not make a career of producing the things you judged, the training will always come in handy.

Throughout life we continually have to select, make decisions and pass judgement. Training in judging work teaches us how to approach these problems with skill and confidence—even with enthusiasm, for most of us enjoy meeting a challenge.

**UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING**

J. W. Burch, Director, Agricultural Extension Service

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The Judging Contest

Its Purpose. Judging contests are a means of training large groups under the guidance of specialists—experts on the items being judged. These events are a perfect teaching tool. Both pupil and teacher have an active, exciting part. By placing a class yourself, then comparing your placement with that of the official judge as he goes back over the class, you learn just where your reasoning is right and where it is wrong.

Miniature contest or judging "sessions" have a place in nearly all project meetings, with leaders serving as the official judges. Such sessions are an enjoyable way to learn things about projects and gain practice and training in judging.

Standard Class—Four Products. The standard class has four products for contestants to place. However, for project meetings and practice sessions, two or three products will do—just so you have

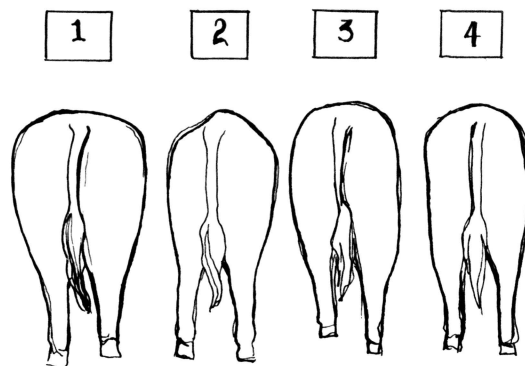


Figure 1—All classes are numbered left to right. In livestock classes, it's left to right as you stand facing the rear of the class.

enough for comparison.

Classes are always numbered from left to right as you stand facing them. In the case of livestock standing at the halter, the numbering is left to right as you face the rear of the class (see diagram).

In agricultural classes, numbers 1-2-3-4 are used to label products. In home economics judging, products are lettered A-B-C-D.

How to Mark Your Card

Refer to the sample judging card in Fig. 2

Line 1 is for naming the general kind of judging, such as *dairy, clothing, or foods*.

Example

4-H Dairy JUDGING

Line 2 is for the name of the class.

An official will announce this title at the beginning of each class. Listen carefully and fill in this title at once. If you wait, you may get wrapped up in your judging and forget.

Example

CLASS Senior Holstein Heifer

Line 3 consists of squares labeled First, Second, Third, and Fourth. These are for your placings.

Example

You have decided to place product number 3 first, number 4 second, 1 third, and 2 fourth. Your card would be marked like this.

First	Second	Third	Fourth
3	4	1	2

Line 4, in the lower left corner of the card, is for your name or number. In small contests or practice sessions, the person in charge may tell you to just sign your name there. In big contests, each contestant is given a number which must be entered in this blank.

Caution: Be sure to fill in the name of the class and your number or name. Check placings on the card before you hand it in. Contestants frequently forget to fill in one number or accidentally put one number down for two placings.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE				
①	4- H CLUB _____ JUDGING			
②	CLASS _____			
③	First	Second	Third	Fourth
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Contestant		Placing Score _____		
④	_____		Reason Score _____	
		Total _____		

Figure 2—Sample judging card.



The Score Card

Before attempting to judge a product, study the score card that applies. Score cards have been developed for nearly everything produced in 4-H projects. These score cards tell you the relative importance of the different characteristics of a product. General score cards are given at the end of this section for handy reference. More detailed cards appear in 4-H project circulars or can be obtained from the County Agricultural Extension office.

You need not memorize the score card or score each item. But you do need to know which characteristics to compare and which ones are the most important.

For example, the main headings on a Vegetable Judging Score Card are: quality—30 points, condition—25 points, typical of variety—15 points, uniformity—15 points. You will want to compare the products on each of these items. Quality and condition are given the most points as they are considered most important. So give special emphasis to these characteristics. But a big difference in the less important characteristics could offset a small difference in these two main ones.

General

Dresses

Design and Color (suitability to occasion and age, beauty of design and color, individuality)	30
Materials (suitability, cleaning qualities)	20
Workmanship	30
General Appearance (cleanliness, pressing)	10
Relation of Value to Cost	10

Pillow Cases

Materials (strong yarns, even weave, little sizing, smooth texture, thread suited)	40
Workmanship	30
Decoration (white, design, laundering, simple)	20
General Appearance (cleanliness, pressing)	10

Dresser Scarf

Materials (laundering qualities, forms background for articles, protects surface, matches furnishings)	35
Workmanship	30
Combination of Materials (texture and color)	15
General Appearance (simplicity, hems, design, cleanliness and pressing)	20

Undergarments

Materials (hygienic, durability, laundering factors)	30
Workmanship	30
Design (suitability, beauty, originality)	20
General Appearance (cleanliness, pressing)	10
Relation of Value to Cost	10

Rugs

Workmanship	50
Combination and Spacing of Colors	30
General Appearance (size, weight, shape)	20

Sheets

Material (strong yarns, even weave, little sizing, durable selvages, smooth texture)	50
Workmanship	40
Size (suitable width, length and weight)	10

Dress Review

The Costume (individuality and style, suitability, upkeep, condition, construction)	40
The Girl (posture, poise, grooming)	20
The Costume on Girl (suitable to design, figure, personality; color, fit; effect of undergarments; accessories; cost)	30
General Effect	10

Canned Fruits and Vegetables

Package (tightly sealed, specified size, clean, neatly labeled)	10
Pack (fullness, proportion solid to liquid)	20
Product (uniformity, flavor, absence of defects)	50
Liquid (clear, free of gas bubbles)	20

Yeast Bread and Cake

External Characteristics (shape, crust, volume)	30
Internal Characteristics (texture, grain, color)	40
Flavor	30

Standard Menu

Balance of Protein, Carbohydrate, Fat and Bulk	20
Suited to Family and occasion	25
Attractive to Eye and Pleasing to Palate	20
Economical Use of Time and Money	20
Food Nicely Served	15

Biscuits and Muffins

Appearance (uniform, free of bulges)	10
Crust (even brown, tender; biscuits—fairly smooth, muffins—thin with rough surface)	10
Volume (biscuits—almost twice unbaked size, muffins—light weight in proportion to size)	20
Grain (biscuits—flaky, peels off in fine, even cells; muffins—round, even cells, free of tunnels)	10
Color of Inside	10
Flavor	30
Preserves, Marmalades, Jellies and Pickles	
Package (uniform, clean, neatly labeled)	10
Product (color and consistency)	50
Flavor (characteristic of fruit)	40

Lighting for a Room

Amount of Light (no dark areas; added light for work areas; light colored ceiling, walls, dull surface)	50
Location of Lamps (convenient height, location)	35
General Effect (resembling natural daylight, free of contrasts and glare)	15

General Scoring for Meat Animals—Breeding Classes

General Appearance (deep, wide rectangular box shape in cattle and sheep, similar to hogs except top gently curved and more stretch of side; clear-cut masculine or feminine breed characteristics)	29
Head and Neck	9
Forequarters (shoulders, breast, legs)	11
Body (heart girth, ribs, loin, flank, back)	30
Hindquarters (rump, thighs, twist, tail head, legs)	21
For Sheep—reduce other points to allow 15 for fleece.	

To Judge

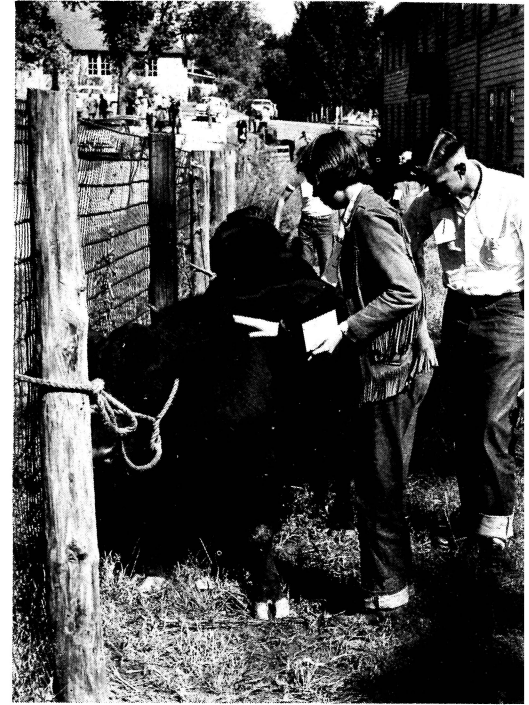
Get an Over-All View

The usual time limit for judging a class is 10 minutes.

Don't rush into a class and start handling the products as soon as you receive the signal to begin. That is a sure sign of an amateur. Experienced judges first stand back where they can get a view of the whole class at once. They move around at a distance to get a mental picture of the class as a whole from all angles. They make a temporary judgement based on this over-all inspection.

Steps in Judging

1. Analyze the class from a distance. Look for something that stands out—an easy top or bottom, or maybe the class divides fairly clearly into a top pair and a bottom pair. This helps you narrow down the field and gives you a picture of the class that will stick in your mind for giving reasons.
2. Once a top product has been selected, place the others in the order that they measure up to the top.
3. This long-range placing is then confirmed or changed by closer examination, including handling of the products if handling is permitted.



Score Cards

Meat Animals—Market Classes

Score about same as breeding animals. Pay less attention to legs, feet and head and more to finish.

Dairy Cows

General Appearance (head erect, dished, clean-cut; back straight, strong; rump long and level, tail setting level, wide at hips and thurls; legs straight, fine bone; general build rugged and large for breed without coarseness) 20

Dairy Conformation (clean-cut, prominent hooks, pins, withers; no tendency to fatness; long ribs) 15

Strong Constitution 15

Capacity—to consume and digest foods 15

Milk Secreting Organs (udder, veins, teats) 35

Light Horses

General Appearance 28

Head and Neck 8

Forequarters 23

Body 10

Hindquarters 31

Fleece

Yield 25

Length, Strength and Elasticity of Fiber (strictly combing fine over 2", Half-blood over 2 1/4", three-eighths blood 2 1/2", quarter blood 2 3/4" and low quarter 3") 25

Cleanness 20

Color 10

Packaging 20

Market Eggs

Freshness 25

Interior Quality (cut 1/4 to 3/4 for each dark yolk; 8 points for blood or meat spot) 25

Weight or Size (cut 2 points for each oz. below 24 or over 28) 20

Uniformity of Size, Shape, Color (5 each) 15

Shell Texture 5

Condition of Shell 10

Springs and Broilers

Dressed Poultry

Size (br. 3/4 to 2 1/2 lb.; spr. 2 1/2 to 3) 2

Head 5

Legs 5

Dressing Percent 8

Body 10

Back 10

Skin 15

Breast and Keel 20

Condition of Flesh 20

Quality: Grain and Texture 5

Disqualification—Unmistakable signs of disease.

Live Market Turkeys

Standard Quality 30

Finish 20

Feathering 20

Fleshing, especially breast and legs 20

Skeletal Development and Proportions 10

Hens for Egg Production

General Appearance 15

Head 20

Body 10

Pigmentation 20

Molt 15

Handling Quality 20

Live Meat Poultry

Breast 30

General Conformation 15

Finish 15

Condition and Vigor 15

Legs and Thighs 15

Back and Spring of Rib 10

Serious Defects—Scratches, bruises, breast blisters, calluses, scaly legs.

Serious Deformities—hunchback, crooked breastbone, or other definite deformities.

General Score Card for Vegetables

Quality 30

Condition 25

Size 15

Typical of Variety 15

Uniformity 15

Woodwork

Originality 20

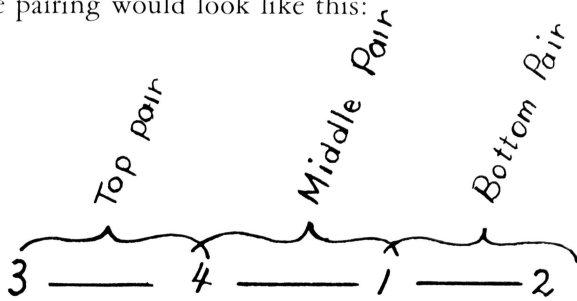
Selection of Materials 20

Skill and Workmanship 60

How To Give Reasons

The usual time limit for giving reasons is 2 minutes.

When preparing reasons, divide the class into three pairs for comparison. With a placing of 3-4-1-2, the pairing would look like this:



It is customary to begin reasons something like this, "I placed this class of (name of class) 3-4-1-2." Then tell why you selected the top article or animal for first and compare it with the one placed second. Follow with a comparison of the middle pair and bottom pair. A good way to wind up is by stating, "For these reasons, I placed this class 3-4-1-2."

When giving your comparison of a pair, mention both good and bad points of both products. The lower of the two usually has some points where it is better than the higher one. The judge wants to know if you saw these. If your placings disagree with those of the official, but you show that you saw all of the points he saw, you can still get a

good score on reasons. Also mention obvious features of a class, if there are any, such as an easy top or bottom or top and bottom pair.

Avoid the word "better" in giving comparisons. Tell *why* one was better than the other. Say the number 3 steer was "*deeper and thicker in the loin;*" not just "better in the loin."

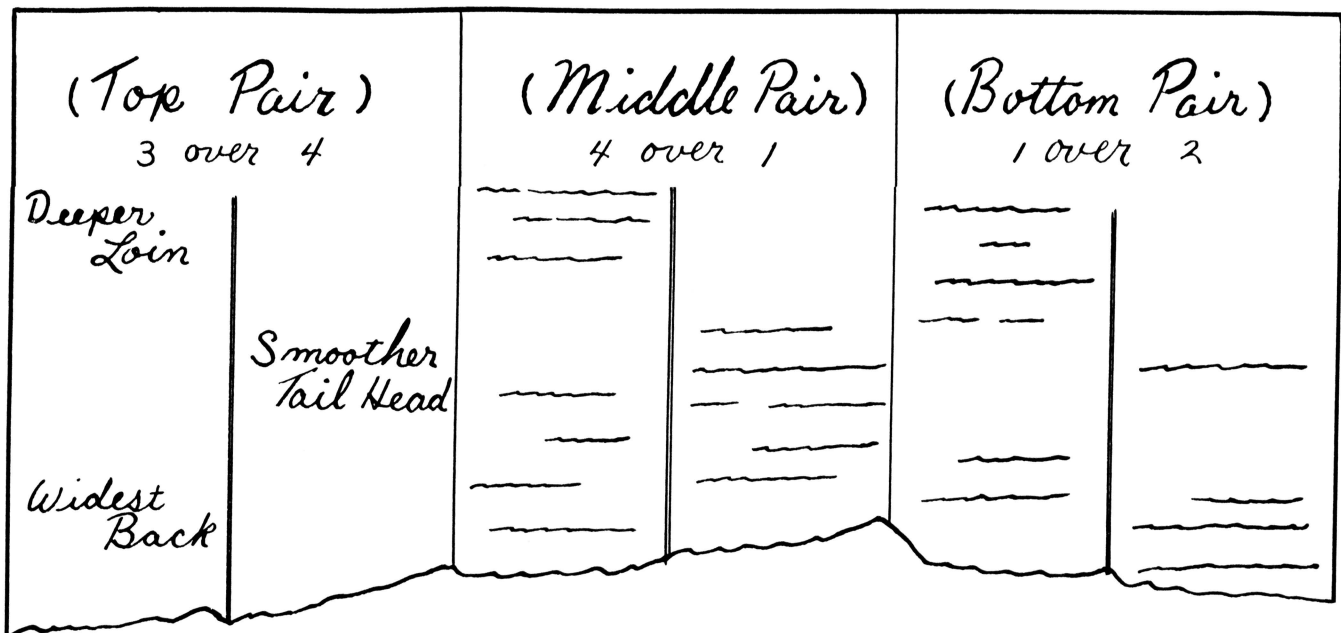
Your Manner Is Important

The confidence and poise with which you face the judge leaves a definite impression on him. When called, approach the judge positively, stand squarely at a comfortable distance from him, with head up and proceed with your reasons. Be confident but not cocky. Be courteous.

Taking Notes for Reasons

Use the note taking system that is simplest for you after you have practiced awhile. Some college team judges prepare sheets of paper on a clip board ahead of time for note taking. They mark off six columns with headings as shown below.

The fewer notes you take the better. Use them as reminders of things to mention and use them only during rehearsal time while you wait to give reasons. A few notes are permissible for beginners in front of the official judge. Experienced members should rely on their mental picture of the class while giving reasons and avoid using notes.



Sample Reasons

Tips on Giving Reasons

- ✓ Reasons separate the lucky guessers from the judges. So practice, practice, practice.
- ✓ Practice imaginary reasons at home in front of a mirror. Give reasons to anyone who will listen.
- ✓ In a contest, get off by yourself while waiting to give reasons. Organize your reasons and get a mental picture of the class. Rehearse a little.

CLASS OF MENUS . . . A Summer Breakfast for the Teenager

A	B	C	D
Orange Sections	Cooked Prunes	Half a Cantaloupe	Fruit Punch
A soft-cooked egg	Fried Egg—Bacon	Scrambled Egg	Pancakes
Corn Flakes with Cream	Toast—Butter	Toast—Butter	Sausage
Grapefruit Juice	Hot Cocoa	Milk—Water	Syrup
			Sweet Roll
			French Fried
			Potatoes
			Water

(LEAD) I placed this class of menus for a summer breakfast for teenagers C-B-A-D.

(1st. PAIR) I placed C first and over B because it most nearly fulfills all the requirements for an adequate breakfast. It is attractive, tasty, easily prepared and in season. It is cool looking, has pleasing color combinations, is filling and low in cost.

B, too, has many of these qualities but the cantaloupe is to be preferred to prunes as an appetizer. It is in season, more attractive and contains Vitamin C, whereas prunes have no Vitamin C nor have any of the other foods. Cool milk is much to be preferred to hot cocoa for a summer morning and is much easier to prepare. B is more appropriate for a winter breakfast.

(2nd PAIR) I placed B over A because B has milk and A has no milk in any form. B has more of the “go” foods. There are two citrus foods in A. Cream is expensive. Overall, B is more nearly in nutritional balance than A. A teenager would be less likely to get hungry before noon on B than A.

(3rd. PAIR) I placed A over D because A does have an egg and fresh fruits. Moreover, D has too many sweets—punch, syrup and sweet roll.

(BOTTOM) D is easily the bottom menu of the class, being least attractive, lacking in nutritive value, too sweet, harder to prepare and lacking three very desirable breakfast foods—milk, eggs and fresh fruit.

For these reasons I placed this class C-B-A-D.

CLASS OF GUERNSEY COWS

(LEAD) I place this class of Guernsey three year olds 4-2-1-3. 4 and 2 are easily the top pair of cows in this class but the placing between them is close. 3 is definitely the bottom cow in this class.

(1st. PAIR) I place 4 first and over 2 because of superior dairy character and a more capacious (or “roomy” or “larger”), well balanced udder of higher quality.

4 shows more dairy character than 2 in that she has a more refined head, is longer and leaner in the neck, sharper over the withers and is longer and more open in the rib than 2. 4 has an udder that is softer and more pliable, carrying less excess meaty tissue than 2. It is as strongly attached in the front and is attached higher in the rear than 2’s udder.

The veining is excellent, Also, 4 is stronger in her top, particularly over the loin.

The placing between these cows is close, however, because 2 is somewhat superior in strength, size and body capacity and carries a well balanced udder. The superior dairy character and quality of 4, her more capacious udder and general balance throughout, however, are sufficient to place her above 2 today.

(2nd. PAIR) I easily place 2 over 1 because of her

greater strength, greater capacity in more width and size and a more nearly balanced udder. Although 1 is straighter in her top line and has more style, 2 is larger, has more width, length and depth and a better spring of rib from front to rear than 1, giving her much greater capacity than 1.

2 has more capacity of udder. Her udder shows greater balance between the quarters and is attached higher in the rear. Teat spacing is wider and more desirable in 2 than in 1.

(3rd. PAIR) I place 1 over 3 because of superior breed type and general appearance. 1 has a straighter top line, is much more refined than 3, particularly in the shoulders, and she shows more quality and dairy character throughout than 3. 1’s udder, though deficient in some respects, is not quartered as badly as that of 3 and it is attached stronger in the front and higher in the rear.

(BOTTOM) I place 3 last in this class because she is plain about the head, thick in the shoulders, low in the back and lacks dairy character. Her udder lacks size, is seriously quartered and poorly attached both front and rear. 3 is easily the bottom cow in this class.

(ENDING) For these reasons I placed this class 4-2-1-3.

How To Organize Judging Events . . . a guide for leaders and agents

Steps for Person in Charge

The person in charge, be it a single class at a project meeting or in a judging contest at a county or state level, has an important role to play. Generally, this role will be filled by the project leader in project meetings. Sometimes a junior leader may have charge of a judging class. Let's think through the job step by step.

Step 1—Set up the class. It may be a class of two, three, or four. For beginners, the differences should be fairly obvious. You can simplify a class of four by selecting an easy top or bottom and only one close pair.

Step 2—Designate by letter or number the individual items in class. Letter cards may be placed on still objects. Hogs are usually marked on the back with a wax crayon. Cattle are sometimes designated by a card on the holder. Often the person in charge merely announces the numbers or letters, always going from left to right.

Step 3—(Optional) Beginners will need to be instructed in how to use a placing card. (See section on How To Mark Your Card.)

Step 4—Tell the group what is to be judged. "This is a class of *aged Guernsey cows*;" "This is a class of *pillow cases*;" "This is a class of *market potatoes*." Remind members to write this class title on their cards.

Step 5—(Optional) Beginners need to be instructed in how to observe a class. Examples: whether or not a certain defect is to be disregarded; when and how to handle the things beings judged.

Step 6—Announce how much time will be allowed for placing and how much time for giving reasons. The usual time limits are 10 minutes for placing and 2 minutes for reasons. These can be adjusted, however, for the age group doing the judging or for other reasons.

Step 7—Hand out placing cards and an extra card or paper on which to take notes, unless notes are allowed on the back of the placing card.

Step 8—If the group has not had previous training in giving reasons, some instruction will be in order at this point.

Step 9—Call in the cards when time is up.

Step 10—Listen to reasons. Move away from the group so that the person giving reasons cannot be heard by others. While the member is talking, listen attentively—do not interrupt. Two minutes should be allowed for reasons; as the members become more skilled it is desirable to time them. After the member has completed his reasons, you may question him as much as you like about the class.

Step 11—Scoring classes. A perfect score on placings is usually set at 100. A table is included to help you figure scores in case you do not have a computing slide. The table is based on a 15 point cut for every switch in placings. The computing slide gives a much fairer score if the spread between animals is not equal because adjustments can be made for the closeness of pairs.

Step 12—Scoring Reasons. In scoring reasons, think of the three comparisons made. Consider whether or not the significant differences were discussed. Also make allowances for closeness of pairs.

If decisions have been reached based on skimpy reasoning, a low reasons score is justified even though the placing is correct.

The fact that the animals are out of order need not concern the scoring of reasons too much. That has been taken care of in the placing score.

Step 13—Review the Class. A member who has given a good set of reasons may be asked to give reasons to the entire group. The person in charge should also go over the class, giving reasons for the official placing. Do this in front of the products, pointing out the differences.

Step 14—Return cards.

Grade for Placings*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
ABCD	100	85	85	70	70	55	85	70	70	55	55	40	70	55	55	40	40	25	55	40	40	25	25	10	
ABDC	85	100	70	55	85	70	70	85	55	40	70	55	55	40	40	25	25	10	70	55	55	40	40	25	
ACBD	85	70	100	85	55	70	70	55	55	40	40	25	85	70	70	55	55	40	40	55	25	10	40	25	
ACDB	70	55	85	100	70	85	55	40	40	25	25	10	70	85	55	40	70	55	55	70	40	25	55	40	
ADBC	70	85	55	70	100	85	55	70	40	25	55	40	55	25	10	40	25	85	70	40	25	85	70	55	40
ADCB	55	70	70	85	85	100	40	55	25	10	40	25	55	70	40	25	55	40	70	85	55	40	70	55	40
BACD	85	70	70	55	55	40	100	85	85	70	70	55	55	40	70	55	25	40	40	25	55	40	10	25	40
BADC	70	85	55	40	70	55	85	100	70	55	85	70	40	25	55	40	10	25	55	40	70	55	25	40	40
BCAD	70	55	55	40	40	25	85	70	100	85	55	70	70	55	85	70	40	55	25	10	40	55	25	40	40
BCDA	55	40	40	25	25	10	70	55	85	100	70	85	55	40	70	85	55	70	40	25	55	70	40	55	40
BDAC	55	70	40	25	55	40	70	85	55	70	100	85	25	10	40	55	25	40	70	55	85	70	40	55	40
BDCA	40	55	25	10	40	25	55	70	70	85	85	100	40	25	55	70	40	55	55	40	70	85	55	70	40
CABD	70	55	85	70	40	55	55	40	70	55	25	40	100	85	85	70	70	55	25	40	10	25	55	40	40
CADB	55	40	70	85	55	70	40	25	55	40	10	25	85	100	70	55	85	70	40	55	25	40	70	55	40
CBAD	55	40	70	55	25	40	70	55	85	70	40	55	85	70	100	85	55	70	10	25	25	40	40	55	40
CBDA	40	25	55	40	10	25	55	40	70	85	55	70	70	55	85	100	70	85	25	40	40	55	55	70	70
CDAB	40	25	55	70	40	55	25	10	40	55	25	40	70	85	55	70	100	85	55	70	40	55	85	70	40
CDBA	25	10	40	55	25	40	40	25	55	70	40	55	55	70	10	85	85	100	40	55	55	70	70	85	40
DABC	55	70	40	55	85	70	40	55	25	40	70	55	25	40	10	25	55	40	100	85	85	70	70	85	55
DACB	40	55	55	70	70	85	25	40	10	25	55	40	40	55	25	40	70	55	85	100	70	55	85	70	40
DBAC	40	55	25	40	70	55	55	70	40	55	85	70	10	25	25	40	40	55	85	70	100	85	55	70	40
DBCA	25	40	10	25	55	40	40	55	55	70	70	85	25	40	40	55	55	70	70	55	85	100	70	85	40
DCAB	25	40	40	55	55	70	10	25	25	40	40	55	55	70	40	55	85	70	70	85	55	70	100	85	40
DCBA	10	25	25	40	40	55	25	40	40	55	55	70	40	55	55	70	70	85	55	70	70	85	85	100	85

How to Use the Chart.—Find the correct placing of the class in the left-hand column. Read across to the 100 score for that placing. The vertical column in which the 100 score occurs is the one used for scoring the class; thus for the ACBD placing use column 3, BDCA placing use column 12, DCBA column 24, etc.