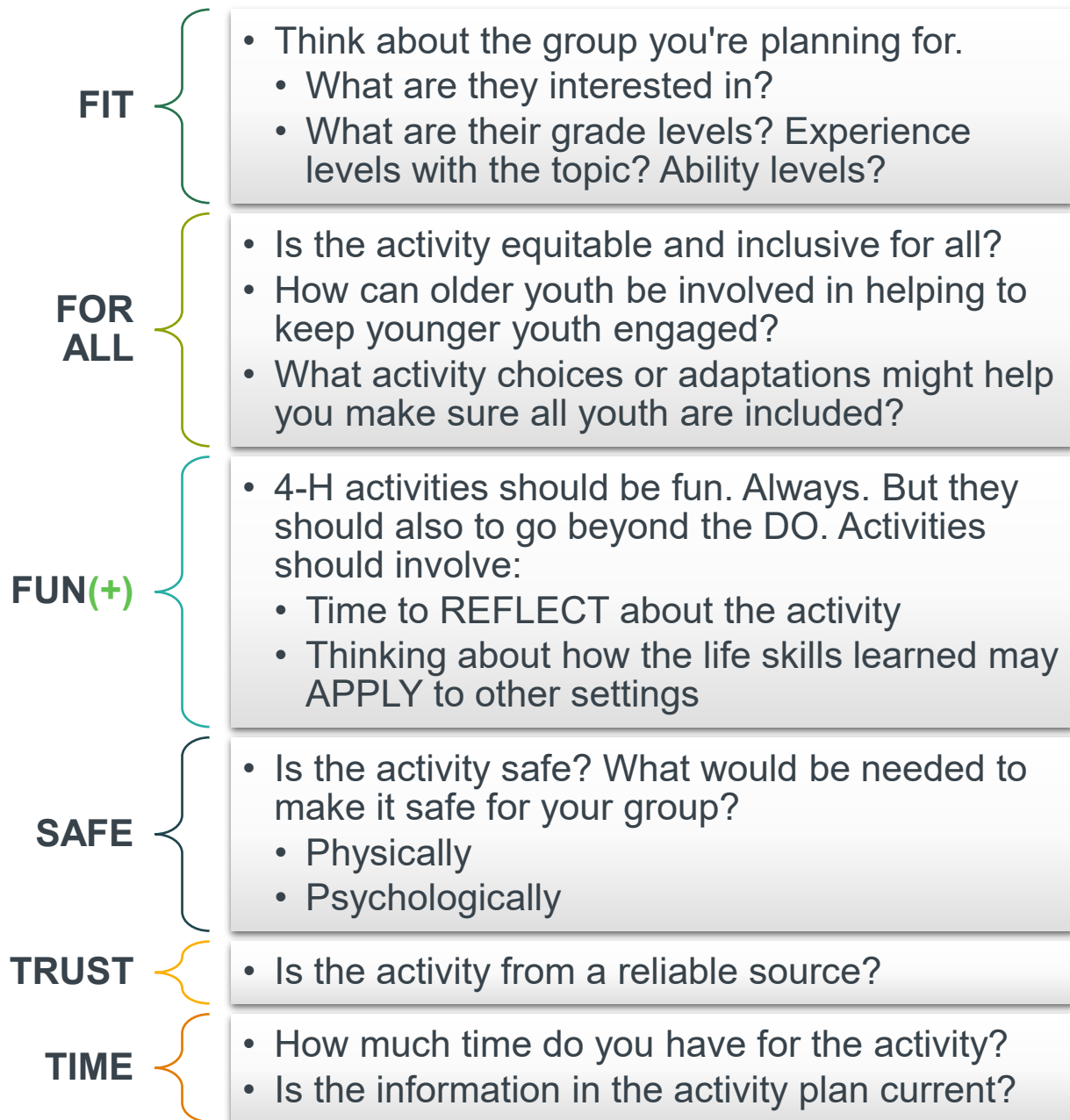




# Choosing the Right Activity

Jan 2024

When choosing an activity for an individual or a group of youth, volunteers are encouraged to consider the following:



## More to consider...

**FIT**—Think about the group you're planning for.

- **What are they interested in?**—Connect to youths' Sparks. Offer a variety of activities if you have a large group with wide interests.
- **What are their grade levels? Experience levels with the topic? Ability levels?**—Meet the youth where they are. Find out what they already know and build on that. It may also help to understand the characteristics of different ages of young people.

**FOR ALL**—Is the activity equitable and inclusive for all? How can older youth be involved in teaching younger youth? What activity choices or adaptations might help ensure all youth are included?

FIT was about group interests. FOR ALL is about making sure individuals do not feel left out for any reason. What may make an individual youth feel **included**? Consider language, culture, ability, background, or other factors. Then, plan adaptations to help make sure everyone can participate equitably.

**FUN(+)**—4-H activities should be fun. Always. In positive youth development, activities also use the Experiential Learning Model. This means the youth get to DO something in a hands-on way. They learn from that experience when they REFLECT about the activity, and they think about how the life skills they learned may APPLY to other settings. This allows youth to build on learning to have a FUN+ situation every time.

**SAFE**—Is the activity safe? What would make it safe for the group?

- **Physical safety** is different for different ages. For youth in grades K-2, the activity should be so safe that even if they don't follow the directions, they still won't be hurt. Older teens have a need for bigger risks. Minimize the risks as much as you can. Then, prepare the teens for the potential risks so they can choose.
- **Psychological safety** means that young people feel mentally and emotionally safe. Create opportunities for belonging and positive interactions with peers and adults. All youth need to feel included in a meaningful way, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ability.

**TRUST**—Use 4-H, Extension, or University resources. It increases the likelihood of finding activities that have both the FUN and the (+) of experiential learning. **Note:** Activities from Google or Pinterest often don't include experiential learning.

**TIME**—How much time do you have to lead activities? Think about how much time you have for activities each day as well as how many times you get to meet with the youth. Plan activities that fit into the available time. Multiple sessions allow for activities to build on each other.

Also, the world is changing quickly, and many curriculums or activities may be old or out-of-date. Choose current and relevant resources from 4-H, Extension, or the University.