A 4-H Consumer Education Project: Unit II

The Magic of Packaging

Name ___________________ Address ___________________ Club ______ Leader ______

Florida Cooperative Extension Service / Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences / University of Florida / John T. Woeste, Dean
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project requirements</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Haven't Always Had Packaging (development of packaging)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging Fills A Need</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging Influences Cost</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packages Aren't Perfect (problems and concerns)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging Influences Sales Appeal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonly Used Packages</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging Materials</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Packages</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws Affecting Packaging</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which Package for You?</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Story</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepared by: Mary N. Harrison and Ruth L. Milton
Professor
Extension Specialist
Consumer Education

Pilot tested by: Alicia Homrich, Extension Home Ec. Agent, Bradford County; Mary Veiga, Extension Home Ec. Agent, Nassau County; Helen Fleming, Extension Home Ec. Agent, Hernando County; Nettie Ruth Brown, 4-H Agent, St. Johns County; Dickie Bentley, Extension 4-H Agent Gadsden County; Carolyn Davis, Volunteer Leader, Gadsden County; and Connie Coffman, Duval County.
The Magic Of Packaging

In this project you will:

--Learn the role of packaging.
--Evaluate the cost of packaging.
--Identify the types of packaging.
--Learn about legal relations that apply to packaging.
--Consider packaging as it relates to specific products.
--Learn about the development of consumer packaging.

To complete this project you will:

--Compare different types of packaging.
--Evaluate the impact of child proof packaging.
--Conduct a survey of consumer opinions about packaging.
--Give a demonstration on packaging.
--Complete this project book
Close your eyes for one minute. Imagine that a little gremlin suddenly caused all the packages in the U.S. to disappear—all packages, boxes, bottles, bags, cans, tubes, wraps! What would the supermarket look like? How about the drug store—the toy shop? Imagine trying to buy:

* Your favorite soft drink without a can or bottle!
* Ice cream without a carton!
* Shampoo without a tube or bottle!
* A model airplane without a box!

Think about your home for a moment. Imagine what the pantry would be like with no packaging materials. Suppose there were none in the medicine cabinet. Storing the toothpaste could be quite an experience.

Look in the medicine cabinet in your home.

* How many items do you see that are sold in a package or container? ____________________________

* How many items do you see that are NOT sold in a package or container? ____________________________

* How many items do you see that are sold in a package or container that could be sold without one? ______________

How would merchandise such as paint or flour be transported from the manufacturer to the store if it were not packaged? With no containers it surely would be an experience!

**We Haven't Always Had Packaging**

Packaging as we know it today did not exist in early days. Early civilizations used whatever they could make or find for containers, for example, goat skins and urns were used to hold liquids. Such containers were not very sanitary or convenient to use. Even in the
Talk with an older person in your community, someone who remembers stores before World War II. Ask them to tell you what food stores were like and how foods were sold when they were young. What did they tell you?

Even today in many countries most of the people buy from local markets instead of from stores. Markets sell a wide variety of products: for example, shoes, blouses, live chickens, and whatever foods are in season or can be sold in dry form. In many places almost no packaging is used. Talk with someone that you know who has visited a village in South America or some other location and ask them to tell you about the markets. If they have pictures, ask if you may borrow them to show at a 4-H meeting. Discuss the usage of packaging in this type of shopping.

In many of the industrial countries of the world such as England, France and Italy, packaging is not used as widely as it is in the U.S. For example, loaves of unsliced, unwrapped bread are often placed on the floor of delivery trucks and transported to stores. The customer carries a string bag to the store to use for carrying home the things purchased. It's not unusual to see a person going home with a loaf of unwrapped bread tucked under an arm.
Packaging Fills A Need

Strong price competition developed in the U.S. as a result of increased levels of production. To keep prices down, stores had to control their overhead costs. One-way to do this was to sell more merchandise with a smaller profit margin on each item. This meant more people had to move in and out of stores easily without increasing operating costs. One-way to do this would be for customers to serve themselves instead of relying on sales people. To have self-service, products must be packaged for easy handling and to protect them from abuse. Without the extensive use of consumer packaging we would not have the types of retail stores that we now have, especially types such as supermarkets and discount stores which are almost exclusively self-service. Imagine what it would be like to have to wait for a grocery clerk to count and package the oranges or weigh and price the tomatoes and potatoes that you wish to buy. Imagine standing in line waiting while the salesperson does the same thing for other customers. Shopping would require much more time.

* Locate a small fruit stand or independent store where a salesperson counts and weighs individual products after the items have been selected by the shopper. Record the time required for you to select 6 items (ex: 6 apples or pears), go to the checker and have the items weighed as you check out. How long did it take? ___________

* Visit your local supermarket that uses a scanner and packaged produce. Record the time needed to select a package of apples (or other produce) and for the check-out person to scan the purchase. Which took longer? ___________

* Which method would enable people to shop more quickly?

__________________________
Packaging also provides other important services. It protects the product, preserves quality and extends the shelf life. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to transport many products without packaging.

* Suppose you were shipping an electric mixer, hair dryer or a television set. Describe how you could ship any of these items without it being packaged?

* What would you look for in selecting a package for such products?

The appropriate packaging is essential for the marketing of many products in specialized forms. For example, dehydrated soups could not be sold without airtight packaging.

* What characteristics do you look for in hair sprays?

* Could you have a hair spray as a gel in a tube? ______
   Why?

* Two forms of packaging are commonly used for hair sprays. What are they? (1) ________ (2) ________.
   Why are these packages used?

Without adequate packaging, selling by special self-service centers, such as vending machines, could not be done. How would the disappearance of vending machines affect American consumers?
Suppose you are selling (A) airplane models and (B) potato chips. Tell how you could sell them without packaging?

(A) ____________________________________________

(B) ____________________________________________

Select a product that is in a package. (It may be a candy bar, a bar of soap, a bottle of aspirin or any other product.) Inspect the package carefully.

* Why was the product packaged? ________________

* List the kinds of information given on the package including:

  --product name ________________________________

  --description of contents ______________________

  --name and address of manufacturer or distributor ________________________________

  --quantity in package _________________________

  --brand name _________________________________

  --other information ___________________________

* If there were no packages or containers where would this information be found? ________________
Packaging Influences Cost

Conflicting claims are made regarding the cost of packaging. Evaluating and determining the cost of packaging is complex because many different things need to be considered.

Materials and labor are necessary to manufacture packages and both do cost money. However, the relationship of the package to the product is very important. The package may enable a product to be sold in a form otherwise not available, for example, aerosol hair spray. The package may enable a product to be sold in a less expensive form than would otherwise be possible, for example orange concentrate. In other instances, packages are used when they may not provide any benefit. Therefore, it depends on how the package is used whether it saves money or increases cost. Let's look at some examples. (Fill in information about the following 3 kinds of packaging.)

(A) Frozen peas.

* Why is a package needed; what purpose does it serve?

* Could you buy frozen peas without a package?________

* Visit a supermarket. Compare the cost of frozen peas with the cost of fresh peas._____________________

* Why is there a difference in price?_____________________

* Which product is available throughout the year?

______fresh peas _______frozen peas.

* Do you think the package increases the cost of frozen peas?_____________ Why?__________________________
(B) Let's take another example?

TOWELS AND WASHCLOTHS

Two towels and 2 washclothes are packaged as a gift set.

TOWELS AND WASHCLOTHS

Towels and washclothes are unpackaged and sold separately.

* How can you compare the quality of the packaged product with the unpackaged one?

* If you are shopping for a gift would you be likely to need a box for wrapping if you brought the packaged set?

* If you wish to buy only one towel and a washcloth, would the packaged set allow this choice?

* Which towels and washcloths ensure a matched set?

* Why do you think the towels and washcloths were packaged together?

* How would you describe this type packaging?
  (a) helpful
  (b) undesirable
  (c) depends on your individual need
  (d) not sure

* Do you think packaging increases the cost of this product?
  Why?
Sheets are often sealed in plastic packages. This keeps them clean. It keeps dust off and eliminates the shelf worn problem. Packaging keeps customers from handling the sheets and from unfolding and leaving them in a disorderly fashion. The package gives information about the product. However, plastic requires petroleum in the manufacturing process. Since the merchant can keep the sheets in good condition longer packaging eliminates the need to reduce prices on shopworn ones. This means he does not have to increase the regular price of the sheets to cover losses resulting from having to sell some at lower prices.

* Do you think this type of package benefits:

___ the merchant
___ the consumer
___ neither

* Suppose a store keeps sheets on hand only a few weeks before selling them. Would this affect the need for packaging? ________________  How? ________________


Packages Aren't Perfect

Packages and materials of which they are made are constantly being improved. Sometimes merchants and consumers do not agree on what they consider to be important in packaging.

Some people complain about the many different sizes of packages. Others complain about the variations in weight of different products in packages of the same size. Consumers sometimes complain because packages are not filled to the top. (This is called "slack fill").

Find two boxes of cereal that are the same size, for example, raisin bran and puffed rice. Look on the front of the package and compare the weight of the two packages.

What are the two weights?

_____ cereal weighs
_____ cereal weighs

(type of cereal)
cereal weighs ________
(type of cereal)

The difference in weight is due to the density of the cereal, one is heavier than is the other.

What would happen if you tried to put the same weight of cereal of each box? ________

(Tip: If two boxes are the same size, compare their weights. If one cereal is twice as heavy as the other, one box would have to be twice as large as the other to hold the same amount by weight.)

Why do you think that there often is a space left at the top of some packages? ________

To find the answer, open a new box of ready to eat cereal, and pour it into a bowl. Then, pour the cereal back into the box. What happens? ________

Why is head space left in many containers? ________

Packaging Influences Sales Appeal

Suppose you and several of your friends are making brownies for a bake sale. What would you do to try to get people to buy your brownies instead of the others? Would you cut them into squares and place them side by side so it will look like a large number of brownies; or, would you stack them neatly into a small, tight package?

Would you use a transparent cover so shoppers could see how good they look - or would you wrap them in brown paper with the word "brownies" written across the top of the package? ________
Visit your local supermarket. Inspect the packaging to see how it influences sales appeal:

* Tell how the goodies are displayed in the deli section.

* Describe how the packages of fresh fruits and/or vegetables are displayed.

* Look at the pictures on the side of a can of food. Why are the pictures colorful and appealing?

Packages become the salesman for most products. Studies show appearance of packages greatly influence consumer buying decisions. For example, food packages with appealing pictures sell easier than those in plain packages with only the required information printed on them.

Developing a new package takes time, usually several months or longer. If special features must be included it may take several years to perfect the package.

The design is the first step in developing a new package. Selecting the materials to use comes next. Sample packages are developed and tested to see if they give the required protections and fulfill the other requirements. The new package is then test marketed in selected locations. Consumer reactions to the new package are evaluated to see if people like it and will buy it. If not, the package is either redesigned or discarded. If the test market is successful, then machinery is refined and mass production starts. Some companies buy their packages from other manufacturers. Others make the packages they need for their own products.
The color, design and art work on a package are important. Bright colors attract attention. Colors must be pleasing and not misleading. For example, a few years ago a company marketed white sugar in a brown container similar to a milk carton. Although the label said "white sugar," most shoppers thought it was brown sugar because of the color of the package. The package was discontinued.

Some people think that manufacturers sell products in too many different sizes, making it hard to compare prices. Other people point out that there are many different kinds of shoppers, each with their own unique needs and demands. For example, if you were shopping for only one person would you want to buy a 36 ounce carton of cottage cheese or would you prefer to have the choice of a 12 ounce, 24 ounce or a 36 ounce carton?

* Visit a drug or discount store or a supermarket. Count the number of different sizes containers of liquid shampoo. How many were there? __________

* Were the containers different sizes — or were there different amounts of shampoo packaged within the containers? ________________

* Did you have difficulty deciding if some containers were the same size because of design? ________________

Why? ________________

* Did some containers that appeared to be larger actually hold less than other containers that looked smaller? ________________ If so, describe (or draw the design) of two containers that looked larger and one that appeared smaller. ________________

* What does this tell you about relying on appearance as the major consideration in selecting a packaged product? ________________
Containers using thick bottoms and heavy sides, or that are tall and curved appear to hold more than they really do. Some gift packages use platforms, (false bottoms) or heavy dividers to make them appear to contain more product. Colors and designs also influence the appearance of a package. Bright colors look larger. Print size and placement are important in creating optical illusions. Colored transparent paper can add color to a product and make it look more appealing.

Package designs and shapes are important to retailers because they affect merchandising and display methods. The Supermarket Institute says that merchants want packages that:

- are constructed so they will not cave-in, crack or break when stamped with a price.
- will stack well on shelves.
- will stand without support
- are of a standard size for easy display on shelves and are no larger than needed because shelf-space is too expensive to waste.

Assemble the following: a quart of milk, a quart bottle of cola, a quart bottle of another type of soft drink, a quart can of juice and a jar of mayonnaise. Compare their appearance.

* Which looks the largest?_____
* Which look the smallest?_____
Why?_________________________

Commonly Used Packages

Commonly used packages include boxes, jars, and bags. The same kinds of packages are used for many different products, only the labels are different.
Visit a supermarket or a large discount store. Compare the types of boxes used for cookies, crackers and cereals.

* Did you find boxes that were alike except for the labels?________ List 3.
  1.__________ 2.__________ 3.__________

* What purpose do these packages serve?

* Why do you think they are alike?____

Compare the packages used for laundry detergents.

* What similarities in packaging did you discover?________

Compare the packages used for wax paper, plastic wrap and aluminum foil.

* What special feature do you find on the packages?________

* What is the purpose of this feature?________

Inspect the bottles and jars used for various products.

* What are the bottles made of?_________________________

* What are some advantages of plastic bottles?__________
* What are some disadvantages?

* List 5 products sold in plastic bottles or jars. (1) _______
  (2) _______ (3) _______ (4) _______ (5) _______

* What are some advantages of glass bottles? ________________

* What are some disadvantages? ____________________________

* List 5 items found in glass bottles or jars. (1) _______
  (2) _______ (3) _______ (4) _______ (5) _______

There is a strong debate regarding the advantages of using returnable bottles versus non-returnable containers.

* When you buy soft drinks in the supermarket which do you buy: _______ returnable _______ non-returnable? Why? ____________________________

When you buy returnable bottles do you carry them back to the store within a few days? _____ Why? __________

Visit your local supermarket or convenience store. Ask the manager to give you his opinion about the proposal to require that all soft drinks be sold in returnable containers. Ask especially about: sanitation problems; storage facilities needed for returned containers; personnel needed to handle the returns and refunds. What did he tell you? ____________________________

Contact your city or county government. Find out how much is spent each year to collect bottles, cans and similar litter in your area. Also find out how much of a problem disposing of trash is becoming in your area. What did you learn? ____________________________
How can consumers, such as you, help resolve the problem of disposing of litter and discarded packaging/containers?

Does your school or community have collection locations for glass and aluminum that can be recycled? What are the benefits of such collections?

---

Packaging Materials

Although a variety of materials are used for packaging, paper, glass, plastics, and metal are the most commonly used. Each kind of packaging material has advantages and disadvantages:

Paper is relatively inexpensive and is made from wood which is a renewable resource. It is light in weight, an important consideration in shipping cost. Since it is biodegradable it does not create serious disposable problems. Paper, however, does not lend itself to all types of packaging, especially for liquids and oils. Moisture and insects can be problems for paper packages. It is not very strong and can be torn, punctured or ruptured with relative ease. It does not permit viewing of the product.

List 3 products that usually are packaged in paper containers.

(1)

(2)

(3)

Glass is manufactured from a common, inexpensive raw material, sand. As a packaging material it allows good visibility of the product, is rigid and provides good protection from insects, moisture and odors. It has
limitations, however, because it breaks easily and requires special handling. Glass is heavy, increasing shipping costs, and is not easily disposed of, for it does not rot or deteriorate.

List 3 products commonly packaged in glass. (1)_______
(2)____________________(3)____________________

Why is glass used?__________________________

Plastics of many kinds are used for packaging. Their versatility and adaptability contribute to the popularity of plastic packaging. They are lightweight, low in cost, and depending on need may be:

- rigid (as for bottles) or flexible (for bags and tubes),
- transparent (can see through) opaque (can't see through),
- airtight (great for products that must be kept crisp) or can breathe (needed for fresh fruits and vegetables),
- soft (cushioning helps to prevent breakage, as with egg cartons) or hard, tough and brittle.

Plastics do have shortcomings. They use non-replaceable natural resources. They are not biodegradable (don't break down, rot or deteriorate) thus they are hard to get rid of in trash and garbage. When burned they give off pollutants.

List 3 different types of products using plastic packaging materials. (Each product should use a different type of plastic materials.)

(1) Product:_________ How does the package fit the needs of the product? ________________________________

(2) Product:_______ What characteristics does the plastic have to make it desirable for this product?_________________________

__________________________________

(3) Product: ________ How does the package fit the needs of the
Metal containers are rigid, give good protection and offer a long shelf life. They are light in weight and don't break or rupture easily. Galvanized tin and aluminum are commonly used for cans.

Aluminum foil is light weight, flexible and gives good protection against moisture, light and insects. However metals do use nonrenewable resources. Efforts are being made to save some of this loss by recycling.

* Name a product that is packaged in aluminum foil.

__________________________________________

* Name an item that is sold in an aluminum can.

__________________________________________

* Name a product that you can buy in a "tin" can.

__________________________________________

Unique Packages

A package isn't just a can or a box that you throw away. It is something that preserves and protects. It can be as important as what comes in it—for without the package the product may not exist.

There are thousands of different kinds of packages. In addition to the conventional packages there are those that are unique—specifically designed for a particular product or purpose. Let's look at a few examples.

Sterile packaging is of great value to consumers and to medical personnel. Doctors and nurses use numerous products that are stored in sterile packages, ready for immediate use whether in the hospital, doctor's office or at the scene of an accident.

* Why are the bandages you buy individually sealed in a sterile wrapping?

__________________________________________

* Talk with a doctor, nurse or pharmacist about the importance of sterile packaging to their profession. What did you learn?

__________________________________________

Individual packaging is essential for several types of food services. For example, hospitals and airlines serve individual trays. It is important for them to have the small individual packages of salt,
pepper and sugar. The clever tubed design makes it easy to "sprinkle" your food after opening these seasonings. These packages are also useful to fast food restaurants.

* If you were going on a picnic with several people and you planned to make your own sandwiches, would it be easier---and possibly more sanitary---to carry individually wrapped slices of cheese or have everyone cut from the same block of cheese?

* If you were at home where it is easy to have clean hands and equipment, is there any specific need for individually wrapped slices of cheese? __________ Why? __________

* Compare the cost per pound of (1) sliced cheese, (2) unsliced cheese and (3) individually wrapped, sliced cheese. Which cost the most? __________ Why?

Shrink packaging offers consumers many benefits. Without shrink packaging, frozen poultry (and other meats) could not retain the quality needed for long storage. The freshly cleaned birds are put in a laminated plastic package with a built-in "memory". In the packaging process, the "memory" causes the wrap to shrink tightly around the bird, driving out the air. Without oxygen the fat in the meat does not become rancid and without air it does not dehydrate or freezer burn.

Shrink packaging extends the shelf life of cheese, processed meats and other food products. It is also used to encase small products such as eyebrow tweezers and razor blades and to attach them to a card for easy display and to reduce theft.

* Buy two packages of cheese of the same kind that are sealed in clear plastic. Leave one in its sealed package. Unwrap the other and put it in another wrapper. Leave both packages in there refrigerator for 2 weeks. Compare the keeping quality of the two.

---Which cheese kept better? __________________________

---Why? ________________________________________
Aerosols enable you to use products in a way not otherwise possible. They help to spread paint thinly over irregular and hard to reach surfaces. They enable you to hold your hair in place with a thin mist or spray. They replace the need for a sprayer when fighting household pests. Aerosols are used for a wide variety of products. The aerosol container is a system. The product is forced out of the can by a compressed gas that does not mix with the product. This gas is called the propellant.

One complaint often expressed against aerosols is, "you can't get all of the product out of the container." This is true, but many people do not realize that the weight given on the aerosol container is for the amount of product that you can get out of the container....not for the total amount put into it.

Special precautions should be taken in disposing of aerosols. NEVER throw an empty aerosol can into the fire or try to open one with a can opener. It may explode and cause serious injury.

The pump spray is part of a container much as is the aerosol mechanism. Hair spray, insecticides, cleaning fluid and many other types of products are packaged in pump sprayers. The operation is similar to a lift-pump. Air pressure is used to force the product from the container.

Boil-in-the-bag is a unique packaging method allowing food to be taken from the freezer and put directly into boiling water. This packaging material easily withstands a wide range of temperatures. Cooking in the bag saves dishwashing.

Airtight foil packages protect dehydrated products such as soups, gravies and salad dressings. They are compact, lightweight and flexible.

Roll-on containers are popular for deodorants, colognes and similar products. As the small roller rotates it is coated with the product. The roller transfers this coating to your skin as you push the roller over it.

The retort pouch is a unique new package that is being test marketed. The retort pouch is a flexible package, composed of a laminated layers of polyester, aluminum foil and polyolefin sealing. Food is processed in the pouch and can be kept for years without refrigeration as long as it is not opened. Ease of handling, light weight, and high quality of the product are advantages.

There are many other unusual containers which enable products to be used in special ways. These include such things as aseptic packages used for UHT milk and fruit juices, lipstick tubes, trays for TV dinners, dispensers of sanitizers for bathroom water tanks and numerous others.
* Visit a store. Carefully look at different kinds of packages
List 10 different kinds of packages that you saw.

1. __________________________ 6. __________________________
2. __________________________ 7. __________________________
3. __________________________ 8. __________________________
4. __________________________ 9. __________________________
5. __________________________ 10. __________________________

Describe the most unique packages and explain its purpose.


Laws And Regulations Affecting Packaging

There are laws and regulations that relate to packaging. Most of these laws are implemented at the Federal level. This way they apply equally to all of the nation. This is important because most packaged products have a wide distribution.

Legal regulations relate generally to the safety and sanitation of the packaging. Others relate to labeling.

Materials of which food packaging is made must be safe and sanitary. Packages can't be made of any materials that release toxic or carcinogenic substances into the food.

Some state laws relate to packaging. For example in most states the sizes of containers that may be used for milk are designated by law.

* Find out the size containers in which milk can be sold in Florida. They are:

Deliberate misrepresentations and deceptions are illegal. For example, it is illegal to wrap fresh meat with red transparent wrap to make the meat look fresher.

* It is not illegal to put carrots in a orange colored
transparent bag.

Why?

Safety regulations require that plastic bags which are used to package clothing, pillows and other large items must have holes in them so that air can circulate. This is to prevent the danger of children suffocating while playing with the bags.

Federal regulations require that most medications and hazardous products be sold in containers with childproof caps. Many closures had to be redesigned because of this regulation. For example, to open a bottle of aspirin you can no longer just unscrew the lid. You may have to line up arrows, press down on the cap or perform some other feat. These devices are designed to prevent children from opening the containers and accidentally poisoning themselves. Conventional closures are supposed to be available upon request for people with arthritis or older people who have trouble opening the containers. Accidental poisoning of children has dropped drastically since enactment of childproof packaging. These safety devices, however, are inconvenient for many adults.

Poisons, caustic and hazardous substances must have a warning on the label. Some also use a skull and crossbones, others use the emblem for "Mr. Uck."

* Interview 2 mothers of small children. Ask each how she feels about childproof packaging. What were their comments?

(1)

(2)

* Interview 2 retired people. Ask how they feel about childproof packaging. What are their comments?

(1)

(2)

* Interview a pharmacist. Ask how he/she feels about childproof packaging. What were the comments?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

22
Select a bottle with a child proof cap on it. Select another bottle with a conventional cap on it. Ask a small child (about 2-4 years old) to open each bottle? What did you learn?

In 1982 a tragedy occurred. Someone placed poison in a few capsules of over-the-counter pain releivers. Several unsuspecting consumers died. As a result of this experience new tamper resistant packaging regulations were enacted by the Federal government for over-the-counter medications.

Visit a store and inspect the packaging for capsules and tablets of over-the-counter medicines.

How does the packaging discourage tampering?

When there is a serious safety problem with a product what happens?

Which Package For You?

No place else in the world offers consumers as many choices as the U.S. This means that in this country you have the best chance of getting exactly what you want—if you've learned to be a good shopper. It also means that if you are uninformed you'll
have real problems trying to decide which are the best buys.

Packaging has brought us sanitary products of high quality. It has extended the length of time products can be stored or kept in good condition. It has provided convenience, extended the availability of products and made them available in a wide variety of forms.

In many stores, the printed words and pictures on packages have replaced salesclerks. You must learn to interpret these in relation to the content of the package and your needs or expectations.

* List 5 examples of packages where you must rely upon pictures and words instead of visual inspection of the product.

(1) ____________________________________________
(2) ____________________________________________
(3) ____________________________________________
(4) ____________________________________________
(5) ____________________________________________

Although most packaging is beneficial, some is costly and wasteful. It is up to you as a consumer to avoid using wasteful or unnecessary packaging. Ask yourself the following questions.

* What is the purpose of the product’s package?

* How quickly will the product be used? Is the packaging needed?

* How well will the item store? (Often packaging extends the shelf life of a product.)

* How will the package store? Will it fit the storage space that is available, or is it too big?

* What condition is the packaging in? Is it torn or damaged? Is the product affected?

* Is the package easy to open and close? It is convenient to use?

* Does the package needlessly use nonrenewable resources?

* Does the package generate extra costs? If so, is it worth the extra money?

* Conduct a survey. Poll 15 of your friends or classmates and 15 adults on their opinions about packaging. Use the survey form given on the next page.
PACKAGING SURVEY

1. Overall, would you rate packaging used for consumer products as:
   ______ very beneficial
   ______ of some benefit
   ______ of no benefit
   ______ of little benefit
   ______ not sure

2. As a general rule, do you think that packages
   ______ increase prices
   ______ save money on products
   ______ do not affect prices
   ______ don't know

3. How would you describe most packaging?
   ______ a waste of resources such as metal and petroleum
   ______ saves resources
   ______ does not affect resources

4. When given a choice, do you prefer
   ______ returnable containers (example, soft drink bottles)
   ______ disposable containers

5. Do you believe the litter problem is caused by:
   ______ excessive packaging
   ______ irresponsible consumer behavior
   ______ there is no problem

Do you think that:

6. laws should be passed to eliminate disposable containers?
   ______ yes ______ no

7. laws should be passed to impose stiffer fines on people who litter?
   ______ yes ______ no

8. educating consumers can solve the litter problem?
   ______ yes ______ no

9. industry will continue to try to improve packaging?
   ______ yes ______ no

10. industry will try to develop more economical packaging?
    ______ yes ______ no
Write a summary of the result of your survey.

How do the opinions of the people surveyed compare with your opinions?

Write a short paragraph in the space below telling about your experiences with this project and what you have learned.
SUMMARY RECORD FORM

The Magic Of Packaging

Name_____________________________ Age_______ Years In 4-H ____

Address__________________________________________________________

Name of 4-H Club or Group __________________________________________

Years In Consumer Education _______

I. MY PROJECT GOALS: (Transfer from page of this book.)

II. THINGS I DID IN THIS PROJECT:

III. THINGS I LEARNED IN THIS PROJECT:
IV. MY FAVORITE PART OF THE PROJECT WAS:

V. HOW I SHARED WHAT I LEARNED:

List demonstrations/illustrated talks, and exhibits given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of Activity</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI. NUMBER OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED:

a - Adults - 

b - Young People - 

VII. OTHER THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN AS A RESULT OF THIS PROJECT: