

Teaching Parliamentary Procedure: Parli Pro Mix It Up Trail Mix!

Learning to use parliamentary procedure is an important part of a club meeting, and this activity can be a fun way for members to practice making motions, seconding them, and voting. When completed, there will be refreshments for the club.

Materials

- Large bowl and a large spoon
- Serving utensils, paper cups, baggies, napkins etc.
- Ingredients for Trail Mix
 - Several choices of cereal
 - Raisins
 - Peanuts – may choose to omit due to allergies
 - Various candies such as M&Ms
 - Pretzels or other desired ingredients
 - Include one or two “undesirable” items such as pickles or broccoli
- Large “I Move” table tent cards or signs for members to hold up when they want to say something.

Time: 15-25 minutes

Set Up

Display the ingredients at the front of the room with the bowl and spoon. Optional: Label the ingredients so the audience can see them. Have the “I Move” signs available on the table. Talk to two 4-H’ers ahead of time so they will be ready to make a motion and a second to add an “undesirable” ingredient.

Let’s Begin!

Introduce yourself, point out the ingredients and talk about the importance of using parliamentary procedure to ensure a successful business meeting, allowing each member a chance to voice their opinion and a chance to listen. This provides an efficient way to have discussions and address issues as a group. During this activity, the club will learn about the ingredients that go into effective group discussions – one of the key pieces to parliamentary procedure. During this discussion, a delicious snack will be made.

While making Trail Mix and adding each ingredient, members will learn how to make a motion, a second, have discussion and finally, vote. It is the duty of the president to keep order by recognizing and calling on members to let them know when it is time to say something. To make a motion, simply say, ‘I move that we *do...*’ (Demonstrate by holding up one of the ‘I Move’ signs.)

Make the First Motion

To get started, the first motion can be, “I move we add the cereal to the snack mix.”

Now the President will ask, “Do I hear a second?” Getting a second lets the president know there is more than one person that would like to discuss this.

With a motion and a second, it’s time to discuss. Because parliamentary procedure is all about getting participation from the group, discussion will be needed from at least 3 members before the president calls for a vote. Discussion is the time for members to ask questions about the effects of the proposal or to add their opinions.

I Move...

As members go through the process of deciding what ingredients they will put in the Trail Mix, they will need to correctly make a motion for each ingredient they want to add. (“I move ____ be added to the Trail Mix.”) Have them hold up an “I Move” sign if they are afraid to speak at first or forget to use this wording.

After a member ‘Moves’ to add an ingredient, the president then asks, “Is there a second?”

Another member says, “I second the motion.”

The president then asks, “Is there any discussion?”

Once discussion has concluded, then the president asks for a vote as follows:

Vote: Aye or No

If a member wishes to vote “yes” on an amendment, they would say, “aye” (pronounced, “eye”). If a member wishes to vote against a motion, they would respond with “no”. For example, the president will call for a vote by saying, “All in favor, say ‘aye,’ all opposed say ‘no.’” A member has the choice to “abstain” or not vote on a particular motion. A member is not required to vote on every motion.

Continue for each ingredient to be added.



Amend a Motion

There are times when members of the group will want to change the motion while it is in the discussion phase. This is called an amendment. It is recommended only one amendment be permitted per motion. An amendment generally strikes out, adds, or substitutes words in the main motion.



Encourage/walk-through an amended or changed motion (perhaps to add only ½ of the sweet treat into the mix or a certain kind or color of candy). For example, if a motion is made to add M&M's to the mix, it can be amended to only add a certain color of M&M's.

When a motion has been moved and seconded and is being discussed, it can be amended as follows:

- A member is recognized by the president to speak. The member says, "I move to amend the motion to add only green M&M's to the mix."
- A second to this amendment is required.
- Discussion follows and is for only the amendment, not the original motion. For example, members may discuss the possibility of adding only green M&M's, not if they are to add M&Ms. (original motion).
- When it is time to vote, the president conducts a vote to determine if the amendment passes. A majority (more than half of the voting members) is needed.
- If the amendment passes, discussion follows on the motion as amended. For example, "I move we add only green M&M's to the trail mix."
- After discussion, a vote is taken on the motion as amended. A majority is needed.
- If the amendment does not pass, discussion on the original motion continues, which in this example, is "add M&Ms to the trail mix."
- After discussion, a vote is taken on the motion. A majority vote is needed.

Practice making other amendments to motions with this activity.

Vote It Down!

Encourage a motion and a second for the "undesirable" ingredient (i.e. broccoli). This will allow the members to voice dissension and to vote down a motion.

Eat & Review!

Once the Trail Mix has been completed, the tasty snack mix is ready to eat. Review what was learned about parliamentary procedure by answering the following questions.

What is parliamentary procedure? *An agreement to keep meetings orderly and give everyone a chance to participate.*

How do we start a discussion? *Make a motion.*

Why do we need a second, before we discuss a topic? *To confirm more than one person wants to discuss the topic.*

If I want to disagree or ask a question, when should I do it? *During the discussion.*

Who can make a motion? *Any member.*

Do I have to vote? *No. You can choose to abstain, which means you may choose not to vote.*

Origin from Nebraska 4-H with contributions from Ventura County Extension in California and Cornell Extension in Oneida County, New York.