Theoretical Definition of Learning Grounded in the Scholarly Literature:
Learning is the progressive and purposeful familiarity, use, and transformation of cultural tools and practices including physical artifacts and symbols (such as language) that influence one’s changing and continuous capacity to act in and upon the world. Learners construct their own knowledge through sense-making of experiences. This process of learning is mediated and oriented through culture, is situated in cultural communities in which one participates, and emphasizes culturally-determined goals leading to culturally-valued development. The definition of learning strives to balance constructivist and sociocultural perspectives; see Barab & Duffy (2012); Dewey (1938); Fosnot (1996); Lave and Wenger (1991); Rogoff (2003); Vygotsky (1978).

Learning Applied in a 4-H Context:
Outcomes: 4-H programs emphasize supporting young people to take active roles in their own learning and growth across all domains of their life, expanding their capacity to achieve the successes they want in life, and to thrive. Learning involves a change in young people, which may include intertwined aspects of knowledge, reasoning and process skills, interests and attitudes, motivations, cultural practices, contribution, and identity. 4-H helps youth find personal and career pathways in life. Youth develop their agency, belonging, and competence while becoming engaged leaders in their communities to positively impact the world.

Processes: 4-H learning activities are experiential, grounded in positive youth development approaches, based on young people’s interests, and provides skill-building opportunities with real-world application. Developmental relationships are the heart of 4-H Learning. Learning experiences happen through participation in activities, experiences, and through social interaction guided by caring adults and peers. Learning experiences are designed for frequency and duration that build learning over time.
Relevant Literature

The Prevailing Metaphors for Learning: Acquisition versus/and Participation

Sociocultural Perspectives of Learning and Cognition

Constructivist and Experiential Perspectives

Out-of-School Time Learning Environments