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Suggestions for Biology or Nature Clubs

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a movement among high school science clubs to organize into state-wide units, the Iowa Academy welcomed the opportunity offered by this situation to serve science.

Already such organizations have been established in athletics, in dramatics and in music to say nothing of the many social activities of the high school student and it is time that science, which today dominates the thinking of the modern world, should claim its share of the student's activities. Further, the Iowa Academy which is composed of the leading scientists of the state, is the logical channel through which this activity should be guided.

The science club movement is well under way and the Academy has much to offer it by a close association. The Academy offers the Junior Academy its central organization as a nucleus around which to build. It has a personnel of distinguished men whose experience and enthusiasm should and can be made a source of strength to the associated clubs. It will be a clearing-house for ideas, programs and information which will be a benefit to the members of the Junior Academy. From its experience it can help the Junior Academy in its organization and success.

By joint meetings contacts can be made between students and the leading scientists of the state that will be mutually beneficial. By recognizing student achievement the Academy hopes to stimulate scientific interest among high school students which will have a lasting influence on their appreciation of and application in scientific endeavor.

It is not the purpose of the Academy to dominate the Junior Academy, as a careful reading of the proposed constitution of that organization should make clear. The Academy wishes rather to act as "guide, philosopher and friend." It is with this spirit that the Academy has taken up the task of assisting the Junior Academy movement and it is in this spirit that we hope the high school clubs of the state will come in with us and make the cause of science felt throughout the state. We shall endeavor to co-operate and assist in every manner within our power to

strengthen and advance science among our junior membership.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph C. Gilman,
Secretary of Iowa
Academy of Science

PROJECTS IN BIOLOGY

The following are suggested projects in biology. Next month the issue will be devoted to physics and chemistry. Write for further information.

1. Health posters. These can be prepared by students to show proper health habits and practices.
2. Posters on civic biology.
3. Bacterial plate cultures illustrating the occurrence of bacteria and their relation to hygiene and sanitation. (See Conn.—Bacteria, Yeasts, and Molds in the Home).
4. Life history studies of animals.
5. Collections of insects.
6. Collections of native weeds.
7. Collections of fruits and seeds illustrating dispersal.
8. Bird calendars and migration charts.
9. Charts showing economic importance of birds.
10. Collections of materials showing trees of your vicinity.
11. Photographs of nature subjects.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BIOLOGY OR NATURE CLUBS

The very first requirement for a successful club of this nature is enthusiasm for and an interest in the world of living things. The sparks for kindling enthusiasm must come from off the hearth of the sponsor. While the students must be guided they should be led to feel that it is their program that they are working out and not that of a teacher who grants credit for participation. Voluntary membership makes possible a better qualified group of students whose hearts are "in it" while compulsion will bring in those who will eventually spoil things for those who are naturally interested.

It is well for the sponsor to have in mind some very definite objectives to be accomplished. These may

in part, at least, be instilled into the minds of the members. This need not necessarily mean that preaching be resorted to but that the very nature of the programs and the activities accomplish the desired ends. The idea of conservation could be the keynote of the club. This permits of local application and leads to good citizenship. Certainly future America needs a mind for this very thing. Here is an excellent place to "put it across." The emotional set of young people is very susceptible to the conservation idea. Other objectives may be to gather practical biological knowledge, to provide material for an avocation, to give vocational guidance, and to train in citizenship and character. Nature study and outdoor life furnish ways and means to spend leisure time. From present indications, this will be one of the crying needs of the future.

The matter of organization is very important. A constitution is necessary. The changing nature of a club's membership requires that some uniformity be established as a guide to future officers and a constitution provides this. Local conditions may determine the nature of this matter. In Dubuque, where there is a large membership and the number of students who are interested in the business side of the club is but a small circle composed of those especially interested, time and experience has led us to establish what we call an Executive Council composed of the regular officers and committee chairmen. Committee chairmen apply for the privilege to organize a group of members around a single project. This shows that he or she is especially interested and qualifies him or her to participate in the Council. The Council has full power to control the club except at the general election of officers. The officers are as follows: President, Vice-president (functions as program chairman), Second Vice-president (functions as hike chairman), Secretary, and Treasurer. These are a few possible committee chairmen: Chairman of Bird Committee, Chairman of Wild Flower Committee, Chairman of Reptile Committee. Other committees may center around butterflies, insect collections, mammals, trees, Indian life, etc. It is a good practice for each

committee to furnish a program before the entire membership.

One should avoid talking the club to death. The strength of your club will be determined by its activities and by its power to hold boys and girls to something that they can do and delight in. However, there is a place for programs and a committee on programs should be provided. Here is a chance for members to tell their experiences and give their observations. There should be no lack of discussion. Outside the classroom and in their own organization some very inspiring discussions take place. Then there is the outside speaker. In every community there ought to be both men and women who can speak to the liking of young students. We have one man who regards himself as one of us because we call upon him every year for a lecture and ask him to attend our parties. He is the president of the local Isaac Walton League. The president of the local Bird Club, the Weather Man, Scout Leaders, etc., make good speakers and can give just the right "slant on things" for young folks. If apparatus is available, a short movie on some nature topic is both inspiring and educational. Demonstrations on "How to Mount Butterflies," "How to Mount Small Mammals," make good material to stimulate interest in animal life. A student can do this. Our club is at present getting a great deal of interest from reports on chapters from Hornaday's "Our Vanishing Wild Life." The spirit of conservation certainly is stimulated.

Activity is the life of the club. These are suggested activities:

Hikes or collecting trips.

Council Fires.

Museum Collections.

Insect Life Histories.

Frog Life History.

Minerals.

Biological Survey of Local District.

Bird Feeding Stations, Houses, etc.

Care of Terrarium or Aquarium.

Exchanges with other clubs.

Essay Contest. The subject "Conservation" was given last year and several members received the first awards issued in the form of a certificate from the Isaac Walton League signed by the national and local presidents.

Bird Assembly before the school on bird day.

Wild Flower Campaign during Wild Flower Week. This is a city wide affair sponsored by club members.

Social Activities. The camp fires and hikes serve to satisfy the social instincts. An annual banquet may be held and everything blend with the Nature Idea.

This article is not written as exhaustive. Many other and better items may be adopted. However, these are the principal ones worked out and used by our boys and girls.

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THE USE OF POSTERS IN CLUB WORK

Posters furnish excellent illustrative material for club programs and will add much interest to the work. There are usually members of the club who have artistic ability and can make use of their ability in this way, but it is not necessary to be an artist in order to make good posters or cartoons, as excellent results can be obtained by cutting advertisements from magazines and arranging them and pasting them on cardboard so as to illustrate various subjects. The value of the poster does not depend upon its artistic side but in the clever representation and emphasis of some important fact of science as related to the lives of the pupils and to the community in which they live. An exhibit of posters as a climax to a study carried on by a club is very effective.

Why not conduct a poster contest in your club and then enter your best posters in the exhibit at the state meeting?

The following list gives sources of information on posters and their uses.

1. Health Posters from Hygeia. American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn St., Chicago, Illinois. (Free.)

2. Poster Contests and Their Educational Value. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Department of Humane Education, 50 Madison Ave., New York City. (Free.)

3. Posters to Visualize Health. American Child Health Association, 370 Seventh Ave., New York City. (12 cents.)

4. Poster Making in School. Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 1 Madison Ave., New York City. (Free.)

5. Posters in Chemistry. Journal of Chemical Education, Vol. 5, pp. 157-67, 1928. 19th and Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa.

A SUCCESSFUL CLUB PROJECT IN BIOLOGY

A few years ago when the author was teaching biology in a suburban high school of Chicago, the tussock moth became a menace to the shade trees in that vicinity. The biology students took up the problem of the tussock moth and how to eradicate it. The life history and habits of the moth were studied. Collections were made to show the life history. The Commercial Club became interested and a talk on the moth was given by a club member at one of their meetings. As a result a city-wide campaign to destroy the egg masses of the moth was carried out. The egg masses are easily seen on the bark of the trunks of trees and they are easily destroyed by collecting and burning or by swabbing them with creosote. The club divided the town into districts and squads of pupils under chosen leaders were assigned to the different districts and were made responsible for their assigned districts. The Commercial Club of the town furnished the necessary equipment and materials and the biology classes were excused from their afternoon classes one day and a campaign against the moth was carried on. This project proved of benefit not only to the town in protecting the shade trees, but it was of much benefit to the boys and girls who participated in showing how their science could function in their community.

Your science club can be of much value to your community. Is there not some problem in your community with which your club can work? Incidentally the Junior Academy of Science would be interested in hearing about it and perhaps it might provide you with material for an exhibit at the state meeting.