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Biology Convention Offers Something for Everyone

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Because of the innovative character of endeavor on behalf of the United Nations, World Understanding and Science, the program will receive unusual attention from the mass media. To make the most of this opportunity for furthering participants' aspirations, they will be given public relations counsel for a year following return.

Mission members will elect to spend 16 or 22 days in preparation, abroad. They will cover or raise their share of travel costs, which for two weeks total: U.S. \$1467; for three weeks: \$1777. This includes the year's supervisory and public relations service. If that is calculated as conservatively worth \$350., the mission costs are on the order of \$1117. and \$1427., respectively. Provisions have been made for full tax-deduction of expenses, which, in effect, reduces the cost still further.

For details and application form, write: Friends of Africa in America, 330 South Broadway, Tarrytown, New York, 10591.

SUCCESSFUL RAPPORT SESSIONS

James J. Hungerford
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When the purpose of the "rap" session is not understood there may be considerable waste of time. Often changes occur, but advance questions for student thought are important for success of a session.

In a democratic session the students and instructor communicate with each other and build for a better chance of wholehearted participation in discussions. While the instructor can contribute from his experience and wisdom, he need not be what one could call the "rap" leader. In a good session everyone has the opportunity to contribute as well as listen. If the instructor preplans the topic for the session, one shouldn't lose control of what the class will discuss. The instructor will influence thinking and opinion without dominating the discussion. The task of the instructor is to inform and educate in such a way that it generates trust among the class.

Ideas, whoever originates them, must be discussed. The instructor should know and accept the fact, frequently overlooked, that the members of the class have many worthwhile ideas. All they need is the chance to express them. Some in science call this creativity. Actually it is letting the student speak what he thinks, original or not.

No two classes are going to be the same. So if uniformity or heterogeneity over the same topics bothers anyone he had better stay with dictorial instruction. One should not be interested in homogeneity or standardization. One should be interested in heterogeneity and individualization. If a person is a manipulative instructor, he probably feels it seems less of an effort to be that way. Under a dictorial type of instructor-student relationship, interest soon begins to wane.

Possessiveness is a common feeling among instructors, a feeling that one's way is the only right way to do things. This is not to say the instructor should not show leadership, guidance and give the students support.

The experienced science instructor will encourage individuals to see and attack problems then reach independent conclusions from the data available. So far as possible, the "rap" session may help individuals learn to understand themselves and others better. One should be aware of conservative students who are merely holding back and only need to be asked to respond.

In every class some individuals are more advanced in their thinking than others. Frequently, the instructor can bridge gaps of thought between students; maybe even then some.

BIOLOGY CONVENTION OFFERS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Dr. Charles R. Granger
NABT Convention Publicity Committee
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"Competitive Ideas in Biology" marks the theme of the 1973 National Association of Biology Teachers Convention to be held October 11-14 at the Chase Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis.

Graduate credit will be offered by the University of Missouri for those attending designated sessions. Convention speakers will include Marlin Perkins of TV's Wild Kingdom, the noted ecologist Barry Comner, evolutionist Sidney Fox, Nobel laureate George Beadle, and the controversial psychobiologist Seymour Levine.

Numerous "hands-on" workshops will be conducted for all instructional levels, elementary through college. Workshops will involve use of drugs, tumor producing agents and techniques for environmental investigations.

In addition, an exhibit of science teaching supplies, apparatus, textbooks and curriculum materials will be featured.

Tours, including a look at the Mississippi River front, Missouri Botanical Garden, Monsanto Chemical world headquarters, the Zoo, etc. are scheduled for October 11. Pre-registration for tours is necessary.

Registration fees are as follows: NABT member, \$10; nonmembers, \$15; full-time students, and non-teaching spouses, \$5. One day registration is 50 percent of fees.

For further information and advance registration write Ted Stixrud, Registration Chairman, Biology Department, Kirkwood High School, 801 West Essex, Kirkwood, Missouri 63122.

HOW CAN I MAKE THE STUDENTS SEE THE RELEVANCE OF THIS IDEA? WHY DO THEY WANT? HOW CAN I MAKE MY SUBJECT COME ALIVE?

Robert Hammon, Principal
Maquoketa High School
Maquoketa, Iowa

These typical, and, unfortunately, all too usual queries among secondary instructors occurred simultaneously to several Maquoketa, Iowa, Senior High teachers two years ago. Out of these questions and ensuing discussions that occurred in answer to the questions, a project was born (maybe "hatched" is a better choice) that enabled the classroom to throw off its four walls and consider the banks of the Mississippi as "walls." Working from the belief that the classroom atmosphere with its four walls is stifling to student creativity and curiosity, these instructors designed a program which would be basically an ecological study, with emphasis in three areas: social science,

literature/communication, and natural sciences. These instructors included Bob Hammon, Senior High Principal; Dwight Zimmerman, Project Director; Sherman Burns; Kirk Daddow, Francis Johnston; Charles Lindgren; Bob Mejerus and Frank Strathman.

The project, known as the Upper Mississippi Valley Cultural and Educational Field Experience, slowly took shape. Funding was received through a \$60,000 federal grant for the three years of the project under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The specific section of the ESEA under which the funding was allocated encourages innovative instructional methodology.

The project is an interdisciplinary approach stressing the ecology of the Mississippi River as it applies to the areas of literature, science, and social studies. All sophomore and junior students of Iowa's Jackson county were encouraged to sign up. These students were subsequently screened by the county superintendent, the project director and a high school guidance counselor. Fifty students were selected according to desire, interest and rapport. Of the fifty, a fairly accurate economic and social cross-section of the county was evident. These chosen students were then divided evenly into two groups, one to spend two weeks going up river from Clinton, Iowa to Lake City, Minnesota, and the other to spend two weeks returning. Accompanying the students on the four houseboat flatilla were the eight originators of the project, two female chaperones, and a cook.

The typical day began at 6:00 A.M. and ended sixteen hours later. After a usually hearty breakfast, the project left its overnight sandbar and proceeded to complete various tasks in subject matter fields. Students spent most of their days on the area boat of their concentration - some on the science boat, others on the literature/communications boat, and still others on the social studies boat. After a full day of interviewing, observing, scientific testing, and a general awakening to the river, the boats beached approximately at 5:00 P.M. for outdoor cooking in which all took part. The remainder of the evenings was spent swimming, working on reports, playing touch football, or merely rapping.

A van accompanied the river travelers. As the boats traveled, the van, pulling a small runabout, paralleled on the highway their advancements on the river. This allowed for any emergency transportation to cities along