

PROMOTING WORLDWIDE MISSIONS

If you hope to challenge boys and girls, you must be missionary-minded yourself You need to be a faithful missionary in your own part of the world every day You should be personally praying for missionary friends, sharing in their needs, showing interest in missionary work and caring for others.

Teach clubbers to be conscious of and concerned for the people in our world who need to hear that Jesus loves them and died for them. Paul tells us to shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life (Philippines 2:15b-16a).

Awana offers many opportunities for clubbers to become acquainted with missions. One of these is through required handbook sections. Clubbers must interview a missionary in T&T Book One and learn about the country where a missionary serves in T&T Book Two.

Missions Orientation Night

Plan this event before the first missionary theme night of the club year. At a leaders' meeting prior to Missions Orientation Night, go through the club handbooks to become familiar with the missions requirements.

During club, take time to help clubbers with their missionary sections. Encourage boys and girls to complete these sections during the weeks you discuss missions in club.

If many of your clubbers are unchurched, they may not be familiar with the term "missionary."

Spend some time during Council Time discussing the following:

What is a missionary?

- Why are missionaries necessary?

What do missionaries do?

How can we help missionaries?

Who supports them?

How can clubbers be missionaries in their own homes, schools and neighborhoods?

Thinking Missions An Year Long

After Missions Orientation Night, emphasize missions in club once a month or once a quarter during Council Time. Plan interesting and informative missions specials. Try to develop in your clubbers a sense of excitement about missionary work around the world.

- Invite missionary speakers to club. Occasionally plan a special missionary feature without devoting the entire club evening to a missionary theme. Visiting missionaries enjoy fitting into a regular evening theme.

- Show a missionary film or filmstrip geared to children.

- Missionary theme nights can be dress-up nights. Award points to clubbers who come up with a foreign costume to fit the theme. Caution: Don't make it mandatory for clubbers to dress up. Some may stay home because they can't find anything appropriate to wear. Encourage clubbers who need help getting a costume together to call their Awana leader for ideas.

Spend time in club working on missionary sections.

Tell missionary stories using visuals.

Tell about Awana clubs in foreign countries.

Adopt an Awana club in another culture.*

Ask clubbers to draw missionary murals (for example, a world map showing the location of your church missionaries and pictures of the types of work they are doing).

Schedule a poster contest to promote your annual church missionary conference.

Decorate the club room with curios and posters (from travel agencies) representing the country featured that night.

Distribute take-home banks for special missionary projects.

Plan a club contest to raise funds for special missionary projects.**

Emphasize Valentine's Day for missionary outreach as a time to share love in a tangible way.

Schedule missionary emphasis during your annual church missionary conference, providing a missionary challenge on the clubbers' age level.

*For further information, contact the International Missions Department at Awana headquarters.

**Contact your Awana missionaries for suggestions they may have regarding Awana projects in your area.

Club Missionary

Your club may decide to adopt one special missionary as its own. Invite this person to club, post his family picture on the bulletin board, pray for him and send him or her tapes and letters.

Talk to your missionary speaker prior to his or her first club meeting. Explain how many clubbers you'll have, their age span and their past involvement with missionaries. Tell the missionary how long he or she should speak and the types of things you want covered. Allow him or her freedom, however, to share as he or she desires. Encourage him or her to bring pictures and curios and to be ready to autograph clubbers' handbooks. Offer opportunities for the missionary to teach a popular game of his or her country or a song in a foreign dialect.

Once this missionary has visited club, the children need to keep informed about him or her. Plan missionary reports for announcement time. Schedule time for clubbers to write letters and make tapes for the missionary.

Missionary Theme Nights

Foreign lands night –Encourage clubbers to dress in foreign costumes. During Game Time, play games from other countries (check local library game books). In Council Time, emphasize missionary needs around the world.

African safari night –Instruct clubbers to arrive at club dressed as Africans. (Remind boys and girls that in Africa there are blacks, whites, mid-easterners and many Asians who have immigrated there over the years.) Have a missionary to Africa speak during Council Time or show a film featuring Africa. Decorate the club room with wild animal pictures typical of Africa.

Piñata night –Highlight Mexico during Council Time. During Game Time, break a piñata and have clubbers scramble for the candy and prizes which spill over the floor. Encourage boys and girls to dress Mexican style.

Japanese night –Encourage clubbers to dress Japanese style. Decorate your club room with Japanese dolls, fans and other Oriental items. Highlight Japan in Council Time.

Hawaiian night –The week before this club night, ask each clubber to come next week with a salad or fruit item. Serve a simple luau.” Encourage clubbers to dress Hawaiian style. Decorate the club room with pine- apples and palm trees (made out of broom sticks and construction paper leaves). During Council Time tell clubbers about Awana clubs in Hawaii.

Mid-eastern night –Encourage clubbers to dress in loose flowing garments. As boys and girls arrive, pass out long sashes for them to tie around their waists. Or give each child a fabric square to wear as a Bedouin-style headdress. In the Middle East, it’s not uncommon to sit on the floor at low tables. Move the tables out of the handbook rooms. Set plywood sheets close to the floor on bricks and have clubbers sit around these tables while passing their sections. Highlight the Middle East during Council Time.

Jet airplane trip –Make it a tradition on various missions nights to take a jet airplane ride to the country emphasized. Position the chairs as in a plane. Dress two or three clubbers or leaders as flight attendants. Play tape-recorded sound effects luring takeoff, then have the pilot welcome the passengers aboard. Serve in-flight refreshments. As you land, show slides or movies of the country being visited.

Progressive foreign-lands dinner –Schedule a progressive dinner. Serve food representing different countries. The host and hostess in each home should dress in the manner of the country represented and decorate their home with posters and curios. Check recipe books in your local library or let each hostess choose her country and decide the food to be served.

Caution: Hostesses must be especially careful to plan foods that children like to eat.

Many kids have no taste for ethnic foods. Consider items such as pizza from Italy, tacos from Mexico, hot dogs from America, apple strudel from Germany, chop suey from China, herring and Swedish meatballs from Scandinavia or limpa bread from Sweden.

Christmas In October – Ask several church missionaries to send you Christmas lists of items their family needs. Then, three or four weeks before the “Christmas in October” club meeting, encourage clubbers to sign up to buy selected items from the list. (Items should be inexpensive enough for clubbers to purchase with minimal parental help.) Send a letter home to parents explaining what you are doing. If parents agree to their child’s participation, they sign the enclosed permission slip. The clubbers return the permission slips the next week. If your club is composed of many un-churched kids, you can have each color team get together and rake leaves or do other odd jobs to pay for the gifts. If gifts are sent overseas, the date of this meeting must be many weeks before Christmas. Your post office can give the recommended date for mailing packages overseas, so they will arrive before December 25. Caution: Do not send any packages before checking with the missionary. In some countries, import duties are so high that the missionary may pay double or triple the value in order to receive the package.

On the night of the party, decorate the room for Christmas and play Christmas music as clubbers arrive. Have the clubbers place their gifts under the Christmas tree. All gifts must be labeled, so you will know what they contain and whom they are for. You can provide time for clubbers to wrap their gifts at club, so you can see what is in each package before it is sent.

During Game Time, have an indoor snowball fight (wads of newspaper). In Council Time, ask a leader to tell the account of Christ’s birth, emphasizing the fact that God gave His Son. Explain why Jesus came as a baby and the significance of His life.

Remind clubbers that we show our love for God by sharing with others.

Show clubbers recent photos of the missionary children to whom you are sending the gifts. Have leaders and clubbers make a tape recording to send along with the gifts. Record the clubbers singing the club theme song and a few Christmas favorites. Also recite some Bible verses.

Conclude the tape with each clubber saying, “Merry Christmas from _____ (filling in his or her own name).”