

GROWING WITH OUTINGS

Outings convey the impression that something special is happening at Awana. When other boys and girls hear about all the fun and excitement, they become interested and want to join your club.

Outings also establish closer leader/clubber relationships. Boys and girls react differently in the casual atmosphere of an outing than in a regular club meeting. You'll find them talking among themselves and with their leaders about everyday home and school situations.

Some outings give clubbers an opportunity to practice Christian service. Others provide the children with additional opportunities to pass handbook Discoveries and Challenges. Outings motivate clubbers to achieve and reward those who do!

Special Considerations

Who? _Plan some outings for all your clubbers. These activities supplement the regular club nights. The purpose of other outings is to motivate achievement, since only those clubbers who attain specific goals may participate. Late in October consider planning an outing for all clubbers who have completed their entrance booklet and are in uniform. Early in December, invite those who have completed their first Discovery or Challenge to a special event, in January, schedule an outing for those who have passed three Discoveries or Challenges. In February, plan a special event for those who have passed five Discoveries or Challenges, and so on. Allowance must be made for new clubbers. Set an achievement level for them according to the number of weeks they have attended club.

When? _Schedule outings throughout the year on Saturdays, on school holidays or during school vacations, during summer vacation, overnight, and on weekends. Check church, school and community calendars to prevent schedule conflicts. For outdoor activities, plan an alternate date in case of bad weather.

Decide the time and place of departure. Be punctual! Inform parents when and where you can be reached and, if possible, give them an emergency telephone number. Decide where and when you will return. For the parents' sake, keep to this set time diligently.

Where? _Check with your local chamber of commerce or public library. Ask leaders for suggestions. Personally check out the planned site; be sure the place fits your purpose and age group. Check with authorities for reservations, permits (i.e., tire), etc. Leave the site in better condition than you found it. Dispose properly of all scraps and garbage.

Leader's Responsibilities

Participate in all games and activities.

Fulfill the specific responsibilities assigned by the club director. Such responsibilities may include planning and overseeing transportation, food, devotions, games, crafts, etc. Find an opportunity to talk with individual clubbers concerning their home, school and spiritual life.

Miscellaneous

- **Permission slips** –Send permission slip home with each clubber one week before the outing. This slip must be signed by parents and returned before the child is allowed to go.
- **Cost** –Ahead of time, itemize all costs involved and charge the clubbers accordingly. Even when clubbers attend an outing as a reward, their way does not necessarily have to be paid by the club. Although they earn the privilege of attending the outing, you can still have them pay their own expenses. In addition, some clubs automatically charge clubbers a small transportation fee, even if it involves riding in leaders' cars. When an entrance fee is charged at your outing site, ask if group rates are offered.
Perhaps the cost of a camping trip, overnight, etc., seems too great. If so, consider ways to cut expenses. Encourage clubbers to earn part of the fee through a club paper drive, car wash, baby-sitting service, etc. If your church does not approve such means of earning money, perhaps an adult Sunday school class could subsidize the trip. Or you might pay part of the cost from your Awana club church treasury.
Collect the money from each clubber before departing. If you have a large club, consider pre-registration and deposits to better estimate the number who will attend. Keep careful records of all money received and spent.
- **Promotion** –Always set the date for outings at least five weeks in advance. Publicize through fliers, posters, word of mouth, club announcements, newsletters and church bulletins. All promotion should include information specifying the type of event, date, time of departure and return, qualification for attendance, and list of things clubbers should bring (including recommended amount of spending money).
- **Transportation** –Whatever your form of transportation –church bus, private cars, hayrack, bikes, etc. –be sure it is sufficient for the number planning to attend. Always plan backup transportation and available drivers in case someone cancels at the last minute.
- **Insurance** –Check your church insurance coverage.

- Food – Will clubbers bring sack lunches or money to buy a meal along the way? Or will leaders supply the food? If so, who will plan the menu, buy the food and prepare the meal?
- Activities – Clubbers enjoy free time, but not too much. Plan more games and activities than you think will be needed. Be flexible in switching activities when one is not as interesting as expected. Make a checklist for game equipment and check what you bring. Consult *The Best Awana Games Ever!* book for game ideas.
- Pictures – Record expressions of anticipation on clubbers' faces as you set out. Catch some of the struggles with cooking or games. Then on the return trip, snap pictures of the gang, perhaps a bit weary, but contented. Such pictures will show other clubbers the fun they missed! Display these pictures with interesting captions on the Awana bulletin board as soon after the outing as possible. If you took slides, show them in one of your coming meetings and at the next parents' night.

Devotions

If you do plan devotions, keep them informal and suitable to the occasion.

En route to your destination, there is usually opportunity to sing familiar songs as well as learn new ones. Set standards for the types of songs in advance so clubbers understand that many popular hit songs are not appropriate. Leaders should plan ahead and guide the singing by suggesting Christian songs or choruses and fun songs.

Most outings, especially those which end around the campfire, lend themselves well to a Bible story or short talk on Christian living. If you are outdoors, the devotional emphasis could center on some specific scenery or natural phenomenon in the area of your outing. The devotional should appear as casual as the outing itself. Clubbers do not want to hear a sermon. They do, however, appreciate knowing that Christianity works practically in everyday life. If the majority of those attending are unsaved, stress the salvation message. If most are saved, air the message toward Christian growth and service, while including the gospel.

A required handbook section may naturally lead into an object lesson. Ask two or three clubbers to share a recent experience that was meaningful to them. When meeting in a home or at church, consider showing a Christian film or video.

Evaluation

On the way home, talk casually with as many clubbers as possible. Discover their opinions of the outing. What was the best part? What did they enjoy least? Try to find the

reasons behind their opinions. Answers to these questions will be helpful in planning future events.

At the next leaders' meeting, evaluate the outing together as you do every Awana event. Keep written records of the time, schedule, menu, those attending (clubbers and leaders) and comments from the participants. Write thank-you notes to those who helped make the outing possible.

Bicycle Rodeo

While some rodeo events described below are more appropriate for woods or fields, a successful bicycle rodeo may also be planned for a parking lot. The rodeo could be planned for just the clubs in your church. Or consider featuring competition between several churches.

Clearly mark the start, finish and zone lines for all events. All clubbers should walk or ride over any rough fields to become familiar with the course before competing. Evaluate all events to be sure they are safe and not too difficult for the age group competing. Divide clubbers so there are several at each event area.

Special equipment needed for the rodeo includes:

pylons (available from local street or traffic department); checkered or colored flags; score sheets, clipboards, pencils; starting guns or whistles; first-aid kits and possibly a nurse. At the conclusion of each event, or the entire rodeo, present a trophy or plaque to the winning team as well as to individual winners of each event.

Cross-country race – This race is for the best time over a course approximately 80-100 yards long. Add appeal by charting the race around several curves, up and down a hill, across a shallow creek, through a muddy area, or over several small earth jumps. Match the difficulty to clubbers' ages and abilities.

Slow race – Place the start and finish lines about 100 feet apart with zone lines approximately one yard apart. The clubber who takes the longest time to cover assigned distance (without touching the ground) wins. Crossing the zone lines disqualifies participants.

Fifty-yard race – The clubber with the best time wins. Run this race on flat ground. Clubbers may use a rolling start.

Hundred-yard race – Follow the guidelines for the 50-yard race.

Obstacle course 1 – Use pylons to lay out a course of sharp curves and switch-backs on relatively flat land.

Obstacle course 2 – This race is basically the same as Obstacle course 1, except the course leads through dense undergrowth with surprises around sharp curves. Surprises include

water holes, fallen trees, sand pits, mud holes, drop-offs, hills, etc., which can often be concealed by shrubbery.

Caution: Contestants should be encouraged to use BMX bikes. The leadership must be responsible and especially alert to potential hazards.

Marathon race –This race may be as long as 900-1,000 feet. It can be run cross-country or as several laps on a circular or elliptical track.

Relay race –Teams of three are required for this race. Two participants mount their bicycles at the starting line, the third at the finish line. At the signal, one clubber carrying a baton in his hand pedals to the finish line. As he crosses the finish line, he hands the baton to his teammate. The second contestant bicycles back to the starting line and passes the baton to the third team member.

The third contestant races back across the finish line. The racecourse should be approximately 50-75 yards long.

Slalom race –Place cones or flags 12-15 feet apart in a straight 200-foot line. Clubbers pass one cone on the left, the next on the right, and so on across the finish line. The clubber with the best time wins.

Boat Trip

Cruise on a nearby river or lake in canoes, rowboats or other craft. If you choose large boats, you will need all your leaders and perhaps parental assistance. One leader or adult should accompany three or four clubbers in each canoe or rowboat.

Caution: Course difficulty is an important consideration when planning your boat trip. Leadership must be knowledgeable and experienced in water safety.

Burger Bash

This is just another name for a cookout in a leader's backyard, nearby park or forest preserve. If a large play area is available, play kickball, softball or soccer. If space is limited, many games described in *The Best Awana Games Ever!* book are suitable for a picnic setting.

As clubbers arrive, involve them in games while you cook hamburgers over an open grill and set out other food: relishes, potato chips, baked beans or potato salad –on the serving table. Keep cleanup simple by using paper plates and cups.

Games

Take clubbers to a game! Professional, semipro, minor league, college or high school sports attract boys and girls. Contact the promotional department of the league, team or school and request free or discount tickets.

Hikes

Hike two or three miles with clubbers to a selected destination. On arrival, play games, explore, fix lunch, etc. Three suggested hike variations follow:

Bike hike –Just because you're bike riding doesn't mean you must go a long way. After shorter distances, clubbers will have energy left for other planned activities. Each clubber brings his own sack lunch. One leader drives a car with soda pop or juice, a repair tool kit and a first-aid kit.

Camera hike –Each clubber brings his or her own camera and film. At their own pace and discretion, clubbers stop along the way to take pictures. Award prizes for the best shots.

Activity hike –Clubbers will enjoy a Saturday designated for passing handbook sections in their Awana handbooks. Meet at the church and head for nearby woods or forest preserve. Divide leaders and clubbers according to handbook groups. After the handbook sections are concluded, serve a meal, then sing and give a short devotional.

Progressive Dinner

Travel by bike, truck, hayrack, church bus, private car, roller skates or on foot. During the club year, many leaders give clubbers various opportunities to visit their homes for team parties or to study and pass sections. Therefore, we suggest that you involve Awana parents, when possible, as hosts and hostesses for a progressive dinner. Through visitation in homes, open house at club, etc., leaders know which parents might be willing to open their homes. In large clubs, several mothers may be needed to prepare and serve the main course at the church.

The club director (or another leader) should call Awana mothers to explain the event and ask if the mom would be willing to open her home and prepare a particular course. Extend the invitation in such a way that the moms won't feel pressured. They should feel free to decline, but perhaps offer to help some other time. Note: The atmosphere in some homes is inappropriate for an Awana activity. Exercise discretion in deciding which homes to consider.

At each stop, schedule a short game or activity and serve one course of the meal. Depending on the distance between homes, the menu and the mode of transportation, your schedule might be as follows:

5:30 p.m.: Meet at church.

5:45 p.m.: First stop. On arrival, the clubbers play a game; the winner earns a prize. Then serve the appetizer, perhaps punch and an assortment of crackers or potato chips and dip. Kids love to eat, and sometimes hostesses feel guilty if their guests leave still feeling

hungry. But this is only the appetizer! Remind clubbers there is more to come and then leave for the second home.

6:30 p.m.: Second stop. As the clubbers arrive, play a game and then more food, such as a fruit or Jell-O salad (since many boys and girls do not like lettuce salads).

7:15 p.m.: Third stop. Sing a few favorite gospel songs before the main course. For an outdoor meal, cook hot dogs and hamburgers on a grill. Otherwise, consider casseroles or other relatively simple dishes which children like. Since this is the most expensive course of the meal, ask two or more ladies to provide and prepare the food.

8:15 p.m.: Fourth stop. Give a Bible story or other short devotional message before dessert. Since your clubbers will be excited and difficult to calm down, choose as your speaker a leader who is especially effective capturing the kids' attention.

8:45 p.m.: Head back to church.

Service Opportunity

Give your clubbers a chance to serve others. They can sing and give verbal testimonies at a nursing home, hospital or community home. Make a craft ahead of time (such as a Christmas decoration) for shut-ins, senior citizens or others visited. You may also prepare small packages of hard candy.

Snowfest

Schedule a hike into an open area of woods where snow is not trampled. Dress warmly and encourage clubbers to bring cameras. Carry sack lunches or return to a warm fire for hot chocolate, hot dogs and roasted marshmallows.

While hiking, announce a "Silent Walk." The group proceeds without saying a word. When someone breaks the silence, everyone else throws snowballs at him or her.

Play the "Siberian Man Hunt." One clubber (the Siberian Man) is selected and given a five- to eight-minute head start before the other clubbers set off to track and tag him or her. The Siberian Man tries to lose the followers by backtracking, covering his or her tracks, etc. When he or she finds a good place to defend (such as a briar patch or next to a wall) or is overtaken by the trackers, the Siberian Man tries to hit the clubbers with snowballs before they can tag him or her. Make sure snowballs aren't too hard - no ice. Any clubber hit with a snowball is out until the next game. The first player to tag the Siberian Man wins and becomes the next Siberian Man.

Mystery Outing

Clubbers and leaders meet at the church and head to an unknown destination. Heighten anticipation by dropping vague clues. Just before starting, either blindfold clubbers or cover their heads with paper bags. If the trip is long, the clubbers may remove the blindfolds or bags at intervals and try to guess their destination. Leaders, however, must keep the secret until arrival.

Breakfast In the Woods

One or two leaders arrive at the woods early to prepare a fire for cooking. Early, perhaps 8:00 a.m., clubbers and other leaders meet at church and leave together. Breakfast can include pancakes cooked on a griddle or bacon and eggs cooked in a tin. Play a few active games and end the outing with a short devotional.

Bum's Stew

Take several carloads of clubbers to a site where campfires are permitted. (Note: All clubbers must receive instruction in fire-building techniques.)

Give each pair of clubbers a clean container for cooking. Half-gallon or gallon tins work well. Fasten a light wire handle to each can through holes punched near the top. (Avoid cans coated on the inside. When heated, they retain the taste of varnish.)

For each stew pot provide one large or two small carrots, one small onion, two branches of celery, two small potatoes, 1/3 pound hamburger or four diced wieners, and one quart of water per person for cooking and drinking. Also provide two slices of buttered bread per person, with fresh fruit and cookies for dessert.

Clubbers cut up all the ingredients, place them in 1/2 a can of water and season to taste. The stew should cook at least 20 minutes over a low fire with water added as necessary. Allow pairs of clubbers to cook together and eat their own food. Leaders should offer assistance when necessary.

Kite-flying Contest

On a windy Saturday, take clubbers to a large open field. Invite moms and dads and other family members to join the fun. In fact, you may combine this contest with an all-day family picnic. Schedule kite-flying events throughout the day for various age levels, i.e., third- and fourth-graders, fifth- and sixth-graders, Jr. Varsity, men, women, etc.

Determine the rules in advance, including the length and strength of cord, size of kite and description of events. Distribute copies to participants at the start of the day.

The ideal place for flying kites is an open field near a body of water. A local playground or park may also be suitable. If you have a sizable group, make reservations and secure permission to use large parks or open areas.

Altitude contest – At a signal, contestants launch their kites and try to let out as much string as possible in a given time. The person unwinding the most string wins.

Marathon – Within a specified time limit, each clubber launches and anchors his or her kite securely. Neither kite nor string may be touched until any part of the kite contacts the ground. The kite staying airborne the longest wins. This event is especially fun during an overnight or campout. Begin the event early in the morning. Depending on the length of cord, some kites will fly all day while the group is involved in other activities. (To reduce probable flying time, shorten the cord length.)

Messengers – In this event, contestants send messages to their flying kites! Furnish sheets of paper, slit from one edge to a hole in the center. Clubbers slide the paper over their kite strings and pin them closed. The paper will climb the string to the kite. The kite receiving the most messages before being weighted down (or within designated time) wins.

Quarter-mile dash – Provide each participant with 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) of cord. At the signal, clubbers launch their kites, play out the entire length of string, attach it to a reel and wind in their kites as fast as possible. Each contestant is entitled to one helper. The player finishing first wins.

Strongest puller – While flying, kites are tested with a spring scale. The strongest puller wins.

Most artistic kite – Clubbers construct and decorate their own kites. The most attractively decorated kite, with the best flying ability, wins.

Polaroid Hunt

Provide each team with a Polaroid camera and film. Explain and distribute copies of the rules to each team. (Make your own list, using the rules listed below in addition to specifics for your situation.) You may give every team the same list of pictures to be taken. Or give each team a different list as equal in difficulty as possible.

To promote clubber/leader relationships, maintain, if possible, your regular color teams for this competition. The size and number of teams, however, depend upon the number of clubbers, adult drivers and available Polaroid® cameras. Provide at least one adult per carload.

Set a deadline for teams to return to the starting point. Announce that points will be deducted from teams returning late. Also, limit the number of pictures to be taken.

RULES:

1. All traffic laws must be obeyed. If at any time clubbers become overly rowdy, the driver may disqualify his or her team and bring the clubbers back to church.
2. Clubbers must be courteous at all times.
3. The face of each team member –except the photographer –must appear in every picture. If everyone cannot be seen, the picture is void.
4. If a stranger takes a picture, the team receives 100 bonus points.

5. A picture is void if the same stranger appears in more than one picture or is used twice as a photographer. The same stranger may be photographer once and appear once in a picture.
6. Judges will deduct 25 points for every minute a team is late returning.
7. All decisions of the judges are final. (Therefore, a judge should not be a team leader whom the clubbers might suspect of being partial. Invite three church members, whose own children are not participating, to judge.)

PICTURES TO BE TAKEN (EXAMPLE)

Blowing up balloons

With stranger doing same

By gravestone dated between 1960-70

By gravestone dated between 1860-70

Making funny faces With stranger doing same

On a slide

With an animal

In barber chairs With barber in picture

With everyone wearing party hats

On the 18th green next to flag

In a small rental trailer

Standing on their heads With stranger doing same

Playing different musical instruments

holding stuffed animals and sucking thumbs

With stranger doing same

Blowing bubbles with bubble gum

With faces pressed against a window

On fire truck

With fireman wearing a helmet

In a tree

In a phone booth

In fast-food restaurant with french fries in mouth With fast-food restaurant employee doing same

With a couple over 65 years old

With a janitor holding his broom

All clubbers sitting in wheel chairs With doctor doing same

Sleep-in

For several weeks in advance, award points for club attendance, wearing uniforms and passing sections. Clubbers earning a specified number of points are eligible to attend the sleep-in. Make qualifications easily attainable for those girls who really try.

Hold the sleep-in in a leader's home or the church basement. Plan a flexible schedule of games and other activities, snack times and a spiritual emphasis (story, filmstrip or film). In addition, take time to talk casually with clubbers about questions they might have (about anything!). After a certain hour, perhaps midnight for younger clubbers and 1:00 a.m. for older clubbers, it's quiet time. Provide a quiet room for those wanting to sleep. Girls who prefer to stay up and talk or play games may do so quietly. At all times there must be adult supervision for those who are awake.

Ask each girl to bring a snack to share. Put all the food in the kitchen until your first snack time. After that, leave it out for the girls to munch on throughout the night. Suggest that girls bring frozen pizzas, popcorn, chips, brownies, cookies, etc. Provide soda pop to drink. In the morning, serve donuts and juice for breakfast.

Splash Party

Have a swimming party at the beach or at a local park, YMCA or motel. Contact the manager and ask for times when the pool will not be crowded. Or consider renting the pool for an hour or two. Check ahead of time that a qualified lifeguard will be on duty. If uncertain, bring a lifeguard with you. Sufficient leadership supervision is essential, especially with young clubbers.