

Planning and Implementing Awana Specials

Why should we have Special Events?

To allow more time for interaction among clubbers and leaders; to get to know each other in a setting away from regular club, to learn about others' needs and ambitions, and to help you minister to clubbers more effectively.

As achievement events; to help your clubbers with completing activities, because there is not enough time during club night. Clear this with your Commander ahead of time.

To have fun as Christians. We can show clubbers that there is joy in being with the church family.

To provide rewards for accomplishments. Special events can be a strong motivator for increased achievement.

Who should take part in our Awana Special Events?

The whole club, especially for outreach or recognition events.

One group within the club; one handbook group, girls, boys, quiz team, Games team, etc.

Your Achievers; those who are making progress in their handbooks. Pacers, Sword Club, any hard-workers.

Your leaders; they enjoy specials just as much as clubbers do! Invite them to everything; some specials can be leaders only. Parties, sports night, etc.

What kinds of Special Events should we have?

Outings; to learn, to experience, to enjoy, to invite friends, to complete craft requirements.

Parties; to have fun, to invite friends.

In-church activities; for outreach, for promotion of Awana.

Regional Awana events; Olympics, Grand Prix, quizzing, etc.

Service activities for training; caroling, rest homes, missions, shut-ins, etc.

When should we schedule Special Events?

Quarterly, for motivation to achieve in the handbook. Have an achiever activity for those who have completed a designated number of drills and crafts, for example.

During regular club night; try to make each night exciting!

Weeknights; try to avoid school nights, since most clubbers will have homework.

On school holidays; could be a perfect occasion for a short trip to a special site. Maybe parents who are not Awana leaders can help chaperon.

Friday nights; great for late-night or all-night activities, since you will not interfere with Sunday School attendance. Give leaders time to get home from work.

Saturday during the day; perfect for service activities, outings. Saturday night could affect Sunday School.

Sunday afternoon after church; might be okay for service activities, visits to rest homes for example. Sunday evenings are good if there is no school on Monday. Open the game floor, have simple snacks.

At the beginning, and at the end of the club year; these are great times to get parents involved; open house, welcome party, awards night, etc.

Where should we have our Special Events?

At church; a central location, game floor, can handle a large group. Must coordinate with other activities.

At a leader's home; must be a smaller group, will usually be more informal. Provides a meaningful chance to get to know your clubbers better. Commanders and Directors, consider having your leaders in your home for meals, deserts, and games.

At a church member's home; provides variety, increases involvement by the church family. Maybe a woodworker can help build Grand Prix cars in his shop. Maybe you can visit a member's farm. Ask around, and be creative.

At a different location; museums, camp or park, shopping, etc. You and your leaders can probably think of dozens of interesting sites.

How should we plan our Special Events?

- Talk among Commander, Directors, and Leaders to get ideas.
- Check facility schedules, call ahead for permission. Coordinate specials with other church & school activities.
- Personally investigate the site ahead of time if possible.
- Delegate tasks to various leaders; ask for help. Later write thank-you notes to those who helped.
- Send a flyer home with the clubbers. Get permission slips from parents. Advertise and promote the special or outing.
- Itemize costs and collect money ahead of time.
- Arrange for transportation.
- Provide for meals if required.
- Take lots of pictures!
- Have a song leader. Sing on the bus or at the site.
- Have an appropriate devotional.
- Talk to the clubbers on the way home to evaluate the outing.
- At the next Awana meeting, have the participants tell everyone else what a good time they had.

How should we conduct our Special Events?

Make them special. You, your leaders, and your clubbers should be excited about the special. Make it something the clubber will be motivated to do.

Also make it easy for the leaders. Don't burn them out. It should be fun and exciting for them as well. Maybe another church member not involved in Awana can help.

Plan ahead. Get everyone involved; brainstorm, get good ideas from others. Don't have gaps in the schedule. Be detailed in your planning but flexible in your execution. Delegate responsibility and people will surprise you with their creativity and administrative skills.

Clubbers don't need all the details; parents and leaders do. Sometimes keep clubbers in suspense. Be punctual. Let parents know when you are leaving, where you are going, and when you will return. Be back early. Better to have the clubbers waiting for their parents than the parents waiting for the clubbers.

Outdoors: miniature golf, skating, bowling, kite flying, basketball, hiking, canoeing, water park, sledding, cookout, state park, car races, double-dare.

Indoors: skit night, Jesus' birthday party, pizza party, parents party, mother-daughter tea, cookie contest, progressive dinner, leaders' Olympics, gift exchange, craft parties.

Service: leaf-raking, house cleaning, work around church, penny counting, short-term missions trip, Christmas card exchange, Christmas card mailbox, food collection.

Overnight: Friday after dinner through Saturday mid-morning. Lots of games, crafts, devotional. Christian video, midnight snacks, simple breakfast.

Caroling: Get lists of shut-ins. Call ahead to nursing homes, hospitals. Coordinate Sparks Carol-A-Rama with other clubs, go to a mall together.