

Cub Scout Academics



Art



Astronomy



Chess



Citizenship



Collecting



Communicating



Computers



Geography



Geology



Heritages



Language
and Culture



Map and
Compass



Mathematics



Music



Science



Weather



Wildlife
Conservation

Why Cub Scout Academics?

Cub Scout Academics is a great way to help fulfill the aims of Scouting—building character, developing citizenship, and encouraging mental and physical fitness. Through the 12 subjects currently offered in the Cub Scout Academics program, a boy can stretch his mind—exploring the wonders of science, learning to better appreciate the arts, improving his sense of responsibility, and understanding and valuing his heritage.



Selecting an Academics Area

The first task in implementing Cub Scout Academics within the den or pack is selecting the subjects that will complement your pack program. Surveying the boys will

help you identify their interests and needs and whether they match the topics covered in the academic areas. Here is a brief description of the 17 subjects and their related activities.

Art—Encourages use of higher-order thinking skills and expression of creativity. Activities include viewing artwork at a museum or gallery and making paper, collages, and other works of art.

Astronomy—Increases understanding of our solar system and universe and how to use a telescope. Boys will learn about constellations, phases of the moon, and famous astronauts. They may visit an observatory or planetarium.

Chess—Provides an avenue for Cub Scouts to participate in an engaging game that requires a high level of mental activity and problem-solving skills.

Citizenship—Promotes good citizenship in all aspects of life. Activities are focused on family and community citizenship and personal character development.

Collecting—Provides a fun experience in collecting and making a nice presentation of the collection. Activities include collecting, labeling, cataloging, and organizing collections.

Communicating—Stimulates and encourages reading and writing through activities such as writing a letter, keeping a journal, and visiting the library.

Computers—Encourages boys to learn about and understand this critical tool in today's world. Boys will use different programs to accomplish simple tasks and learn about the Internet.

Geography—Helps boys understand the importance of geography in many aspects of life. Boys will use and draw maps and make travel posters and geography displays.

Geology—Emphasizes rocks and minerals as the boys enjoy plaster crafts, rock collections, volcano projects, and crystal gardens. They also learn about fossils and caves, and may visit a stone quarry.

Heritages—Develops a better understanding of personal family history and appreciation for the heritage of others. Activities include researching family history, visiting a genealogy library, and sharing heritage information with den members.

Language and Culture—Helps Cub Scouts be more aware of different cultures and languages. Boys have fun learning new words, including words in American Sign Language. Communicating and the use of an interpreter are also emphasized.

Map and Compass—Provides an opportunity for Cub Scouts to learn about cartography. Boys learn how to orient a map and use a compass. They also learn to make neighborhood maps and read road maps.

Mathematics—Encourages the development of problem-solving skills and basic reasoning and helps boys see the connection of mathematics to everyday events. Activities include using the math skills of geometry, statistics, probability, and measuring to solve specific problems.

Music—Promotes the understanding and enjoyment of different types of music. Activities include singing, playing a musical instrument, and writing and listening to music.

Science—Helps boys develop a basic understanding of the scientific method of problem solving. Activities include conducting experiments in the natural and physical sciences.

Weather—Helps boys develop an interest in meteorology as they learn about such things as the water cycle, severe weather, and acid rain. Projects include building a simple weather vane and learning about what meteorologists do.

Wildlife Conservation—Encourages a respect for natural resources and the environment and helps boys develop a sense of responsibility for other living things. Boys will learn about endangered species, animal habitats, and conservation practices.

Using School- and Community-Based Events

As you begin planning your den or pack Academics program, be sure to check with local schools to determine whether they are planning any special academics-related events. You will also want to be aware of any special community events or summer programs that might fit into one of the Academics areas. Consider the following:

- Is there a science fair each year? The boys could be completing the requirements for their Science Academics pin while preparing for the school event. You might consider having your own den or pack science fair.
- Does the local parks and recreation department offer arts and crafts classes after school or during school vacations?
- Do local schools or clubs have competitions that might encourage boys to investigate academic subjects?
- Does the local government offer a young people's government day that might help boys earn the Citizenship belt loop and pin?



Be sure to spend some time brainstorming with your pack leaders about any available local resources and how they might help your Cub Scouts enjoy the Academics program. Through this kind of interaction with the community, the Academics program can help develop better understanding between pack leadership and school and other community organizational leadership. Also remember that individual boys may participate in community-based events, so parents need to be informed of these resources.

Cub Scout Academics Fair

A Cub Scout Academics fair can serve as the focal point of a pack's Academics program. The academics fair is

an excellent complement to an existing summertime pack program or can be the center of a new program. It provides Cub Scouts with the opportunity to learn skills in a variety of scholastic and artistic areas that they may not have explored before.

The Cub Scout Academics fair is a pack event and requires planning and preparation, just like any other successful Cub Scout activity. To ensure effective planning and clearly define responsibilities, a committee should be formed as far in advance as possible (nine months is ideal). If necessary, this committee can be divided into three subcommittees: facilities and equipment, finance and promotion, and program development.

Facilities and Equipment

Decide on the amount and type of area needed to allow adequate movement among the display areas and participation in the activity areas. Secure the facilities, working with the finance and promotion committee to budget for any costs for rental, cleanup, etc.

Decide on and secure any needed equipment, such as tables, chairs, easels, lighting, extension cords, and tarps or canopies. Work with leaders and parents to secure all needed materials and supplies. Using donated facilities, equipment, and supplies will reduce the overall cost of the event. Be as resourceful as possible.

Finance and Promotion

On the basis of input from the other subcommittees, decide on the funds needed and formulate a budget for the event. Then decide on a means for raising the funds. This could include charging participants a fee or developing and conducting a fund-raising event or events. Monitor fund expenditure and prepare a final financial report for the general committee.

Begin promotion and registration for the event as early as possible. This will allow families to set aside the date on their calendars. Depending on the planned size of your fair, events such as den meetings, pack meetings, the blue and gold banquet, roundtable, and a Scoutorama or Scouting show could be useful in publicizing your academics fair.

Program Development

Your fair may include any of the 17 Academics subjects, using several activities from each area. The following planning hints might help you in developing your program.

1. **Time**—The schedule should provide plenty of opportunities for the boys to view displays and take part in the activities offered.
2. **Activities**—Have a good selection of individual and team activities. Several of the academic subjects and activities can be adapted to a team event.
3. **Variety**—Offer a wide variety of academic activities. These might include
 - Music concerts or recitals
 - Art shows or hands-on activities
 - Mathematics contests and demonstrations
 - Heritage group demonstrations and displays
 - Science fair presentations and experiment displays
 - Radio or television broadcasts
 - Computer art and communications demonstrations
 - Geography displays or contests
 - Citizenship exhibits
 - Chess tournaments
 - Special displays or programs at a local museum or park
4. **Expert Assistance**—Find “experts” within the community for academic areas. Ask college professors, artists, scientists, and other professionals to help run the events. They could even be asked to give a short talk or demonstration in their area of expertise to add to the quality of the program.

Summary

The most important ingredient of a successful Cub Scout academics fair is **fun**. But also stress scholarship and team support. Avoid letting the fair become a full-blown competitive event. Remember that the ability and interest levels of the boys in the various Academics areas could vary significantly. Try to include something for everyone. The 17 Academics subjects provide a wide range of activities and events, from quiet to active, for the boys and their families to experience and participate in. If you focus on the goal of showing your Scouts the fun, excitement, and adventure that can be found in scholarship, your fair will be a success.

After the event, many of the items would make nice display materials for other functions. Encourage boys to save their projects for use at the pack’s blue and gold banquet, recruitment night, Scouting Show, or other suitable occasion. Also, boys may find that sharing their projects at school or putting them in public window displays is rewarding.

Schedule for Planning a Cub Scout Academics Fair

Date	What To Do	Adult Responsible
_____	Consider the interests of the pack and decide which Academics subjects will be used.	_____
_____	Select chairperson for the event. Select other committee(s) as needed.	_____
_____	Establish a schedule for the event. Decide on the date, duration, place, and rules. Determine how much lead time is needed.	_____
_____	Prepare introductory flier and distribute to boys. Include notes to parents and step-by-step instructions on what the boys need to do, dates, place, categories for judging (if applicable), and registration form (if needed).	_____
_____	Provide Academics literature to boys and families.	_____
_____	If needed, select instructors to teach academics skills to boys.	_____
_____	Follow up with dens to determine progress.	_____
_____	Inspect site or facilities that will be used.	_____
_____	Arrange for judges (if needed) and recognition items if they are to be presented at the event. Invite the local news media.	_____
_____	Conduct the event. Be sure to gather the records from the boys and their adult partners to determine any recognition earned. Belt loops and/or pins may be presented at the event, at a pack meeting, or at another meaningful opportunity. Recognize judges and referees.	_____
_____	Evaluate the event. Make recommendations for future improvements.	_____

Worksheet for Building a Pack Academics Program

Decide which academic subject will help your pack program. Determine parental involvement.

Academic Subject	Facilities Needed	Individual Equipment	Pack Equipment	Personnel Needed
Art		Pencils, art supplies, brushes, canvas	Easels	Art instructor
Astronomy	Outdoors; observatory or planetarium	Pencil (pen) and paper, star chart, map	Telescopes, binoculars	
Chess		Chess set	Optional: Chess clock	
Citizenship				
Collecting		Computer with internet access	Computer with internet access	
Communicating				
Computers		Computer	Optional: Computer and Web site	
Geography		Globe, atlas		
Geology	Outdoor area of special interest	Pencil (pen) and paper	Poster board and markers	
Heritages		Tape recorder for oral history		
Language and Culture				
Map and Compass	Outdoors	Map, compass		
Mathematics		Pencil (pen) and paper		
Music		Musical instrument		
Science				
Weather		Art supplies, thermometer		
Wildlife Conservation	Outdoors	Binoculars	Plaster for track casting	