

Merit System

Philosophy of Merit System

The ultimate goal of Pathfinding is to prepare boys and girls for the coming of the Lord. Anything short of this mark is incomplete. Every idea, plan, or approach built into the master programme of the Pathfinder Club should help to develop personality and character. One area so often neglected, yet so basic to the need of personality and character development, is the practice of self-discipline or control. "The greatest danger of the young," says Ellen G. White, "is from a lack of self-control." – *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 243.

The merit system not only helps to develop personality and character but also guides boys and girls into a proper relationship to others through the practice of self-discipline and self-control. They learn to pit themselves against a standard rather than against one another. It helps them to learn the importance of obedience to the natural and moral laws of life and to practice firm self-control in their relationship to them.

We all like to be rewarded for our efforts in life. Unselfish rewards achieved and gained without causing others loss and sorrow are good. Even God our Father offers to His faithful children the reward of eternal life. The merit system offers rewards of honour trips and special adventures to the boys and girls who achieve a total of 75 percent or more of the total points possible over a given period of time such as six months. (The time and percentage can be adapted to the local need or desire.) This means that all can be winners.

Boys and girls like a challenge. Often they are reticent in becoming involved unless a reward is held out to them. Once involved, though, they grow fond of wholesome fellowship and positive challenges and, instead of participating because of the reward, now participate because of the enjoyment experienced.

The merit system challenges participation and involvement thus opening the door to character development.

The following list is a few of the benefits of the Pathfinder merit system:

1. The merit system challenges participation and involvement.
2. It helps to develop personality and character.
3. It also emphasizes the importance of individual responsibility.
4. Pathfinders learn to compete against a standard rather than against one another.
5. The merit system develops co-operation and coordination, instead of competition.
6. It offers a legitimate and profitable reward to those who attempt to excel through individual initiative.

7. It develops an attitude of self-discipline and self-control, thus helping to insure a well-controlled club atmosphere.

Merit Point Allocation

Not only can merit points be given for attendance, uniform, and dues but also for many other things as determined by the Pathfinder Club executive committee. It is wise to follow the policy of not giving the Pathfinders extra points for everything they do. In many cases they do not need to know they will receive points until after they have participated.

All Pathfinder Club members will participate in a point plan known as a "Merit Program."

- Club members will receive a value of from 0 to 10 points for complete uniform, neatness, and unit attention.
- Members will receive 10 points for attendance on time.
- Members will lose 6 points for unexcused tardiness.
- Members may earn extra points for helpfulness to the club or leadership.
- Members will receive a value of 0 to 15 points for club participation, (disobedience, rowdiness, politeness, etc., are taken into consideration). The Pathfinder Law becomes a living demonstration.
- There are awards for attaining a certain percentage of points for both the individual and the unit.
- Points used can be determined by the local Pathfinder executive council.
- The points as suggested above are issued at every official Pathfinder Club meeting as promoted for the Pathfinder calendar year and two weeks before the beginning of a new quarter.