

Comments and Criticism

Response to Letter regarding Dr. Novack's comments about Scouting STEM merit badges

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You bring up an important point that the actual delivery of the merit badge curriculum is highly dependent upon the dialog between the merit badge counselor and the Scout. While this does make an analysis of the terms “discuss” and “explain” difficult, our approach was to view the merit badge requirements as a standardized curriculum and to evaluate the level of cognition promoted by the verbiage of the requirements. This is similar to how in a classroom, the teacher's delivery will impact the objectives laid out by a school's stated curriculum. This is definitely an area worth following up with additional research.

Both of the authors are active in Scouting and serve on their local Boy Scout Council's Executive Board. Both authors are Eagle Scouts who have served as summer camp directors and have been involved in the implementation of many science related merit badges in summer camp environments. The article has been shared with the national office of the Boy Scouts of America.

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