



# AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

## GUIDE TO THE CLASSROOM-PRESENTATION

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### GOALS:

- To help create a clear mental image of correct breed type according to the standard. This mental image is necessary for good judging – sometimes the correct dog may look different from the others. A presenter has to be able to verbalize this mental image in easy to understand terms.
- Clarify the breed standard. What does it call for? Where is the emphasis? Where do you “give” when judging this breed? Or what are you willing to “forgive” and why?
- Reveal what longtime breeders think and value. What are the hard to get virtues that are treasured and what is the drag of the breed? What are the hallmarks of the breed?
- Familiarize the participant with the development of the breed including its history and purpose and the evolution of breed type. Discuss those features important in a breed relative to its purpose, i.e. a herding dog’s ability to be sure-footed and swift, or a bloodhound having enough extra skin to reach the ground in order to detect scent.
  - Provide BREED SPECIFIC exam techniques such as bite, mouth, the approach, eyes etc...
- Why do you use your hands the way you do and what specifically are you checking for?
- Answer questions regarding the breed and clear up any confusion regarding the standard, breed type and character. Personality: Aloof, overly friendly? What should you expect as a judge when going over a breed? What is acceptable behavior (for example, Min Pins hardly ever stand still).
- Finally, to inspire the prospective judge with the beauty and uniqueness of the breed so that he or she WANTS to judge the breed.

After the individual examination demonstration has been completed, line up a class of three or more dogs. Have the participants look at the dogs from across the room. This is the time to discuss and compare balance, proportion and shape. Next have the participants walk in line in front of the dogs to take a closer look at expression.

Repeat the above with a class of bitches and field any questions that arise.

Have half the participants go to one end of the room and half go to the other. Move the dogs down and back and field any questions regarding coming and going movement.

Next, have the participants go to one side of the room and move the dogs one at a time to assess side-gait. Ask them to go at least twice so the differences between the dogs are more apparent. Mention appropriate speed, reach, drive, foot timing, topline and efficiency. Turn any questions into a discussion and encourage the attendees to participate. If they are comfortable they will be less hesitant to ask their questions.

Line up the dogs in the center of the room so that participants can go over each one. Work with them individually on the examination and answer their questions.

After the participants have evaluated all the dogs request that they go and stand in front of the dog that is their "best" or class winner. Ask them to speak about the virtues that their choice possessed and encourage discussion at this point. If time permits ask the participants to move to their runner-up and elaborate on the virtues of these dogs. Keep the tone positive at all times and make it enjoyable as well as educational.

*Authors: Rosalind Kramer and Thomas Coen*



# AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

## Presentable Presentations

The components of a good breed workshop or seminar

The development and growth of the Judges' Breed Study Groups and Judges' Workshop Groups have been overwhelming. The American Kennel Club continues to support and encourage these programs and will develop new ones as the need arises. We have had the opportunity to attend some of the educational programs presented throughout the year and would like to attend more, time permitting.

Most of the presentations thus far have been well-organized and have included: written material for use during and/or after the seminar; live dogs for illustration and examination; a variety of prepared visual aids to clarify the formal presentations.

The following guidelines might be helpful in preparing a breed-specific workshop or seminar. First, here is a basic outline:

- I. Presentation
  - A. History
  - B. Interpretation of the standard
  - C. Examination technique
  - D. Examination of dogs
  - E. Breed problems
  - F. Written supplementary materials
  - G. Question and answer session
- II. Avoid Potential Pitfalls
  - A. Preparation
  - B. Practice
- III. Purpose of Seminar
  - A. Learning, not teaching

### **Preparation Is Universal**

It's not just the individual giving the presentation who needs to prepare. Individuals attending a seminar should do some preliminary preparation as well. They should familiarize themselves with the breed standard and, if possible, view the breed video. This is an excellent tool and a great introduction to individual breeds.

As for the program coordinator, he or she should secure a short biography of the presenters in order to prepare pertinent introductions for the beginning of the seminar. Among the information included in a biography should be the presenter's background with regard to the breed.

A logical starting point for seminar or workshop is a brief background on the history of the breed. The presenter should discuss the original purpose and development of the breed, as well as how it may have changed and its current function and level of activity.

Next might come an interpretation of the breed standard. During the discussion of the standard, slides or overhead transparency drawings are especially helpful. These provide a large image of the breed that

can easily be seen by an audience. Slides or transparencies also allow the presenters to show a wide range of examples of different breed characteristics. One important component of a seminar is defining the essentials of breed type. What is it that makes one breed different from another? What are the breed's key characteristics? At the conclusion of the discussion of the breed standard, you can review and explain any recent or planned changes to the standard.

Where disqualifications exist within the standard, it is important to explore them in detail. If measurement is involved in disqualifying a dog in the ring, this should be demonstrated at the seminar. It is especially interesting to explain the history of disqualifications to workshop attendees who may be unfamiliar with the breed.

Areas that might also be addressed while discussing the breed standard are: current problems of the breed; variations of the type; variations between the conformation and field animal; differences that may exist between the sexes within the breed; color; coat conditions; and temperament in and out of the ring.

The standard should include a section on gait. It is recommended to have a film or video on hand to portray proper movement, or at the very least, slides. It is often difficult to give an adequate demonstration of movement with a live dog within the confines of the presentation room.

Demonstrating the appropriate examination technique for the breed should focus on the areas of approach, mouth examination, eye examination, coat/texture and size. The presenter may also use a live dog to demonstrate any variations in grooming techniques.

### **Hands On and Hand Outs**

Have several examples of the breed present for workshop attendees to examine. Observe their examination technique and correct an approach that might be problematic. Provide several examples of the breed and allow participants to examine all and place as a class. Encourage discussion of the placements among attendees and presenters.

It is important also to discuss any medical or genetic problems the breed might have, such as PRA, hip dysplasia, thyroid problems, deafness or CVI, among others.

Be sure to provide the group with supplementary materials. Consult with the parent club education committee and obtain prior permission if you wish to reprint anything to hand out. Many breed clubs have successfully compiled packets of information that are available through the judges' education coordinator. Among the important items to include are: parent club information on the standard; an illustrated standard or explanation; a history of the breed's development. Other pertinent information might consist of a list of specialties, a breeder's directory and a bibliography of other source materials on the breed.

### **Avoiding Pitfalls**

Potential pitfalls can be avoided by providing adequate attention to details such as time, audio-visual equipment, a presentation outline, room space, use of live dogs, alternative interpretation of the standard and alternative views of live dogs. With regard to the last two points, in the spirit of genuine comprehension, reasonableness must prevail. When two presenters disagree, an opportunity for real education exists; this is neither to be avoided nor permitted to elevate to unprofessional heights, since the informal audience will always decide in the end anyway. Holding a question-and-answer session is also a good idea.

It is helpful for the presenters to do a practice run-through of their program. This allows them to assess their thoughts, materials and the dogs they may be using. It will also give you a running time for the program, as well as an opportunity to iron out any problems.

Always check your audio-visual equipment in advance and preview the slides you will be using. The person in charge of this equipment should also have spare bulbs and an extension cord handy.

### **Learning, Not Teaching**

It is important to keep in mind the spirit of the presentation-an educational experience on a specific breed. Throughout the entire process we are all “learners.” In preparing, organizing, sharing and responding to the audience, learning is continuous, not only for the audience, but for those giving the presentation. Some one may ask a question that causes you to reflect in a new way. The results (hopefully) can only be positive.

These are merely recommendations for putting together a breed-specific program. The idea is to plan and organize in advance, be confident about your subject matter, and have the appropriate supplementary materials. All of these components add up to a positive learning experience for everyone involved.

We look forward to enjoying the rapidly growing number of breed presentations happening nationwide.

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