

*Teacher Jack Greening talks about setting up a school photography club.*

§1. Last year the headteacher came and asked me to start a photography club. Our school already has lots of fantastic sports clubs, which is great, but not all students like sport. My classroom's decorated with photos I've taken, but they're not exactly works of art and I wasn't sure I was a good enough photographer to teach others. But I wanted to run a school club and the headteacher promised money for cameras, memory cards, tripods (штативы), and so on — so I said yes.

§2. There were so many things to consider before I started, and I knew my colleagues were too busy to help. Should the club be for students with experience? Should it be for the whole school, or only some year-groups? Above all, what did I want to achieve? To enter student competitions, or just to take photos for the school website? In the end I decided my aim was for students to have fun with photography. I held the sessions in a science lab where we could lock stuff that we needed for the club in a cupboard.

§3. About fifteen students came to the first session. Some of them were clearly only there to be with their mates. Still, I got them all to take photos of each other. We put these on the screen and the keen students chatted about the good and not so good points. I hadn't expected them to have so many good ideas about what they could do better next time.

§4. The second week, most of the students came back, and another twenty-five joined. I had to ask the headteacher to get another teacher to share the sessions. Colleagues heard students talking about the club in lessons and advised me about things to do with students, including taking them to a famous photographer's exhibition. A year later, and I've no regrets about starting this club. The students have worked hard on their photography. Some clearly have a natural ability, which helps. I've already planned next year's photographic projects, but our school cameras are quite basic. To take really amazing photos, the students need a more advanced one of their own — that's the best way to improve.

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What surprised Jack at the club's first session?

- 1) how many different types of students took part
- 2) how good most of the students' photos were
- 3) how well students could discuss their photos
- 4) how serious all the students were about photography