Inspiration Via The Disc

ROBERT WHEELER, Biology Teacher and Director of A-V Aids, Junior-Senior H. S., Waukesha, Wisconsin

I'm a high school biology teacher. I think it is part of my function to inspire students as well as to acquaint them with the antics of amebas, corpuscles, and lazy genes. To my way of thinking, one way to inspire youngsters is to help them discover what the "greats" have done in biology and related fields.

Some time ago I referred a class studying bacteria and other microorganisms to biographies containing the stories of people like Hooke, Schleiden, Schwann, and Leeuwenhoek. Among the books recommended was one telling the story of Leeuwenhoek's pioneer work with the microscope. Several students became interested in the story and the man to the extent that I felt persuaded to give their interest a little extra shove. I said, "Why don't you rewrite the story, converting it into a play?" Then, one of those spur-of-the moment ideas dropped in and I added, "If you do it well, we'll have it recorded."

Never again will I harbor any doubts about the effectiveness of a promise to preserve contemporary talent for posterity; they fell to with a will! In short order they came up with a five-page script complete with parts for a cast of five, stage directions, a narrator —even sound effects. There followed a series of experiences that were gratifying to me and almost certainly must have made the work of Anton van Leeuwenhoek much more meaningful to the youngsters involved in the project. There was casting to do, then script-trimming, and revision. There was the tinkling of glassware and the noises of lens-grinding to be worked in for sound effects, and finally the wave of the hand saying, "You're recording!"

We cut the little play onto a 12 in. disc using our school's disc recorder cutting at $33\frac{1}{3}$ RPM. Of course each participant, wishing to make sure that his particular segment of "posterity" would not be neglected, wanted a copy of his own. This called for duplicating in the only inexpensive way available to us—playing the original into the mike of the recorder to cut six additional discs.

About then, the Science Department got its annual request for a program to be broadcast from the local radio station—part of "Your Schools in Review," a weekly broadcast mirroring local school affairs. Our "Life of Leeuwenhoek" won a quick decision. After all, it was all prepared! But now a weighty choice: shall we send the recording down to the radio studio, or shall we send the "live" cast? Again a quick decision, with the lure of the studio winning handily over the portability of the disc. Every youngster in the group (although affecting a blase "I-do-this-every-day" front) thrilled with the experience that started with a class assignment. Spurred by the experiment with the disc recording, the play reached its climax with the pointed index finger that said, "You're on the air!"

Enzymatic Aid for Euglena

HOWARD BAKER, El Dorado High School, El Dorado, Kansas

How I happened to start working with euglena and the account of six years of experimentation would occupy too much space. It is enough to describe a simple method whereby, with the aid of enzymes, one can grow a good culture in a few days for class examination and still keep that same culture for a long time on a minimum amount of attention. I have kept my present stock for over six years. Some of my cultures survived for more than a year on one feeding without suffering noticeably. It seems wiser, however, to start new cultures whenever rapid growth is desired. Evidence indicates that the action on starch is invaluable to euglena as well as to many other small organisms in their metabolic processes. A little artificial digestion is a great accommodation. Or perhaps the protein in the enzyme is sufficient.

The simplest and one of the best methods of feeding that I found, was to add one-fourth teaspoon of commercial diastase malt to 400