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A Microscope Lamp

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The beginning student in biology is faced with a number of difficulties in laboratory work, and many of these problems are related to his use of the microscope. Some students, even after a year or more of biology, still confess they have rarely seen what they were supposed to see through the microscope.

Proper microscope light and its regulation is vital to success in microscopy. Many students never learn to use light from the windows in the classroom or from the ceiling lights in the room. On several occasions I have had students ask about "these little square cells on my slide", only to find they had focused on the egg-crate grill of the fluorescent lights in the room.

A simple, but effective microscope lamp for each student can be constructed for less than a dollar, using the following parts:

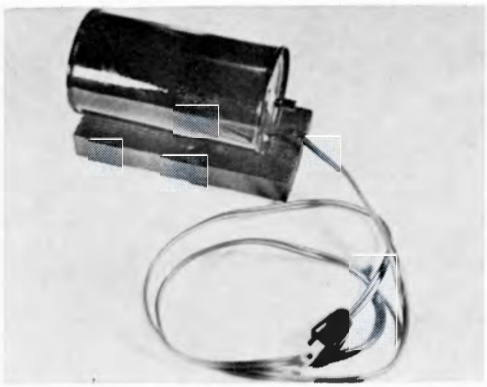
12 oz. "pop" can	no cost
socket with end switch	.45
wire	.09
plug	.15
25 watt bulb	.25
1" x 4" wood base	.04
	$ .98

If the teacher gets the material, and nails the pop cans to the bases, the students can complete the assembly in class in about 10 minutes.

Construct the lamp in the following manner:

1. Punch a hole in one end of the can to receive the end switch of socket. Punch a second hole for wire to come out. Remove other end of can with can opener.
2. Nail can to wood base with one nail at front and one nail at rear of can.
3. Pass wire through its hole in end of can. Attach one end to plug and other end to socket.
4. Insert socket in hole punched in end of can and fasten with threaded ring provided with the socket.
5. Paint assembled light black.
6. Insert light bulb.

My own classroom had no individual outlets at the lab tables, so we made a long extension cord for each row of tables with outlets on the cord for each student. Each student plugs his own microscope lamp into the outlet on the long cord.



Have you an idea for equipment? Send it in and share it with other **Journal** readers.