TITLE: PHILATELY IN THE TEACHING OF MICROBIOLOGY

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ABSTRACT:

Philately is the study or habit of collecting stamps, but it can be a means of scientific promotion regarding the importance of a teaching resource. In addition to their cultural value, stamps contain a wealth of detail in their prints. Using them in teaching-learning disciplines linked to the field of Microbiology at different educational and research levels may favor learning. The Brazil RHM Stamp Catalog was used as a reference. All post stamps issued by the Brazilian Post Office between the years 1900-2020 were analyzed. The stamps that had some relationship with the theme "Microbiology" were selected. Eighty-four stamps on “Microbiology” were found. Of these, 14 (16.7%) were scientists; 20 (23.8%) had images from laboratory equipment (glassware and microscope); 62 (73.8%) were about infectious diseases. Oswaldo Cruz appears on seven stamps. Other scientists appearing on the stamps included Adolfo Lutz; Gaspar Viana; Vital Brazil, Henrique da Rocha Lima; Carlos Chagas; Albert Sabin and Louis Pasteur. Nine stamps contained images of the microscope and 11 featured glassware (balloon; test tubes and Erlenmeyer flasks). Of the 62 stamps on diseases, 32 (51.6%) referred to leprosy; 12 (19.4%) to AIDS; six (9.7%) to COVID; four (6.5%) to polio; and two (3.2%) to tuberculosis. Typhus; leishmaniasis; malaria; smallpox; chagas disease and foot-and-mouth disease appeared in (1.6%) one stamp. Regarding the subfields of Microbiology, 35 (56.5%) stamps referred to Bacteriology; 24 (38.7%) to Virology; three (4.8%) to Protozoology; and three (4.8%) to Immunology. Several strategies can be used to promote the interest of students through stamps, such as shining a light on leading scientists, the study of diseases, laboratory equipment, etiology, taxonomy and phylogeny, ecological relationships, the origins of concepts and contents, environmental preservation, and the relationship with other fields, all of which may increase the curiosity and, consequently, the interest in the subject, leading them to greater knowledge about Microbiology in a playful and unique way. The use of stamps can stimulate students to build their own knowledge; critical thinking; creativity and curiosity. It can help in the development of a sense of observation and analysis, stimulating students toward research and the scientific method. Stamps can and should be used as instruments of scientific promotion and teaching-learning both in elementary and high school, as well as in higher education.

Keywords: Stamps; Learning; Scientists; Scientific Promotion; Virology.