

# Grade Level Essentials

## Self-paced Home Study

### Part One: Introduction

Welcome to the exciting world of Girl Scouting. We hope that your interest in sharing new experiences with today's girls will lead to many exciting adventures and personal growth for you and the girls in your troop.

For Girls reaching out to touch, understand, and affect their world, you are a friend, guide, advisor, and partner. The strength of this partnership will give you, as well as the girls, a lifelong enthusiasm for living, learning and growing. You make the Girl Scout program a vital part of your community.

This self-paced home study course is designed to give you basic information you will need as a new Girl Scout leader. The course begins with the story of Girl Scouts, and continues with the Promise and Law, Girl Scout ways, the three keys to leadership, organizing your troop, uniforms and insignia, ceremonies, and program level essentials.

It would be wonderful if we could learn how to become a leader by just reading a book, but in reality we will likely learn the most from our direct experiences with the girls. You are bringing your personal skills and love of children to the program, which will serve as a foundation on which to build but always remember you are not alone. There are many resource people available to you through your Community, Neighborhood, Area Teams, the Girl Scout Service Center, Membership Resource Center (MRC), and recommended reading. This home study course will help you build upon that foundation.

Upon completing the self-paced home study course, fill out the registration form, place the entire completed Program Level Course into an envelope and return to:

Leadership Essentials/Program for Adults  
119 East Coronado Road  
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1512

In return, you will receive a training card, materials from the classroom course and your completed work for your personal records.

Resources needed to complete the Grade Level self-paced home study are:

- *Program Level Leader Guide Book*
- *Program Level Handbook and Activity/Try It/ Badge/Interest Project Book*
- *Journey Book Adult Guide*
- *Girl Grade Level Journey Books*
- *\*Safety-Wise and applicable updates*
- *Transforming Leadership*

Additional resources:

- *Let's Celebrate! Girl Scout Ceremonies*
- *GSACPC Leaders' Resource Notebook*
- *Fun & Easy Activities – Nature and Science*
- *Fun & Easy Nature and Science Investigations*
- *Lets Play! Games For Girls*
- Girl Scouts, USA (GSUSA) web site, [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org)
- Arizona Cactus-Pine Council GSACPC) web site, [www.girlscoutsaz.org](http://www.girlscoutsaz.org)
- Member Resource Center (MRC)
- GSUSA Equipment Catalog

\*Some publications are available in Spanish

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## Reflections

List five resources in addition to the program level books and describe how they will be used in your Girl Scout program.

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# All About Girl Scouting

## Juliette Low – Girl Scout Founder

Daisy was the nickname of Juliette Gordon Low, the founder of Girl Scouting in the United States of America. There are many books written about Juliette Low. The Young Patriots series has published a book, *Juliette Low – Girl Scout Founder* written by Helen Boyd Higgins, illustrated by Cathy Morrison. This publication is available in the Council Shop and would make a much-appreciated addition to any Girl Scout meeting. Keep the girls wondering what happened next as you share the childhood adventures of the young girl from Savannah, Georgia, who grew up to found the Girl Scouts. “Daisy” Gordon would rather climb a tree and ride a horse than learn to dance and sew. “There’s not one thing I can’t do that boys can,” said Daisy, and the organization she created years later proved her words.

“Girl Scouting is not just knowing... but doing... not just doing, but *being*.”  
Juliette Gordon Low

## Girl Scout Promise and Law

The foundation of Girl Scout values is the Promise and Law. Everyone who becomes a Girl Scout must make the Promise. In the Promise the word “God” is subject to individual interpretation and encompasses a very wide range of spiritual beliefs. It is important for you – and your Girl Scouts – to understand that serving God in a way that is compatible with individual beliefs is the most important thing. It is okay for a girl to replace the word “God” with whatever word her spiritual beliefs dictate. Take a moment to read the Promise and Law.

<b>The Girl Scout Promise</b>	<b>The Girl Scout Law</b>
On my honor I will try: To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law.	I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Girl Scouting is a values-based organization. When Juliette Gordon Low started the Girl Scout movement in the United States in 1912, she wanted to build an organization that would provide exciting opportunities for girls within a positive values-based framework movement. Today, these values, as expressed in the Girl Scout Promise and Law, continue to be the force that unites Girl Scouts nationwide. Having a strong value system adds meaning and purpose to life. Girl Scouting promotes the development of values. Through program activities and events, Girl Scouting encourages girls to apply and strengthen values learned at home, school, and religious instruction. Girl Scout activities and events also help girls appreciate the importance of values in their individual lives. Girl Scouting recognizes that the family is the primary educator when it comes to teaching values. The job of adults in Girl Scouting is to supplement and reinforce those values in an informal, educational setting.

## Reflection

The Promise and Law are strong statements about what we believe are important values for girls to learn. Which words in the Promise and Law are most important to you and why?

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## Girl Scout Ways

Juliette Low understood how special words and signs help girls feel they are members of a group. Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all around the world share special signs: a motto, a slogan, Girl Scout sign, a handshake, and the friendship squeeze. These special signs overcome barriers of language and culture. Familiarize yourself with the Girl Scout Sign, the Girl Scout handshake, the quiet Sign, the Girl Scout Motto, the Friendship Circle and the Girl Scout Slogan. Girl Scouts and Girl Guides worldwide greet each other in the same way and abide by the same motto. In the many languages spoken by Girl Guides and Girl Scouts the world over, girls say some version of the motto, “Be Prepared.” Girl Scouts of the United States of America also have their own slogan: “Do a good turn daily.”

**The Girl Scout sign is symbolic of the Promise.** The girl holds up her right hand with the first three fingers extended – each finger stands for one part of the Promise – and the little finger held down by the thumb. She makes the sign whenever she says the Promise, at her investiture, and when she gives the Girl Scout handshake. The handshake is given with her left hand while she makes the Girl Scout sign with her right hand.

## Special Days in Girl Scouting

Girl Scouts in the U.S.A. have four special days that are celebrated all across the nation. Girls often plan events or hold special ceremonies to celebrate these days.

October 31	Juliette Low’s Birthday
February 22	World Thinking Day
March 12	Girl Scout Birthday
April 22	Girl Scout Leader’s Day

## Reflection

List two ways that the girls and you can celebrate each of the special Girl Scout days to make them meaningful and memorable.

1. Juliette Low's birthday
2. World Thinking Day
3. Girl Scout Birthday
4. Girl Scout Leaders' Day

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## Self-Check

What does the Girl Scout Sign represent?

What is the significance of the Friendship Circle?

## **Pluralistic Diversity**

In our pluralistic society, our strengths come from the contribution of a variety of people from different backgrounds, and in Girl Scouts these differences help to make our program unique. Any girl who meets the grade level requirements can be a member of the Girl Scout movement. In *Safety-Wise* read page 71, Standard 19, which clearly explains our pluralistic organization.

## **Girl/Adult Partnership**

A key ingredient in Girl Scouting is the partnership of girls and adults who work together to plan and carry out Girl Scout program. Girl/Adult planning is beneficial to girls in several ways. Girls feel involved and have more opportunity to become responsible and self-reliant. They learn how to plan and make decisions, and they develop leadership and interpersonal skills. Girls also are provided the opportunity to experience a variety of leadership roles in a non-threatening environment. Read more about Girl/Adult partnership on page 23 in *Safety-Wise*.

## **Service**

Service is such an important part of Girl Scouting that it cannot be overlooked. Service is synonymous with friendship and can occur at every meeting in small ways. Larger service projects can be carried out in partnership with other Girl Scout troops. Service projects for Girl Scouts should be designed with the following suggestions in mind: projects should be reasonable and provide an experience that is meaningful to the girls, they should be short duration, encourage learning more about Girl Scouting and bridging, and occur as part of the ongoing troop activities. Service hours can be tracked on the “Inchworm of Service.” The forms can be picked up at the Council Shop or printed from the council web site. Read pages 33 and 76 (Program Standard 33) for information to consider when planning service projects for your troop.

## **Reflection**

Keeping in mind the ages and abilities of your Girl Scouts, list three service projects that you think might be appropriate and meaningful.

## Three Keys to Leadership

The New Girl Scout Leadership Experience identifies three keys to Leadership. They are:

- Discover: Girls understand themselves and their values; and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world.
- Connect: Girls care about, inspire, and team with others, locally and globally.
- Take Action: Girls act to make the world a better place.

Read *Transforming Leadership* pages 11 – 12 to develop a further understanding of the three keys to leadership and how the program is designed to meet the specific needs of each age group.

### Reflection

The three keys to leadership form the foundation upon which all Girl Scout program is based. These keys address the developmental, educational, emotional, social needs and interests of girls. Now think about the girls you will work with. For each of the three keys, write a question and list an activity that will help you measure the girls' development in each area.

## Organizing your Troop

### Troop Size

Girls participate in groups that encourage interaction with individuals from more than one school grade. The group should be large enough to provide experience in self-government and small enough to develop the individual girl. The leader, size of meeting place and how many adult volunteers attend the meetings on a regular schedule, determine troop size. In *Safety-Wise* read pages 69 and 72, Standards 13 and 20.

### Meetings

There is no such thing as a “typical” Girl Scout meeting. The length and frequency of meetings depend on the needs and interests of the girls. In general, Girl Scout troop meetings last 60 – 90 minutes and can take place once a week, or twice a month.

Some Girl Scout troops meet once a month for three hours; or, when engaged in a project, meet twice a week for two months. Read *Safety-Wise* page 72 for additional information.

What should you do? ASK THE GIRLS! Consider your availability and base your decision about meetings on the projects, ideas, and plans that girls have.

Your program books have additional information on meetings.

Daisy	<i>The Guide For Daisy Girl Scout Leaders</i> , pages 50 – 59 <i>Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden Adult Guide</i> , pages 33-78
Brownie	<i>The Guide For Brownie Girl Scout Leaders</i> , pages 22-24 <i>Brownie Quest Adult Guide</i> , pages 39-94
Junior	<i>Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide Book</i> , pages 34 –37 and 39-47 <i>Agent of Change Adult Guide</i> , pages 41-86
Cadette	<i>Cadette Girl Scout Handbook</i> , page 42
Senior	No reference found
Ambassador	No reference found

Breaking your troop meeting down into small parts gives it structure and helps you see the meeting in workable segments. A balanced troop meeting consists of seven or eight components, (depending on whether you include a snack). They are found in:

Daisy	<i>The Guide For Daisy Girl Scout Leaders</i> , page 55 <i>Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden Adult Guide</i> , page 33
Brownie	<i>The Guide For Brownie Girl Scout Leaders</i> , pages 22-29
Junior	<i>Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide Book</i> , pages 36-37 <i>Agent of Change Adult Guide</i> , page 41

Girls can sign up for jobs on a chart or roster, or you may find that in your particular troop it is best for you to assign jobs. Emphasize that everyone will have a chance as a leader and that everyone is capable of leadership. Then, remember to adhere to some sort of rotation. A kaper chart (kaper is a special Girl Scout word meaning “task”) is a simple way to rotate responsibilities.



## Program Planning

Find a simple monthly planning calendar that you can duplicate and use to plan troop activities. At the beginning of the troop year, work with the girls to develop tentative plans for the year. Pencil in planning meetings, the names of possible resources and consultants, or any special events the Council has planned. Perhaps the girls would find it interesting to focus on a theme each month or may wish to devote two months to completing a service project. Whatever the case, the planning calendar helps ensure that experiences are varied and maintain a balance between Discover, Connect, and Take Action activities.

## Reflection

What are the most important components to remember in planning a Girl Scout year? How will you help the girls balance their need to succeed and the need of their parents for their daughter to succeed?

## Girl Scouts and Money

Girl Scouts learn to understand budgeting and group financing by managing the funds of their troop. Experiences in Girl Scouting can help girls to learn to manage money wisely. Girls learn to understand and appreciate its value, and develop habits of thrift, honesty, and self-reliance. Girls at all grade levels engage in troop budgeting activities. The girls take an active part in the decision-making process in determining troop dues and the uses of troop funds. Managing money is a progressive experience. All girls should have the opportunity to participate in the planning and decision making processes, but you might need to play a more active role in teaching the girls responsible money management if they have not had these kinds of experiences. Girls can decide whether to save their money for a more expensive trip, to share their money with others through a service project, or to spend their money on troop/group supplies. Girls should also be given the opportunity to go to the bank to deposit group funds, go on shopping trips, or compare costs through newspaper advertisements or flyers before purchasing items and supplies. Older girls can be of great help in teaching younger girls how to budget and manage money.

At the outset, girls need to understand that this money is the troop's and Girl Scouts' money, not theirs or yours. Keep accurate records of income and expenses. Although you handle the group funds, it is the girls' money. You should not add to it from your own money, nor should you remove money without the girls' knowledge and permission. Read Program Standards 28, 29, 30, 31, and 32 in *Safety-Wise* to get a better understanding of troop financing. You should **never** mix your personal funds with Girl Scout money.

Earning money for trips or other major projects should not dominate your troop's activities. You need to ensure that decisions about earning and spending money reflect the needs and interests of all girls and remember that product sales is considered a program activity as well as a way of earning money.

The program standards and guidelines about activities involving money state that troop dues, funds from money-earning activities, and money earned through council-sponsored product sales are troop money and not individual girl funds. Troop money-earning activities are activities planned and carried out by girls and adults in partnership to earn money for the troop treasury. Types of appropriate activities are discussed on page 29 of *Safety-Wise*. Each girl's participation in money earning activities is voluntary.

Daisy	<i>Safety Wise – Standard 28 &amp; 30 revised 6/15/2008</i>
Brownie	<i>The Guide For Brownie Girl Scout Leaders, page 16</i>
Junior	<i>Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide Book, pages 24-25</i>

## **Conflict Resolution**

Conflicts will occur in your troop from time to time. Arguments may surface around minor issues such as whose turn it is to clean up after an activity, or major issues such as how to spend troop money. Girls might be more likely to argue if they are tired or bored, or have recently experienced a problem at home or school. Sometimes, older girls might make fun of younger girls in mixed-grade level troops or a clique may form that excludes some girls. When disagreements arise over issues that affect values or goals, it becomes particularly important to come up with a solution in which both participants win. This is good conflict resolution. Aim at recognizing the problem and shifting the focus from the people to possible solutions. Following are some conflict resolution techniques. Always consider the situation and the girls before moving ahead.

**Mediation:** Each girl has a chance to tell her side of the story. Interruption is not permitted. The girl identifies the problem and what has happened. Each girl suggests some solutions. Together the girls try to choose one.

**Active Listening:** You or a member of your troop restates or paraphrases what each person involved in the conflict has said. You could use phrases such as "This is what I heard you say..." or "You are saying that..." or whatever sounds most natural to you. These phrases can help you discover the reason for the conflict. Then you move ahead with a resolution.

**Time to Work It Out:** This technique is most suitable when you know the girls are capable of resolving the conflict on their own. You ask the girls to go off by themselves for a set period of time. When the time has expired, the girls return with their agreed-upon solution.

**Role Reversal:** Seeing another person's point of view is the focus of this technique. Ask each person involved in the conflict to state the point of view of the other person.

**Skillful Listening:** The way in which you and the girls listen and speak to each other is important for resolving conflicts. Listening is a skill. Do you:

- Look at a girl when she is speaking to you?
- Listen actively so that a girl knows you have heard what she said?
- Wait to give a girl a chance to answer?
- Avoid interrupting her?
- Use body language and facial expressions that agree with what you are saying?
- Help girls understand that putdowns are not allowed in the troop meeting?

If you have established positive and open lines of communication, then you have already made tremendous strides toward avoiding conflicts in your Girl Scout troop.

### **Reflection**

The girls arrive at the meeting, already arguing about where to go on the next field trip. What technique will you use to help them come to a resolution so that each girl feels that she had a say in the decision making process?

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## **Self Check**

What makes Girl Scout program unique?

List three things that may determine the troop size:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is the recommended length of a Girl Scout meeting?

List the four special dates in Girl Scouting and explain what they represent.

What is the Girl Scout motto?

Describe the Girl Scout Handshake

List the parts of a Girl Scout meeting and give an example for each part.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Where can you find information about “kaper charts”? What are they?

What year did Juliette Low start Girl Scouts in the United States?

## Troop Government

Girl Scouting has a built-in structure to help leaders sustain their girl/adult partnership and efforts. This structure is traditionally referred to as troop government. Troop Government has several models including the patrol system, town meeting, and the executive board.

Daisy	<i>The Guide For Daisy Girl Scout Leaders, page 48 and 53</i> <i>Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden Adult Guide, page 36</i>
Brownie	<i>Brownie Girl Scout Handbook, page 38</i> <i>Brownie Quest Adult Guide, page 25-26</i>
Junior	<i>Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide Book, pages 32-33</i> <i>Junior Girl Scout Handbook, page 25</i>

For Girl Scout Juniors and older, it is possible after your girls have worked with the different types of troop government they will find that many times it is more effective for managing a troop to use two or even three types at the same time. For example, troop business, such as attendance and dues, will be handled in a Patrol System and the Executive Board will handle planning an event. This gives troop variety in their way of work and nothing becomes “routine”. Girl Scouting allows many opportunities for girls to practice and sharpen their leadership skills. Encourage their participation and give the girls a chance to become responsible and self-reliant.

## Reflection

Which type of troop government would work best for your grade level and how would you use it?

Daisy Circle/Brownie Ring

Patrol System

Town Meeting

Executive Board

# Uniforms and Insignia

## Uniform

Uniforms and insignia are available for purchase at the Council Shop. There are pictures in the *Girl Scout Catalog*. It is important to wear the uniform properly and the insignia in the correct place.

“All Girl Scout members should wear the membership pin when participating in Girl Scout activities. Since Girl Scouting is a uniformed organization, girl and adult members should be informed; at the time they become members, that they are entitled to wear the Girl Scout uniform appropriate for their grade level. Although the wearing of the uniform is encouraged, it should be clearly conveyed that the wearing of the uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. (*Safety-Wise* – page 68 Standard 11). “Once official, all uniforms are considered so regardless of a change in style.” Uniforms are required when girls participate in Girl Scout ceremonies, or represent the Girl Scout Movement in public. The official uniform for girls, grades 6-12, is a white top and khaki bottoms (pants, shorts, skirt) worn with the appropriate grade-level sash or vest. Girl Scout Daisies and Brownies also have an official uniform. The official uniform for adults is navy blue business attire worn with an official scarf and membership pins for women, and the tie to men.

“Every badge you earn is tied up to your motto. A badge is a symbol that you have done the thing it stands for often enough, thoroughly enough, and well enough to be prepared to give service to it.”

Juliette Gordon Low

## Insignia

The insignia on a girl’s uniform are a record of her adventures and accomplishments as a Girl Scout. Insignia is the general term used to refer to all official items that girls may wear on the uniform.

Girl Scout insignia are divided into two categories, emblems (special identification patches, membership pins) and recognitions (earned age-level awards, and additional recognition or participation patches) that may be worn on the uniform. You may find the exact placement of awards on the GSUSA web site or the Girl Scout Catalog.

## Emblems

### **GSUSA Identification Strip**

(Brownies and older) Identifies you as a member of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States.

### **Council Identification Strip**

(Brownies and older) Identifies you as a member of a particular Girl Scout Council.

### **American Flag Patch**

Worn above the council and Girl Scouts of the USA identification strips on the uniform.

### **Membership Pin**

Shows others that you are a member of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. Its shape is called a “trefoil,” and represents the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise. There are two versions of the membership pin worn by Girl Scouts at the Junior level and above. The contemporary has three profiles inside the trefoil. The dark and light profiles represent the ethnic diversity (all the different races and ethnic groups) of Girl Scout membership, and the equal value placed on all girls. The traditional version of the pin has the initials “GS” inside the trefoil, along with the American eagle and shield that are part of the Great Seal of the United States of America. Girl Scout Daisy Pin is in a trefoil shape representing the three parts of the Promise and the daisy flower as a symbol of the Girl Scout Daisies name sake Juliette "Daisy" Low. The Girl Scout Brownie Pin also in the shape of a trefoil. Each leaf represents one part of the Girl Scout Promise and in the middle of the pin is a brownie elf.

### **The World Trefoil Pin**

All Girl Scouts are eligible to wear the World Trefoil Pin because when they register, they have also become a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). On it are three leaves representing the Girl Scout Promise, with a flame that stands for loving all the people in the world. The compass needle is to guide you, and the two stars are the Girl Scout Promise and Law. The outer circle represents the World Association, and the golden yellow trefoil on a bright blue background stands for the sun shining over the children of the world. You may want to wait until 22 February, World Thinking Day, to present this pin as the girls might have a better understanding of its meaning.

### **Membership Star**

Presented at the end of the year at a Court of Awards ceremony to every girl who has been registered with a Girl Scout troop. A colored disc behind the membership star indicates the program level.

### **Brownie Wings**

These have no requirements but are presented to a last year Girl Scout Brownie at her Fly-Up ceremony when she officially crosses the bridge to become a Girl Scout Junior. A girl must have been a Girl Scout Brownie to wear “wings” on her Girl Scout uniform.

### **Patrol Leader’s Cord**

(Juniors and older) During a special ceremony, the patrol leader is given the patrol leader cord, a recognition made up of two gold cord loops or circles, to wear on her left shoulder. The larger circle symbolizes the whole troop while the smaller circle represents the patrol. The patrol cord is passed from one elected Patrol Leader to the next and is only worn while the girl is holding that position.

### **Troop Crest**

(Juniors and older) In the early days of Girl Scouting, troop crests were used to identify a troop. The rapid growth of the movement soon made numbering necessary, but crests was kept as a symbol of a troop’s goal or main interest.

### **Troop Numbers**

Every Girl Scout troop has its own number. The Girl Scout Council gives the number to your troop.

### **Juliette Emblem**

Girls who are registered as IGMs (Individual Girl Members) will have the Juliette emblem in place of troop numbers.

### **Earned Age-Level Awards**

Earned age-level awards are insignia from the Girl Scout age-level books that are earned by completing the requirements indicated. Examples of earned awards include the Journey awards, Daisy Learning Petals, Try Its, Badges, Leadership awards, and Bridging awards.

Earned awards are a symbol of a girl's growth. Each grade level has a recognition system appropriate for the girls' level of development. All Girl Scouts take responsibility in the choosing and planning recognitions according to their program level.

Girl Scouts are usually enthusiastic about earning awards but they will need help getting started and selecting topics. Keep in mind, however, that awards should come from troop program, not program from awards. Girls who want to take part in activities and not work on awards should not be made to feel guilty or uncomfortable. It doesn't matter whether girls choose to structure their activities according to award requirements or if they follow interests and later complete requirements for specific awards.

### **Cookie Sale Activity Pin**

This pin is earned through participation and special activities related to the Girl Scout Cookie Sale. Requirements can be found on the GSUSA web site or with your cookie sale materials.

### **Safety Award**

Girls may earn the Safety Award by completing a number of activities. These activities reinforce the importance of safety in everyday life and in everything we do in Girl Scouting. Check page 11 in your *Safety Wise* for requirements for this award.

### **Religious and Other Awards**

Additional awards earned through requirements determined by religious/other organizations or by GSUSA:

Lifesaving Awards: *Safety-Wise* p. 148

Bronze Cross

Medal of Honor

Religious Recognitions: PRAY Publishing - praypub.org

President's Volunteer Service Award Points of Light Foundation

[www.presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov)

It is inappropriate for adults to wear girl recognitions and earned awards unless they were awarded to her as a girl.

### **Special Programs and Occasion Patches**

Participation patches and pins are supplementary insignia whose focus is participation, not prescribed requirements. These insignia are developed at the National or Council level. There are several patches girls can earn as they participate in programs that have been developed to recognize special interests or special occasions. Some are council sponsored, others are through GSUSA; some have specific requirements to complete, while others only require participation. These patches are not official GSUSA insignia and therefore are not worn on the



front of the vest or sash. Information about council sponsored patches can be found in the *GSACPC Leader Resource Guide*, the council web site, and the Member Resource Center (MRC).

### Self Check

Describe the official Girl Scout uniform for girls and adults.

What is the general term for all official items that a girl may wear on her uniform?

What does the shape of the membership pins represent?

Proficiency awards are a symbol of what?

Where can the requirements for the Safety Award be found and what are they? (Brownie and older)

List three supplementary insignia focusing on participation and not set requirements.

## Ceremonies

Ceremonies play an important part in Girl Scouting. They are used to help celebrate special occasions, such as welcoming of new members to your troop, the presentation of awards, or the Girl Scout birthday. They can be used to open or close a meeting. They can be short or long, formal or informal. They may include girls in your troop, other girls in Girl Scouting, Girl Scout leaders or other adults, and special guests like parents/guardians, relatives, and friends. They can be held by large groups or small groups, outdoors, indoors, and should include anything the girls choose. The best ceremonies are the ones that the girls design and carry out themselves. The Girl Scout publication *Let's Celebrate! Girl Scout Ceremonies* is an excellent resource for planning any ceremony.

Training for Ceremonies is available through the council in the form of enrichment class and "programs in a box" at MRC. Refer to the *Leadership Essentials, Program for Adults* for additional training classes

### Common Ceremonies in Girl Scouting:

Each Girl Scout meeting should have a definite **opening and closing**. Girls enjoy repetition, and opening and closing ceremonies offer them the comforting feeling of having "traditions" at the meeting and knowing what to expect. Many times, the opening and closing ceremonies can be the same thing. For example, a meeting could begin with everyone joining hands in a circle, reciting the Promise and Law, singing a song or calling their names – "Kim' here," "Henrietta's here," etc. When the meeting ends, the Friendship Circle can be formed with everyone singing a song or saying, "Goodbye, see you next meeting," to one another.

At an **investiture** ceremony, registered girls make the Girl Scout Promise for the first time. It is a special, formal ceremony that symbolizes the beginning of Girl Scouting and families should be invited to share in this special event. A Girl Scout usually wears her uniform for the first time and her Girl Scout pin is pinned to the left side of her uniform, over her heart. Working with the troop committee and the girls, you will be able to plan a meaningful and joyous investiture ceremony. If a new girl joins during the year, the troop will hold an investiture ceremony for her. Girls who were previously Girl Scouts will be rededicated instead of invested.

At a **rededication** ceremony Girl Scouts who have already been invested, renew their Girl Scout Promise and Law. Many girls do this at the beginning and the end of the troop year.

A **bridging** ceremony is held when Girl Scouts "cross the bridge" to the next level in Girl Scouting; Girl Scout Brownies become Girl Scout Juniors, Girl Scout Juniors become Girl Scout Cadettes through this process. This involves learning about the next Girl Scout program; and planning and participating in a bridging ceremony. Refer to the grade level handbook. At the Bridging Ceremony, girls receive the Bridge to the next level award, if they have completed the Bridging requirement, and a year membership star and grade level disc.

A **flag ceremony** honors the American flag as the symbol of our country. Girl Scouts can do a flag ceremony, recite a favorite song or poem, or recite the Promise. Flag ceremonies encourage flag etiquette and build patriotism in young people as they develop an understanding of proper flag display. A flag ceremony may be incorporated as part of another ceremony.

A **Court of Awards** ceremony may include one troop/group or several in an area. It is a time to pause and give recognition to the girls and adults who have accomplished something. The ceremony may include the distribution of earned awards, participation patches, or anything else that girls are eligible to receive as a result of their initiative and their troop/group program activities. The girls may decide to hold the ceremony several times a year.

A **Girl Scouts' Own** is an inspirational, girl planned program to express their deepest feelings about something such as the Girl Scout Promise, friendship, nature, or any ideals or values that have meaning for them. This is not a religious ceremony. It can occur at any time during the year and may take any form. The girls should choose the purpose, theme, and they should plan and carry out the ceremony. This ceremony should not be a performance for an audience; rather, it is a way for girls to express their feeling on a chosen topic.

A **candle lighting** (or flashlight) ceremony helps remind people of the words and meaning of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. This can also be included as part of another ceremony.

A **full stop** can be used to begin any meeting or ceremony. It is simply a quiet moment of reflection that can help get everyone centered and ready to focus on the activities at hand.

## **Reflection**

A Rededication and Court of Awards Ceremony are very important to Girl Scouts. **List ideas that you can use to make each ceremony special.**

## Self Check

What are two ceremonies that might be held at the beginning of the Girl Scout year?

What are two ceremonies that might be held at the end of the Girl Scout year?

**Please proceed to Part Two: Grade Level Essentials**