Girl Scout Traditions

As Girl Scouts reach and pass their first centennial, looking back to where we have been gives us an idea of the accomplishments that have been made by one person's vision — Juliette Gordon Low. The Girl Scout Traditions badge set allows you to explore not only each level available as of 2012, but also general traditions that have been developed by Girl Scouts worldwide for generations.

NOTE: Read through the steps below. Note any resources that you might need to complete this badge program. Check SUPP_GirlScouts_Glance.pdf for a listing of all Girl Scout supplements, including the Traditions set. If you need resources beyond what is provided, check your Service Unit and Council archives. You can also check with other leaders for assistance with acquiring materials.

Steps

Explore Traditions

1. Tradition of acceptance.
   Perhaps because of a woman being treated as less than a man, Girl Scouts has always embraced girls as individuals. Girl Scouts supports and teaches each girl to reach for her unique goals. While society struggles to look past skin color, religion, and other characteristics, we place the needs of each girl first no matter what each looks like or believes. We celebrate the victories and provide support during failures, encouraging a “try again” attitude. Share a story of a girl that you helped gain self-acceptance or encouraged to grow beyond what she thought she could do.

2. Leadership.
   From girls who succeed personally in their own lives to women who leave Girl Scouts to start their own youth groups, you can see the teachings of leadership take hold. Every Girl Scout, past and present, leads with courage, confidence and character. Share how you have taken the lead of a project, group or idea and made it your own.

3. Embracing change.
   The world is constantly changing. Girl Scouts understands this and frequently updates or provides programming to cover new trends and movements. As you learn and grow, you are also changing. Examine your own life. How has Girl Scouts changed you?
EXPLORE SKILLS

4. Holidays.
Explore and celebrate one or more of these Girl Scout holidays in a traditional way.
• Founder's Day / Juliette Low's Birthday
• Girl Scout Anniversary
• Girl Scout Leader's Day
• Girl Scout Sunday / Sabbath
• Girl Scout Week
• World Thinking Day

5. Cookies.
Originally, selling cookies was merely a money earning project. Today, it is an extension of business as girls make decisions and goals, working to do more than just “sell cookies.” Try one or more of these to explore traditions with cookies.
• Make the original Girl Scout cookie recipe
• Host a cookie rally
• Participate in a sale, doing door-to-door and booth sales
• Explore other ways girls have sold cookies
• Make recipes with cookies as an ingredient

6. Other money earning traditions.
Calendar sales started through necessity when ingredients were unavailable to make cookies during war years. Today, girls may sell calendars, nuts or magazines for additional funds in the fall when their year starts. Explore ways girls have earned money for their troop and plan to do something new with your earnings.

7. Camping.
After selling cookies, most people relate Girl Scouts to camping. Camping has changed drastically from the beginning of Girl Scouts. While we still recycle items to make things for camp, we no longer damage foliage to create items to use at camp. Explore items Girl Scouts have made over the years to use at camp. Make one or more and try them out.

8. Participation.
Even in the early days of Girl Scouts, troops weren't the only way to participate. Due to the rural areas of many places in the US, independent Girl Scouts could join. Today, we have even more ways to be a Girl Scout. Explore our current pathways and find out more about each.

9. Insignia and uniforms.
Original badges were referred to as “merit badges” or “proficiency badges.” As the years went on, they changed to reflect the levels of the girls, giving us “petals”, “try-its”, and “interest projects” to name a few. In 2012, we're going back to badges for all levels with the exception of Daisies. Explore insignia and uniforms from the past 100 years.

10. Girl Scout levels.
In 1912, Girl Scouts were girls aged 10 and older. As the materials and abilities of the girls were understood, the levels were broken down and today we have six levels of girls. This makes it easier to work with the girls as they are more likely to have the same skill set. Explore the development of one of the six levels of Girl Scouts through the appropriate Girl Scout Traditions for that level.
11. **Meetings and events.**
Meetings encompass a lot of traditions from how they’re run to activities done during a meeting or event. Explore one or more of these traditions and share them with others.

- Kaper charts
- Badge requirements
- Field trips
- Encouraging participation of strong female role models
- Government
- Ceremonies
- Skills
- Games
- Songs
- Sports

This is only a small list. Feel free to add your own traditional experience if you wish.

12. **Take action.**
Take one or more of the traditions you have explored and look at it more in depth. Which Girl Scout levels will be able to do your tradition? Think of how you can incorporate it into a meeting or event. Try the tradition with a few girls and see what adjustments you need to make so your ideas can be used with a larger number of girls. Do your tradition with a larger group or share it with others.

13. **My own tradition.**
If you were a Girl Scout, what activities do you remember that you could make into a tradition? It can fall into one of the general categories in Step 11 or something completely unique. Create your own tradition from what you remember. Share the memories you have as you share your tradition.

14. **Start traditions.**
From starting an annual World Thinking Day event to doing a special ceremony for Gold Award winners, starting a new tradition isn’t difficult. It’s keeping the tradition going that is the challenge. Brainstorm traditions you feel would benefit your girls or community. Discuss with other Girl Scout to determine the plausibility of your plan. Follow through and start your tradition.

**Supplements**

**SUPP_GS_Glance.pdf**
- Listing of all supplements available with the Girl Scout Traditions and general Girl Scouts badge sets — as of August 2014

**Sites to Explore**

- www.girlscouts.org
- www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history
- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Girl_Scouts_of_the_USA
- www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/traditionsgirl.aspx
- www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/default.aspx
- www.waggsworld.org/en/about/guiding/guidinghistory
- www.juliettegordonlowbirthplace.org
- www.scouter.com/compass/Scouting_History
- www.youtube.com/user/girlscoutvideos

**Check out larajla’s Enrichment Project to start your own adventure.**