

Take Action: Outdoor 1

Overview

Note to Volunteers:

Junior Take Action Requirements

The Junior Outdoor Journey consists of three badges--Animal Habitats, Camper, Eco Camper--and three Take Action meetings. To complete the Journey, have girls complete the meetings in the following order:

- Animal Habitats badge (2 meetings)
- Camper badge (2 meetings)
- Eco Camper badge (2 meetings)
- Take Action (3 meetings)

Girls must complete a Take Action project at the end of the Junior Outdoor Journey.

Get Help for Take Action

There are three Take Action meetings--one for planning, one for creating and carrying out a project, and one for awards and celebration. Look for this helpful Take Action Guide in the Meeting Aids resources section:

- **Girl Scout Volunteer Take Action Guide:** Find out the difference between community service and a Take Action project, steps for a Take Action project, how to make a project sustainable, and ways girls can Take Action.

Make the Most of the Take Action Meetings

Use the talking points (but make them your own): In each session, you'll find suggested talking points under the heading "SAY." Some volunteers, especially new ones, find it helpful to follow the script. Others use the talking points as a guide and deliver the information in their own words. Either way is just fine.

Add an extra meeting: The meetings are each designed for 90 minutes. It's perfectly OK to add a meeting to your Outdoor Journey plan if you feel girls need more time completing the Take Action project.

Use Girl Scouts' three processes: Girl-Led, Learning By Doing, Cooperative Learning--these three processes are the key to making sure girls have fun in Girl Scouts and keep coming back.

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"Learning by doing" and "cooperative learning" are built into this Journey, thanks to the hands-on activities and tips. You'll also find "keep it girl-led" tips in the meeting plans. They'll help you create an experience where girls know they can make choices and have their voices heard.

Read "Think Pair Share" in Meeting Aids: Find out how to make sure all girls are heard when making team decisions.

Leave time for the Closing Ceremony: If girls are having fun doing an activity, you may be tempted to skip the Closing Ceremony so they can keep going--but the Closing Ceremony is absolutely key to their learning, especially when you take time for reflection. One of the most important components of any activity is allowing time for the girls to reflect on what they have learned. Ask girls:

- *What did you learn? What did you like best?*
- *How would you share what you learned with others?*
- *In what ways did your troop work together?*

Complete the surveys: Be sure to complete the surveys in the Volunteer Toolkit about your experiences. Your input is important! The data collected is used to enhance the program.

If You Have a Multi-Level Troop

Be prepared: To help run a successful Outdoor Journey Multi-level meeting, read this useful information in the Meeting Aids resources section:

- **Benefits of a Multi-Level Troop:** Find out about why a Multi-level troop can be a great experience.
- **Tips for Working with Girls at Different Levels:** Get hands-on tips for how to deal with younger girl/older girl scenarios.

Prepare Ahead

- Gather supplies.
- If your meeting location doesn't have a flag, bring a small one from home to either hang or have the girls take turns holding.
- Print the handout of the list of Take Action project ideas you've collected throughout meetings, one for each team of 3-4 Juniors.

Get Help from Your Family and Friends Network

Your Friends and Family Network can include:

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- Girls' parents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, cousins, and friends.
- Other volunteers who have offered to help with the meeting.

Ask your Network to help:

- Bring supplies.
- Bring a camera, smartphone, or video camera to document the meetings.
- Assist with helping girls come up with and create their Take Action project.

Award Connection

In the final Take Action meeting, Juniors will earn their Take Action award.

- From your council shop or the Girl Scout website, buy the Take Action awards, one for each Junior.

Meeting Length

90 minutes

- The times given for each activity may be different depending on how many Juniors are in your troop, so adjust accordingly.
- Give Juniors 10- and 5-minute warnings before they need to wrap up the last activity so you'll have time for the Closing Ceremony.
- There is no snack time activity in these meetings, but there's enough extra time built in for snack breaks if girls want them.

Materials List

Activity 1: As Girls Arrive: My Favorite Thing

- Colored markers
- Index cards

Activity 2: Opening Ceremony: Leave No Trace and Take Action

- Flag
- **Leave No Trace** handout, one for each Junior
- White board or poster board
- Markers

Activity 3: Deciding on a Take Action Project

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- Sticky notes
- Pens/pencils
- Printed handout of the list of Take Action project ideas you've collected throughout meetings, one for each team of Juniors

Activity 4: Closing Ceremony: Get Ready to Take Action!

- None

Detailed Activity Plan

Activity 1: As Girls Arrive: My Favorite Thing

Time Allotment

20 minutes

Materials

- Pens, pencils, colored markers
- Index cards

Steps

Juniors think about earning their Animal Habitats, Camper, and Eco Camper badges and write or draw the things they liked best about earning them.

SAY

You will start planning our Take Action project today.

But before you do, think about earning your Animal Habitats, Camper and Eco Camper badges. On the index cards, write down or draw what you liked best about earning those badges.

Maybe you enjoyed a certain activity. Or perhaps you really liked something you did on a camping trip. Or remember a special song you learned or game you played. Or maybe you learned something about animals and camping you didn't know before. Whatever it is, write it down or draw it. It can be one thing or many things!

Activity 2: Opening Ceremony: Leave No Trace and Take Action

Time Allotment

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30 minutes

Materials

- Flag
- **Leave No Trace** handout, one for each Junior
- White board or poster board
- Markers

Steps

- Recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Girl Scout Promise.
- Have Juniors share what they learned from earning Animal Habitats, Camper and Eco Camper badges
- Have Juniors review Leave No Trace principles to inspire Take Action ideas
- White board or poster board
- Markers

SAY:

In this meeting, you will decide on a Take Action project.

Before we start, let's go around and share your favorite thing or things you did while earning a badge.

When you did the Eco Camper badge, you learned about Leave No Trace and protecting the environment. Do you remember how you practiced the principles when camping?

Did any of those experiences give you ideas for a Take Action project?

Write Juniors' ideas on a white board or poster board.

Activity 3: Deciding on a Take Action Project

Time Allotment

30 minutes

Materials

- Sticky notes
- Pens/pencils

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- List of Take Action project ideas you've collected throughout meetings handout, one for each team of Juniors

Steps

Divide Juniors into teams to come up with Take Action project ideas.

SAY:

Now you will decide on a Take Action project.

Divide girls into teams of 3-4. Give each team index cards and pens. Give each team a list of the Take Action project ideas.

Each team will look at your ideas on the handout and on the poster board, plus come up with any other new ideas.

Then, as a team, decide on your top three (3) top ideas you want to do. Then write each down on a sticky note, one for each idea.

When Juniors are done, tape or post sticky notes on poster board or white board. Organize by similar ideas.

SAY:

Now you'll decide as a team what you want to do.

Give Juniors a chance to talk about the ideas they like (or don't like).

If Juniors disagree, help them build their conflict-resolution skills.

Remind them to speak with respect, listen to other people, and perhaps even develop a new idea together that everyone likes.

Instead of stepping in and making the decision for them, help them talk about the pros and cons of each project.

To help Juniors zero in on their top choices, ask open-ended questions, such as:

- *Which of these project ideas sounds like the most fun?*
- *Which projects would help you learn something new?*
- *Which ones will make you feel proud when you're done?*

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To help Juniors think about which projects are realistic, ask open-ended questions, such as:

- *Are there any ideas that might be hard to do right now?*
- *It will probably cost a lot of money to do X. As a troop, we have \$X to spend. What do you think we should do? We could put it on a list to do later or we could come up with another idea that doesn't cost so much. What do you think?*

If Juniors are divided between a few ideas, ask them to choose one top idea and keep the others as backups. You can also have girls vote--just make sure that anyone whose idea wasn't chosen knows that it was a good idea and that it might be used later.

Juniors may reach an agreement quickly. If they don't, note the top 2 or 3 ideas and facilitate an agreement using "fist to five":

- *If you're holding up 5 fingers, you love it!*
- *4 fingers--it's good.*
- *3 fingers--you're OK with the idea.*
- *2 fingers--you're OK with it but perhaps want to make a little change.*
- *1 finger--you'd like to talk about making more changes.*
- *And a closed fist--no fingers--you really don't like it!*

After Juniors make a decision, have girls do a group cheer.

SAY:

*Now that you've decided on your project, you'll brainstorm ideas about how you want to **do** your Take Action project.*

Offer things for Juniors to think about, depending on what Juniors want to do. For example:

If girls want to make a video, how will they film it?

- What do they want to say?
- Do they want to wear costumes?
- Do they want to use music?
- How will they show it to people--at a school assembly, at a gathering of their families, by having an adult post it (safely) online?

If girls want to create posters for their school, what materials will they need?

- Who can they ask for permission to put the posters on the walls?

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- How should they ask for permission--if they want to make a presentation to the principal, what should they say?
- Once they get permission, what should the posters say?
- What will they look like? When do they want to hang up the posters?
- Do they want to get other students to join them?

The ideas are endless! **Keep It Girl-Led** by giving just one or two examples and then see where the girls take it.

Remind girls that good teamwork is important. Encourage girls to take turns; make sure each girl has a role.

SAY:

Is there anything you need to make in order to carry out your project? Is there someone you need to ask for help?

How could you do that? What would you say?

(Note to Volunteers: You may need to pave the way for Juniors to Take Action by calling school or town officials to get permission for what the girls want to do. Or set up a time for them to meet the officials to make their Take Action proposal. If possible, guide the conversation so Juniors come up with ideas about how you can help them so they have the experience of connecting with others to Take Action.)

Offer positive feedback and specific examples of what you observed, such as girls listening to each other, cooperation, and compromising.

Keep a list of the "to do" items Juniors are suggesting, for example: materials they need, people they need to talk to, etc.

Activity 4: Closing Ceremony: Get Ready to Take Action!

Time Allotment

10 minutes

Materials

- None

Steps

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Have Juniors form a Friendship Circle and share something about their Take Action project.

SAY:

You made a team decision about your Take Action project.

Review the Take Action project the girls decided on.

SAY:

The next step will be to create and carry out the project in our next meeting.

Be sure to share your Take Action project idea with your friends and family and ask for their help and support.

Go over the list of "to dos" that you have for Juniors to create their Take Action project at the next meeting. (Note to volunteer: This might be a list of materials Juniors need, a reminder for girls to bring props if they're performing a skit, names of people girls need to talk to, etc.)

Now let's go around the circle give a high five to the girl next to you.

Remember, Juniors can change the world!

End the meeting with a Friendship Squeeze.



Benefits of a Multi-Level Troop

Leading a multi-level troop can be lots of fun, but also challenging!

Picture this: The troop meeting is in full swing. You notice that the Brownies and Juniors are absorbed in an activity, but the Daisies are distracted. Or the Juniors are ready to take on a more complex project, but the younger girls can't move at the same pace or don't get the concept. Or you see that the Daisies are having tons of fun doing an activity that completely bores the Brownies and Juniors.

How do you manage it all?

This Outdoor Journey was developed with the multi-level troop in mind. You'll find "multi-level notes" throughout to help you navigate the challenges of leading groups of K–5 girls.

Multi-level troops are naturally set up to create a more girl-led environment.

- Older girls have a unique opportunity to lead. They can serve as role models for younger girls, creating an enhanced leadership experience for all involved. They can explain more advanced concepts, which gives younger girls a powerful near-peer experience.
- Younger girls have aspiration built right into their experience. As they interact with the older girls, they learn what's possible for them.

Multi-level troops offer all girls a diversity of perspective. When they do an activity together:

- Older girls approach it with confidence and skill, based on their experience.
- Younger girls bring a sense of wonder and imagination that makes the activity more creative and fun for the older girls.

Make sure to read the "Tips for Working with Girls at Different Levels" handout in Meeting Aids for some hands-on help.



Girl Scout Volunteer Take Action Guide

What's the difference between a community service project and a Take Action project?

Community Service makes the world better by addressing a problem “right now.” For example, collecting cans of food for a food pantry feeds people “right now.” Gathering toys for a homeless family shelter makes kids happy “right now.” Providing clothing and toiletries to people after a fire or flood helps them “right now.” These acts of kindness are important ways to help people—right now.

Take Action encourages girls to develop a project that is sustainable. That means that the problem *continues* to be addressed, even after the project is over. Sustainability simply means coming up with a solution that lasts.

For example, girls might want to do something about trash in a local park. If they go to the park and pick up trash, they've solved the problem for today—but there will be more trash to pick up tomorrow.

Instead, girls could explore *why* there's so much trash. Here's what they might discover:

1. There aren't enough trash cans in the park.
2. The trash cans are hard to find.
3. People have to walk out of their way to throw away trash because of where the cans are placed.
4. People don't realize the importance of putting trash in the trashcans.

Here's how girls might address these issues:

Issues 1–3: Make a presentation to the city council to report on their findings and make suggestions for improvement, such as adding more trash cans or moving them to more visible or convenient positions.

Issue 4: Create a public awareness campaign that encourages people to use the trash cans instead of littering.

What are the steps of a Take Action project?

Girls team up to:

- Identify a problem
- Come up with a sustainable solution
- Develop a team plan
- Put the plan into action
- Reflect on what they learned



Keep it girl-led: Girls should actively participate in each step in order for this to be girl-led. Younger girls will need more guidance, but they can and should decide as a team what problem they want to address.

How do girls make their project sustainable?

Here are three ways to create sustainable change:

1. Make your solution permanent.
2. Educate and inspire others to be part of the change.
3. Change a rule, regulation or law.

Here are some specific examples you can use to help girls understand what sustainable Take Action projects look like.

Keep it girl-led: These examples are intended to give a sense of what a Take Action project could look like at different grade levels. Please do **not** choose a project from this list for girls to do! If girls are told what to do, they won't learn key leadership skills, such as decision-making, compromise, conflict resolution, and teamwork.

Issue: We could conserve water if more people collected rainwater and used it to water plants.

Solution 1: *Make it permanent.*

Make rain collection devices for family or friends that can be installed in their yards. Give them a list of different ways to use rainwater and how they're helping the Earth.

Solution 2: *Educate and inspire others.*

Create a handout, video tutorial, or show-and-tell presentation about how to make a rain collection device and how to use rainwater—and how that helps the Earth.

Issue: Parents often run their engines outside the school as they wait to pick up or drop off their children, which pollutes the air.

Solution: *Change a rule, regulation or law.*

Make a presentation to the school board or administrators about why this is a problem and suggest a new rule that makes the pick-up/drop-off area a "no idling" zone.

Issue: There's no sidewalk along a street near the elementary school, which makes it dangerous for children to walk home.

Solution: *Make it permanent.*

Make a presentation to the city council about the problem and suggest that they build a sidewalk.

Note: Even if the council doesn't vote to create a sidewalk, the girls have earned their Take Action award because they came up with a sustainable solution and took action through their presentation.

Extra Inspiration: Do an online search for "Girl Scout Brownies Convince City Hall to Build Sidewalk."



Issue: There have been several accidents at a busy intersection that doesn't have a stoplight.

Solution: *Make it permanent.*

Research the number of accidents and make a presentation to the city council, asking that they have a stoplight installed.

Issue: The local park doesn't have a swing for children with disabilities.

Solution: *Make it permanent.*

Make a presentation to the city council explaining the problem and offering to use troop money from the cookie sale to help pay for the swing.

Extra Inspiration: Do an online search for "How One Brownie Troop Became Social Entrepreneurs."

Issue: We should recognize women who have helped their communities and made the world a better place in all kinds of ways.

Solution: *Educate and inspire others.*

Research the "hidden figures" in your community (unsung women who've done great things). Create a display about their accomplishments for a library or community center.

Issue: The local shelter is having a hard time getting rescue animals adopted.

Solution: *Educate and inspire others.*

Use your photography skills to create pet portraits for the shelter's website. Use your writing skills to craft heart-warming bios for each portrait.

33 Ways to Take Action

1. Make and install something outside (benches, bird houses, dog run, ropes course, sensory trail, Little Library, etc.)
2. Plant something (butterfly garden, tree, wind chime garden, etc.)
3. Make something inside (Maker Space, reading room, etc.)
4. Create a collection (children's books children's hospital or family shelter, oral histories for town museum, etc.)
5. Advocate for building a permanent community improvement (sidewalk, bridge, park, streetlights, stoplight, walking trail, etc.)
6. Do a show-and-tell
7. Create a poster campaign
8. Perform a skit
9. Make a "how to" handout
10. Draw a comic
11. Give a speech
12. Write and perform a song
13. Make an animated movie



14. Make a live-action movie
15. Make a presentation
16. Create a workshop (perhaps in partnership with a local business or organization) to teach a skill such as coding, camping, canoeing, robotics, sewing, car care, healthy eating, gardening, home repair, budgeting, etc.
17. Create a workshop to teach others about healthy living (exercise, nutrition, mental health, etc.)
18. Create a social media campaign
19. Make video tutorials to teach a skill
20. Organize an email campaign
21. Organize a petition
22. Organize an event (concert, play, poetry slam, art exhibit, sporting event, field day) to raise awareness about an issue
23. Make a "playbook" to help others follow your lead (how to mentor robotics teams, organize a workshop or event, advocate with city council, create an online petition, change a law, etc.)
24. Make an app that helps people take action on an issue
25. Create a website
26. Write an op-ed or letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine
27. Start a blog
28. Make a presentation to your school principal
29. Make a presentation to your school board
30. Make a presentation to your city council
31. Speak up at your representative's town hall meeting
32. Create an online petition
33. Advocate for a law with your state government

Need other ideas?

Check out "Girls Changing the World" on the GSUSA website [<http://www.girlscouts.org/en/for-girls/girls-changing-the-world.html>]. Girls post their Take Action and Bronze/Silver/Gold Award projects on this site. You can search by project topic or grade level. (And after the troop has done their project, please post it so they can inspire other girls!)

Illustrated Leave No Trace Principles

Learn and be prepared to use the Leave No Trace Seven Principles to help protect the environment on your trip:



Plan ahead so you leave nothing behind. Get to know the area you'll visit. Repackage and store food in reusable containers.



Travel and camp on durable surfaces. Walk only on existing trails and camp on surfaces that are already impacted or are durable enough to withstand repeated trampling.



Dispose of waste properly: Carry out what you carry in—never dump anything on a campsite or into a water source.



Leave nature as you find it—don't collect or take anything from the outdoors.



Minimize campfire impacts: Instead of using firewood and building campfires, pack a lightweight cooking stove and lantern.



Respect wildlife by checking them out at a distance. Never approach, feed, or follow them.



Be considerate of other visitors. Remember you're not alone in the wilderness. Keep your voices down and let nature be the loudest sounds you hear.



Brainstorming Tips: Think, Pair, Share

Think, Pair, Share is a great way to make sure all girls have a chance to be heard when making troop decisions.

HOW TO RUN A THINK, PAIR, SHARE ACTIVITY:

Lead girls through the basic steps by telling them they will:

Break into small groups.

Listen to the question or prompt.

Think about their answers.

- Girls may want to write their answers down.
- Twenty seconds should be enough time, since girls will need to sit quietly.

Pair with other girls.

- Girls talk with one to three other girls (depending on group size), making sure everyone has a chance to share their answers. If there's time, it's OK for girls to ask questions about each other's answers.
- For pairs, 20 seconds should be enough time. If your troop enjoys discussion, consider extending this to 1 to 2 minutes.

Share with the group.

- Girls share their answers with the larger group.
- This can be completed in 20–30 seconds, but will run longer based on group size and how the group sharing is done.

There are two ways to set up group sharing:

Strongly recommended: One girl shares the best/most interesting/summary answer for the group. This approach is great if you're running short on time. It also helps develop conflict resolution and compromise skills.

Optional: Each girl shares her partner's answer. This helps girls develop active listening skills, but will run longer because all girls are sharing.



Tips for Working with Girls at Different Levels

Follow these tips and insights to help make your multi-level troop experience fun, not challenging:

- Offer younger girls more concrete guidance to help them express their thoughts and come up with ideas.
- Older girls will have more nuanced understandings of interpersonal interactions and how Girl Scouts can take action, as well as more in-depth knowledge about the subject matter. They will bring up more complex concepts, which won't be familiar to younger girls. This is a great opportunity to ask older girls to share their knowledge with younger girls. Ask questions like, "Can you give us an example of that?" or "Can you describe that for everyone in the group?"
- Sometimes Daisies will outperform Brownies or you may have Juniors who perform at Brownie level. That's all OK; just customize your activities based on your experience with your troop.
- Younger girls will need more adult supervision and it's natural that older girls will help them, too. But make sure to treat older girls like troop members, not as mini-Troop Leaders.
- Help older girls feel welcomed and valued by giving them leadership opportunities, such as guiding a discussion or acting as a scribe. Juniors may want to earn their Junior Aide award by mentoring the younger girls.
- Give older girls more responsibility in troop decision-making. While all girls should be involved in decision-making at some level, older girls will be able to offer good insights about how to make things work better for them. When older girls make a suggestion that can reasonably be implemented, try it out and acknowledge their contribution.
- Encourage all girls to help hand out supplies and snacks.