

Take Action: Outdoor 2

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 for the Take Action project. For example, girls may need:
 - A smartphone or camera if girls are creating a video
 - Poster board if they're making signs
 - A laptop if girls are making PowerPoint slides for a presentation to the school principal, park superintendent or city council
 - Material for costumes if they're putting on a skit
 - Paper and markers to create list of after-project partners
- If you need more adult helpers, let them know the time and place of the meeting and brief them on what the girls are doing.

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- Make columns on poster paper or a white board with a variety of topic headers: Equipment, Who will help, Permits/passes, Timeline, etc.
 - Talk to people who are needed to help Juniors to complete their Take Action project. For example:
 - If the girls have decided to make posters about saving water for their school or local library, call the school/library office to set up a time when the Juniors can make their proposal in person.
 - If they want to put on a skit at the community center, talk to an administrator about how to arrange that.
 - If they want to make a presentation to the city council or with a park superintendent, call the office to find out how to schedule that.
- 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.

Get Help from Your Family and Friends Network

Your Friends and Family Network can include:

- 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.

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- 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: Plan!

- Poster paper
- Colored markers
- Pens and pencils

Activity 2: Opening Ceremony: Why Is Our Project Important?

- Flag
- Paper
- Colored markers

Activity 3: Taking Action!

- Paper
- Pens or colored markers

Activity 4: Closing Ceremony: How Will Our Project Last?

- Paper
- Markers

Awards

Girls do not receive any awards in this meeting.

Detailed Activity Plan

Activity 1: As Girls Arrive: Plan!

Time Allotment

20 minutes

Materials

- Poster paper or white board with topic columns from "Prepare Ahead"
- Colored markers

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- Pens and pencils

Steps

Have girls post their ideas about what will need to be done to complete their Take Action project.

SAY:

You came up with a Take Action project in your last meeting. Now, as a group, write down the things you will need to create your project on this white board/poster board.

Activity 2: Opening Ceremony: Why Is Our Project Important?

Time Allotment

30 minutes

Materials

- Flag

Steps

- Recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Girl Scout Promise.
- Have Juniors talk about why they think their Take Action project is important to the community.

SAY:

You've learned to about how to make a difference in the world--to spot problems, work as a team, and come up with solutions. Now you're going to help others by taking action--and we know that you will make a difference!

In our last meeting, you came up with a plan for your Take Action project.

Finish this sentence: We're about to team up and Take Action to _____.

Ask each Junior to share with the group the focus of their Take Action project.

Activity 3: Taking Action!

Time Allotment

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30 minutes

Materials

- Any materials Juniors need to create and carry out their Take Action project.

Steps

Juniors work together to build their Take Action project. Using the information on the poster board, have girls create all the components of their project. If need be, girls can break into teams to do different things.

SAY:

Check your master list of what you need to do to create your project. If you need to break into teams to do certain things, that's OK.

Help girls create what they need (posters, videos, presentations, costumes, materials, and scripts).

If girls have a "next step" in their project, remind them about it. For example, they may have decided to start a community garden. What will they need to build the garden? Can they get donations of plants, soil, fertilizers? Who can help them with the work ahead? Permits needed?

If you've done some "behind the scenes" work since the last meeting, such as setting up a meeting for girls with officials or securing permission for their project, let them know about it now.

Congratulate the girls if they've completed their Take Action project in this meeting (if, for example, they've created a video that an adult will now share with friends and family or post safely online).

Activity 4: Closing Ceremony: How Will Our Project Last?

Time Allotment

10 minutes

Materials

- Paper
- markers

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Steps

Have Juniors come up with ideas about how to make their project sustainable and plan their Take Action celebration.

SAY:

How do you think you can keep this project going even when you're not around? That's called making it sustainable.

To create sustainable change, you want to make your solution permanent, educate and inspire others to be part of a change, or change a rule, regulation or law.

Here's an example:

You want to help people conserve water by collecting rainwater to water plants.

You can make it permanent this way:

- *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 explain how they're helping the Earth.*

You can educate and inspire others this way:

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

How can you keep your Take Action project sustainable?

Offer prompts for Juniors based on the Take Action project idea, such as:

- Will school or park staff be willing to care for the garden?
- Could you ask an older girl troop to help out?
- Should we make a presentation to the community to ask for their help?

Make a list of the possibilities and decide on several approaches for action.

Now you can plan your celebration!

Offer prompts for girls to come up with their own ideas for the celebration:

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- *Do you want to make a special display of our Take Action photos or show our videos?*
- *Do you want special music? Special snacks?*
- *Is there anyone you want to thank?*
- *What do you want to do for the Closing Ceremony?*

Write down their ideas and tell them you'll help organize this for the next meeting.

SAY:

Let's end the meeting with a cheer for Take Action.

*For the next three things I'm about to say, jump once and yell out, **Hooray for Girl Scouts!***

Every Girl Scout, from Daisy to Ambassador, does Take Action projects.

(Girls: Hooray for Girl Scouts!)

It doesn't matter how big or small your project is, it makes a difference in the world. (Girls: Hooray for Girl Scouts!)

You're a leader because you work as a team to make the world a better place.

(Girls: Hooray for Girl Scouts!)

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!)



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.