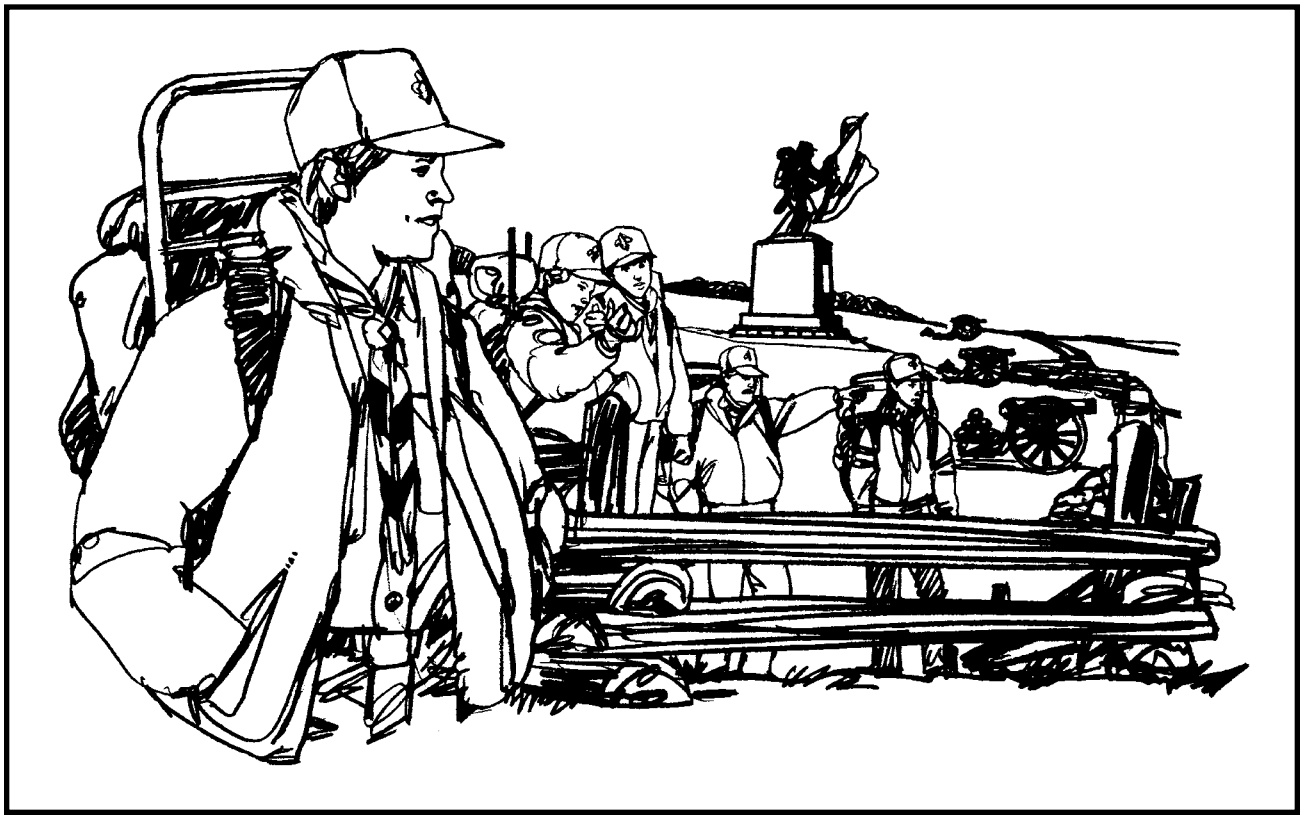
CITIZENSHIP



A primary aim of the Boy Scouts of America is to guide youth toward good citizenship. That goal is clearly expressed in the Scout Oath pledges of "duty to God and my country" and "to help other people at all times." The 12 points of the Scout Law are virtually a checklist for good citizenship.

The citizenship program feature is designed to heighten a Scout's appreciation of his rights and duties as a citizen, to make him aware of his heritage as an American, and to acquaint him with the approved ways of displaying and showing respect for the chief symbol of our country—the flag. The suggested troop meeting plans also include elements that apply to related merit badges including Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, American Cultures, and American Heritage.

As one highlight of the month, the troop could plan to attend a meeting of a public body such as the city council or school board, or a gathering of a private group that is concerned with the public welfare, such as a tenants' or homeowners' association or neighborhood block-watch group. (Obviously the troop schedule will have to be adapted to the schedule of the council, board, or group.) While planning the event, the patrol leaders' council can arrange for an official or officer of the group to answer questions after the meeting.

The troop's big event will be a heritage hike. The destination might be a historic site or trail in your troop's area. Or it could be a place that is significant to the heritage of your region—a wildlife refuge, an unusual geological formation, a zoo, or the location of an ethnic festival. The heritage hike can be a day outing or an overnight campout.

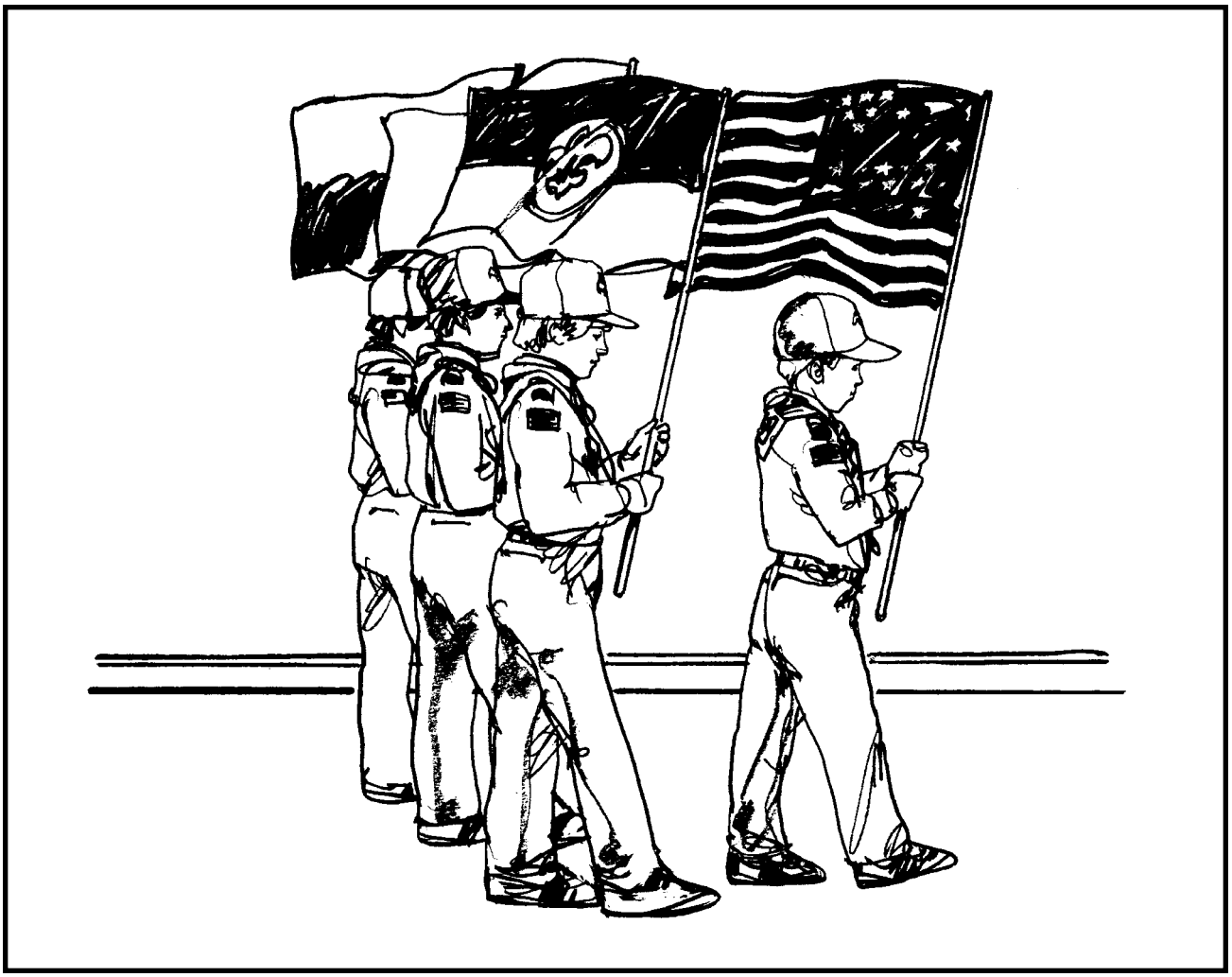
SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts

- A greater understanding of their duty to country and their obligation to help other people
- Awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens
- Some knowledge of their heritage as citizens of their community and nation
- Growth in self-confidence
- Increasing ability to work cooperatively with others in an outdoor setting

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, all Scouts should have met the majority of their citizenship requirements through First



Class rank. Depending on the activities, they might also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—hiking, camping
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

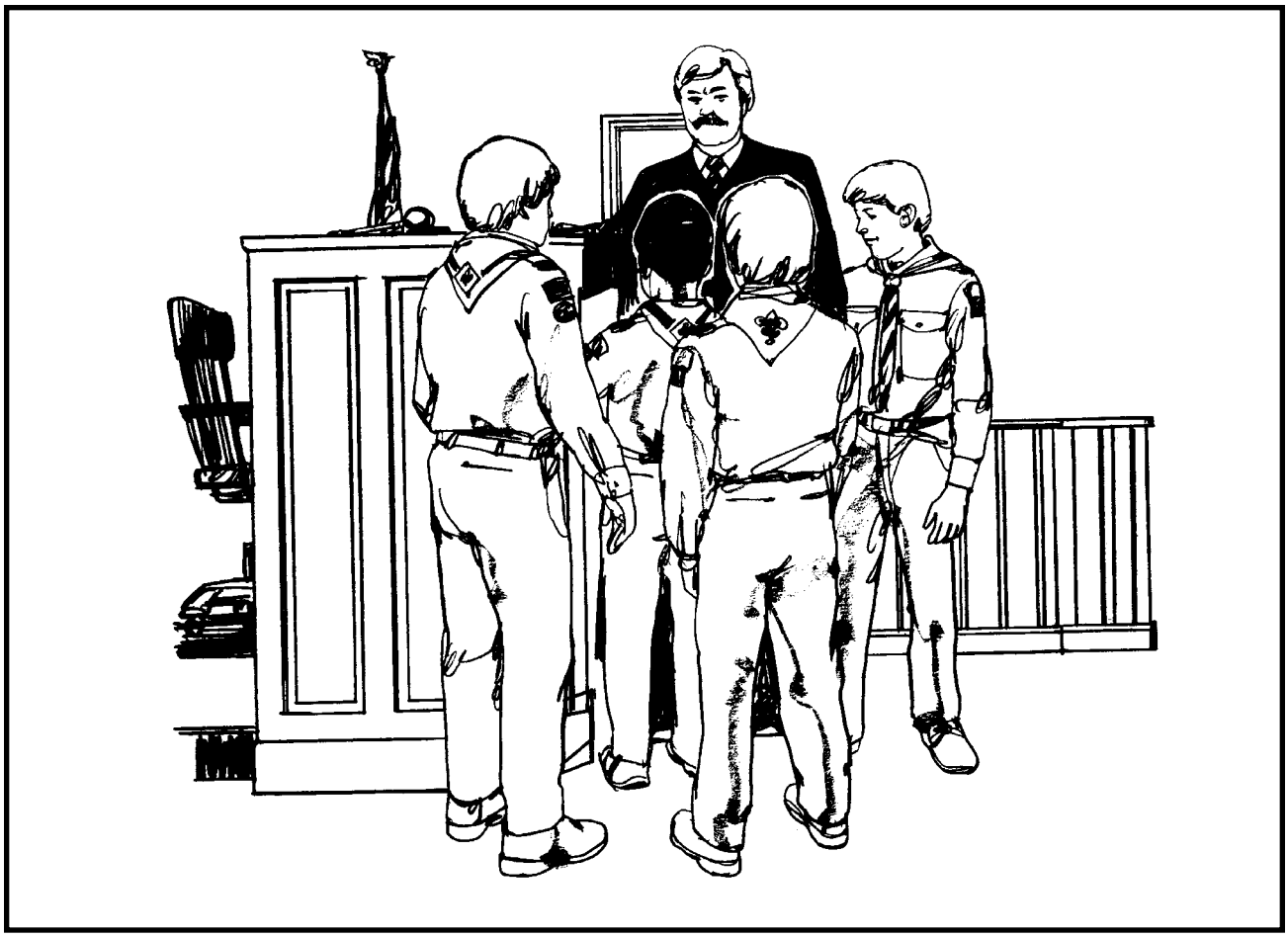
- Outdoor—cooking, camping, nature, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges. Older Scouts should be able to complete some of the requirements for one or more of the Citizenship merit badges. Depending on activities during the month, they might also complete some of the requirements for American Cultures, American Heritage, Camping, Cooking, Hiking, and other outdoor-related merit badges.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents and guardians in the program feature this month by

- Asking qualified parents and guardians to help with troop meeting instruction (Give special consideration to those involved in public positions—lawyers, history teachers, law enforcement officials, journalists, etc.)
- Inviting parents and guardians on the heritage hike



- Asking them to provide transportation for the visit to a community meeting or to and from the starting point of the hike

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The patrol leaders' council should have met in the middle of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If they didn't complete all of the items on the following agenda, they can continue planning at brief patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Decide which public body or private organization the troop will visit during the month. Assign a member to check on the date, time, and place of the meeting, and arrange to have an official meet with the troop either beforehand or afterward. (The patrol leaders' council may ask an adult on the troop committee to make these arrangements if that is more appropriate.)
- Make arrangements to invite a community leader to the second troop meeting of the month to discuss his or her work and to lead a discussion on the rights and duties of a citizen. The person could be a mayor, city council member, school board member, city attorney, judge, or the leader of a civic or service group.
- Make patrol assignments for the following troop meeting activities:
  - — Perform the opening and closing flag ceremonies.
  - — Give a presentation on the history of the U.S. flag.
  - — Report on the history or significance of the destination of the heritage hike.
  - — Lead a discussion on the rights of Scout-age youth—including the right to be protected from assault and theft, to inform authorities if someone is being treated unjustly, to use public facilities on the same basis as all other citizens, and to have adequate food and shelter. Also discuss the duties of young people, including the duty to attend school, to complete schoolwork to the best of their ability, to pay for public services on the same basis as other citizens, to avoid littering or damaging public and private property, and to follow traffic rules while bicycling. (See the *Boy Scout Handbook* for more ideas.)

- Make a list of possible patrol Good Turns for the community. (For ideas and guidelines, see chapter 19, "Community Service," and "Conservation Projects" in chapter 9, "The Outdoor Program," in the *Scoutmaster Handbook*. The BSA's *Conservation Handbook* contains plenty of information about meaningful ways Scouts can complete projects on public and private lands.)

BIG EVENT

The Heritage Hike

As with most other Scouting activities, this big event should be fun. It should have an educational purpose, too, although not in a classroom sense.

The aim is to introduce Scouts to some aspect of their American heritage. It might be a historic site of local, regional, or national interest. It could be a place where Scouts can bask in America's beauty or be awed by the nation's natural wonders—perhaps a pristine lake, a wildlife refuge, a canyon or mesa, or an ancient forest. If this program feature occurs during a national holiday, your "hike" might take the form of participation in a parade, an ethnic festival, or other fitting event.

The big event can be a day outing or an overnight campout. Based on the patrols' interests, the patrol leaders' council should determine the distance to be covered and the location of the destination or campsite. An overnight stay increases the possibilities for Scouts to complete outdoor-oriented rank and merit badge requirements.

The senior patrol leader could assign a patrol the task of researching some facts about the heritage hike destination and reporting to the troop on its history and significance. For example, if the troop is going to a historic site, what can the Scouts expect to see? What happened at the site? This kind of advance information will enhance the experience for the Scouts, especially if there will not be a local guide at the site.

Historic Trail Hike

In most states Scouts can find historic trails marked and waiting for troops to enjoy. More than 250 such trails have been approved by the Boy Scouts of America for their historical significance and the condition in which they are maintained. For a list of these trails, see *http://www.scouting.org,* or contact your local council service center or the National Parks Service.

LEARNING THE PUBLIC'S BUSINESS

The troop meeting plan for week three suggests that the troop visit a meeting of a public body, a private organization that works for the public welfare, or some other agency or group that affects the lives of citizens. The goal is to show Scouts American democracy in action. Here are several possibilities:

- City council
- School board
- Municipal court
- County court for a naturalization ceremony
- Tenants' or homeowners' association or neighborhood block-watch group

At meetings of this type, it is essential that the presiding officer or other knowledgeable person meet with the troop either before or after the regular meeting to explain the proceedings. If not, the meeting's business might not make much sense to Scouts.

Check ahead of time with those in charge of the meeting to determine the expected length of the session. The meetings of some city councils and school boards can last for hours, much longer than the attention span of most boys. Arrange to have troop members attend a particular portion of the meeting that is most likely to hold their interest, and then have them quietly file out. The "public comment" section of a meeting is often lively and entertaining.

At the troop meeting following the visit, encourage Scouts to discuss what they saw and heard. Reinforce the idea that the meeting was a demonstration of *representative democracy*—the way Americans govern themselves.

OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

If the troop is using this feature around Memorial Day (last Monday in May) or Independence Day (July 4), the patrol leaders' council might want to observe the holiday by encouraging display of the U.S. flag or by taking part in local celebrations. The troop might march in a parade, assist at a ceremony, perform a public display of flag courtesies, or distribute fliers to remind residents when and how to fly the flag.

CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ Week 1

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Have a pair of experienced Scouts show how to fold and care for the U.S. flag *(Boy Scout Handbook)*.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	• Form the troop into parallel patrols. • Present the colors. • Sing the national anthem. • Hold a uniform inspection.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice raising, lowering, and folding the flag. Plan and rehearse an opening ceremony to use at next week's meeting. • Experienced Scouts visit a fire or police station to find out how they operate and what it takes to become a police officer or fire fighter. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or start planning the troop heritage hike. Consider planning several stops that are of historical importance to your community.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for a patrol outing this month. This outing could be a five- or 10-mile hike so that newer Scouts can work on their hiking skills. Or plan a patrol Good Turn. Consider working on items that Scouts need to advance to the next rank.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Rooster Fight." (See the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.**)		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Form the troop into patrols and sing "God Bless America." • Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Begin work on next month's program feature.		

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CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ Week 2

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts meet with an elected public official, either at the troop meeting place or in his or her office. Learn what the official does and how an election is conducted. • Experienced Scouts plan a simple community Good Turn project (chapter 19, "Community Service," in the *Scoutmaster Handbook)*. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or, if possible, prepare for a campout on the troop heritage hike.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Identify Scouts in the patrol who need to participate in flag ceremonies and Good Turn projects. Suggest activities that these Scouts can participate in to fulfill rank requirements.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play any of the "Steal-the-Bacon" games suitable for patrol teams. (See the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.* *)		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Work on next month's program feature.		

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CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ Week 3

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• Visit a public agency such as a night court, city council meeting, or a school board meeting. • Find out how the agency fits into the economy of your community, the country, or the world. • See how the government operates.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes			
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes			
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ Week 4

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on projects related to citizenship. • Experienced Scouts review map-and-compass skills in preparation for the heritage hike. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity, assist with map-and-compass activities, or continue planning for the troop heritage hike (and campout, if approved).		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review plans and assignments for the historic hike. Make sure everyone knows the travel plans and equipment needs. Practice interpatrol activities.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources*. Pick a game that will require teamwork within each patrol.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and last-minute details for the troop outing. Finalize work on next month's program feature.		

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CITIZENSHIP

TROOP OUTDOOR PROGRAM PLAN

Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Friday evening	Load gear at meeting location; leave for campsite. Plan only a light meal en route.	SPL
	Arrive at campsite; off-load equipment. Set up patrol sites. Stow gear and set up camp. Prepare camp stoves for breakfast.	SPL/PL
Saturday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities; clean up patrol site.	
8:30–11:30 A.M.	Give patrol leaders a topographic map to lead a three- to five-mile hike. Scouts working toward First Class rank could take part in an orienteering race. Younger Scouts could take a nature hike.	SPL
11:30 A.M.	Sack lunch.	
Noon	Continue activities.	
4:30 P.M.	Start dinner preparation.	Cooks
5:30 P.M.	Dinner.	SPL
6:00 P.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
8:00 P.M.	Campfire.	
9:00 P.M.	Bedtime snack.	
10:00 P.M.	Lights out.	
Sunday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities; clean up patrol site.	

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
8:30 A.M.	Worship service.	
9:00–11:00 A.M.	Patrol games—use four from the Games section of *Troop Program Resources.* *	
11:00 A.M.	Break camp.	
Special equipment needed	Topographic maps, clipboards, compasses, troop camping equipment.	

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