

OPTIONS

Girl Scout Leaders today are usually juggling some combination of family, career, volunteer commitments and leisure activities. Finding the time for all of these could, at best, be described as difficult. Planning time is even more precious. Here, then, to help get you started, are OPTIONS for the busy Girl Scout Leader.

Each OPTIONS guide will offer meeting ideas for the beginning of the year as well as presenting a collection of openings and closings to be mixed and matched at meetings throughout the year. To implement OPTIONS, certain resources are necessary. Each OPTIONS identifies those resources considered primary (used at nearly every meeting) and secondary (used at certain specific meetings). Resources listed on page 5 are supportive to leaders and girls and are available for purchase at the G.S. Shop or check out at the Emerson or Hannibal Resource Centers at the St. Louis and Hannibal Girl Scout Service Centers.

OPTIONS is here to help you – do not think your troop meetings should be planned around what is written here. The girl/adult partnership always has been a fundamental concept in Girl Scouting; it is one of our unique strengths and values. In Girl Scouting, a girl can learn to make decisions, accept the consequences of those decisions, and help plan activities for her troop. Through your efforts, girls will Discover (themselves and their values) Connect (with others) and Take Action (to improve their communities and the world).

So feel free to use OPTIONS in helping to get you started in planning your troop year. You are encouraged to use the Girl Scout Journey Publications and resources, which invite girls to “Take Action” on an issue they care about. The books contain stories, inspirational material, Girl Scout History, traditions and values, facts and games, and open spaces for girls to fill in their own ideas and memories. There are currently three different Leadership Journey’s available to the Daisy Girl Scout. Each Leadership Journey Set includes a girl book and a how to guide for the troop leader/facilitator. The *Daisy Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* (available in the fall of 2011) will include stories and activities to show Daisies how to live and learn the Girl Scout Law and earn their Petals. It will also include new Financial Literacy and Cookie Business “Leaves” to go with their Petals.

Additional Ideas and options for troop meetings and activities can be found online at www.girlscoutsem.org, the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers, *Pep Session Packets* and in each issue of *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin*. Your Neighborhood Chair will also serve as a resource in finding out about Neighborhood Events and District Events offered to Daisy Girl Scouts in your area.

Training is the most important tip we can offer to first time and returning Girl Scout Leaders. Daisy Leaders responded that Introduction to Girl Scouting (ITGS) and Daisy Leader courses gave them a great start. The GSUSA Online Volunteer Orientation (<http://training.girlscouts.org/>, password: Discover) is required and provides an introduction to the organization. GSEM’s ITGS is required and provides essential troop start up information for new Leaders. Leadership Essentials and Daisy Essentials offer additional ideas and information for working with a troop. Check www.girlscoutsem.org for a link to online ITGS and the current issue of the *GSEM Course Catalog*, which lists course dates, times, and locations. Additionally the *Adult Facilitator Guide for Daisy Flower Garden Journey* offers Leaders information to help guide girls through the learning petals. *The Daisy Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* will be available in the fall of 2011 and will also offer new and updated information for working with girls.

Girl Scout programs change and update to keep girls interested and involved. Check www.girlscoutsem.org for a link to online courses and the current issue of the *GSEM Course Catalog*, also available online, which lists course dates, times, and locations.

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Girl Scout Daisies are in kindergarten and first grade. The Girl Scout Daisy troop offers girls an opportunity to develop their own unique strengths, talents, gifts and to expand their family circle.

Daisy meetings should last approximately 40-60 minutes. Time of day and frequency will depend on your schedule and the girl's schedule. Meetings may be held in a school room, church hall, day care, recreation center, or other places where space is available.

Some things to take into consideration when working with the Girl Scout Daisy are:

- ✓ Permission slips, notices of future meetings, parent's letters, etc. should be given to the girls at the end of the meetings as the girls are going home.
- ✓ It is important to let each girl express herself and experience activities in her own way at her own pace within an environment of support and trust. At the Girl Scout Daisy level, the creative "process" is more important than the finished product.
- ✓ Family involvement is encouraged by inviting the participation of family members (parents, guardians, foster parents, grandparents, older brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, etc.) in troop activities. Adults that participate in on-going troop activities should register as an adult Girl Scout. A welcoming ceremony may be held in the very beginning of the year to welcome the girls and their parents/guardians to Girl Scouting.
- ✓ Plan for a "sharing time" in each meeting. It is important for girls to have the opportunity to talk about the events of their day or the past week.

Troop meetings for the Girl Scout Daisy have a certain structure (see following example. They should begin with a short opening ceremony that might include a song, the Promise or a flag ceremony. The opening can be followed by a sharing time and possibly a snack. Check with parents/guardians BEFORE you begin your meetings to find out if anyone has a food allergy. The Program Activity portion of the meeting may be a game, art project, a story or a dramatics project. It may include an activity that will teach girls to live and learn the Girl Scout promise and law and earn a petal or leaf. It may incorporate activities or a story from one of the three Leadership Journey series. Some meetings may include a field trip or the trip can also take the place of the meeting. The meeting should have a definite closing – a song, game or the Girl Scout handshake or friendship circle.

Tips for planning a meeting:

- ❖ Meeting outlines provide structure and help the troop meet its goals.
- ❖ A typical Girl Scout meeting will have some or all of the parts listed on the next page.
- ❖ Selection of major activities will depend upon location, facilities, weather, interest of the girls and the capabilities of the leaders and available consultants.
- ❖ Leaders may wish to plan extra activities in case the meeting moves more quickly than anticipated.

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Parts of the meeting	Time to Allow	What Happens
1. Start Up or Arrival		Start-up activities give girls something to do until the meeting starts.
2. Opening	5 minutes	Opening activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus the girls on the meeting. • Are chosen by the girls. • Often include the Girl Scout Promise and Law. • May include a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story or other.
3. Business	10 minutes	Troop Government is utilized during this part of a meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking attendance and collecting dues. • Making announcements. • Planning an upcoming event or trip.
4. Activities	20 minutes	Girls help plan activities they will do during troop meetings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insignia work, activity, field trip. • Outdoor time. • Physical Activity (active games, etc.) • Ideas from the Leadership Journeys or the new <i>Girls Guide to Girl Scouting</i>
5. Snack/Treat	10 minutes	Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be a food snack or special treat. • Guide girls to consider the health benefits and possible food allergies of potential snacks. • Parents can take a turn bringing a treat.
6. Clean-up	10 minutes	Clean-up gives girls the opportunity to observe the familiar Girl Scouts tenant, "Leave a place better than you found it."
7. Closing	5 minutes	The closing lets girls know the meeting is ending. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand out information. • Review next activity/meeting.

Some meetings may need more time for an activity. Flexibility, wise planning and observing how things are going will help you judge the proper timing of a meeting.

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Girl Scout Daisy Troop Finances

- **While there is always the temptation to do so, DO NOT SUBSIDIZE TROOP ACTIVITIES YOURSELF!!** Check the *GSEM Troop Money Earning Monograph* for planning troop budget, troop checking account, and other troop money related topics. This publication is available from your Neighborhood Chair or council resource centers. Additionally, refer to the *Volunteer Essentials* (available online from the GSEM website) and the newly updated *GSEM Essentials* also available from your Neighborhood Chair for information regarding specific issues relating to troop funds for Daisies. Specifically note that: Girl Scout Daisies are not involved with handling any money, including troop dues. Adult Volunteers will handle money, keep financial records, and do all group budgeting. Daisies may participate in the cookie activity and other council product activities but do not participate in troop money earning activities. Parents/guardians should decide what they will contribute to the cost of activities.
- Most Daisy Troop Leaders have determined the amount needed per girl by discussing estimated expenses with experienced Troop Leaders, Troop Organizers, Neighborhood Chairs, and Mentors.
- Keep field trips simple and low cost.
- Know the total cost of recognitions for the entire year. Please take inflation into consideration when determining annual dues for your troop. To determine yearly dues for your troop be sure to include Girl Scout Daisy and World Association pins, Daisy Learning Petal sets, Journey Awards, membership star and blue disk, fun or participation patches, craft supplies, etc. and for girls bridging to Girl Scout Brownies, the Girl Scout Brownie Pin and Bridge to Girl Scout Brownie patch. Current prices of these items can be found in the Girl Scout Shop in St. Louis and Hannibal and online at www.girlscoutsem.org.
- The Girl Scout Daisy Tunic or vest (including the insignia tab, USA flag, council ID set, and troop numbers), the *Daisy Girls Guide to Girl Scouting*, available in the fall of 2011 and the Daisy level Leadership Journey books are all optional purchases and are the responsibility of each girl's family. Refer to the *Daisy Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* or online for uniform insignia placement guides.
- Have a parent meeting early in the year to review plans and costs. The meeting will afford you the opportunity to organize the troop committee (i.e.; assistant leaders, cookie manager, fall sale manager, etc.) and to get acquainted with the parents/guardians and other family members. It will give you the opportunity to find out what the parents/guardians expect for their daughters and what interests they may have regarding the Girl Scout program. You will be able to tell the parents/guardians about the troop's plans and let them know how they can help. This is your opportunity to collect registration money and gather information.
- Go to your Neighborhood meetings. You'll get great ideas, meet experience leaders, and learn about exciting neighborhood events and council wide opportunities to enhance your troop activities.

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Resources

Please always refer to the current versions of both primary and secondary resources.

Primary:

Girl Scout Leadership Journey resources and publications:

Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden: In this Journey, a favorite pastime, gardening, meets the Girl Scout Law. The result is a storybook world of flowers and little girls who, together, do great things. Girl Scout Daisies will especially enjoy meeting the colorful, global characters who teach them to live the Girl Scout Law. The adult “how-to” guide offers Garden Story Time tips, key ideas for garden projects, and all the Girl Scout history and traditions needed for an adventure starring Amazing Daisy, a new flower friend for Girl Scout Daisies.

Between Earth and Sky: The flower friends take a cross-country road trip that invites Daisies to explore what sprouts up across the country as they learn how to protect what needs protecting! As Lupe and her flower friends zip along in Lupe’s petal-powered card, the Daisies witness some wonders and woes of nature, and are on their way to earning their Clover, Blue Bucket and Firefly awards.

5 Flowers, 4 Stories, 3 Cheers for Animals!: Daisies learn just how much they can care for animals and for themselves-and just how good that makes them feel.

The Daisy Girls Guide to Girl Scouting (available fall, 2011): The Flower Friends are now tied to the Petals. They will show Daisies how to live and learn the Girl Scout Law through brand new short stories and activities. Daisies can now earn Financial Literacy and Cookie Business “leaves” to go with their Petals.

Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin (online at www.girlscoutsem.org)

Volunteer Essentials (online at www.girlscoutsem.org): Contains content that impacts the entire volunteer membership of the GSUSA, with current GSEM specific information. Online only

GSEM Essentials (available from your Neighborhood Chair): Minimizes content from *Volunteer Essentials* and current GSEM specific information. Printed Document

Safety Checkpoint: Guidelines and checkpoints regarding safety issues by specific activity (<http://www.girlscoutsem.org/content/822/safety-activity-checkpoints.aspx>)

Secondary:

Perfectly Effortless Program (PEP Session Packets) – activities to enhance troop program (topics include: *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting; Celebrate!; Fun in the Out-of-Doors; Helping Others; Bridging; People Near and Far; Do-Re-Mi and Swaps*) available at the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers or online at www.girlscoutsem.org

Trips and Tours – A resource designed for Girl Scout Leaders to explore the many outstanding venues in and around our community. *Trips and Tours* is available online at www.girlscoutsem.org.

Troop Money Earning Monograph – Information about troop checking accounts, planning budgets, etc. available from your Neighborhood Chair, council resource centers or online at www.girlscoutsem.org.

It’s Your Journey – Customize It! – GSUSA Publication. This publication is available for purchase at the Girl Scout Shop or to borrow from the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers.

Melinda Carroll Girl Scouts Greatest Hits – Pocket Songbook of Vol’s 1-6 and a world of Peace (GSPSB): available to be borrowed from the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers.

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On-Line:

www.girlscoutsem.org – GSEM news source, online courses, workshops, council program activities, Neighborhood Announcements and other council publications.

www.girlscouts.org – GSUSA's national organization Web site, go to Girl Scout Central section for awards, ceremonies and other information.

Additional Resources and Program Ideas:

Girl Scout Virtual Catalogs: Online at www.girlscoutsem.org : Girl Scout Shop

Girl Scout Promise and Law: Online at www.girlscoutsem.org

The Story of Juliette Low: Interactive story of the Girl Scout Founder. Online at www.girlscoutsem.org: Resource Centers

Girl Scout Puppet Activity: Fun Craft – Play activity. Online at www.girlscoutsem.org: Resource Center

Girl Scout Fun Patches: Girl Scouts offers various patches for sale in the G.S. Shop or online at www.girlscoutsem.org. The variety of these patches is constantly changing. You can view the updated available patches on a virtual catalog through the Girl Scout Shop link on our website. Fun patches and participation patches may include: Manners, First Aid, Pet Care as well as Fire Station Visit, Ice Cream Party, Roller and Ice Skating etc. There are no requirements specifically for these patches. Girls may earn or be given them at your discretion.

Living the Girl Scout Law: Individual level ideas for working with the girls about living the law are available online under the Resource Centers – Links section at www.girlscoutsem.org.

Religious Awards: Contact your religious organization directly to see if there is a program available for your level of girls to earn awards.

Resources for Volunteers: A listing of all resources available to borrow from the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers. Available online at www.girlscoutsem.org ; Resource Center; Links

The following Patch Programs are available at www.girlscoutsem.org: Programs and Events: Patch Programs or in the Emerson or Hannibal Resource Centers:

Juliette Low World Friendship Fund Patch Program (JLWFF)

Making CENTS in the City Patch Program - Girl Scouts of Missouri financial literacy program. Age level traveling trunks may be borrowed from the Emerson or Hannibal Resource Center.

Economize Energy (ECO-EN) Patch Program: Help girls learn to use resources wisely and to protect and improve the world around them.

Disability Awareness Award Programs: Our own council program promoting disability awareness for all levels of girls.

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Getting Started.....Meeting Ideas

Children enjoy repetition and opening and closing ceremonies offer them the comforting feeling of having “traditions” at the meeting and knowing what to expect. The PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting* and various books in the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Centers have descriptions of numerous Ceremonies that are appropriate for meeting openings and closings.

Opening Ceremony:

Begin with a song such as “Hello! Hello!” (GSPSB). Say the Girl Scout Promise using the Girl Scout Sign, or complete the flag ceremony, recite the Girl Scout Promise/Law, or form a Friendship Circle (see below).

Friendship Circle: In a friendship circle, you stand in a circle with other girls. Place your right arm over your left arm. Hold hands with the girls next to you. The friendship squeeze begins when you hold hands in a friendship circle. One girl or the Troop Leader should start. With her right hand she squeezes her neighbor’s hand. Then that girl squeezes with her right hand. One by one, each girl passes on the squeeze until it travels all around the circle.

Closing Ceremony:

Say the Girl Scout Promise and Sing “Make New Friends” (GSPSB). Eventually, introduce the friendship circle/squeeze or complete the flag ceremony or recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Meeting 1: Read the “*Story of Juliette Low*” and have the girls act out the sound effects. (See Additional Resources and Program Ideas) or teach the girls a song from the *Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden Leadership Journey*.

Meeting 2: Read the Girl Scout Promise and Law to the girls. Discuss “What does it mean to make a promise to do your best?” Before the Investiture Ceremony it is important for the Leader to develop the ideas of the Girl Scout Promise and Law with the girls on their level. Through discussion, examples and acting parts they will be able to comprehend the basics of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Have the girls make the Girl Scout sign when they say the Girl Scout Promise. The sign is formed by holding down the thumb and little finger on the right hand, leaving the three middle fingers extended (these fingers represent the three parts of the Promise). See the PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting*, for information about the Daisy Learning Petals ceremony and the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Meeting 3: Investiture: The Girl Scout Daisy Investiture Ceremony can be found in the PEP Session Packet – *Celebrate!* Girls should receive Girl Scout Daisy pin and the Girl Scout Promise Center as they recite the Girl Scout Promise. The Girl Scout Promise Center is the foundation of the Daisy Learning Petal program that you and your troop will work to complete throughout the year. Refer to the Leadership Journey *Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden* and the *Daisy Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* (available fall, 2011) for more information.

Meeting 4: Begin helping the girls to earn their Daisy Petals. Begin with the first law (the LIGHT BLUE Daisy Learning Petal)... A Girl Scout will do her best to be honest and fair; Lupe the lupine is honest and fair. Discuss what it means to be honest, how you feel when you tell the truth and how you feel when didn’t. Law#2 (the YELLOW Daisy Learning Petal) Sunny, the sunflower is friendly and helpful. Let the girls divide something up in a fair way. Lupe and Sunny are from the *Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden Leadership Journey Book*.

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Other Special Girl Scout Days and Activities Ideas:

October 31 – Juliette Low’s Birthday. Celebrate by having a birthday party for Juliette “Daisy” Low! Start earning the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund (JLWFF) patch. Design and develop your own celebration. Visit the Emerson and Hannibal Resource Center or online at www.girlscoutsem.org for patch requirements and other ideas to celebrate Juliette’s birthday.

Fall Product Sales: If you choose to participate in this Council Fall Product Sale event, refer to the *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin* and Fall Product Training materials for more information about this sale.

January: Cookie Go Day! Refer to the current issue of the *Inspire: Leader Program Bulletin* and Troop Cookie materials for more information about the sale.

February 22 – World Thinking Day: This is a time when Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all around the world think about each other. Visit www.girlscouts.org for theme and program ideas. Choose one country, Mexico, for example, and play a game. Serve Mexican food and follow their traditions. Also, no matter what country you may choose, think about how Girl Scouting in that country is both similar and different from Girl Scouting in the U.S.A. You also may choose to award the girls with their World Trefoil Pin or Juliette Low World Friendship Fund Patch as part of your World Thinking Day celebration. Refer to the PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting* for World Pin ceremony options. There are new Girl Scout Thinking Day patches available every year. Contact the GS Shop.

March 12 – Girl Scout Birthday. Celebration of the first Girl Scout troop meeting ever held. How about some cake? There is always a Girl Scout Patch available yearly for this event. Contact the GS Shop.

April – April Showers: Plan to participate in this council wide collection of personal care items. Again, patches are available. Contact the GS Shop

April: First grade Girl Scout Daisies should begin working on the Bridge to Girl Scout Brownie Patch. Invite some Girl Scout Brownies from an existing Brownie troop to your troop meeting. Have the Girl Scout Brownies take turns reading the Brownie Story to your troop and have them tell about some of the things they do in their troop.

May: Complete Bridge to Brownie steps by inviting younger girls to a troop meeting. Play a game together or have the Brownie girls teach the younger girls the interactive story of Juliette Low (online resource). Encourage girls to help plan for their Bridging Ceremony to Brownies or have them make thank you cards or decorate a picture frame (include a photo of the troop) for the adults that have helped with troop activities throughout the year.

May: Court of Awards/Bridging Ceremony: The Girl Scout Brownies may do a simple flag ceremony. You may decide to give each girl a bridging certificate, their Bridge to Brownie Girl Scouts and membership star with blue disc that fits behind it to show that the Girl Scout Daisy has completed a year in Girl Scouting. Then, proceed to celebrate in any way you and your troop see fit! Girls should have received their Daisy Learning Petals and/or Awards in the Daisy Garden (Leadership Journey) as they were earned throughout the year. Celebrate the girl’s accomplishments. Hand out cards and thank all your adult volunteers.

You may also wish to check the PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting* for a sample Court of Awards Ceremony. Each girl should receive a membership star with blue disc, and her Daisy Learning Petals, Journey awards, participation or fun patches or other earned awards that have not already been presented during the year.