

Taken from the Volunteer Toolkit Badge Year for Brownies Household Elf 1

Overview

Note to Volunteers

Send a note to parents before the meeting asking them to have their Girl Scout bring an old t-shirt of any size. It can be plain or have graphics on it, but make sure they know it will be made into something else.

The excitement and fast pace of running troop meetings for the first time can sometimes leave us tongue-tied. For that reason, scripting is included for guiding girls through a meeting; these "lines" are under the heading "SAY." However, you know your girls best. If you feel you don't need the script, do what makes sense for you and your girls.

- **Prepare Ahead**

Get your badges [here](#).

- Print out a PDF of the Girl Scout Promise and Law, one for each girl.
- Create an Energy Action worksheet for each girl. Write "SAVE ENERGY & WATER" in bold letters at the top of a paper. Down the left, write 1, 2, and 3, with space next to each number for the girls to fill it in. At the bottom, create a line where a girl can sign her name.
- Cut the top 1/3 off plastic soda bottles, one set for each girl (they will use top and bottom.)
- Have extra used T-shirts available for girls who don't have one.
- Cut poster board into rectangles for each girl to use – roughly the size of a sheet of a paper.

Get Help from Your Friends and Family Network

Your Friends and Family Network can include:

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

Ask your network to help:

- make snacks
- welcome girls to the meeting
- supply materials for the session

Meeting Length

90 minutes

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The times given for each activity will be different, depending on how many girls are in the troop. Plus, girls may really enjoy a particular activity and want to continue past the allotted time. As much as possible, let them! That's part of keeping Girl Scouting girl-led! And what do you do if you only have an hour for the meeting? Simply omit some of the activities.

Materials

Activity 1: As Girls Arrive

- Paper
- Markers and crayons

Activity 2: Opening Ceremony

- PDF of Girl Scout Promise and Law

Activity 3: Energy Hit List

- Markers
- Poster board or dry erase board
- Energy Action sheet

Activity 4: Down with the Draft

- Knee-high panty hose socks, one for each girl
- Ribbon
- Rubber bands
- Dried beans or rice
- Funnel
- Poly-fill
- Scissors
- Google eyes
- Glue
- Pipe cleaners

Activity 5: Chasing Water Falls

- Used, plastic water or soda bottles
- Decorative duck tape

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- Sharpie markers
- Electrical tape
- Ruler

Activity 6: Snack Break: Local Love

- One plate with fruit or vegetables from a local source, like a farmer's market, garden or local business
- One plate with fruit or vegetables from a faraway source, such as a tropical fruit (banana) or fruit that's out of season

Activity 7: Bag Lady

- Fabric markers
- Fabric cutting scissors
- Old t-shirt

Activity 8: Closing Ceremony

- None

Detailed Activity Plan

Activity 1: As Girl Arrive

Time Allotment

10 minutes

Materials

- Paper
- Markers and crayons

Steps

As girls arrive, have them draw something that uses energy or water in their home.

SAY:

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- *As you arrive, think about all the things that use energy or water in your house – lights, appliances, anything that gets plugged in—or kitchen sink faucets, toilets, and showers. Draw something you use a lot.*

Activity 2: Opening Ceremony

Time Allotment

10 minutes

Materials

- PDF of Girl Scout Promise and Law

Steps

Gather girls in a circle. Welcome them to the Household Elf meeting.

Girls say the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law together.

SAY:

- *Welcome to the Household Elf meeting! You will learn some household habits to help your families have a clean home. As a Girl Scout, you want to leave a place better than you found it, and that includes your home!*
- *Some of the household habits you learn will also help protect the environment. One way to protect Earth is by saving energy and water.*
- *Energy and water are not free. The grown-ups in your house pay for the electricity and water you use. So wasting energy or water is the same as wasting money - and we know that's not a good idea!*
- *Wasting water or energy isn't good for the environment either. Most of the energy sources we depend on, like coal and natural gas, can't be replaced - once we use them up, they're gone forever. Another problem is that most forms of energy can cause pollution for our environment. Many worry that the places we get clean water can run out, too.*

What kind of chores do you do at home to help keep it clean?

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Are there things you do to protect the environment at home? [Sample answers could be: recycle, use less water.]

[After girls share...]

- *All these things help at home and it's also good that you're being green. Now let's figure out more fun ways to help our families be better protectors of the planet at home!*

Activity 3: Energy Hit List

Time Allotment

15 minutes

Materials

- Markers
- Poster board or dry erase board
- Energy Action sheet

Steps

Ask girls to brainstorm and come up with some additional ideas about saving energy that you will write on a white board. If the girls need prompting, you could suggest:

- Replace regular light bulbs with energy efficient ones
- Turn off lights when not in the room
- Unplug chargers when phones or tablets are charged.
- Unplug appliances and electronics that aren't in use
- Clean the lint filter after every dryer load so it takes less energy
- Wash laundry with cold water
- Take shorter showers
- Turn water off when brushing your teeth
- Make sure you only run the washer with a full load
- Use shades and curtains to block the sun from heating your house so it takes less energy to cool
- Turn on ceiling fans instead of the air conditioner

Then, have the girls pick three things that they will put on their Energy Action worksheet to try at home. Ask them to hang the sheet on the fridge to remind everyone in the family to save energy.

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SAY:

- *One way to protect the earth is by saving energy and water.*
- *When you got here, you were asked to draw something in your home that uses energy or water, something that you use a lot. What did you draw?*

[After girls share...]

- *Now think of all the things that use energy and water you just heard about. Do you do anything in your home to save energy or water? (Like turn lights off when you're not in a room? Or only use the heater when it's really cold? Or turn the water off when you're brushing your teeth? Or take shorter showers?)*
- *Let's come up with more ideas and I'll write everything up on this board. Then you'll pick three to try and do it at home.*

[After girls brainstorm...]

- *Did everyone hear a few things that you could try at your own home?*
- *On your Energy ACTION sheet, write or draw three things you want to try to do at home to save energy and water. Sign your name at the bottom.*
- *Then bring your list home and hang it somewhere everyone can see, and get your family to help save energy too!*

Activity 4: Chasing Waterfalls**Time Allotment**

10 minutes

Materials

- Used, plastic water or soda bottles
- Decorative duck tape
- Sharpie markers
- Electrical tape
- Ruler

Steps

Girls make their own rain collector.

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SAY:

- *Lots of things around your home need water that could be recycled. For example, if you have plants inside, why get water from the tap when you can bring the rain in from outside? Let's make a fun rain collector for our plant friends.*
- *Take the two parts of your bottle...you'll see the top part has been cut off.*
- *Turn the top part upside down and stick it to the bottom part. You've created a funnel. This will help make sure that water gets in your rain collector.*
- *Then, using the duct tape, go around the edges so you cover the sharp part.*
- *Use the ruler and the markers to make measurement marks around the outside of the bottle. One inch, two inches, three inches, and more. I'll help you.*
- *Now you can take your rain catcher home. Next time it rains, see how much water is collected, and use it to water your plants.*

Activity 5: Snack Break: Local Love**Time Allotment**

10 Minutes

Materials

- One plate with fruit or vegetables from a local source, like a farmer's market, garden or local business
- One plate with fruit or vegetables from a faraway source, such as a tropical fruit (banana) or fruit that's out of season

Steps

While everyone is eating, discuss why buying local is better for the planet.

SAY:

- *When you look at these two plates, do you know the difference? One is better for our planet. Here's why:*
- *One plate has fruits (or vegetables) that are grown locally. It's better for our planet to eat things grown locally because they take less energy to get to us.*
- *The other plate has fruits (or vegetables) that aren't grown nearby. Like a banana, it's grown in a warm climate, like the Caribbean. So the farmer has to use a truck to get the bananas to a place where they will be put in crates or boxes. Then a*

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boat of plane has to deliver the boxes of bananas to a port, and then another truck has to deliver them to the grocery store. That's a lot of traveling and energy used!

- *If you buy something local, that means it's grown less than 100 miles away. It takes less gas, energy, and water to get that food.*
- *Have you ever been to a farm and tried fresh vegetables and fruit?*
- *Did they taste differently than what you eat at a grocery store?*
- *Have you ever been to a farmer's market? What did you like about it?*

Activity 6: Bag Lady

Time Allotment

20 minutes

Materials

- Fabric markers
- Fabric cutting scissors
- Old t-shirt

Steps

Girls make a reusable tote bag to take home their crafts, but also for using at the grocery store and to run errands.

SAY:

- *Another fun way to help save the Earth is to use natural products, or to reuse something you already have. Let's solve a household problem with a natural solution, by making our own reusable tote bags!*
- *Some of you might have some reusable bags already at your house that your family uses when you go to the store. Now you can make your own that's completely washable and made from a T-shirt.*
- *Everyone should have brought in an old t-shirt for this project, right? If not, I have extras.*
- *Start by laying your t-shirt flat. Cut off the sleeves. Then turn your t-shirt over and cut off the neck, right past the seam. The shoulder part of the shirt that is left is going to be the handles. I can help you with the cutting.*
- *Then, draw a line with your marker across the t-shirt, about 4 inches up from the bottom. I can show you where.*

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- *Then, cut slits from the bottom of the shirt up to the line, cutting both the front and back at the same time. You want this “fringe” to line up. Then, tie the front and back strips together into a knot. Keep tying all the fringes together and then turn your shirt right side out.*
- *Use the markers to draw on your bag. And now you have a fun tote bag to use!*

Activity 7: Closing Ceremony

Time Allotment

5 minutes

Materials

- None

Steps

Girls form a friendship circle and sing a song.

SAY:

- *Today we had loads of fun solving household problems the green way. We not only helped save energy and save water, but we hopefully can help our family see that it is easy to be green and clean!*
- *Thanks for being a protector of our planet. We'll do even more stuff next time we meet.*

Ask a girl to end the ceremony by starting the friendship squeeze.