

Planning the Troop Year With Your Brownie Girl Scouts



This guide provides information, ideas, and tips for planning a year of engaging, interactive, and fun activities for your Girl Scout Brownies.

To learn more about working with girls at the Brownie level, dig into the grade-level program resources available from GSUSA (described on the next page). The new Journeys are especially rich in ideas and facilitation tips that provide some great self-study about working with girls even if you don't plan to do a journey yet.

And, the best kept secret....talk with other Troop Leaders in your Service Unit. Hearing what others on the path ahead of you have tried is priceless information!

Program Resources for Girl Scout Brownies – 2nd & 3rd Grade

Below is a brief description of your primary national program resources. You can purchase these at either of our council stores (Boise and Idaho Falls) or at our online store (www.girlscouts-ssc.org). You might be able to acquire a used copy from another leader or from your Service Unit Library to review before purchasing.

Brownie Quest - It's your World Change It Journey Series



A group of Girl Scout Brownies are on a quest to find three very important keys -- the Three Keys to Leadership. But, it's not easy. To find them, the Brownies may have to put a whole new spin on the tradition of the Brownie Elf. On this journey, Brownies earn awards for each of the Leadership Keys.

Adult Guide for Brownie Quest Journey



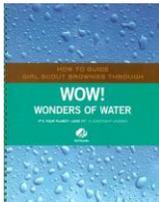
The journey adult guide offers all the tips needed to create and maintain a sense of fun and mystery along the entire Quest. Instructions for a Brownie Brainstorm, Brownie Team Trade, and other activities ensure a quality and fun time for the girls.

WOW! Wonders of Water - It's Your Planet, Love It Journey Series



The Brownie friends explore the Wonders of Water and Ways of Working as a team. Brownie ELF is back for the Very Wet Elf Adventure. In real life, the Brownies might just hold their own "Green" Tea for the Blue Planet as they earn their Love, Save, Share, and Wow awards.

Adult Guide for WOW! Wonders of Water Journey



The journey adult guide has everything you need to guide your Brownies through the WOW! Wonders of Water girl journey guide.

Brownie Girl Scout Handbook



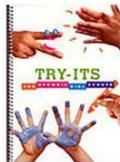
This handbook includes information on becoming a Girl Scout Brownie and suggestions for activities and how to incorporate traditions into program.

Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders



This resource offers practical suggestions to enhance your work with girls at this grade level. "Activities in a Pinch" section includes activities that require few materials and very little preparation time. Great fillers for those in-between times.

Try-Its for Brownie Girl Scouts



Try-Its are activities that challenge Brownies to try new things. This book contains 57 Try-Its with specific criteria for earning each badge and excellent instructions and pictures. A great resource for girls and troops who want to learn specific skills and ideas.

Brownie Girl Scout Songbook



Popular Girl Scout songs that Brownie's love to sing.

The Big Picture

At the beginning of the year, you will start planning the general layout of the program activities for the year. Here is a generic troop year structure that you might use as a starting point.

<p style="text-align: center;">October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founder's Day Event • Investiture • Yearly Planning 	<p style="text-align: center;">November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey Start • Badgework, etc. • Service Project 	<p style="text-align: center;">December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey, cont. • Badgework, etc. • Service Project • Cookie Program Goal Setting
<p style="text-align: center;">January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey, cont. • Badgework, etc. • Cookie Program 	<p style="text-align: center;">February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookie Program, cont. • Thinking Day Activity • Journey, cont. 	<p style="text-align: center;">March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookie Program, cont. • Girl Scout Week Activity • Journey, cont.
<p style="text-align: center;">April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey, cont. • Badgework, etc. • Service Project 	<p style="text-align: center;">May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day/Overnight Trip • Journey Wrap-Up • End of Year Celebrations 	<p style="text-align: center;">June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troop Camping • Girls might go to Resident Camp

Many leaders suggest loosely planning the entire year with 'room to move.' These leaders find that they deviate from their original plan as they notice what the girls enjoy doing and how long it takes them to accomplish activities.

You and your co-leaders might get together and discuss the following:

- Given our meeting schedule, how many troop meetings are we planning?
- Which journey do we want to do this year?
- How many meetings should we devote to the journey?
- Will we do an Investiture/Rededication ceremony at our first meeting?
- What badge-earning activities do we want to propose?
- How many short trips do we want to plan for?
- Do we want to consider one or more service projects?
- What Service Unit events are being planned that we might want to participate in?
- How much time will we devote to the cookie program?

The Planning Partnership

Planning is still new to Girl Scout Brownies so they will need your help to suggest activities, and provide stimulation and direction. You and your co-leader will layout the basic plan and engage your girls in making decisions here and there. Examples of making the programs girl led at this grade level are found in your Journey Adult Facilitator's Guide, and include:

- Help girls make informed choices by talking them through the various steps of decision-making
- Encourage girls to be creative and add their own flair to projects and activities
- Look for opportunities to role-play problem-solving and give girls the freedom to solve problems on their own.

You don't want to over-plan so that you leave room for surprises and new opportunities, but it is good to have a general plan so that the girls know what to expect and so that you can manage the planning and preparation time efficiently. This will also help your organize your Troop Support Team including the adult helpers so they know what is expected of them and when.

At the Brownie grade level, since they are not yet ready to take the lead in planning, it is not necessary to have an entire meeting designated to planning the year. Instead of planning with your girls use this first meeting to let them know what to expect during the year and what fun activities and group learning you have planned for them. Use this meeting to talk about the journey you have selected, the Girl Scout Cookie Program, ceremonies you will be performing and any special trips or events you have planned with your troop or service unit. Give them a list of badge projects and let them choose which ones they want to work on as a group.

Before each troop meeting review your materials and your plan so that the session will run smoothly. Make sure all field trips are organized and parents know what their girls will be doing. Look over what materials you will need, including opening activities for girls to do as they arrive and anything they will need to bring from home for the next troop meeting. This preparation includes purchasing materials, printing forms, confirming field trips, etc.

The most important thing is to do your best to design your troop activities around the basics of Girl Scout Leadership Experience. If you choose to add a journey to your plan for the year, you will be all set because the GSLE is built right in. But, anything can become a GSLE activity with a little extra planning. An example is provided on the next page.

GSLE'ing Any Activity

With a little planning, any activity can become a Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). Let's say that you have decided to do one of the Brownie journeys this year, and participate with your Service Unit for two big traditional events, but you also want to invite your girls to choose an idea for a day trip.

Since Brownies cannot always come up with ideas on their own, you might give them three choices:

1. A trip to the zoo
2. A trip to the cheese factory
3. A nature hike.

Let's say your troop of Girl Scout Brownies chooses to go on a nature hike.

Although taking your Brownies on a nature hike is a wonderful learning opportunity in and of itself, you and your co-leader can make it a Girl Scout Leadership Experience by linking the activity to the three keys and the three processes.

Applying the GSLE Keys

Discover	By going outdoors on a hike girls will begin to explore the possibilities that nature offers and explore who they are in the outdoor environment. Girls can see if going on hikes and connecting to nature is something that is important to them. Have them reflect on their hike in a journal: how did it make them feel, did it give them more energy?
Connect	Invite an expert to come along and talk about the flora and fauna of the hike area.
Take Action	After the hike, encourage girls to brainstorm on the value of spending time in nature and what they could do to get more people hiking? Help the girls decide on one idea to take action on and facilitate a simple planning session.

Applying the GSLE Processes

Girl-Led	Have the girls decide on the type of area for the hike – lots of trees, water, birds, etc. Let them suggest the appropriate clothing and what they will need to pack. The girls will need guidance from you to make sure everything is safe and all girls are properly prepared.
Learning By Doing (& Reflection)	Partner with the girls to make a list of what you observe along the hike. Ask them to describe what it looks like or smells like or sounds like. After the hike, ask girls to reflect on their experience and perhaps draw a picture of their favorite nature hike memory.
Cooperative Learning	Before the girls go on the nature hike have them gather as a team to decide on the rules and expectations. Bonus: If they work on this together and they come up with their ideas they are more likely to follow and respect the rules.



Traditions at the Brownie Level

This section provides detail about the traditional Girl Scout activities and where you can find information to help you plan with your Brownies.

General Resources:

- **Traditions** link on **Resource Central** on our council website (www.girlscouts-ssc.org)
- **Girl Scout Central** under **Program** on the GSUSA website (www.girlscouts.org)
- Let's Celebrate! Girl Scout Ceremonies, GSUSA Program Resource
- www.scoutingweb.com

Investiture/Rededication Ceremony: Usually held at the beginning of the year

Investiture is a ceremony that welcomes new members, girls or adults, to Girl Scouts, where they say the Girl Scout Promise and Law for the first time. You can invite friends and family and have girls help plan the ceremony. If you have a new Girl Scout join your troop you should hold an investiture ceremony for her. Include the girls in the planning by asking their preferences on who should be invited or if they would like a song or poem to be read. Girls will receive their Girl Scout Membership Pin.

A Rededication ceremony can also be conducted any time the girls want to review what the Girl Scout Promise and Law means to them. Repetition is important at this age and some of your Girl Scout Brownies will need a refresher course on the Girl Scout Promise and Law – a rededication ceremony is a perfect opportunity for this.

Founder's Day or Juliette Low's Birthday: October 31st

This is a great day to celebrate the Girl Scout Founder, Juliette Gordon Low, by participating in an event or party with your Service Unit. Your troop might want to help plan this celebration and invite a sister troop.

Find out more:

- Brownie Girl Scout Handbook:
 - Special Days in Girl Scouting, Page 20
 - Juliette Low Album, Page 7-11
 - Celebrating with a Ceremony, Page 22
- Try-Its for Brownie Girl Scouts
 - Her Story, Page 106

Girl Scout Cookie Program: January through March

Each year our cookie baker, Little Brownie Baker, develops great **Cookie Activity Kits** with suggestions on how to design a fun, educational, and successful cookie program. These will be available at the start of the membership year.

World Thinking Day: February 22nd

This is an important day to think about our sister Girl Scouts around the nation and world. Girl Scout Brownies will love to learn about other countries, which can include creating a dish from a foreign place or learning a few words or songs in a different language. Girls usually earn their World Trefoil Pin. Make sure you plan to attend your Service Unit Meetings since many Service Units plan a special Thinking Day activity for all troops.

Find out more:

- Brownie Girl Scout Handbook, Page 20, 24
 - People Near and Far, Chapter 5, Page 117-134
- Try-Its for Brownie Girl Scouts
 - Around the World, Page 8
 - Through the Years, Page 10

Girl Scout Birthday/Girl Scout Week: March 12th

Girl Scout Sunday/Sabbath: The Sunday that begins the week in which March 12th falls. This gives girls an opportunity to attend their place of worship and be recognized as a Girl Scout. If a place of worship is the group sponsor, girls may perform a service, such as greeting, ushering, or doing a flag ceremony. This can also be a time when girls explore other faiths.

Girl Scout Birthday: On March 12th, 1912 Juliette Gordon Low started Girl Scouting in Savannah, Georgia. The week in which March 12 falls is Girl Scout Week. During this week Girl Scout troops hold ceremonies within their Service Unit or with sister troops. Juliette Gordon Low wanted to show young people that they can make their world a better peaceful place and the ceremonies should reflect this sense of goodwill.

Girl Scout Week: The week of March 12th Girl Scout week brings girls, adults and friends together to recognize and appreciate the Girl Scout Organization. Celebrations happen all week, and in many cities Mayors will issue a special Girl Scout Week proclamation. This is a perfect time to have a ceremony or special activity in your Service Unit. Girl Scout Brownies can also do a service project for their community as a way to highlight the value of Girl Scouting in our communities.

Find out more:

- The Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders, Religious Awards, Page 14
- Brownie Girl Scout Activity Book, Page 21

Trips: Girls can take and help plan trips at any point during the year

At the Girl Scout Brownie grade level girls can start planning overnight trips with their troop. Remember that there is a progression to planning trips, so if trips are new to your girls, start with short trips and work your way up to longer day trips, a short overnight trip, and so on.

Find out more:

- The Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders
 - The Progression of Trips, Page 30
- Brownie Girl Scout Handbook
 - What's Out There, Chapter 4, Page 89-116
- Try-Its for Brownie Girl Scouts
 - Travel Right, Page 81

Service Projects: anytime during the year.

Plan service projects with your girls based on their interests. Some samples that are good for the Brownie grade level include:

- Making fun kits for homeless children
- Adopting an animal at the zoo
- Taking part in the Brownie Valentine Program (a Program Pack)

Bridging: At the end of the year for girls moving to Juniors



Bridging from Girl Scout Brownies to Girl Scout Juniors is known as a “fly up”, where every Girl Scout receives her wings. Girls earn the rainbow patch through a series of activities. To read more about this tradition and the requirements for these activities and ceremonies please see the resources below.

Find out more:

- Brownie Girl Scout Handbook
- Updated Bridging Requirements on the **Bridging** link on **Resource Central**