

Short and Snappy

Information for Girl Scout Volunteers

What you will need:

- Volunteers
- Copies of the Short and Snappy
- Girl Scout pins for the new leaders
- Posters with the Girl Scout Promise and Law

Time: 10–15 minutes

GIRL SCOUT CEREMONIES

Girl Scout ceremonies offer a rich tradition to our organization. These ceremonies reinforce the values of Girl Scouting. They may be a part of a meeting such as a simple Flag Ceremony or more elaborate as when the girls are receiving badges and other recognitions. Ceremonies may also recognize other accomplishments or special Girl Scout Holidays. Whatever the purpose and whatever the ceremony, the girls must be an integral part of the planning process.

All ceremonies have certain elements in common. The best ceremonies use a combination of the following:

Purpose: The reason, the motivation for, or main idea of the ceremony. What is the driving force of the ceremony? Possible purposes include to welcome new members, celebrate accomplishments or express Girl Scout values.

Mood and Atmosphere: Pleasant surroundings appropriate to the purpose/theme. Consider having music, songs, readings, dramatics or use symbols to build an appropriate mood for the ceremony. Allow the girls to be creative in determining the props and equipment to be used. Bringing their individual personalities to each ceremony will also help drive the events atmosphere.

Personality: Bring out the characteristics of the girls and volunteers involved in the ceremony. Allow the girls to take on roles that express who they are as an individual. Highlight the personal qualities of the girls and allow them to flourish at their own level.

Setting: Consider the time of day and how it impacts the attendance and mood of the ceremony. Choose a location relevant to the purpose and mood and atmosphere desired (i.e. outside in the woods, inside on a stage, part of the meeting, etc.) Consider using different types of props or materials during the ceremony. For example, if the girls are bridging to the next level of Girl Scouting, they might want to include some kind of bridge to cross over. Make sure the location can accommodate for activities and number of people planned. Also try to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

Safety: Always utilize the safety activity checkpoints and ensure the safety of everyone involved in the ceremony.

Theme: The theme focuses on developing the purpose. The subject, topic or idea is expressed through the activities, decorations, invitations, refreshments, etc. It is a common thread that brings the whole ceremony together.

Note: Plan for rehearsal time no matter how short and simple the ceremony.

There are many types of ceremonies. The girls are limited by their imaginations and resources! There are a few that are traditionally a part of the Girl Scout experience. These include:

Investiture is a ceremony that welcomes new members into Girl Scouting for the first time, giving Girl Scout pins to both girls and adults.

Rededication is a ceremony for girls and adults who have already been invested. It is a time for them to reaffirm their belief in the Girl Scout Promise and Law and to reflect upon the meaning of Girl Scouting in their lives. Usually it is held at the beginning of each Girl Scout year and can be done simultaneously with the investiture of new members. Because of the importance of these events, a beautiful and meaningful ceremony should be planned and carried out.

Scout's Own is a ceremony that has a specific theme and includes whatever the girls want it to include. A friendship Scout's Own might include poems, songs and reflections from each girl on what friendship means to her.

Flag Ceremony: A flag ceremony honors the American flag as the symbol of our country and all the hopes, dreams and people it consists of.

Bridging Ceremony: Marks a girl's move from one level of Girl Scouting to another.

Please note that Girl Scouting, while being spiritual, is not affiliated with a specific faith. Each ceremony should be inclusive of all participants.

When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their spiritual beliefs.

Activity

Invest your new volunteers and rededicate the returning volunteers with a short and simple ceremony. Provide new volunteers with a Girl Scout pin, pinned on upside down until they do a good deed – or right-side up because their good deed is volunteering to be a Girl Scout leader!

Have the group stand in a circle. Ask the new volunteers to step forward and pin them with a Girl Scout pin. Once they are all pinned, ask them to step back into the circle. Together as a group, recite the Girl Scout Promise and Girl Scout Law together. The Service Unit Manager can then briefly talk about the upcoming year and the excitement of the girls.

To learn more about Girl Scout ceremonies, visit:

<http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/traditions/ceremonies/>