

Short and Snappy – Scouts' Own



Objective

To learn about and experience a Scouts' Own ceremony.

Length

20 minutes

Materials Needed

Pencils and paper,
open minds

Information to Share (spend 10 minutes on this section)

The idea of Girl Scouts' Own came from the founder of Girl Scouting, Juliette Low. It is a special, traditional ceremony for Girl Scouts that allows girls to express their thoughts and feelings in a truly meaningful way.

Because it is the Girl Scouts' "own" ceremony, it is planned and carried out by the girls. It can take place at any time or date on the calendar.

Sarah Louise Arnold, in her book *The Way of Understanding*, said that a Girl Scout's Own

"... may be held at any time or place where Girl Scouts are gathered together. But I always like to think of the Girl Scouts and their leader going silently through the twilight to meet around the campfire by the lake. Something in both leader and girls is growing as they watch the darkening sky in that quiet place. Together they share the blessed gift of reverence which comes to youthful, earnest souls. Can we make it any clearer through words? Probably not. There is a voice in the soul of the leader and in the souls of the girls that help them to understand the silence and the beauty. Volumes could not make it clearer nor deepen more surely the reverence in their hearts."

A Scouts' Own is planned and carried out BY GIRLS. The main purpose of a Girl Scouts' Own is to elaborate on a theme, which can be related to the troop, badges the girls have worked on, or experiences they have shared.

A small group is best when planning a Girl Scouts' Own, usually the Court of Honor, a patrol, or (with larger groups) a representative from each troop or unit. Adults may help with ideas and to assist with resources.

Girls should:

- Choose a theme and make a list of materials needed to express the theme in different ways.
- Decide on a time, such as sunrise, sunset, dusk, or moonrise.
- Pick a site that is quiet and beautiful, for example, by a creek, in a forest grove, on a hilltop, in a city park, or on a rooftop.
- List the parts of the ceremony and specify who will be responsible for each.
- Determine the order of the program, the opening, who will direct the people to the chosen activity, what comes next, what will be sung, and the closing. (Customarily, girls walk quietly to the spot and leave quietly after the ceremony is over.)

Information to Share (continued)

Tips and Guidelines:

- A Girl Scouts' Own usually lasts 15-45 minutes.
- You may help the girls, but make sure not to take over – this is a Girl-led, Girl-owned ceremony.
- Make sure the girls are not rushed into planning something so quickly that they don't feel good about the outcome.
- Group participation is essential to a successful Girl Scouts' Own. There is no one person in charge. Each person with a part should know where and when her part is to take place. Some parts could be said by two, three, or even five people in unison; the whole group could sing a song.

Activity (spend 10 minutes on this section)

Plan your own Scouts' Own for your next Community Meeting!

- As a large group, decide on a theme (remember, this is your Scouts' Own- you as the volunteers are picking a theme meaningful to you).
- Break up into 6 smaller groups, and assign each group one of the following (you may change these according to your group's preference):
 - o Opening
 - o Song/poem/skit/etc.
 - o Song/poem/skit/etc.
 - o Song/poem/skit/etc.
 - o Song/poem/skit/etc.
 - o Closing
- Give the groups time to each plan their part of the ceremony. (Each group is responsible for its own supplies.)
- At your next Community Meeting, hold your Scouts' Own!

