

Short and Snappy – Kick off Your Year!



Objective

To provide some fun ideas and tips for troop leaders to start their year off on the right foot!

Length

20 minutes

Materials Needed

Positive attitudes.

Information to Share (spend 5 minutes on this section)

This is a great Short and Snappy to do as you near the beginning of the new Girl Scout Year! Here are some tips to kick off an amazing year with your troop:

1. **Set the Tone:** Whether you have a new troop or a group of girls who have grown together in scouting for years, each new year faces new challenges for girls. Make sure to set the right tone for your year, remembering that as girls grow, their concerns, worries, and interests change and grow with them. Focus on **inclusion**, and embrace **diversity** in order to build your troop's **pluralism**. Everyone should feel comfortable, welcome, and enthusiastic about all that Girl Scouts will have to offer this year.
2. **Have Fun!** Regardless of the age of your girls, games are a great way to start of the year with fun and enthusiasm. Do some icebreakers, some energy-burners, some team-building games, and deeper thinking games. This can help you to make sure all girls feel equally included, are having fun, and are working together.
3. **Mix it Up:** If you notice former cliques forming, make sure to get girls active in making new friends and forming new bonds. In forming groups or partners, try fun methods of pairing up girls in new ways (such as pairing off by zodiac signs or favorite movies).
4. **Ask the Girls:** Remember, Girl Scouts is girl-led. The beginning of the year is a great time for girls to brainstorm about where they see their troop going and what they want to accomplish this year. Let the girls lead in making plans and sharing ideas.
5. **Chill Out:** Make sure the first meeting of the year isn't all business. Some of the girls won't have seen each other all summer and want to catch up. Snacks and crafts are great activities for catching up and relaxing a little bit.

Tips for making girls feel welcome and comfortable:

- Call each girl by name. This makes her feel valued as an individual.
- Acknowledge each girl's contributions. From questions to new ideas, make sure to validate each girl as she shares what is on her mind.
- Share something personal. A great way to connect with girls is to share your own stories, funny anecdotes, and even your flaws. They will respect you for it.
- REMEMBER: GIRL-LED! Girl Scouts is by girls, for girls.

Activity (spend 15 minutes on this section)

1. Choose an icebreaker or two from the list below.
2. Get the group to play the icebreakers.
3. Wrap up with a discussion where leaders share their ideas and experiences for first-of-the-year meetings.

Icebreakers

I Never:

1. Set up chairs in a large circle, facing in.
2. Make sure there are enough chairs for everyone except 1 person.
3. The person without a chair starts. They stand in the middle of the circle and make an "I Never" statement. For example: "I have never been to Europe."
4. Everyone who has done what was announced has to get up and find a new chair, while the person from the middle tries to find a chair and sit. Your new chair cannot be the chair right next to you, and no one can share chairs.
5. After the dust settles, a new person should be left in the middle. Now it is her turn to make an "I Never" statement.
6. Continue playing until everyone has gone at least once.

Rock-Paper-Scissors:

1. Explain that through this game, it is your goal to become a super human. Everyone will start out as an egg.
2. You will go through a series of rock-paper-scissors battles, and each time you win, you get to evolve into a higher being in this order:
 - a. Egg (squat down and walk while squatting) → Chicken (flap your wings like the Chicken Dance) → Dinosaur (Make a large chomping mouth with your arms) → Human (walk around normally) → Super Human (hold your hands on your hips and your nose in the air)
3. How it works:
 - a. When you say "go," individuals mill around, announcing their species and doing their action.
 - b. When you find someone who is the same species as you, play rock-paper-scissors.
 - c. The winner evolves to the next level, and the loser devolves to the lower species.
4. Play until most have evolved to super humans.

Strut Miss Lucy:

1. Get in two lines, facing each other.
2. Join hands with the person across from you and sing while moving arms in a sawing motion, back and forth.

***This way, thata way, this way thata way,
This way, thata way, all the way home***
3. Join both hands with your buddy to make an arch. Girls continue to sing (words below) as the head girl in one line passes down between the two lines making up any silly movement she wishes, and falls in at the foot of the opposite line.

***Strut Miss Lucy, Strut Miss Lucy
Strut Miss Lucy, all the way home***
4. The buddy of the previous girl copies the movements just done by her buddy as she passes between the two lines and joins the foot of the opposite line, while others sing:

***Here comes another one just like the other one.
Here comes another one, all the way home.***
5. Both lines move up a wee bit and repeat the song over and over until everyone has had a turn.