

Short and Snappy – SWAPS



Objective

To learn about the tradition of SWAPS and get some ideas for making them.

Length

20 minutes

Materials Needed

SWAPS materials (see next page).

Information to Share (spend 10 minutes on this section)

SWAPS are a Girl Scout tradition that has lasted throughout our entire history. They are meant to promote friendship between fellow Girl Scouts, especially when meeting someone new. SWAPS stands for *Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere or Share With A Pal*.

Where did SWAPS come from?

They originated from the Native American “Potlatch” which is a ceremonial exchange of gifts. The idea for SWAPS was originally started by Lord Baden-Powell. They are generally handmade and are exchanged anywhere Girl Scouts get together, be it day camp, resident camp, council events, or special Girl Scout events. Most SWAPS are one to two inches in size, and they can be anything from bracelets and necklaces to event patches or council patches.

Why We SWAP

We SWAP to promote friendship throughout the Girl Scouting community, to learn to talk to other people we may not know, to give and receive mementos of a good time, and to share something about where we live and what we do.

Swapping Etiquette

It is considered rude to refuse a swap with someone who asks and you always remember to say thank you. SWAPS that are meant for trading should be carried separately from those you wish to keep. If you are at a Girl Scout event, you can attach a tag with the event name and date, troop number and/or council name, but not with the girls’ last name or personal information.

Where are SWAPS worn?

They can be pinned to hats, bandanas, or a similar holder. There are other examples of other types of SWAPS holder on the internet, specifically Pinterest.

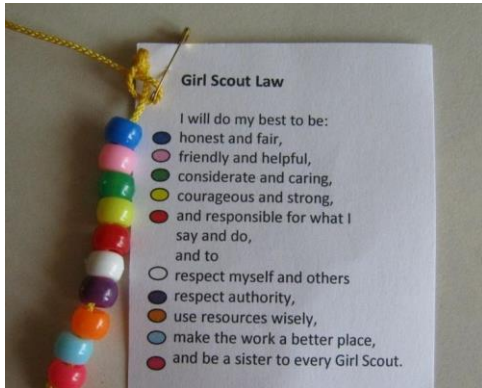
How SWAPS Are Made

There are always a few things that need to be considered when making SWAPS. They can range widely in difficulty, from simple bracelets to very detailed ones. Make sure that the SWAP that is chosen is age appropriate for your girls, and try one yourself first to see how difficult it is to make. You should also consider what tools you will need and make sure you have enough help so that everyone is supervised. You can pre-cut some parts for younger girls to save time. Be accepting of what the girls do, even if it wasn’t what was originally planned.

Activity (spend 10 minutes on this section)

Make a Swap! Make sure that you have enough supplies for everyone in your community to make one.

Girl Scout Law Swap:



You will need:

- Make printouts of the Girl Scout Law color code (as is seen in the photo) – enough for everyone to have 1
- Safety pins
- Pony beads (navy, pink, green, yellow, red, white, purple, orange, light blue, fuchsia) – make sure to get enough
- String (one 6 in piece for each person)

String the beads on, according to the order of the Girl Scout Law, as seen on the printouts.

Tie your beaded string to a safety pin, and attach the safety pin to the printout.

Examples of SWAPS

