



OPTIONS

Program Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders



OPTIONS

Girl Scout Leaders today are usually juggling some combination of family, career, volunteer commitments and leisure activities. Finding the time for all of these could, at best, be described as difficult. Planning time is even more precious. Here, then, are *OPTIONS* for the busy Girl Scout leader. *OPTIONS* are offered for each of the five levels of Girl Scouting: Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts.

Each set of *OPTIONS* is designed in the same fashion. They offer nine months of troop meeting ideas from September through May. They additionally present a collection of openings and closings to be mixed or matched at meetings throughout the year. To implement *OPTIONS*, certain resources are necessary. Each *OPTIONS* identifies those resources considered primary (used at nearly every meeting) and secondary (used at certain specific meetings).

OPTIONS should be used as meeting outlines for planning your own calendar of troop meetings or used occasionally when you've had little or no time to plan. *OPTIONS* is here to help you – do not think your troop year must be planned around what is written here. The girl/adult partnership always has been a fundamental concept in Girl Scouting; girls can learn to make decisions, accept the consequences of those decisions, and help plan activities for her troop or group. It is difficult to stand back and let someone else participate in decisions when they obviously aren't as well equipped as we are. But that is exactly what we need to do if we sincerely want to help girls learn the decision making process.

So feel free . . . to change, adapt, modify and use *OPTIONS* in planning your troop year. Additional ideas and options for troop meetings and activities can be found in *The Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders (GBGSL)*, PEP Session Packets, each issue of *Leader Program Bulletin (LPB)* and at PEP Sessions hosted by the Resource Center, which highlight available resources.

FYI: Training is the most important tip we can offer to first time and repeating Girl Scout Leaders. Brownie Troop Leader survey responses say that Introduction to Girl Scouting, Brownie Basic Age Level courses and other trainings have offered immense support. Check the current issue of the *Volunteer Development Bulletin* for dates, times and locations.

OPTIONS - BROWNIE GIRL SCOUTS

Brownie Girl Scouts are ages 6-8 or in grades 1-3. The Brownie troop offers girls an opportunity to experience working with a group, making decisions as a group and sharing learning together.

Brownie meetings can last between an hour and an hour and a half. This time will depend on the type of activities that are planned. Meetings may be held in a school room, church basement or Leader's home, after school, early evening or on a weekend day.

Some things to take into consideration when working with Brownie Girl Scouts are:

- ❖ Permission slips, notices of future meetings, parents' letters, etc., should be given to the girls at the end of the meetings as the girls are going home.
- ❖ If meetings are held right after school, plan an action activity at the beginning of the meeting to give the girls an opportunity to unwind.
- ❖ Involve parents/guardians in making decisions and be sure to recruit them to assist you with the troop's activities. A welcoming ceremony or parent meeting for both parents/guardians and Girl Scouts may help to bring your troop community together.
- ❖ Plan for a discussion time in each meeting. Give the girls an opportunity to tell you what they like to do.

Troop meetings have a certain structure. Each meeting should begin with an opening (game, ceremony, Promise, etc.) and can be filled with patch/badge work, hands-on activities, a snack and/or time to brainstorm ideas for future meetings. Each also should end with a closing. (See page 3 for some opening and closing options and see pg. 10 for the "Meeting Wheel" – a chart designed to assist you with meeting structure and in keeping the activities at each meeting varied.)

Brownie Girl Scout Options Resources

Please always refer to the current versions of both primary and secondary resource.

Primary:

The Guide for Brownie Girl Scout Leaders (GBGSL)

Brownie Girl Scout Handbook (BGSHB)

Try-Its for Brownie Girl Scouts (TIBGS)

Girl Scout Pocket Songbook (GSPSB)

Leader Program Bulletin (LPB)

Secondary:

Perfectly Effortless Program Session Packets (PEP Session Packets) – available at the Resource Center and the G.S. EXPRESS.

Cookie Sale Activity Guide – a resource provided by GSUSA (one per troop) that is also available online at www.girlscouts.org

Highlights in Girl Scouting 1912-2001 – provides information on the exciting history of Girl Scouting. This book is available for purchase in the G.S. Shop and G.S. EXPRESS or for check out at the Resource Center and G.S. EXPRESS.

Trips and Tours – A resource designed for Girl Scout Leaders to explore the many outstanding venues in and around the St. Louis region. *Trips and Tours* is available online at www.gscgsl.org and at the Resource Center or G.S. EXPRESS.

Brownie Meeting Openings

Opening One

Say the Pledge of Allegiance. Follow with one of the games found in the *BGSHB*. Finish your opening with a song. These can be found in the *BGSHB* and the *GSPSB*.

Opening Two

Say the Promise and Law using the Girl Scout sign. Talk about the meaning of the Promise and Law. Let each girl take a different Law and recite it. Stress the importance of trying.

Opening Three

Make a fitness wheel for the troop (*BGSBH*). Follow the directions in the handbook, and take a fitness break accompanied by music to start your meeting and to drain some of the girls' energy.

Opening Four

Say the Promise and play "Thumbs Up." The girls stand in a circle or line with the Leader in front. The Leader explains, "I'm going to make some statements. If a statement is true for you, hold your thumb up. If it's false, hold your thumb down. If you can't decide, hold your thumb sideways."

Choose a subject such as their values, their likes and dislikes, plans for the future, the day's activities, and what they want to do next. This game is a good way to get a lot of feedback from individuals in a short period of time.

Brownie Meeting Closings

Closing One

Form a friendship circle (*BGSHB*) and sing "Taps" (*GSPSB*).

Closing Two

Form a friendship circle (*BGSHB*), give a friendship squeeze (*BGSHB*) and sing "Make New Friends" (*BGSHB*) or (*GSPSB*).

Closing Three

Sing the "Brownie Smile Song" and act out the words (*BGSHB*).

Closing Four

Say the Promise and sing "Where'er You Make A Promise" (*GSPSB*).

Brownie Girl Scouts

SEPTEMBER

- Meeting 1:** Tell the story of Girl Scouting found in the *BGSHB*. Then discuss the Girl Scout Promise and Girl Scout Law - associate them to things your troop will be learning about throughout the year. This also may present an opportunity to examine *Highlights in Girl Scouting 1912-2001*.
- Meeting 2:** Tell the girls the Brownie Story (*BGSHB*), and review the Girl Scout Promise and Law (*BGSHB*).
- Meeting 3:** Make parent invitations to the Investiture and/or Rededication Ceremony next week. Practice for the ceremony. Use the PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting* for reference and open with a flag ceremony. After the flag ceremony, recite the Promise (and Law if the girls feel comfortable with it) and then move into the Rededication Ceremony.
- Meeting 4:** Hold your Investiture and Rededication Ceremony.

OCTOBER

- Meeting 1:** Begin planning for a field trip. See the fall *LPB* for upcoming council-sponsored events or plan something that your girls suggest. *Trips and Tours* also may be a good resource.
- Meeting 2:** Introduce Try-Its and other awards to be earned as a Brownie Girl Scout. Have the girls choose a few that catch their interest. (*TIBGS*) NOTE: It is possible to complete one Try-It in one or two meetings.
- Meeting 3:** Talk about Girl Scouting around the world. PEP Session Packets and the *BGSHB* are good resources. The “Brownies Around the World” Try-It would be appropriate for such a topic.
- Meeting 4:** Have a birthday party for Juliette Low! Combine her birthday with Halloween by having the girls come in costume and bob for apples.

NOVEMBER

- Meeting 1:** Go on the field trip that you and your troop planned in October.
- Meeting 2:** Taking Care of Yourself (*BGSHB*). Conduct activities focused on health and safety, self-confidence, etc. The “My Body” Try-It would fit well with this type of activity.
- Meeting 3:** **Work on your service project for Seasons of Giving. Check with your Neighborhood Seasons of Giving Coordinator for your assigned agency and the gifts that they need. Gifts are distributed in the month of December.**
Make candlesticks for the table at Thanksgiving.

You will need: nature finds – pebbles, pinecones, leaves; salt dough (see below for recipe); 4-inch circle of heavy cardboard; and whole cloves, bits of stick cinnamon or other aromatic spices.

1. Build up a doughnut of salt dough on the cardboard circle
2. Press nature finds on dough, covering the dough completely. Add spices too, if you wish. The items will stick to the dough.
3. Place a candle in the center of the ball of dough.

Salt Dough

You need: 4 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 ½ cups water.

1. Mix ingredients together. If dough is too sticky, add more flour.
2. Knead for 4-6 minutes. Dough can be used immediately or stored in a plastic bag.
3. To harden, bake small figures at 350 degrees F for 1 hour. Large or thick items should be baked at 250 degrees F for 3 or more hours or until hard and golden brown.

Meeting 4: Thanksgiving week – no meeting.

DECEMBER

Meeting 1: Distribute your **Seasons of Giving** gifts in the month of December. Remember to report your troop's service to the Girl Scout Council of Greater St. Louis. Some other ideas for service projects can be found in the *BGSHB*, "Leadership in Girl Scouts and Beyond" section.

Meeting 2: Discuss the importance of family and friends, make cards, plan a party for parents, talk about building strong families, or simply discuss different types of friends. Try out some sign languages. The "Listening to the Past" Try-It would work nicely here.

Meeting 3: Make "snowflakes" for the holidays. The basic "snowflake" is nothing more than a square of white paper folded into quarters with pieces cut out of it. With the younger girls you will have fewer failures if you instruct them to cut out only one "bite" out of each side. The older girls can fold their paper one more time and their cuts can be more adventurous.

With a piece of yarn tied around them, these "snowflakes" make simple but attractive holiday tree ornaments. Or, fold a piece of red or green construction paper in half and glue "snowflakes" on outside half. With the appropriate sentiment on the inside, you have a holiday card!

Meeting 4: Happy Holidays! – no meeting.

JANUARY

Meeting 1: New Years Week – no meeting.

Don't Forget! Check for TROOP COOKIE TRAINING dates in your Neighborhood!

Meeting 2: Work on the Brownie Girl Scout Try-It that looks like the most fun to your troop. You may want to vote at your last meeting in December so that any supplies that are needed can be acquired ahead of time.

This week, play Kim's Game (*BGSHB*). Again, you may want to announce this ahead of time so that each girl can bring one item to use in the game.

Meeting 3: **Get ready for GO DAY!** Work on the "Cookies Count" Try-It in anticipation of the annual sale. Refer to current issues of *LPB* and Troop Cookie Training materials for more information about the sale.

Meeting 4: Tally up overall troop cookie sales. Use the Brownie Ring to decide how to use the proceeds.

FEBRUARY

Meeting 1: Have each girl bring her copy of *A Girl Scout Summer* to the meeting. *A Girl Scout Summer* is usually published and distributed late January or early February. Look through it together and discuss the opportunities available for Brownie Girl Scouts. There are many; have the girls pick several they find most intriguing. Is there a Day Camp nearby or does a Lark sound like fun? Encourage the girls to sign up for at least one of these council-wide events. They can open doors and expand her horizons in a way she'll remember for years. Many of the camp registration deadlines are at the beginning of March so be sure to have the girls start thinking NOW about what they would like to sign up for.

Meeting 2: Valentine's Day – have a party and exchange Valentines and make a special Valentine for a special someone. A red construction paper heart pasted on a "lace" doily makes a simple, yet attractive, Valentine.

Meeting 3: Celebrate World Thinking Day (February 22), also the birthday of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell. Some activities are listed in the *BGSHB*. This also would be a good day to give each girl her World Association pin. Girl Scouts and Girl Guides everywhere wear the World Association pin to show their membership in a worldwide organization. Check out the PEP Session Packets – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting* for ceremony ideas.

Meeting 4: In reflection of World Thinking Day on February 22, discuss the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund. Information regarding the fund can be found in the current issue of *LPB*. Make a donation to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund and work on the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund patch program. Make the donation fun – for example, a penny for each inch of a girl's height. Work on a "People Near and Far" Try-It!

MARCH

- Meeting 1:** Play “Red Light, Green Light.” This is a very popular game and most of the troop probably already knows how to play. Work on a Try-It that coincides with next month’s activities – primarily **April Showers, the annual personal care item drive.**
- Meeting 2:** Even if your meeting date doesn’t fall exactly on March 12, the Girl Scouts’ birthday, it’s still Girl Scout Week and time to celebrate! (See the *BGSHB* for ideas.)
- Meeting 3:** Encourage your girls to choose a Try-It to work on in small groups and then share their work with the entire troop.
- Meeting 4:** Spring break/vacation – no meeting.

APRIL

At about this time in the program year you will want to begin preparing your third graders for “flying-up” to Junior Girl Scouts. Every Brownie Girl Scout received her wings at the end of her Brownie Girl Scout years. Many also choose to earn their Bridge to Junior Girl Scouting rainbow patch. Girls must choose one activity from each of the SIX steps to Junior Girl Scouting in order to earn the rainbow patch. See the *BGSHB* for details.

- Meeting 1:** Spring has sprung! Go outside for your meeting. PEP Session Packets can be found on *A Day At a Time in the Out-of-Doors*. Start thinking about participation in April Showers. Contact your Neighborhood Coordinator for April Showers to find out how your troop can assist with this wonderful personal care item drive. (See the spring issue of *LPB* for details.)
- Meeting 2:** **Participate in April Showers, the annual council-wide personal care item drive.**
– no meeting.
- Meeting 3:** Celebrate April Showers – explain its benefit to the community – use this to begin talking about the community around them. You may consider inviting parents/guardians to this meeting. Discuss how they can help the environment by working together (*BGSHB*).
- Meeting 4:** Go on a field trip! *Trips & Tours* is a great resource for finding exciting places to visit in and around St. Louis. Find a Try-It that relates to the trip and complete some/all of it during your visit.

MAY

The first two weeks of meetings this month are geared primarily to the third graders who are preparing to fly-up to Junior Girl Scouting. While the older girls are working on their Bridge to Junior Girl Scouting patch, the first and second graders could be helping Daisy Girl Scouts bridge to Brownie Girl Scouts. Suggestions can be found in the *BGSHB*. Check bridging guidelines for further details.

Meeting 1: Work on steps 1-3 of the Bridge to Junior Girl Scouting rainbow patch in the *BGSHB*. Your Neighborhood Chair should be able to put you in touch with a Junior Girl Scout troop in your area if you don't know of any. They may be working on their Junior Aide patch so you will be helping each other!

After the visiting Junior Girl Scouts tell the girls about their activities as Junior Girl Scouts, work with them on doing an activity from the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*. This will help in completing Step 2 toward earning the Bridge to Junior Girl Scouting rainbow patch.

Meeting 2: Work on bridging Steps 4 and 5. Share with the first and second graders the activities accomplished to date while working on Junior Girl Scout recognition activities (Step 4). Then you may want to join forces with another Brownie Girl Scout troop in completing Step 5: "Plan and do a summer Girl Scout activity". Girls can still Bridge if the event is to take place after the ceremony.

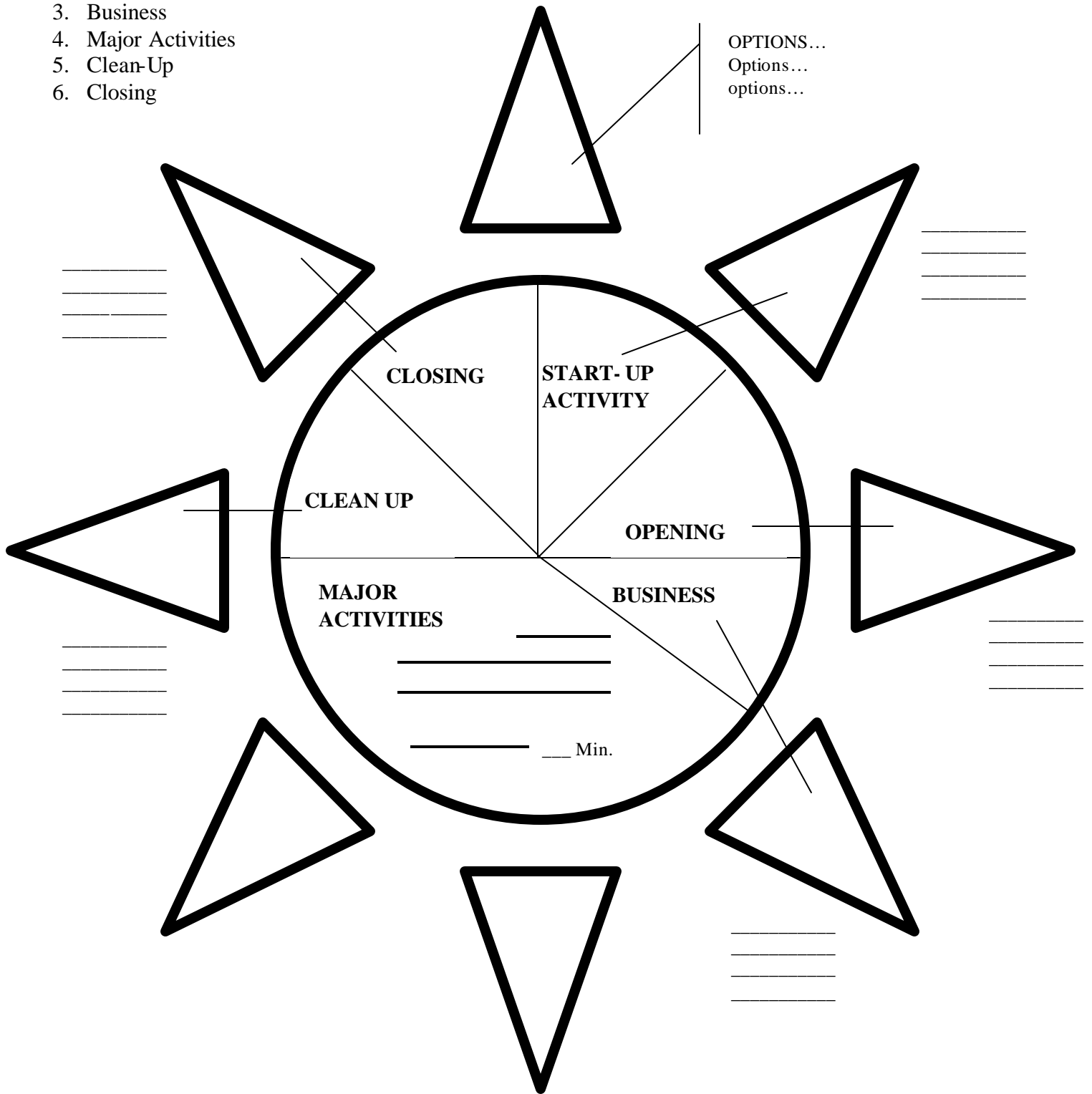
Meeting 3: Finally, work on bridging Step 6. While the third graders are planning their fly-up ceremony (see the *BGSHB* for some ideas) the rest of the troop could be planning and practicing the Court of Awards, to be held at the same time. Below is a sample Court of Awards ceremony. Feel free to use it as it is or adapt in any way you wish.

1. Flag Ceremony
2. Leader or patrol leader welcomes guests, introduces ceremony of building the membership pin. (See next page)
3. Girls perform the ceremony of building the membership pin. (see the PEP Session Packet – *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting*)
4. Leader or Co-Leader tells, in a general way, what the girls have done to earn their recognitions.
5. Leader or Co-Leader calls girls' names. Girls come forward, one at a time, and receive all of their recognitions at once. Badges, patches and signs for each girl may be pinned to a card or ribbon.
6. Leader closes ceremony.

Meeting 4: Hold Court of Awards ceremony and fly-up to Junior Girl Scouts.

THE MEETING WHEEL

1. Start-Up Activity
2. Opening
3. Business
4. Major Activities
5. Clean-Up
6. Closing



The “Meeting Wheel” can be used to simply help you keep each of your meetings structured and timely. Plus it’s a great space to write out and sort through all of the options available to you and your Girl Scout troop! Don’t forget the “just in-case” items that can be used as fillers in case one of your activities does not take as long as you expected!

Girl Scout Council of Greater St. Louis

OPTIONS EVALUATION

Name: _____ Troop #: _____

District: _____ Neighborhood: _____

_____ DAISY _____ BROWNIE _____ JUNIOR _____ CADETTE _____ SENIOR

Please mark the space that most accurately reflects your feelings on each topic.

1. What is your overall rating of this resource?

_____ Excellent _____ Satisfactory _____ Average _____ Unimpressive _____ Poor

2. Did you feel that the “options” presented here were clear and easy to follow?

_____ Very _____ Reasonably _____ Clear _____ Unclear _____ Muddled

3. How many times during the troop year did you refer to Options?

_____ 1-2 _____ 3-4 _____ 5-6 _____ 6 or more

4. Which program ideas were most useful?

5. Which program ideas were least useful?

Please use the reverse side for any other comments and return to:

Girl Scout Council of Greater St. Louis

Attn: Options Evaluation

2130 Kratky Rd.

St. Louis, MO 63114