



Camping in the Rain



If disaster strikes and it pours with rain and you have access to some form of wet-weather shelter, here are some ideas to try besides your craft activities:

Story Bag : Each Patrol is given a bag with five or six assorted items in it and has to go away - to their patrol tent, own corner of the wet-weather shelter or somewhere else they can work together undisturbed - and prepare a short play incorporating all of the items in their bag. Give a time-limit for preparation - say half-an-hour - and then all patrols have to perform their play for the rest of the assembled camp.

Beauty Salon : Popular with Guides of all ages : an opportunity to do each other's hair - expert hair braiding is much in demand - and indulge in facials, either home made herbal preparations (oatmeal and egg-white face-mask, cucumber or used teabag eye pads) or commercial preparations (e.g. Body Shop – usually very generous with free samples). Lots of tissues, wipes etc. should be on hand for cleaning off!

Board Games : A selection of popular board games is useful : stick to well-known ones to avoid problems with rules, e.g. Snakes and Ladders, Ludo, Draughts and Chess, but introduce a few new ones with supervision until the rules are learnt. We have learnt to avoid Monopoly (they call it Monotony in my unit) – there are too many bits to lose.

Beetle Drive: Take plenty of blank "Beetle" forms, spare dice and plenty of pens and pencils; give prizes for highest and lowest overall scores. (See back for game description!)

Skipping: (also a fine - weather activity!) - Many of the girls will not have had much experience of "Long Rope" skipping so Guiders must be prepared to demonstrate. After practice in running under, jumping over, and "keeping the pot boiling," try skipping a set number of jumps, coming in to join the skipping at a signal - "birthdays," "initials," - and simple rhymes. After the girl's have exhausted the Guiders' childhood repertoires, they might be able to add some of their own.

Indoor Sports Day :

1) **Sock Wrestling :** (long trousers recommended) two girls kneel facing each other, preferably on a large mat, with shoes removed. Make a great show of "psyching out" opponent, before commencing, at a given signal, to attempt to remove one of the opponent's socks. WARNING - this can get very boisterous so make sure pairs of girls are reasonably evenly matched, supervise closely and be prepared to intervene if necessary, and ask for volunteers - "Challengers" - rather than nominating. Some girls may enjoy watching and encouraging rather than actually taking part.

2) **Blow Football :** An old favourite - two girls kneel at opposite sides of a small table and try to score goals by blowing through a straw to put a ball - either a ping-pong ball if available, or a ball of crumpled foil - through a goal (or off the table). Keep bouts short or the girls will get out of breath; a messier variation is to have a shallow tray of water as the "pitch" - much splashing will ensue! If everyone wants a go, organise a knock-out tournament, with a prize for the overall champions.

3) **Broomstick Walking :** this is deceptively difficult : hold a broomstick or similar with hands apart, step over between hands and without letting go with either hand, bring the broomstick up over the head and eventually return the broomstick to its original position. If anyone actually manages this feat, time with a stopwatch to find a champion!

4) **Sumo :** a pair of protagonists faces each other, adopting the "Sumo Wrestlers" stance and each, without touching, tries to make the other girl laugh. The winner is the one who keeps a straight face longest (difficult when all the spectators are helpless!)

5) **Penny race :** they say the simple ones are the best. (Only suitable if you have a flat floor.) Use 2p or similar-sized coins : each girl takes it in turn to roll a coin, either across a line or (better) into a target circle. Nearest wins a small prize – could be the coins if it's a small camp and you haven't got 100s of Guides!

The Beetle Game (referred to on the first page)

This is an active game that can be played anywhere, by anybody.

Each "team" chooses a table to sit at. One person at each table will be staying at the table throughout the game. The rest of the team will be moving from table to table after each win. Each table has one dice, scrap paper, pen or pencil that works, and a diagram of a "beetle". (I use scrap cardboard from cereal boxes and laminate). The beetle is a large oval abdomen, smaller head, feelers/antennae, two eyes, four legs, and a tail. Each body part has a number from 1-6, just like the dice has numbers 1-6. The abdomen is 6, head is 5, tail is 4, legs are 3, antennae are 2, and eyes are 1. Number all the parts clearly on the body, although as the girls get experience with the game, they remember quite well without looking.

Each team is playing simultaneously (at the same time!). The one person at each table that stays (Beetleguise) is the one that draws the parts on the paper. Each team member at the table take turns rolling the dice. You have to be quick because the first team to complete the picture first, hollers "BEETLE", play stops and the teams move to the next table in a round-robin fashion. The rules are much like a cross between parcheesi and hang-man. The dice is rolled, and you need a 6 to start. Makes sense, body first. As soon as a six is rolled, Beetleguise will quickly draw a body on the paper, while the other members frantically continue rolling the dice to get a five. Once the head is on, then it doesn't matter which numbers come next, as long as you get 4-3's, 2-2's, and 2-1's. Again, once the body is completed, holler "BEETLE" and play stops. Players move to the next table and on a signal, play resumes again. You can either keep score and award applause to the team that had "BEETLE" the most times, or you can use this game at tuck-time at camp and hand out little treats. Just make sure everybody gets something!!

I find this game can be quite crazy and noisy (my favourite) as the girls get older, but it is also wonderful to use larger dice for 5 & 6 year olds to help them with numbers. Of course, they won't play as fast. Adults also get

Here are some more ideas to keep your Troop busy if the weather pulls an "Oregon"!

INDOOR CHALLENGES

Here are a couple of the indoor challenges.

Flashlight Challenges

This is a challenge of speed, efficiency, and courage!

Sit in a circle. Silently, hand your flashlight batteries to the leader and reassemble your flashlights with no batteries inside.

You are exploring the dark and dangerous ASHGROVE CAVE! Suddenly, your flashlight batteries go out without warning. With no light, you must locate your spare batteries in your fanny pack and put them in your flashlight.

Light your flashlight to show that you have completed this challenge correctly.

Results: As you can guess, we shut off the cabin lights for them to complete this challenge. (The instructions were read to them) The reason I added the word "silently" to the challenge was that I anticipated immediate griping along the lines of "My batteries are still in the package and it's difficult to get them out."!

If I had to do this again, I would have told the girls to bring spare batteries unwrapped in their fanny packs, since one girl cut her finger trying to hurriedly open a plastic blister pack wrapping in the dark -- just a scratch, but it would not have happened if the batteries had been unwrapped. (On the other hand, it was a lesson in the accessibility of emergency supplies!)

It took a long time for the first girl in each patrol to locate her batteries in the dark, but after that, each patrol used that light to speed their task along. This whole challenge took 6-7 minutes, maybe less.

The next challenge was adapted from one used for multi-troop wide games, to fill in time since some groups finish earlier than others. Each time you use it, change what the final message says. Usually it is not a question that they have to answer, just a comment like "Happy Birthday Juliette Low!" or "Girl Scouts are 90 years old today."

Instruction Following Challenge

The girls were given a pencil and two pieces of paper. The first one had the following instructions on it. The second one had numbers from 1-39 with spaces next to each number.

1. If you ever saw a cow jump over the moon, write W in spaces 3 and 5. If not, write A in those spaces.
2. If X comes before H in the alphabet, write Z in spaces 4, 8, and 11. If it comes after H, write T in those spaces.
3. If 31,457 is more than 12 dozen, write E in spaces 7, 10, 14, 15, and 26. If it is less than 12 dozen, write F in those spaces.
4. If you like candy better than mosquitoes, indicate with a W in the first and thirty-fifth spaces, and an H in the second, ninth, and twelfth spaces.
5. Closing one eye and without consulting your fingers, write the 9th letter of the alphabet in spaces 17, 24, 29, and 32.
6. If Shakespeare wrote "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," but an O in spaces 13 and 14. If not, put an R in the spaces numbered 6, 13, and 25.
7. If black and white are opposites, write K in space #16 and a question mark in space #39. If they are the same color, write W in those same spaces.
8. If summer is warmer than winter, put an N in space 18 and space 33. If the reverse is true, put an N in space 23 and 25. (This applies in Pittsburgh, PA, USA, obviously.)
9. If two quarts make a pint, put an E in space 21, 36, and 37. If they do not, put an O in those spaces and then put a D in spaces 19, 31, and 38.
10. If you think your troop has great troop leaders, put an F in space 22 and the space immediately following it. If you think they are lousy, you can go home right now, you ungrateful little bunch of stinkers!
11. If the word bee begins with a B, put a B in space 27.
12. Using the letters in the word SLUG (in order), put the first letter in space 20, the second letter in space 30, the third letter in space 28, and the fourth letter in the space immediately following space 33.

Now read the question you have created and answer it (in writing). Give your paper to your leaders right away.

Results: The question was "What are the three kinds of firebuilding wood?" The answer was tinder, kindling, and fuel.

Here is a fun game: Bed Rolls

Prior to camp teaching how to do the bedding roll. We make miniature bedding rolls using tea towels, small sheets of plastic (from plastic bags) and cord. We play relay races and who can tie a bedding roll the quickest etc. The results are not always what you would expect.