

Science

The Thankfulness Challenge

November represents something very important in our lives; it represents a concept called thankfulness. We all go about our days, living day to day, looking to whatever comes our direction. Very seldom do I see people express personal gratitude for what we have; I seem to see more people, even scouters, looking to see what more we can have. I feel November is a time to reflect on things we can be “Thankful” for in our personal lives, our employment lives, and in our scouting lives. I want to take this time to challenge each and every one of you the 365 day **Thankfulness Challenge**. I want you to go home, get a three stacks of note cards, on the note cards in the first pile I want you to write on each card on one side the date, and the words “Personal Life”, on the second stack on each card on one side write the date, and the words “Employees, or Co-workers (whichever fits your employment situation), and the third stack of cards on one side write the date and scouting. Next I want you to each day of the week to turn each card from each stack over with corresponding date and write something you are thankful for in each of those three categories. An example for the “Personal Life” stack might say, “My dearest wife I am thankful I married you as you bring so much love and devotion to our family.”, then on the first card from the “Employee or Co-worker” stack you might write “John, I am thankful for you as a manager as you really did a great job last week helping us with inventory”, and on the first card from the “Scouting” stack you might write, “Oh Little Johnny, I am so thankful to have you as a patrol leader as you saved Jonathon’s life on that trip to the Big Mountain. If it weren’t for your quick thinking Jonathan would have fallen into the canyon.” Next I want you to share these cards with those who you wrote the message too, and challenge them to the same challenge for the next 365 days. This challenge is being done on all of our nation’s social networking challenge and in many employment settings across the nation with some very interesting statistical responses from both employers and the employees. You may be amazed to find out how much of a difference you made in one of your scouts lives.

Scouting Outcomes

This month’s patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts:

- An appreciation of the wonders of nature and possibly
- a greater feeling of closeness to God
- A better understanding of how pollution affects the natural world and how Scouts can help to stop it
- A strengthened resolve to do their “duty to country” through good conservation practices
- Increased self-confidence
- Basic knowledge for predicting weather

Advancement Opportunities

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking, nature
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking, nature
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking, nature
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges. Older Scouts can concentrate on the Camping, Cooking, and Weather merit badges this month. Depending on activities during the campout, they may also cover requirements for the Hiking, Backpacking, and Wilderness Survival merit badges.

Preopening Activities

Building a Solar Energy Box

Begin with a clean, empty tin can. A 1-pound coffee can works well. Pour about a cup of water in the can, place a thermometer in the water, and let the water absorb solar energy.

You will need two transparent windows about 1/2 inch apart on the can. One window can be made by covering the top of the can with clear plastic wrap. Hold the plastic in place with a rubber band.

For the second window, make a cardboard collar for the can by bending a 2-inch-wide cardboard strip into a ring the same diameter as the can. Let the ends of the strip overlap and glue or staple them together. Cover the top of this collar with a second piece of clear plastic held by a rubber band. Slip the collar down over the top of the covered can so that the two plastic surfaces are about 1/2 inch apart.

Insulate the can so that the energy it collects will not be lost during the experiments. Wrap the can in some sort of insulation material, such as house insulation, plastic foam, or even newspaper pieces crumpled into small balls. For some suggested experiments, see the *Energy* merit badge pamphlet.

Adventure Obstacle Trail

THE HURRICANE. The object is for patrols to get a report through to a headquarters point after encountering the kinds of obstacles that Scouts might meet during a hurricane. Sealed envelopes are given to each patrol leader, to be opened at a specific spot and time (a different place for each patrol). Each patrol should be advised beforehand to bring the equipment it thinks it will need in the event of emergency situations.

The sealed envelope contains the following message:
“All means of communication have been severed between this point and the central relief headquarters. Personnel is limited, and it is extremely urgent that they know the extent of the damage in this area. They need your help in rendering service to the homeless and injured.

This is not a race against time. Follow the marked trail on the map. Watch for special hazards and other conditions that should be noted and reported to headquarters. Watch especially for injured persons; give such aid as you can and be prepared to report on this. Certain situations will require answers that you will deliver to headquarters. Be alert, be prepared, and good luck!”

Also in the envelope is a map with the central relief headquarters indicated on it, the patrol’s starting point, and the route the patrol is to follow.

Problems are set up by troop leaders, parents, and troop committee members. Troop leaders and others who set up problems should serve as judges and scorers at the various stations. Have people at each problem site acting as victims.

- A downed tree is blocking the main road (dead limb laid across trail, cardboard sign on trail, “U.S. 1”).
Project: Cut and clear using safe axmanship.
- Main power line down at Dow Crossing, marked with card, “100,000 volts.” Project: Note location and rope off or barricade the immediate area.
- Bridge washed out at Moose Ford. Several projects possible: Lash together a raft; build a monkey bridge or other type of bridge.
- Jones family homeless, cold, hungry. Project: Build a fire and serve canned soup.
- You have broken or lost your compass. Determine due north from this point.

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- Determine the height of the dangerous, tall “chimney” (tree) that has been left standing at the destroyed factory. If it should fall in this direction, will the top hit the Henderson house (carton)?

Near the end of this obstacle trail, give the Scouts a test of memory and powers of observation. List a number of questions such as:

Did Mr. Jones wear glasses? How many volts of electricity did the downed power line carry? What color was the Henderson boy’s coat? How far do you think you have traveled since leaving point X? What was the number of the highway blocked by the big tree? What’s the name of the lashings you used in making the bridge at Moose Ford?

Opening

EXPLANATION OF THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Narrator: We often recite the Pledge of Allegiance without really listening to or understanding the words we are saying. We will recite it now and try to explain the meaning of each word.

1st Scout: I...

Narrator: I, an individual, a committee of one.

2nd Scout: Pledge...

Narrator: Dedicate all my worldly goods to give without self-pity.

3rd Scout: Allegiance...

Narrator: My love and devotion.

4th Scout: To the flag...

Narrator: Our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom, dignity, respect, and loyalty.

5th Scout: Of the United...

Narrator: United means that we are one.

6th Scout: States of America...

Narrator: States - individual communities that have united into 50 great states - 50 individual communities, with pride and dignity > and purpose; all separated by imaginary boundaries, yet united in a common bond, love for country.

7th Scout: And to the Republic...

Narrator: Republic - a state in which sovereign power is invested in representative chosen by the people to govern, and the

government is the people; and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

8th Scout: For which it stands...

9th Scout: One nation under God...

Narrator: Blessed by God.

10th Scout: Indivisible...

Narrator: Incapable of being divided.

11th Scout: With liberty...

Narrator: Which is freedom, the right to live one's own life without threats, or fear of some sort of revenge.

12th Scout: And justice...

Narrator: The principle or qualities of dealing fairly with others.

13th Scout: For all.

Narrator: For all, which means boys and girls, ladies and gentlemen, it's your country as much as it is mine. Will you all please stand and repeat with me the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Present colors.
- Recognize first-time attendees.
- Present training awards, Quality Unit Awards, Scoutmaster Award of Merit, etc.

Program Features

- Provide a handout with the four items to be covered for each of the three Scout experience levels so participants can identify which level to attend.

Identify appropriate resources:

Boy Scout Handbook, No. 34554

Field book, No. 33104

All applicable merit badge pamphlets

Troop Program Features (Volumes I (No. 33110), II (No. 33111), and III (No. 33112))

Troop Program Resources, No. 33588

New Scout Patrol

- Identifying common native plants
- Identifying common local rocks and earth formations
- Insect Study merit badge requirements
- Plant Science merit badge requirements

Regular Scout Patrol

- Predicting local weather patterns year-round
- Identifying local geology features
- Identifying common native animals
- Electricity and Chemistry merit badge requirements

Venture Patrol

- Introduction to local Varsity Teams or Venturing Crews in the science fields
- Setting up a simple weather station to use on campouts
- Setting up a solar reflector to use on campouts
- Identifying common local animal signs and tracks

Skill Instruction

Week 1

- New Scouts work on identifying plants and animals in the area (*Boy Scout Handbook*).
- Experienced Scouts learn types of clouds and ways to

- predict weather.
- Older Scouts work on the Venture program or plan to build a solar reflector that could be used in camp to prepare meals or heat water, or for some other use. Make a list of materials needed. See the *Energy* merit badge pamphlet.

Week 2

- New Scouts work on basic first aid that might be needed in a problem-solving exercise for the outing.
- Experienced Scouts make arrangements to go to an auto mechanics shop or have an engine brought in to learn the basics of an internal combustion engine and how it uses energy.
- Older Scouts work on the Venture program or continue work on a solar reflector. Arrange for a tour of a local power plant for the entire troop..

Week 3

- New Scouts work on using woods tools and learn fire preparation. Demonstrate cooking fire lays. If you can do so at your meeting site, build several types of cooking fires and light them.
- Experienced Scouts review lashings and other skills that might be needed in problem-solving for the weather bivouac.
- Older Scouts work on the Venture program or plan several other problem-solving activities.

Week 4

- New Scouts come to the meeting with backpack packed if the troop has planned a campout. Review items needed for the campout.
- Experienced Scouts review first-aid skills, particularly bandaging for broken bones and sprains, plus severe bleeding control. Summarize weather record keeping for weather station; make long-range forecast for campout.
- Older Scouts work on the Venture program or finalize plans for a problem-solving trail on the campout. If that has been done, get a map of the area and plan a 1-mile nature trail.

GAMES AND CONTESTS.

Inchworm

Pair the Scouts, then have them sit on each other's feet and grasp each other's elbows or upper arms. Each pair advances by having the Scout whose back is toward the

direction of travel lift his bottom off the other's feet and rock backward. Meanwhile, his partner slides his feet forward about a foot and rocks forward as the other sits down on his feet again. Continue with this rocking-sliding motion to the turning line—but don't turn. For the return trip, Scouts simply reverse roles, with the Scout who had been going backward now going forward. The first pair to return to the start wins.

Human Ladder

This game will help Scouts develop trust and learn to be responsible for each other's safety.

Equipment: Six to 10 smooth hardwood dowels about 3 feet long and 1/4 inch in diameter

Procedure: Pair the Scouts and give each pair one “rung” of the ladder. Several pairs, each holding a rung and standing close together, form the ladder. A climber starts at one end of the ladder and proceeds from one rung to the next. As the climber passes by, the pair holding that rung may leave that position and go to the front end of the ladder, extending the ladder length indefinitely.

Note: The direction of the ladder may change at any time (making a right-angle turn, for example). Obstacles may be added, and the height of the rungs may also vary.

Sloppy Camp

Equipment: A simple camp setup (tent and fireplace) with many things wrong—ax on the ground, glass jar in the fireplace, poorly set tent pegs, wrong knots on guylines, etc., and personal items such as two blankets and one sleeping bag in the tent, two neckerchiefs of different colors draped over a guyline, two Scout shirts with different troop identification and name tags, etc.

Procedure: The patrols study the camp for five minutes without talking. The Scouts are permitted to touch what they see, but must replace items exactly as they found them. Each patrol then huddles to come up with a list of wrong things.

Scoring: The patrol with the best list of “incorrect” items wins.

Scoring variation: When a patrol turns in its list, it gets

a card with questions such as these: "How many boys camped in the sloppy camp?" "To what troops and patrols did they belong?" "What were their names?" (according to the items used).

Four-Way Tug-of-War

Equipment: About 100 feet of 1/4-inch or thicker rope, chalk or rags for marking the rope

Procedure: Mark a spot in the center of the playing area. Tie the ends of the rope together to make a circle, then divide the rope into four equal segments marked by chalk or tied with rags. Lay the rope in a rectangle shape with the marked spot directly in the center. Have equal-size patrols line up along each of the four sides. On signal, the Scouts grasp the rope and try to pull the other patrols toward them. The winning patrol is the one that has made the most backward progress after a specified time.

Special Feature

Review first aid for the most common plant- or animal-induced injuries in your area (poison ivy, poison oak, spider bites, snake bites, etc.).

Have a talk by a meteorologist, geologist, astronomer, biologist, council, or national event(s) or botanist.

Closing:

Close with the Scout Benediction, whereupon the boys are dismissed by troop, by patrols, or occasionally by rank- the Eagle Scouts first, then Life, Star, First Class, and so on.

Scoutmaster's Minute:

Why doesn't the Scout Law include "A Scout is THANKFUL"? I think I might add that one as the 13th point of the Scout Law if I could.

A thankful scout sees that he is blessed with good things – food, family, friends, freedom, and even fun. He has opportunities for adventure and excitement that many other boys do not get.

A thankful scout understands that the world does not owe him anything. He realizes that he's an awful lucky guy compared to the rest of the world.

Then, what should a thankful scout do? Saying that I'm thankful doesn't count for much, just like saying I'm trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, ... doesn't mean much. I have to DO something to show that I am really that way. That is what living the Scout Law in my everyday life means.

I'm Thankful for being free to make my own choices, so I'm Trustworthy by telling the truth.

I'm Thankful for my patrol mates, so I'm Loyal to them by pitching in with hard tasks and working as a team.

I'm Thankful for scouts that have taught me, so I'm Helpful to younger scouts.

I'm Thankful for my friends, so I'm Friendly to people around me that don't seem to have friends.

I'm Thankful for the efforts of the SPL and other leaders, so I'm Courteous and quiet while they speak.

I'm Thankful for being accepted into this troop, so I'm Kind to Webelos and welcome them to my troop.

I'm Thankful for my home and family, so I Obey my parents.

I'm Thankful that I have free time and opportunities to have fun, so I'm Cheerful even while working.

I'm Thankful for the money people give me for fundraising, so I'm Thrifty when buying food and gear for camping.

I'm Thankful for the soldiers, policemen, firefighters, and others that protect us from danger, so I'm Brave when faced with a scary situation.

I'm Thankful for the adults that drive on campouts, so I leave their car Clean when we're done.

I'm Thankful for every day I wake up with more life to live, so I'm Reverent to my God.