

# Girl Challenge



## Girl Scout Brownie Activity Guide



**Girl Scouts**<sup>®</sup>  
of Eastern Massachusetts  
[www.hergirlscouts.org](http://www.hergirlscouts.org)

Teambuilding games and challenges will help your group work together and learn communication skills, and have a lot of fun, too. The activities in this program are a terrific foundation for the tools needed on GSEM Challenge Courses and in life!

## Activity I. Bag of Toys (5 minutes)

*Materials:*

- Small Soft Toys

Play the name game. Toss a toy to a friend while calling her name out. The object of the game is to remember whom the toy was tossed to and in what order. Change it up by reversing the toss...now the girls have to remember the toss order backwards! For an additional challenge, add a toy (or toys) and create a “round robin” effect...confusing but fun!

## Activity II. Warm Ups and Introduction Games (20 minutes)

Choose 2 of the three activities. The object of warm ups and introductions is to introduce the concepts of planning, communication, and cooperating with the group. TEAMWORK requires communication so everyone understands the goal, planning to achieve the goal, and cooperation to work together towards the goal. It is recommended that groups try these activities once or twice only, and that we focus on the debrief, not the activity. The activity is just a tool to illustrate the concepts we are teaching.

### **Basic Line Up**

Girls simply line up, in order of height, shoe size, last name, middle initial, birthday, etc. To make this more challenging, take away talking.

Debrief:

- *Who were leaders?*
- *How did you communicate?*
- *Who was frustrated?*
- *Did everyone give an idea?*
- *Did the group decide how to manage this, then follow through?*
- *Did everyone understand the plan at the beginning?*

### **ABC Beachball or ABC Balloon ball**

*Materials:*

- Beachball

Blow up a beach ball or balloon. Have the group try to sequentially hit the ball or balloon into the air with one hit equaling one letter of the alphabet. The idea is that girls step in and hit the balloon. Make the rules adjust to the group - no hitting twice in a row (easy) or every girl has to hit once before going again (hard).

Debrief:

- *How did the group decide who would take turns?*
- *Did everyone get a turn?*
- *Were there leaders?*

- *Did everyone feel successful?*
- *Was there a plan? Did everyone cooperate with the plan?*
- *If we did this activity again, what would the plan be?*

### **1-2-3 Touch**

*Materials:*

- Numbered butterflies (or any other object that can be labeled # 1 – 20)

Scatter the numbered butterflies on the floor or a table. The group stands in a circle around them. The group needs to tag the numbered butterflies in order, 1-20, as quickly as they can. For large groups, girls can only go once, smaller groups, everyone has to go once before anyone can repeat. Give a 1-minute planning time to develop a plan, then have girls try. To make it more challenging, take away talking after the 1-minute planning time.

Debrief:

- *Did the plan work?*
- *Did everyone understand the plan?*
- *Did everyone cooperate with the plan?*
- *What were the reasons for not cooperating?*
- *How could they have been expressed, so that the group might have been more successful?*

## **Activity III. Group Challenges (30 minutes)**

Choose at least 2 of these activities to work on during this time period basing the difficulty level on how they worked together in the Warm Up Phase. Girls are now warmed up and are familiar with each other. They have learned the concepts of Teamwork, now is the time to put them in actions with these more difficult challenges. Don't forget to debrief each activity.

### **Muscle Beach**

*Materials:*

- Balloons
- XL Sweatshirts

Divide girls into two groups, each with adults to help blow up balloons. Have one girl wear the sweatshirt, and everyone else has a set time to blow up balloons and fit them into her shirt.

Debrief:

- *How many did each group fit?*
- *How well did they work together?*

### **Helium Stick**

*Materials:*

- Sticks for the group

For our next challenge, your group will have a simple mission: To lower this stick to the ground better than ANYONE in the world. Have the group repeat the mission a couple of times.

*The Challenge:*

1. Have the group of 8-12 divide into two lines and face each other.
2. Explain the technical rules to the group (very important): everyone's index fingers MUST remain in contact with the stick at all times, and the stick must rest on top of their fingers at all times (no grabbing, finger curling, etc.)
3. Have the group extend their index fingers at waist level.
4. Lay the stick across the group's fingers.
5. At that time, the group must work together to lower the stick to the ground.
6. Inevitably, the stick rises almost instantly - causing laughter, frustration, or confusion. The rise is caused by the small ripples of upward pressure as individuals each try to remain in contact with the stick.
7. After refocusing, the group will be able to lower the stick.

Debrief:

- *Ask the group if everyone understood the mission and technical lowering rules.*
- *Ask if anyone was intentionally trying to sabotage the group's mission by lifting the stick.*
- *Ask if everyone sincerely wanted to accomplish the mission or thought that it could be done.*
- *If everyone understood the mission, and was committed to succeeding, why did the group get so far off track right away?*
- *Try to elicit answers that are related to the group process, not the technical explanation of the challenge. For example, "we didn't plan well" more so than "we weren't holding our fingers correctly. Ask the group to share example of groups that they have participated in "the real world" that seemed to be comprised of committed folks, but were not productive.*

*Discuss what types of actions are important to keep a group focused on the mission. Many times during this activity, people become frustrated with others who aren't lowering the stick, and often choose one person as the culprit. Also, some people give up and let the stick come off their fingers. If either happens, be prepared to discuss how blame or giving up affects groups.*

## **Jedi Numbers**

Everyone stands in a circle and puts their heads down. They need to count up to a certain number (usually just the number of people there are in the group, so everyone gets one number) one at a time without two people talking at once. If two people talk at the same time, the group starts over at one.

Debrief:

- *Was the challenge more or less difficult than you originally thought?*
- *Who took a leadership role?*
- *What things did you do as a team to accomplish this task?*

## **Tube Pass**

*Materials:*

- Bicycle tubes or hula hoops

Have the girls hold hands and make a circle. Break the circle and add a tube. The object is to pass the tube around the circle while holding hands (hands must be held at all times)! Add tubes and switch directions for more excitement! Add more than one tube for an added challenge.

Debrief:

- *Was your group successful in their task?*
- *Were you successful as a group?*
- *Did everyone participate?*

### **Human Knot**



Have the girls stand in a tight circle, with their hands in the center. Then have them grab other hands at random. The puzzle is for the whole group to work together to get themselves untangled. Sometimes you'll find that the group has actually formed several smaller circles.

Debrief:

- *Did you communicate effectively?*
- *In what ways did you act together as a group to solve the challenge?*
- *Did anyone feel frustrated during the activity?*
- *How did you deal with this?*

## **Activity IV. Final Challenges (15 minutes)**

Now that the group has mastered some skills in communication, cooperation, and planning, this activity can be done as two groups competing to see which is better at using these skills, or as a large group. If girls are in two groups, the facilitator should divide them, not the troop leader, nor the girls themselves.

### **Minefield**

*Materials:*

- Cones to set boundaries
- toys

Set up boundaries, and scatter objects inside on the floor. (Use chairs, people, etc) The object is for the group to "steer" a person through the minefield using voice commands, without letting the person touch any of the mines. Generally, groups start yelling, no one can hear, and the person is not successful unless they "cheat" by peeking.

Debrief:

- *What were the challenges when you tried to work together?*
- *What things did you do to improve communication?*

- *When your troop works together to make decisions, or to discuss ideas, what are some "landmines" that make communication difficult?*

## Activity IV. Closing activity (15 minutes)

While the girls are doing this activity give the adult volunteer for each troop one evaluation and ask them to fill out the adult portion. Girls will fill in the "girl" portion with the leader after this activity.

**Thumbs up, Down, Middle** Have the group stand in a circle, facing each other. Instruct them to place one hand behind their backs. On the count of three, they will make a "Thumbs Up", "Thumbs Down", or "Thumb in the Middle" sign with their hand. *In this example, the signs represent "how the group worked together as a whole."*

**Thumbs up** means the group functioned perfectly: took time plan, listened to everyone's ideas, no one argued, everyone participated in a positive fashion, etc.

**Thumbs down** means that the group did not function well as a team at all: there were lots of arguments, no planning, inappropriate communication, etc.

**Thumbs in the Middle** means that the group did well, but there is room for improvement. Once you explain the "thumbs" scale, count to three, and have everyone present their thumbs and keep them in front of their bodies. Ask the group to go around the circle and discuss one specific example why they chose the way they did.