

**Junior Agent of Change**  
**Take Action Project Sample Sessions: Learning by Teaching**

Learning should be interactive, fun and available. After examining what kinds of things help and hinder learning, girls will create learning games and toys and use them to teach younger children. Girls can visit shelters, day care centers, Headstart classes, kindergarten classes, hospitals or libraries to teach young children letters, numbers, geography, puzzles, etc. The most important lesson is that learning can be fun.

**Session 1**

*Path to Learning—explore learning influences*

**Session 2**

*Learning Memories—brainstorm ideas for teaching*

*Who, What and How to Help?—choose a group to teach*

**Session 3**

*Presentation Development—develop games, songs, plays, experiments*

**Session 4**

*Presentation—visit and teach kids*

**Session 5**

*Letter to the Editor—share the project with the community*

**Session 1: Path to Learning**

Objective: Encourage girls to think about what influences learning.

Time Allotment: 30 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Checkerboard and checkers or 64 sheets of newspaper
- Dice
- Path To Learning Cards (end of packet)

Prep Needed:

1. This game can be played as a walking or sitting game. If playing a walking game, lay out the pieces of newspaper on the floor in a path with a beginning and ending point.
2. If this game is played as a sitting game, girls will start in one corner of the checkerboard and zigzag along the board in rows, counting each square as "one".
3. Sidewalk squares may also be used.

Game:

1. Girls take turns rolling the dice.
2. If the girl rolls a 2, 3, 4 or 5, she moves that number of spaces.
3. If the girl rolls a 1 or 6, she draws a card, reads it out loud and does what it says.
4. The first girl to reach the end wins a small prize such as a pencil, eraser or other tool associated with learning.

## Session 2: Learning Memories

Objective: Generate ideas for what girls want to teach.

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Learning Memories Interview Sheets one per girl (end of packet)
- Pens and pencils
- Timer (kitchen or watch)

Interviewing:

1. Ask girls to pair up.
2. Pass out interview sheets (one per girl). Pass out pencils or pens (one per pair).
3. Set a timer or keep track on a watch.
4. Ask girls to choose who will go first. The first girl should have the pen or pencil.
5. Give the girls five minutes to interview and then ask them to switch and the interviewee becomes the interviewer for another five minutes.
6. Bring girls back together as a group and ask pairs to share what they learned about each other.
7. Talk about what children learn in kindergarten and first grade. What are some things the girls would like to teach children that age? Record answers for next activity.

## Session 2: Who, What and How to Help?

Objective: Choose subject, method and a group of younger children to teach.

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Large sheets of paper
- Markers

Discussion:

1. Using sheets of paper and markers, record responses to the following questions.
2. Ask girls to brainstorm different things they can teach younger children. Girls can use the results of their interviews as guides. Record responses. Some suggestions are:
  - The alphabet
  - Counting
  - Adding
  - Subtracting
  - Weather
  - Air expansion and contraction with hot and cold temperatures
  - Telling time
  - Minnesota history
  - Safety
  - Sharing and caring for others
3. Ask girls to brainstorm different methods of teaching younger children. Record responses. Some suggestions are:
  - Singing an alphabet song or a counting song
  - Making new books
  - Making letters
  - Playing counting or safety games
  - Performing a puppet show
4. Ask girls to brainstorm about where to teach. Do they know a teacher they can call? Is there a shelter or hospital close by? Is there a childcare center? A Headstart program? A Latchkey program? Are there girls in afterschool programs that serve younger children as well? Call agencies and programs and discuss the possibility of making visits.
5. Discuss as a group what subjects and what methods will be used to present to the younger children. Girls may want to divide into small groups or work on something individually.
6. Try to create something tangible that can be left at the site, whether it's a tape of the song, a book or a game to promote the importance of learning.

### **Session 3: Presentation Development**

Objective: Develop games, songs, experiments, etc. for teaching presentation and to be donated to the site.

Time Allotment: Depends on interest of girls and complexity of projects.

Materials: All materials used should be safe for young children. Keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Do not include objects that contain small pieces that can be easily swallowed or parts that can be broken off and choked on.
- Game and activity pieces should be non-toxic, unbreakable and have no sharp edges.
- Sharp objects such as scissors, knives and pins should not be included.
- Do not use plastic bags.

Creative Activity:

Girls can be creative and have fun making their presentations, games and activities. Some suggestions are:

- Movement songs and/or finger plays—write the words and motions on laminated cards to donate.
- Storytelling—make a flannel board and characters or puppets (or objects), and include the story either in book form or laminated cards.
- Songs—record the song on cassette and include a read-a-long book.
- Flashcards—constructed of durable materials or laminated.
- Puzzles—constructed of durable materials or laminated.
- Lacing cards—cut shapes from construction paper or magazines, glue to lightweight cardboard, cover with clear contact paper, punch holes in cards and lace them together with yarn or ribbons.
- Dominos—make an alphabet domino game: cut out rectangles of cardboard, draw or paste a picture of an object on one end and a letter on the other end. Play by matching the object with the letter it starts with—A with apple, B with bear, etc. Be sure that the matching letter and object are NOT on the same card (then they can't be matched!). Increase durability by covering in contact paper.

### **Session 4: Presentation**

Objective: Present learning activities to young children.

Time Allotment: Depends on commitment to site.

Materials Needed:

- Games, songs, activities girls created.

Prep Needed:

- Call and arrange with a teacher or program director for a site visit. Girls also need to determine how they will present their materials.

Site Visit:

However the site visit is organized, each girl should spend time interacting with the younger children and encouraging learning.

- Present as a large group and break into small groups to practice games, songs, etc.
- Break into small groups and girls will work with one or two children at a time.
- Wide Game format—create several girl-run stations children can rotate among.

### **Session 5: Letter to the Editor**

Objective: Share with each other and the community the project.

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pens or pencils
- Examples of Letters to the Editor from local newspaper

Group Writing

1. Show girls examples of letters. Explain that people in the community write the letters about their opinions and things that happen locally.
2. Ask girls to think about what they have found out about learning and teaching. Brainstorm ideas.
3. Work with girls to write a letter to the editor explaining the project, what was accomplished, who was involved and the results of the project.
4. Send it to the editor and wait for publication. Remind girls that not all letters get published and it may be edited when it does—but keep an eye out!

## **Learning Memories Interview**

Ask your partner questions about her memories of learning.

1. Who was your kindergarten teacher? What did she/he look like?
2. Who was your first grade teacher? What did she/he look like?
3. What do you remember learning in kindergarten?
4. What do you remember learning in first grade?
5. What was your favorite part of kindergarten?
6. What was your favorite part of first grade?
7. Was there anything you did not like about kindergarten or first grade? What was it?

### Path to Learning Cards

<p>Since you have no electricity, you cannot read after dark.</p> <p>GO BACK 1 SPACE</p>	<p>Your grandmother tells you a story each night at bedtime.</p> <p>GO AHEAD 1 SPACE</p>	<p>Your culture believes boys and girls should be educated differently.</p> <p>IF YOU ARE A BOY, GO AHEAD 3 SPACES.</p> <p>IF YOU ARE A GIRL, GO BACK 2 SPACES.</p>
<p>Your mother had good health care while she was pregnant with you.</p> <p>GO AHEAD 3 SPACES</p>	<p>There is not enough measles vaccine to go around and you become very sick.</p> <p>GO BACK 1 SPACE.</p>	<p>Both of your parents/guardians were well educated.</p> <p>GO AHEAD 3 SPACES.</p>
<p>The only books available at your school are about a racial or ethnic group different from yours.</p> <p>GO BACK 2 SPACES.</p>	<p>After school, you must work six hours each day to help your family. You are very tired when it's finally time to do your homework.</p> <p>GO BACK 2 SPACES.</p>	<p>You live in a wealthy area where people are willing and able to pay more for good school buildings.</p> <p>GO AHEAD 2 SPACES.</p>
<p>A new free newspaper is available in your neighborhood.</p> <p>GO AHEAD 1 SPACE.</p>	<p>You have a learning disability and your school is unable to help you.</p> <p>GO BACK 2 SPACES.</p>	<p>A generous person has just donated new books to your school library.</p> <p>GO AHEAD 1 SPACE.</p>
<p>There is a paper shortage.</p> <p>GO BACK 1 SPACE.</p>	<p>Your government has decided to spend more money on other items and has cut the education budget.</p> <p>GO BACK 2 SPACES.</p>	<p>Because of all the activity around you, you cannot sleep well at night.</p> <p>GO BACK 2 SPACES.</p>