



Brownie Letterboxer Badge Activity Plan 2

Badge Purpose: When the girls have earned this badge, they will know how to have fun adventures by finding and hiding letterboxes.

Planning Guides Link: Outdoor Awareness and Environmental Stewardship

Fun Patch Link: Letter Boxing

Activity Plan Length: 1.5 hours

Involve Family and Friends: Participation from family and friends can enrich your troop's Girl Scout experience, both for the girls and for you. Use the suggestions below to make it easier for you to connect with additional support.

- Before the meeting:
 - Send a note to families to find those with interest in or expertise with the topic. Ask them to lead or support an activity or two, or even lead the whole meeting.
 - Offer this activity plan as a starting place and point out that they may choose alternative activities using the *Customize It!* section as a guide. For example: If an activity plan directs girls to sit outside and observe animal habitats, you may choose to go to the zoo and learn about animal habitats there instead.
- At home:
 - Encourage families to ask questions about their girls' badge activities. Some examples that work for any badge include: What did you learn? What surprised you? What does it make you think of trying next?
- Throughout the year:
 - Suggest to families ways that girls can share or display their Girl Scout accomplishments. Possibilities include a bulletin board, a scrapbook, a special memories box or family sharing time.

Girls Take the Lead: Include girl leadership through long-term planning, short-term meeting prep and specific activities at meetings.

- Long Term Planning
 - If you use "Plan Your Brownie Year", share this with the girls at the start of the year. Have them ask friends and family to help out with specific meetings or activities. Let the girls brainstorm ways to make the plans their own, such as thinking of related field trip activities. If a girl has experience with a field trip, ask her to be assistant tour guide.
 - If you are adapting the "Plan Your Brownie Year", get the girls' input on which badges to choose. Offer just a few choices in each category or timeframe to make decisions easier. Every girl should have at least one badge or journey she's excited about.
- Short Term Planning
 - Ask a family to help lead a badge. Make sure they have access to activity plans and any resources you might have. Keep additional requested materials to a minimum.

- Choose two helpers to stay after a meeting for 15 minutes. Give them each an activity to introduce and either instruct or help guide at the next meeting.
- Before a meeting, ask everyone to vote on some aspect of the activity: draw posters or perform skits, open with a song or game, etc.
- Use a rotating list of helper tasks, called a 'kaper chart', to share responsibilities. Examples include acting as emcee of the meeting, leading an opening game, bringing a snack next meeting or taking attendance.
- At the Meeting
 - During the opening, have 1-2 girls share their answers to a get-to-know-you question.
 - Have girls fulfill their kaper chart responsibilities.
 - Try to find something in each activity that you can let girls decide or manage.

Customize It: If your group wants to expand work on this badge or simply try different activities, go for it! There are many ways to earn this award, including: completing the activities as listed in the *Brownie Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*, completing two of these activity plans, attending a council-sponsored event or customizing activities. Pick the one(s) that work best for your group. Girls will know they have earned the award if:

- They made their own stamp
- They practiced solving their own clues
- They made their own letterbox for others to find

Tips and Tools

- Check out ways to stay safe using Safety-Wise at <http://gsrv.gs/safetywise>.
- Ensure that your activities are accessible to everyone. Ask in advance if any special accommodations need to be made. If you have questions regarding specific adaptations, please contact River Valleys at 800-845-0787.

Resources

- This activity plan has been adapted from the Brownie Skill-Building Badge set for the *It's Your Story—Tell It!* Letterboxer Badge, which can be used for additional information and activities.
- For more information about letterboxing, visit <http://letterboxing.org> or <http://gsrv.gs/1P4sr7y>

Getting Started

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Girl Scout Promise and Law printed out on poster board

Steps:

1. Welcome everyone to the meeting.
2. Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Use repeat-after-me or say it as a group if girls know it by heart.

Girl Scout Promise	Girl Scout Law
<i>On my honor, I will try:</i> To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law.	<i>I will do my best to be</i> honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, <i>and to</i> respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

3. Sing the Brownie Smile Song. Use repeat-after-me or sing as a group if girls know it by heart.

The Brownie Smile Song
I've got something in my pocket It belongs across my face I keep it very close at hand In a most convenient place I'm sure you wouldn't guess it If you guessed a long, long while So I'll take it out and put it on It's a great big Brownie Smile!

Activity #1: Group Letterbox

Badge Connection: Step 5—Make a letterbox

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- 2 small waterproof containers, such as Rubbermaid
- 2 small notebooks that fit inside the container (this is the log-book)
- 2 stamps
- 2 ink pads
- 2 labels
- Stickers
- Markers
- Plastic baggies

Steps:

1. Divide the girls into two groups and tell them to think of a group name. Explain that they will be making their own letterbox as a group and hiding it for the other group to find.
2. Give the girls 5 minutes to decorate their letterbox and cover of the log-book. Have one girl write the following on a label and stick to the outside of the box:
 - **[Group Name] LETTERBOX. PLEASE DO NOT DESTROY.** Enjoy the contents, and replace where found, hidden from view. To Learn More About Letterboxing, Visit the Letterboxing Web Site.
3. Have girls place the log-book, stamp and ink pad into a plastic baggie and put inside the letterbox.

Activity #2: Letterbox Hiding

Badge Connection: Step 5—Make a letterbox

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pens or pencils
- Clipboard for each group

Steps:

1. In the same two groups as before, explain to the girls they will now be hiding their group's letterbox. If possible, have the girls go outside to hide their letterboxes. If your meeting area is smaller, have groups hide their letterboxes one at a time.
2. When girls find the location where they want to hide their letterbox (make sure the other group can't see them!), they need to write 3-5 clues that will lead the other group from the troop meeting space to their letterbox. For examples, see Creating Clues Idea Sheet.
3. Check to make sure the girls have hidden their letterbox well and their clues make sense.

Activity #3: Letterbox Hunt

Badge Connection: Step 4—Search for a letterbox

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Make sure girls have their stamp and notebook from the previous meeting

Materials Needed:

- Stamp per girl
- Notebook per girl

Steps:

1. Ask the two groups to exchange clues with each other.
2. As a team, have girls work together to solve the clues and locate the letterbox.
3. When girls find the letterbox, make sure they stamp their logbook with the stamp they found in the letterbox, as well as use their personal stamp in the letterbox logbook.

Activity #4: Snack Chat

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Steps:

1. While enjoying snack, here are some things for girls to talk about.
 - Was it difficult finding the other group's letterbox?
 - Which did you enjoy more, hiding your letterbox and writing clues, or searching for the other group's letterbox?
 - What are some other ways to write clues?

Wrapping Up

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Make New Friends printed on poster board

Steps:

1. Instruct girls to get into a Friendship Circle. Have girls stand in a circle and cross their right arms over their left, holding hands with the person on each side of them.
2. Sing "Make New Friends."

Make New Friends		
Verse One	Verse Two	Verse Three
Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver, the other is gold.	A circle is round, it has no end. That's how long, I will be your friend.	You have one hand, I have the other. Put them together, We have each other.

3. After the song, ask everyone to be quiet.
4. Assign one girl to start the friendship squeeze by gently squeezing her neighbor's hand with her right hand. Then, that girl squeezes with her right hand. One by one, each girl passes the squeeze until it travels around the circle. When the squeeze returns to the girl who started, she says "Goodbye Sister Girl Scouts" and the girls unwrap and face outward instead of inward.
5. Optional: Have girls make a wish after their hand has been squeezed and before they pass the squeeze along. Girls can also put their right foot out into the circle when they receive the friendship squeeze, so that everyone can see it travel along the circle.

More to Explore

- Field Trip Ideas:
 - Look on the internet for letterboxing locations near you and go on an adventure (see the Resources section above for more information).
- Speaker Ideas:
 - Invite an older Girl Scout that has done letterboxing to talk about her experiences.

Suggestions

Do you have any suggestions to improve this activity plan? Do you have ideas for other possible badge-earning activities? Please email troopsupport@girlscoutsrv.org.

Family Follow-Up Email

Use the email on the next page as a template to let families know what girls did at the meeting today. Feel free to add additional information, including:

- When and where you will be meeting next
- What activities you will do at the next meeting
- Family help or assistance that is needed
- Supplies or materials that girls will need to bring to the next meeting
- Reminders about important dates and upcoming activities

Hello Girl Scout Families:

We had a wonderful time today learning about letterboxing and have earned our Letterboxer Badge.

We had fun:

- Making our own letterbox
- Hiding our letterbox and writing clues
- Searching for letterboxes

Continue the fun at home:

- Work with your Girl Scout to set up a scavenger hunt for your family using different clues.
- Help your Girl Scout find letterboxes in the area. Clues are available online if you do an internet search for letterboxes.
- Look through the *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* with your Brownie to find other activities you can try at home.

Thank you for bringing your Brownie to Girl Scouts!

Creating Clues Idea Sheet

Adapted from Step 3—Practice Solving Clues in Brownie Skill-Building Badge set for the It's Your Story—Tell It! Letterboxer Badge.

Create a fill-in-the-blank clue. Write a hint, then replace a word with a blank. Then write a question that will help the letterbox seeker figure out the missing word.

Example: Look _____ the slide at the park.

Question: What is the opposite of over?

The seeker answers under, and the clue is done: Look under the slide at the park.

OR

Create a scramble. Scramble the letters of the words in each clue. For example, the last letter of every word could become the first.

Example: Kool rndeu eht elids tae ht karp = Look under the slide at the park.

OR

Create a number code clue. Each number in the hint becomes a letter. Use the code below to help you write and solve your clue. Each letter of the alphabet is a number.

Secret Code

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>M</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

<u>N</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>Q</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Z</u>
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Example: Use the secret code given to solve this number code puzzle.

12-15-15-11 21-14-4-5-18 20-8-5 7-1-18-4-5-14 16-15-20

OR

Keep it simple. Write clues that tell the person what to do but not where to go. Ambiguity is key! For example, find the big, red slide. With your back to the slide, look for three small trees in a row. Take 4 steps forward and turn right.