



Brownie Letterboxer Badge Activity Plan 1

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 further information on letterboxes near you at <http://gsrv.gs/1P4sr7y>.
- 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

- Allina Health's Health Powered Kids program provides additional lesson plans that go along well with this badge, including "Decreasing Screen Time" and "Get Out and Enjoy Nature".

To use these plans:

- Visit healthpoweredkids.org
- Log in using:
 - Username: gsrv
 - Password: allinahealth
- Find lessons for this badge on the Girl Scouts page.
- 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://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: Practice Your "Seeking" Skills

Badge Connection: Step 1—Get started with letterboxing

Time Allotment: 10 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.
- Hide small objects or candy around your meeting location.
- Prepare some clues for the girls to use to find the objects/candy.

Materials Needed:

- Objects/candy
- Clues written on slips of paper

Steps:

1. Introduce letterboxing to the girls. Letterboxing is essentially a real-life hidden treasure hunt. To participate, look online for clues or set up your own letterboxes.
2. Split girls into pairs and give each pair a clue.
3. Have the girls practice their seeking skills using the clues to find the hidden objects/candy.

Activity #2: Creating Your Own Stamp

Badge Connection: Step 2—Find your own stamp

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Craft foam or pre-cut foam shapes
- Jar lids or small pieces of wood
- Glue (if foam is not self-adhesive)
- Scissors
- Ink Pad
- Paper
- Small notepads or paper to make notepads

Steps:

1. Explain to the girls that stamps are an important part of letterboxing and represent the person who made the letterbox. Anyone who finds your letterbox will have your stamp in their own notebook of stamps.
2. Have the girls create their own stamp by cutting a shape from craft foam or use pre-cut shapes and let girls pick their favorite.
3. Have the girls glue the foam to a jar lid or piece of wood to make the stamp sturdy.
4. Have the girls test out their stamp by pressing it onto an inkpad and then firmly pressing it on paper.
5. Give each girl a notepad or make one by folding paper together. Girls can use these notepads to collect images from the stamps they find on their letterboxing adventures.
6. After girls have created their own stamps, have them work together to make a troop stamp that they will use in the troop's letterbox. Save the stamp for a future meeting, where you will create your troop's letterbox.

Activity #3: Create a Scramble

Badge Connection: Step 3—Practice solving clues

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Writing utensils

Steps:

1. Give the girls some examples of word scrambles.
 - For example: The last letter of every word becomes the first and the first becomes the last.
Kool rndeu eht elids ta eht karp = Look under the slide at the park
2. Have the girls create their own word scramble and ask others to try and solve their clue.
3. Ask the girls to brainstorm other ways to write clues.

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.
 - Where are the best places to look for a letterbox?
 - How many letterboxes do you think are out there?
 - Where would you hide a letterbox?

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 are on our way to earning the Letterboxer Badge.

We had fun:

- Solving letterboxing clues
- Making our own stamp
- Creating clues of our own

Continue the fun at home:

- Work with your Girl Scout to set up a scavenger hunt for your family using different clues.
- Help you Girl Scout find letterboxes in the area. Clues are available online if you do an internet search 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!