



## Brownie Potter Badge Activity Plan 1

**Badge Purpose:** When girls have earned this badge, they'll know how to make their own projects out of clay.

**Planning Guides Link:** Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

**Fun Patch Link:** Pottery

**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 Skill-Building Badge set for *It's Your Plant—Love It!*, 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 used and experimented with a variety of clays
- They have made pots and other objects from clay
- They have finished at least one project with a paint or glaze

### Tips and Tools

- Ovens may be used to fire pottery, but girls should never use (or even touch!) the stove, oven, knives or other kitchen appliances without an adult to help.
- 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 Planet—Love It!* Potter Badge, which can be used for additional information and activities.

## 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: Clay Is for Everyday

Badge Connection: Step 1—Find some pottery

Time Allotment: 10 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Review story before meeting.
- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Writing utensils

Steps:

1. Hand out paper and writing utensils. Tell the girls that they are going to hear a story about someone's ordinary day, and they are going to keep track of all the tasks she does and when she does them.
2. Read the story, leaving some pauses where girls may need to make notes.

## Clarissa's Day

Clarissa woke up to a beautiful, sunny day and knew it was perfect for her big yard project. She got up early and made herself a **pot** of peppermint tea. She poured some tea into her favorite **mug** and sipped it while reading the newspaper, taking out the **shiny coupon and ad inserts** for later. After a quick breakfast and a quick clean-up of a spill on the **kitchen tile** floor, she hurried out the door. She already had some herbs growing in **pots** on her windowsill. She had filled the **pots** with **potting soil** and planted the seeds a month ago, and they were showing good progress. The master plan, however, was for a backyard patio with a fire pit and a little fountain in a pond.

Soon, her friend Viola, who had promised to help today, arrived. Together, they brought loads of **bricks** for building the patio and fire pit. Viola started placing the bricks while Clarissa dug out the space for the pond and filled in the **liner** to hold the water. On a future day, they would put in plants around the outside of the pond.

Viola had plans to play **tennis** that afternoon, and also planned to stop in to see her mother and bring her some **medicine for her stomach flu**. When Viola left, Clarissa made herself a homemade pizza on her **pizza stone** and decided to relax with a nice, long **bath**, including a **facial mud mask** and bubble bath. It had been a good day.

3. Have the girls report back the tasks they recorded. Ask them if they think that any of the tasks use clay or ceramics. Since clay and clay minerals can show up in unexpected places, point out that even if their guess doesn't sound like an example of clay or ceramics, it still might be.
4. Go through the list of clay examples below and point out anything the girls missed.

### Appearances of clay and clay minerals:

- Mugs, coffee cups, pottery bowls, china plates
- Liner material for artificial ponds, dams, landfills
- Printing on magazines and glossy newspaper inserts
- Tennis court
- Ceramic tile
- Anti-diarrheal medicine (kaolin clay—Kaopectate)
- Flower pots
- Baking stones, some cooking pots
- Soil additive—vermiculite
- Porcelain sinks and tubs
- Bricks
- Facial mask

### Activity #2: Glassy Glazing

Badge Connection: Step 5—Paint and glaze

Time Allotment: 25 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies. Decide on an oven-baked or a no-fire paint, and plan accordingly for either giving firing/baking instructions to families or planning to keep or finish the items at your home or meeting place.
- Make a practice piece at home before trying with it the girls.

#### Materials Needed:

- Plain, white tiles, about 4" square
- Sandpaper (if tiles are glazed, you may need to sand the surface to help the paint stick to it)
- Paint for glass or multi-use: Glazes for pottery must be fired in a kiln, which most people do not have. There are many kinds of paints used for glass or multiple surfaces. Gallery Glass comes in a tube and air dries. Glass markers from Deco Art or Pebeo Vitrea 160, or Liquitex Glossies paints will dry to tacky in your meeting time and dry thoroughly overnight, or can be baked in an oven to set. The heat set versions are more durable, though all of these can still be damaged if put to hard use. You can also paint with ordinary acrylic paint, and the paint is less likely to flake or scratch off if you paint the tiles first with a ceramic sealant. Be sure to include information on the material used when sending your family message.
- Newspaper, tablecloths or other ways to protect your work surface
- Brushes (unless using Gallery Glass in tubes or markers) and cups of water for clean up
- Optional: Pictures of decorative tile patterns
- Scratch paper and pencils for sketches
- Permanent marker

#### Steps:

1. Introduce girls to clay tiles with the information below.
  - Clay tiles have been used all over the world to decorate floors and walls, and can be found in many shapes—either plain or with designs pressed into the wet clay. Tiles are fired in a kiln to a hard finish to protect them and like other pottery, can have colors added with glaze that is fired again. We are going to make our own art tile designs without using a kiln. Glass paints will keep some of that glossy finish typical of the fired tiles.
  - Geometric designs are common, especially when an entire wall will be covered with the repeating pattern. Many look similar to quilt patterns, or have four- or eight-sided shapes or symmetry.
2. Let the girls know what to expect regarding how much time it will take to finish their tiles, including drying time. This will depend on the type of paints you are using.
3. Tell the girls they can use the scratch paper if they want to sketch a design and they may be able to draw lightly in pencil on the tile before painting it.
4. Before girls start on their tiles, write each girl's name or initials on the bottom of her tile with permanent marker.
5. Have the girls create a design on their tile with the paint and set aside to dry.

### **Activity #3: Sculpture Jars**

Badge Connection: Step 4—Make an art piece

Time Allotment: 25 minutes

#### Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.
- Optional: Let the girls know a few weeks ahead of time to save glass jars with metal lids, such as jam, salsa, peanut butter and spaghetti sauce jars. They should bring empty, washed and dried jars to the meeting.

#### Materials Needed:

- Polymer clay, such as Fimo or Sculpey (approximately 2 oz. per girl or more if the jars are large)
- Glass jars with metal lids (one per girl)
- Paper
- Writing utensils
- Assorted molding tools, such as toothpicks, plastic knives, rolling pins and/or polymer clay tools

### Steps:

Girls will be decorating jar lids.

1. Have each girl choose a base color for her jar lid. She'll create a thin sheet of clay to cover the lid as completely as possible without interfering with the closing of the jar. Girls can use rolling pins to roll out the dough, wrap it over the jar lid, and then use a knife to cut off the excess. Smooth and press down the clay, and make sure it goes right over the edge to encase the lid, as long as the jar still closes.
2. Have the girls use additional colors to continue decorating their lids. The lid itself still needs to be functional, so any three-dimensional figures need to reach no more than one inch above the lid. Decorations can be shapes cut out of rolled-out clay, patterns scratched in with toothpicks or small figures added on top.
3. Polymer clay must be fired in an oven to harden. You can give the girls the instructions and have them fire their lids at home, take care of them at your meeting space if ovens are available, or you or another adult volunteer can fire them and bring them back. The jars themselves can then be used for candles, sand paintings or as containers for gift items.

### Wrapping Up

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

#### Materials Needed:

- Optional: Make New Friends printed on poster board

#### Steps:

- 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.
- Sing "Make New Friends."

<b>Make New Friends</b>		
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.

- After the song, ask everyone to be quiet.
- Assign a 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.
- 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:
  - Visit a local potter, clay and artist supply store, or ceramics store.
  - Visit a history museum that has displays of pottery from different eras.
- Speaker Ideas:
  - Invite a professional or hobbyist potter or ceramic artist to your meeting.

## Suggestions

Do you have any suggestions to improve this activity plan? Do you have ideas for other possible badge-earning activities? Please email [troopsupport@girlscoutsvr.org](mailto:troopsupport@girlscoutsvr.org).

## Family Follow-Up Email

Use the email below 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 making artwork from clay and are on our way to earning the Potter Badge.

We had fun:

- Finding out all the ways clay is used in everyday life
- Painting a tile with special glaze
- Creating a sculpture out of a jar

Continue the fun at home:

- Help your Brownie find more ways clay and ceramics are used in your home.
- Make some homemade clay and experiment with pots or figures. An example recipe is included below.
- 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!

## Cornstarch Clay Recipe

This clay has a bright white color and crystalline, sparkling look when dry. It is somewhat brittle, but takes small details and edges well. Roll it flat and use cookie cutters to make ornaments or plaques. Use leaves or rubber stamps to make impressions, then paint the dried clay with watercolors to bring out each leaf vein or fine line.

2 cups of baking soda, usually 1 box

1 cup of cornstarch

1 1/3 cups water

Directions:

1. Stir together all ingredients in saucepan with a large spoon until well mixed.
2. Cook over medium heat until it turns into the consistency of mashed potatoes.
3. Remove from heat immediately.
4. Knead the clay a little when it is cool enough to touch.

This clay air hardens, so keep in tightly sealed container until you want to use it. You can also speed up drying time by baking it in a 200-degree oven for an hour.