

Campout Preparation Activities & Games

In addition to those activities detailed in section E, section 10, this section, and various other sections of this booklet, you might want to consider holding an "Outdoor Skills Day" like the one written by Joan Beitman. (provided separately).

Here are some additional suggestions for activities preparing girls for camping:

Prepare a camp booklet/journal. Depending on the theme, this booklet will contain word searches, puzzles, facts, program notes, autograph page, diary pages, knot pages, etc. Each girl prepares one during meetings and leaves with the troop. Then she is given hers to start to use during opening ceremonies. We include program work in the booklets so the girls will have to use them, and not throw them on the ground or use them as firestarter. If the patrols are involved in patrol camping/cooking, then recipes can be included also. Scavenger hunts or other nature pages can be added. The possibilities are endless! During rain or STA's (Spare Time Activities) the girls can colour, draw, do puzzles, etc. in their booklets. They have become quite popular, and once again, this idea is easily adapted to the different age groups and group dynamics. Make these booklets exciting and fun and they will be a keepsake of a memorable camp!

Pictionary The girls like to play Pictionary and there is no limit to the theme. Camp preparation is a popular one - this idea can be adapted to any part of the program to make it more enjoyable for the girls to learn something new. Easily adapted for adults as well.

Each patrol has several sheets of scrap paper and pencils. A leader (or parent, older girl, etc) has the list and stands an equal distance from each patrol. One girl from each patrol rushes up to get the first word then rushes back to the patrol and begins drawing. The girl that guesses correctly, in each patrol, rushes up to the leader and looks at the next word. It is up to the leader to make sure that the previous word was guessed correctly. If you are in a small area, whispering would be wise so the other patrols that haven't figured out the word yet don't overhear. Play continues until one patrol has guessed all the words correctly ahead of the others. No talking is allowed by the girl who is drawing the word.

Example camp words: Guy line, 4-man tent, Campfire, Dunk Bag, S'mores, Sleeping bag, Compass, Fire Bucket, Woodpile, Camp Stove, Grill, Duffel bag, Lantern, Dishwashing

Make some camping gear! There are some very common ones – dunk bags, situpons, and handwashers. Instructions for each of these in the next few pages. You could also make other items, though, such as lashed gadgets (wash basin stand, camp stool), troop flag, kaper charts, etc.

Get some books and share them with the troop If you can, get ahold of a copy of the books "Sharing Nature with Children" and "Sharing the Joy of Nature with Children." These two books are great at helping you come up with different kinds of games for different ages, groups sizes, and abilities.

Sit-Upon Ideas

Sit-upons are something portable to sit on outside rather than sitting on the dirt. There are many ways to make them, generally with inexpensive or free materials. Some useful features might include being waterproof, lightweight and somewhat padded. Here are some ideas:

The **traditional sit-upon** is made by weaving newspaper strips – You need 12 sheets of newspaper per sit-upon. Use the full-sized double sheets, not half sheets or tabloid sized. For each sheet of paper: fold in half the long way, then fold in thirds the long way so you have the longest possible strip from a sheet of newspaper. Fold again or until it is about 3" wide. Have some rocks around to use as paperweights as the folds tend to unfold until you weave them. Now place 6 of the strips horizontally. Weave the remaining strips vertically, over and under. Probably the hardest part for the girls will be getting the strips to lie right next to each other without gaps. Finish off the ends by folding over to the opposite side and tucking into the strip of newspaper running perpendicular to it, closest to the end. (This is hard to write, but I think you will see what I mean when you actually do it.) You might need to fold the ends once or twice before tucking them in, to make everything come out neat and tidy.

To make it waterproof, you could cover the traditional newspaper sit-upon with vinyl, contact paper or perhaps put it in one of the big (2 gallon) Ziploc bags.

Other ideas:

Use old carpet samples. Or take the samples, fold in half and cover with contact paper.

Some other things to use for exterior of sit-upon: 2 gallon Ziplocs bags, Old blue jeans, vinyl tablecloths, old shower curtains, Contac paper, grocery or sturdier plastic bags

Things to stuff the inside with: folded newspapers, old grocery bags, foam rubber, little pillows, packing foam paper, polyester batting

Ways to finish the edges: Sew with a sewing machine, punch holes and lace with double-thick yarn or gimp, duct tape

More instructions for a couple of interesting sit-upons:

Recycled jeans - Turn inside out, cut off most of the legs. Sew across the legs and turn right side out. Sew together across the waist. Use fabric paint in the squeeze bottles to decorate/personalize each sit upon. When dry, unzip the zipper and stuff with plastic grocery bags. Besides being fun and creative, they are comfortable, washable (take out the plastic bags, wash and restuff.) and handy. For hikes and camping, use the belt loops for carrying or attaching to your own belt. If you need a bag to carry something, grab one out of your sit-upon. You can even carry a few things in your sit-upon (flashlight, etc.).

Katie's personal favorite - Contact paper & newspaper - Self-adhesive contact paper comes in 18" wide rolls, and sometimes even wider. Cut a 27" pc. of contact paper. In the center, stack several sections of newspapers (whatever thickness you want the sit-upon). Fold ends of contact up and over papers and seal. (like wrapping a gift). You may seal the edges with packaging tape if you like to help hold the contact paper in place. These are just the right size for girls to sit on. Double the length of adult ones using two stacks of newspapers side-by-side, and then when finished it will fold in half between the stacks and is the same size as the girls for carrying purposes (but wider for sitting on!)

Suzy Spitmouth the handwasher

I would like to introduce you to "Suzy Spitmouth"!! Suzy Spitmouth used to be a bleach bottle, but she has been scrubbed down and painted with hair and a lovely face.

Materials:

1 bleach bottle, rinsed out well
1 wooden golf tee or dowel plug
old nylon stocking
bar of soap or several old small bars
sturdy string
1 piece of small diameter rope
permanent markers (optional)

Directions:

- 1) Stand the bleach bottle on a table. Using an ice pick, poke a small hole near the bottom of the bottle on the side opposite the handle. The hole should be slightly smaller than the golf tee or dowel plug you intend to use. Tie a piece of string on the handle of the bottle and attach the other end to the golf tee. This is done so that the tee won't get lost when the girls pull it out to use the water. Insert the pointed end of the tee in the hole.
- 2) Put the bar of soap in the stocking and move it all the way down to the toe. Tie the top of the stocking to the handle of the bottle. Now there is soap attached to Suzy Spitmouth that won't fall in the dirt and won't get lost.
- 3) Loosely tie the piece of small diameter rope to the handle. This will be used to hang Suzy Spitmouth from a tree or post should there be no convenient rock, log nor table for her to sit on.
- 4) Suzy can now be decorated, if you wish. You might want to use permanent markers to draw luscious red lips around the golf tee hole and to then add eyes, a nose, hair, etc.

To use, fill the bottle with water. Optionally, some people choose to use a very small amount of bleach in the water. To wash your hands you loosen the cap slightly and remove the golf tee. To turn it off you tighten the lid and put the tee back in. Placing a basin or plastic bucket under the spout will prevent a mudhole from forming in your wash area. It also lets you show the girls how much (or how little) water they are using when washing.

It is helpful to tell the girls to stand a little to the side of Suzy when removing the tee as they might get water sprayed right on the front of their shirts or on their shoes.

Some people prefer a plastic milk jug to a bleach bottle.

Dunk Bags

Dunk bags are a handy way to clean and store your personal camping dishes. Each girl has her own bag full of non-breakable, washable dishes for camping, complete with tableware and cup. The bag is made out of mesh like materials that allow water to pass through easily and dry quickly. The girls wash their dishes in the appropriate buckets or dishpans and place in the dunk bag. The bag is then “dunked” in a bucket of boiling hot water, preferably with a little bleach in it. The dishes are sanitized that way, but nobody has to put their hands in or near the boiling water. After the bag is “dunked”, it is hung up on a length of cord or rope which is strung up at the camp like a clothesline. The bag hangs there and dries. By the next meal, the dishes and bag are dry. The dishes are out of the way, all together and safe from much of the dirt and debris around the campsite.

Making a dunk bag

Buying nylon bags for washing lingerie are one option, but cheaper options would be to buy similar material, get nylon netting, or loosely woven dish cloths. The bag can be sewn by machine or stitched up using polyester or nylon string or shoelaces. Sew up the bag on 3 sides. The top of the bag should have a drawstring, which could easily be done by hand. The drawstring should be plenty long so that the bag can be dunked from a distance and also so that it can be easily hung on a clothesline.

Some troops have girls tie their dunk bags to the clothesline while others choose to attach them to the line with clothespins – sometimes pre-decorated with each girl’s name.