



Welcome! Welcome Back!

First meeting ideas for Daisy and Brownie Girl Scouts

The August 2006 issue of *Scholastic/Instructor* magazine had some great first-day-of-school ideas from Trina Gunzel and her colleagues at the Julia Randall Elementary School in Payson, Arizona. Here at the Girl Scout Council of Northwest Georgia, we've made a few adaptations so Girl Scout leaders can use these ideas to kick off their first meeting of the Girl Scout year. Plan to have fun:

- 1. Get Right to Work!** Make the girls feel at home and part of the group by having activities for them to do as soon as they walk into your meeting place. Have several tables or activity areas set up, and after you welcome the girls direct them to an activity of their choice. You can invite parents to stay for a few minutes and work with their children too. You'll want a name tag area, but also try puzzles, coloring pages, magnets, and bean bags to toss into boxes or buckets. Troop leaders can raid their daughters' bedrooms for ideas!
- 2. Go On A Treasure Hunt:** When it's time for "snack," sit in a circle with the girls and open the container to hand out the goodies...only to find a note and a map! Have the girls use the sketch map of your meeting place to search for their snack, making sure the map includes restrooms, emergency exits, and "off limits" areas. If the weather is nice, the map might lead them outdoors for a "picnic" snack, or back to their meeting room, where the goodies have "mysteriously" appeared.
- 3. "Bee" Fun With the Rules:** Use a friendly bee theme to introduce Brownie Girl Scouts to the "Be safe" rules at your meeting place, and to help them create their own troop guidelines. Girls write the safety rules on bee-shaped cut-outs, then come up with additional "be" rules such as "be friendly", "be responsible," "be respectful" and "be prepared." Post them around your meeting place each week.
- 4. Make A Time Capsule:** Second- and third-grade Brownie Girl Scouts create an "All About Me" booklet (pages of paper from the recycle bin, stapled together!) by writing and drawing their favorite hobbies, colors, TV shows, books, foods, and what they hope will happen at Brownies this year. Girls share their favorites in their Brownie Girl Scout Ring, then the booklets are sealed in a shoebox marked "Don't open until the last troop meeting!" When the girls open the time capsule at the last meeting of the school year, they see how much they've changed.

And for Older Girl Scouts...

"Keys to Success" – Gather an assortment of cheap locks and keys.* At your kick off troop meeting, divide the girls into pairs by handing each a lock or a key; they have to find their partner by seeing who "fits." Next, ask the partners to brainstorm "keys to a great Girl Scout year" - things to do, places to go, behaviors to pursue and to avoid ("No gossip") and strategies for managing their time. Have the girls write their tips on key-shaped cut-outs and fasten them to the wall or to a strip of butcher paper. Girls can add to or revise them through out the year.

*If you can't find or borrow enough locks and keys for your group, print lock-and-key clip art onto cardstock, then cut them out as two puzzle pieces; girls have to match their halves to find their partner.

(From middle school teacher Jennifer O'Neil Plummer)