

Citizenship in the Community

Prepared by:

Mark Brooks (2006)

Revised by:

Cody Boswell (2008); Andrew Gerhardt (2018); Teddy Novotny (2024); Aiden Shackelford(2025)

Target Group:

Preferably 1st Class Scouts

Time Allotted:

Two one-hour blocks

Pre-Requisites:

Complete Requirement 3, 4, and 7c.

Materials Needed – Staff:

Pens and paper

Materials Needed – Scout:

Merit Badge Pamphlet

Any materials completed before the start of camp

Note: The following is only a teaching outline. The instructor should teach the material as he sees best fit. The Eagle Area Director must approve any changes to the outline of this badge and all other Eagle Area merit badges.

MONDAY

Requirement 1

Discuss with your counselor what citizenship in the community means and what it takes to be a good citizen in your community. Discuss the rights, duties, and obligations of citizenship, and explain how you can demonstrate good citizenship in your community, Scouting unit, place of worship, or school.

Staff Instruction:

(Prepare a list of questions that you know the answers to and that are relevant to Req. 1 that are likely to generate a lot of discussion. Think about what is happening currently in communities around St. Joseph, MO. Keep your audience in mind- do not instruct over their heads.)

(Allow a question and answer period on each topic encouraging meaningful discussion on the topics of community obligations, rights and duties.)

TUESDAY

Requirement 6

List some of the services (such as the library, recreation center, public transportation, and public safety) your community provides that are funded by taxpayers. Tell your counselor why these services are important to your community.

Staff Instruction:

(Have scouts split into groups and brainstorm some of the things in their community that might be funded by taxpayers.)

(Prepare some examples about things in your community and surrounding communities that might be funded by taxpayers in case your class has trouble coming up with answers).

(Ask the Scouts how their view about taxes and services might change if THEY were paying the taxes and not the adults in their lives.)

(Join all the scouts back together and discuss the different things brought up in each group)

Requirement 4

Choose an issue that is important to the citizens of your community; then do the following:

- (a) Find out which branch of local government is responsible for this issue.
- (b) *With your counselor's and a parent's approval, interview one person from the branch of government you identified in requirement 4a. Ask what is being done about this issue and how young people can help.*
- (c) *Share what you have learned with your counselor.*

Staff Instructions:

(Have scouts brainstorm ideas for something that is important to them and their community.)

1. *It would likely be in your best interest to have the brainstorm session focus on ideas that are important to the scout's parents and the community their parents live in.*
2. *Prepare a list of important issues that your community are currently dealing with and find out which branch of local government is responsible for handling those issues, and why. Ask parents or appropriate adults for help with this.*

(Have them discuss these ideas and how they might effectively be able to get information on the issue from the interview they will do.)

1. *You will be able to get effective information from the interview if you know what you want/need to get out of the interview.*

2. *Prepare a list of SPECIFIC questions ahead of time...have an appropriate adult review them.*
3. *In regards to # 2, know how many questions you should ask (enough to get your information, but not too many as to annoy the person your interviewing.)*
4. *Note that this activity does **not** fulfill the requirement but sets the scouts ready to complete it when they get home*

WEDNESDAY

Requirement 5

With the approval of your counselor and a parent, watch a movie that shows how the actions of one individual or group of individuals can have a positive effect on a community. Discuss with your counselor what you learned from the movie about what it means to be a valuable and concerned member of the community.

Note: Depending on year and availability, instructor should choose a movie in which a 30-minute section can be shown to scouts. Area Director and Program Director should approve this video.

1. In the past, we have shown the movie "*Follow Me Boys*."
2. You will need to talk to the Camp Director about a location to watch the movie, and where to acquire the T.V. and the movie, itself.
3. Watch the movie yourself, ahead of time, & research some of the deeper meanings of the movie, if you feel the need.

Staff Instruction:

(Follow this movie with a group discussion. Involve topics such as what the movie meant in terms of community involvement, what the scouts have done in similar terms, and what they might be able to do in the future.)

1. *Remember to guide the discussion, but not control it (guiding the discussion can be made easy by preparing a list of questions ahead of time.....questions you know the answer to).*
2. *Don't rush the discussion; let the class dictate how far the discussion goes.*
3. *Ask the scouts "Why" they feel the way they do about the points they make.*

THURSDAY

Requirement 8

Develop a public presentation (such as speech) about important and unique aspects of your community. Include information about the history, cultures, and ethnic groups of your community; its best features and popular places where people gather; and the challenges it faces. Stage your presentation in front of your merit badge counselor or a group, such as your patrol or a class at school.

FRIDAY

Requirement 2

2. Do the following:

1. (a) Using an electronic mapping tool or paper map, locate and pinpoint the following services and landmarks in your community. Determine and record the distances from your home including driving time AND either walking or biking time:
 2. (1) Chief government buildings such as your city hall, county courthouse, and public works/services facilities
 3. (2) Fire station, police station, and hospital nearest your home
 4. (3) Parks, playgrounds, recreation areas, and trails
 5. (4) Historical or other interesting points of interest.
6. (b) Chart the organization of your local or state government. Show the top offices and tell whether they are elected or appointed.

Staff Instructions:

(Have the scouts locate each necessary location and spend some time discussing the differences between communities)

(Have a map of St. Joseph, MO. prepared ahead of time. Make sure you already know where the Req. 2a buildings are located on the map.)

(b) Chart the organization of your local or state government. Show the top offices and tell whether they are elected or appointed.

Staff Instruction:

(Finally, finish the hour by having the scouts complete a flow chart of the organization of each their communities and discuss the differences between each scouts own community.)

(Make sure you understand what a flow chart is and how to complete one before starting this class. At the least, make sure you know how to complete a flow chart of the organization of the city of St. Joseph, MO.)

Requirement 7

Do the following:

- (a) Choose a charitable organization outside of Scouting that interests you and brings people in your community together to work for the good of your community.
- (b) Using a variety of resources (including newspapers, fliers and other literature, the Internet, volunteers, and employees of the organization), find out more about this organization.
- (c) With your counselor's and your parent's approval, contact the organization and find out what young people can do to help. While working on this merit badge, volunteer at least eight hours of your time for the organization. After your volunteer experience is over, discuss what you have learned with your counselor.

Staff Instructions:

(Have scouts brainstorm ideas for charitable organizations. Make sure they do not include scouting based charities and try to have them think outside the box for organizations that affect their community in a unique way.)

(Lead a discussion on different resources that may be used to complete this requirement. Attempt to have scouts determine what local resources they may have that other scouts had not thought of.)