

NEW LEADER BOOKLET

MONTH BY MONTH OCT-JUNE

OCTOBER

Take a picture of each girl, as well as group pictures. Weigh and measure each girl so that you can tell how much they grow during the year. Make simple scrapbooks, using blue poster board and construction paper white daisies with yellow middles.

Hand Tracing: Each girl should have a buddy for this activity (introduce the idea of the buddy system in Girl Scouting). Each girl should help her buddy trace her hand in her scrapbook. They should think of five special things about themselves, and print them onto each finger.

Begin work on the Girl Scout Ways Try It or the Girl Scouts in the USA badge. These are great ways to get the girls ready for Investiture.

Start planning your Investiture Ceremony. Get the girls in on the planning - it is their day! Get copies of Ceremonies books put out by National, Council, and our own Association. Look on the Internet for ideas, too. This ceremony can be simple or elaborate, depending on how much you want to tackle, but above all, remember that it should be meaningful to the girls and doesn't need to be an extravaganza.

Prepare food to be served at Investiture. A suggested recipe would be Yum Yums, as it is easy to prepare, cooks quickly, and freezes well. Make extra so that some could be eaten when they come out of the oven. Melt one cube butter in cookie sheet. Spread following on top: 2 cup graham cracker crumbs, 1 1/2 cups shredded coconut, 1 pkg. chocolate chips, 1/2 cup chopped nuts, 1 can sweetened condensed milk. Bake in 350 oven for 10 minutes. Cut in squares.

Make situpons. There are many ways to do this, but one example would be to get a book of wallpaper samples. Hole punch around two pieces together so that the holes line up. Place two or three sections of newspaper between the two pieces of wallpaper, and have the girls lace together the wallpaper, using yarn with masking tape at the tip. Another way to do it is to have the girls decorate a square of muslin with markers and then "lamine" with clear contact paper. This kind can be folded up and put in your pocket. Or you can laminate a second piece of fabric and put foam or newspaper in between and then sew the pieces together.

Make piñatas to be used at a birthday party for Juliette Low. Hang a balloon on a string from the ceiling, dip strips of newspaper in undiluted Vano starch, make a handle by rolling a piece of newspaper and holding in place with more newspaper dipped in Vano. This would be a three meeting activity: make piñatas, paint piñatas, break piñatas.

Have refreshments and sing 'Happy Birthday' to Juliette Gordon Low. Play typical Birthday Party games, or even add a twist - like Play 'Pin the Pin on Juliette' like 'Pin the Tail on the

Donkey'. Or, do crafts or activities from the days of the first Girl Scout troop. Perhaps you could check out some books like "Lady From Savannah" or the first GS Handbook from the Association Black Box. Find out about our founder - she's a cool lady.

Sing songs and play games. Play Fruit Bowl Upset. All girls are seated in a circle and assigned either apple, banana or orange. One girl is in the center. She calls either one of the fruits and all 'apples' have to exchange seats, with the last girl becoming the center. Sometimes the center can call 'Fruit Bowl Upset' and all players must exchange seats. This is kind of like musical chairs, with one player not getting a seat and becoming the center. Play 'Daisy to Daisy'. Girls pair up. Leader (or a girl if the group is uneven) calls out 'elbow to elbow'-girls touch elbows, 'head to head' - girls touch heads, etc. At some point, she calls out 'Daisy to Daisy', (or Brownie to Brownie, etc.) and all the girls run to become partners with a new girl.

Do something Italian to celebrate Columbus Day or something German to celebrate Oktoberfest.

October 24 is United Nations Day, which commemorates the date the UN charter was adopted and the UN was officially in existence. Church bells ring and there are special prayers for peace and brotherhood in churches of all faiths, and parades in many cities. Perhaps you could learn about the UN and celebrate in some way.

In October, the people of Burma celebrate the end of Lent, a religious season of fasting, with a Festival of Lights. This celebration occurs at the end of the rainy season. Homes are decorated with lights, fireworks light the skies, and tiny rafts float along the rivers. Maybe you could make some little rafts and float them in the rain gutter or a stream.

Get moving: Do some aerobics. If you can find a video that is geared to children, that's great, or tape different kinds of music with good, danceable rhythms. Improvise to the type of music: twist to fifties, do-si-do to country, etc.

In October or November, the Hindu Festival of Lights is celebrated. Homes and shops are decorated with clay lamps filled with mustard oil to guide Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth and fortune back to earth. Houses are cleaned and accounts are closed. The floors in many homes are decorated with elaborate chalk drawings. Perhaps you could decorate the sidewalk and driveway with chalk drawings. Simple but FUN!

Make spider webs with black construction paper and yarn glued on in a web pattern. Pom Pom spiders with pipe cleaner legs and wiggly eyes. Or, you could learn about the body parts of spiders and make a giant model of a spider out of newspaper - crumpled for the body and head, and rolled for the legs. Or, you could make spiders and have races - Cut a spider body out of sturdy construction paper or 'fun foam'. Glue on wiggly eyes (lots of them - spiders have many eyes!) and pipe cleaner legs. Glue a plastic straw to the back, and thread a doubled piece of string through it. Hang the loop of the string on a hook, and if you pull on the alternating ends of the string, the spider will 'climb' up it's web.

Halloween. Have the girls come in costume. Make Spooky Hands - put jelly beans in the fingertips of latex gloves and then fill with popcorn. Tie with string, and put a spooky

Halloween ring on the finger. Or, have a Halloween party at a children's hospital or some type of shelter.

Do face painting. Have the girls pair up and paint each other.

Bob for apples.

Pass 'scary' things to feel: peeled grapes for eyes, cooked spaghetti for brains, pork and beans for guts, batting for hair, carved carrot for a nose, chicken wing bones for fingers, etc.

In October, Bolivians celebrate the Festival of Alacitas, or Little Things which is symbolic of hope for abundance in the coming year. There is a fair, in which all articles are in miniature, with tiny dolls, household articles, jewelry, etc. There is a 6" high clay man named Ekeko. People put miniature articles on his back as a symbol of abundance. Make some miniature toys by taking the crust off of a piece of white bread. Mash bread with fingers until it is a little ball, and mix with some white glue until pliable.

Have a sock and mitten tree at your local school to collect these items for a homeless shelter.

Have an outdoor hike. Witness any fall changes. Take crayon rubbings, and some leaves as specimens. Be sure to take along a trash bag to pick up any trash you may find along the way.

NOVEMBER

Have an Investiture Ceremony and invite the parents. If you find yourself putting it off because it is too complicated, it *is* too complicated! A few pointers and Girl Scout lore: Girls shouldn't wear their uniforms until they are invested. Girls should attend four meetings before they are invested (or this could be her fourth meeting). Pin the pin on upside down. When the girl does her first "good turn", then it can be turned right-side up. After the ceremony, the girls could serve refreshments to their families (a good turn!) and invite their siblings to play some Girl Scout games they have learned.

Make pine-cone turkeys.

Have a food drive, or cook food for someone in need.

Make edible collages. Smear honey on a paper plate, then add food items such as cereal, raisins, peanuts, coconut, etc. to make pictures. Enjoy and eat!

Have an overnight at the Scout House. To reserve the Scout House, phone Mrs. Kaiser at 583-7862. It is free! Decorate pillow cases with fabric markers and let the girls autograph each other's pillow case and outline a handprint. Get glow-in-the-dark necklaces to play with at bedtime and to serve as nightlights. Be sure to let the girls cook their own food! Or, make

shadow puppets to play with after dark by using stencils to trace shapes onto heavy construction paper and tape onto Popsicle sticks.

Make cranberry relish with an old fashioned food grinder and the recipe on the back of the package of whole cranberries. Put in baby food jars and perhaps decorate with a ribbon and a circle of fall -print cloth to give as gifts to families for Thanksgiving dinner.

Visit an elder-care home, or a convalescent or children's hospital. Or, deliver groceries to someone in need.

Lummi Sticks. Check the sticks out from the Association or make your own. For the short sticks, they should be about a foot long (1" dowels work well, or you could even cut strips of PVC pipe). The long sticks should be about 4 feet long. For the short sticks, each girl has two, and they are worked on the count of three and you bang them together in different patterns (e.g. down, together, against, OR down, together, right sticks cross, OR you can get really fancy and pass the sticks. etc.) For the big sticks, you have two holders who bang the sticks on the ground about 18" apart twice and then together, and the dancer jumps in and out of the sticks.

Have a kidnap breakfast. Arrange ahead of time to have the families keep the girls in bed or at least in their pajamas, but don't tell the girls! You arrive (in your pajamas) at the homes of the girls and wake them up. As you have picked up more girls bring the crowd with you into the bedrooms. Go to a restaurant, the Scout House, or someone's home for breakfast. They'll never forget this one!

Do some Native American activities. Make corn bread, make macaroni bead necklaces (to color macaroni, soak in isopropyl alcohol with a few drops of food coloring for a few minutes. If you want vivid colors, use the coloring used for cake decorating.), make scary masks from grocery bags (Native Americans made scary masks to ward off illness or evil spirits.)

Make tree decorations for the birds. String Fruit Loops or Cheerios, cut-up fruit, and popcorn. Or, make ornaments by spreading old bread with lard and cutting out with cookie cutters. Tint the lard if you wish. Or make suet bags with squares cut from plastic onion bags tied with yarn. Mix a spoonful of suet with bird seed.

Make a troop quilt. Have each girl decorate a square with fabric pens and hopefully participate in sewing the squares together. Remember to leave a few squares empty for future troop members.

Make a "Good Turn Mouse". Cut out a small heart shape of felt. Glue a piece of yarn on one edge. Fold felt in half and glue in n place. Add wiggly eyes or cut eyes from felt. Talk about the fact that a good turn is something that you see that needs to be done and that nobody has told you to do. It usually doesn't include regular chores like making your bed, etc. Send the mice home with the girls along with this poem: This saucy creature is a mouse. Most mothers won't let one in the house. See, it has a long tail, Each Scout can have one without fail. Take it home until next week, and for Good Turns, you must seek. For every Good Turn that you do, Tie a

knot in the yarn...make quite a few. Remember why each knot you tied, and how much to help you really tried. Bring back the yarn and take your turn, To tell us all, so we can learn Just what you did to help at home, a ready helper you have grown!

Learn about Kaper Charts and use them at your meetings.

Sing some Thanksgiving Songs:

Mr. Turkey (sung to If You're Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands)

Gobble-gobble, Gobble-gobble says the bird,
Gobble-gobble, Gobble-gobble says the bird,
Mr. Turkey gobble-gobbles
and his feet go wobble-wobble
Gobble-gobble, Gobble-gobble says the bird,

Turkey, Turkey (sung to the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Turkey, turkey, look at you,
Please be careful what you do.
Thanksgiving Day is almost here,
We eat turkey every year.
Go and hide out in the woods,
We'll eat pizza, like we should!

The Pilgrims are coming (sung to the tune of When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again)

The Pilgrims are coming to celebrate,
Hurrah, Hurrah!
The Pilgrims are coming to celebrate
Thanksgiving Day.
The Pilgrims are coming so don't be late, We'll eat and dance to celebrate.
And we'll all be glad so,
Hurry and don't be late.

The Turkey Ran Away (Tune: Farmer in the Dell)

The turkey ran away,
before Thanksgiving Day
He said, "they'll make a roast of me
if I decide to stay."

Make the famous turkey card: Outline the girls' hand and let them cut it out. Decorate the thumb like the head-add turkey wattle and beak. Use markers to add color to the fingers for feathers and add eyes and legs. Include poem inside card:

This isn't just a turkey, as anyone can see.
I made it with my hand,
which is a part of me!
It comes with lots of love
Especially to say -
I hope you have a
Very Happy Thanksgiving Day!

Find out about boats and ships (especially the Mayflower). Sing a few sea chanteys. Visit one of the many ships open to the public in San Francisco (Jeremiah O'Brien, Balclutha, or the Maritime Museum.

Bring a pet to visit at an elder care home, or plant some bulbs at a park or other public place, or at a convalescent hospital.

Learn how to make baskets or do weaving.

Take part in a community Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony, if appropriate.

DECEMBER

NOTE: Please be very careful to remember that not everyone celebrates Christmas! If all of the girls in your troop are of one faith, you could go ahead and do the typical crafts, holiday caroling, etc. However, it is much better to remember that Girl Scouting is not a Christian organization, and that we want to be inclusive to girls of all faiths. As such, this might be a perfect opportunity to learn about other faiths by doing activities such as Hanukkah dreidels, something related to Kwanzaa, etc.

Take part in a service project benefiting others, such as "To Kids, From Kids" in our area, or a food drive, or gift-giving to those less fortunate.

Have a cookie exchange.

Decorate cookies or cakes to donate or keep.

Make gingerbread houses with graham crackers and small milk cartons.

Make angel dolls. Cut white material approx. 8"x15". Satiny material looks great. Fold down 1/3 and stuff a ball of stuffing for head, tie with attractive cord. Add a second piece of material approx. 4"x12", tie around shoulders with a criss cross in front for wings. Add doll hair, use markers for faces, make a halo with star garland.

Make sock snowmen: Take one boys' tube sock, turned inside out (so you have the fleecy side out). Stuff with three balls of polyester stuffing (largest at bottom, smallest on top for head.) Turn down cuff of sock - stripes form hat. Decorate with black pom-poms for face and buttons, and a skinny triangle of orange felt for nose. Glue with tacky glue or glue guns (be careful!). Tie ribbon around neck. Sing Frosty the Snowman.

Take an outdoor hike, especially in the rain. Notice all the changes taking place (bare trees, etc.) Be sure to take along a trash bag to pick up any trash you find! If everybody doesn't have a raincoat, cut holes in large trash bags for arms and heads. Jump in puddles. Find a rainbow.

Make rain pictures. Put a piece of paper down on the ground, weighted down on the edges so it won't blow away. Sprinkle some dry tempera paint on the paper. Let rain sprinkle on the paper. Look to see what designs were made!

Make homemade rain. Put a spoon or ladle into the freezer to cool it. When the spoon is ice cold, turn on the kettle. (Don't take the spoon out of the freezer until the water boils.) As the water in the kettle heats up, it turns into steam. Most people think the white vapor coming from the kettle is steam, but it's not. Real steam is invisible. If you look carefully - but not too closely - at the spout, you'll see a space between the kettle spout and where the white vapor starts. In that space is steam. As steam meets the air outside the kettle, it cools and becomes water vapor which is visible as a white cloud. When the water is boiling, hold the cold spoon in the white vapor coming from the kettle's spout. Presto! In a few seconds it'll be "raining" in your kitchen. How does it work? Your cold spoon suddenly cools the water vapor that's coming out of the kettle spout, making it condense into water and fall to the floor as "rain." Real rain is made in much the same way as homemade rain, but more gradually. Instead of a stove, there is the sun, which warms water in Earth's rivers, lakes, oceans, and even puddles. Fortunately for fish, frogs, and swimmers, not enough of the sun's heat reaches the Earth to make the water boil, but it is warm enough to allow tiny molecules of water to escape and rise into the sky. This is called "evaporation." As the water-bearing warm air rises, it cools, and a cloud of water vapor forms, just like the cloud of water vapor formed when you boiled the kettle of water. Cold air can't hold as much water as warm air, so when the air gets too cool to hold all the water vapor in it, some of the water falls back to earth as rain or snow. Then the cycle begins all over again. Brrrrrr! Now make some hot chocolate with the boiled water and some instant cocoa mix!

If appropriate, attend a holiday show, play, or ballet. There are lots of deals for youth groups!

The Jewish festival of Hanukkah is celebrated which commemorates the cleansing and rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after the desecration by the Syrian King Antiochus. The eight-branched Menorah is lit, one candle each night, to celebrate the miracle of one day's oil that lasted eight. There are gifts for children. Play the dreidel game and eat potato latkes with applesauce.

Play with your food! On December 23, the Festival of the Radishes is celebrated in Mexico. Giant radishes are carved into figures of people and animals. Prizes are awarded. Practice knife

safety and carve a few radishes, too. Perhaps you can even practice making beautiful garnishes for food during all the holidays of the season. Practice some fancy folds of napkins.

Decorate cookies. You could do it the regular way with colored frosting, or try one of these ideas: Cookie Paints-prepare plain sugar cookies and place on cookie sheets as directed. Place 2 tablespoons evaporated milk in each of four custard cups. Add up to five drops of food color to each cup, mix well. Paint mixture on unbaked cookies. Bake cookies as directed in recipe. OR: Potato Printing- Prepare cookie dough as directed, placed on cookie sheets. Cut medium-sized raw potato in half crosswise. Using small cookie or canapé cutter, push cutter into cut side of potato 1/4" to 1/2" deep. Using knife, trim potato away from outside of cutter; remove cutter. Repeat to make another design on remaining potato half. Place 1 tablespoon evaporated milk on small plate. Add several drops of desired food color, mix well. Place potato, design side down, in evaporated milk mixture. Print design on unbaked cookie. If necessary, evenly distribute evaporated milk mixture over design. Repeat process to imprint remaining cookies. Occasionally blot potato on paper towels. Bake cookies as directed in recipe.

Make a toy: you could make a tic-tac-toe game with cardboard and felt markers. Another simple toy that you could make is a variation on the ball and cup toy: Take a 1/2" wooden dowel and cut 9"-10" long. Next cut a piece of heavy twine or string about 12"-14" long and nail it to the top of the dowel. Tie a washer that has a hole larger than 1/2 to the end of the string and try to get the washer on the dowel by swinging the string up and over. Or you could try to find a small metal cup to nail to the dowel with the string between it and the cup and put a large bead on the end of the string.

Play Cat's Cradle or make "spinners". Spinners are a loop of heavy string or yarn with a large button. You wind it up, and then pull on the ends to keep it spinning.

Make star wrapping paper for Christmas or Hanukkah: take a used plastic-foam plate or fast-food carton. Cut a 3"x3" piece of the foam. Trace a star onto the square. Cut out the star. Go over the pencil lines on the star pattern using a heavier stroke. Make dots in the foam with a dull pencil in a pattern coming out from the middle. This will make indentations in the foam. Glue the star to an empty thread spool and this will make the stamp. Use paint and stamp with paint onto white or brown craft paper. Allow paper to dry.

Try some stargazing. The winter sky is beautiful. Or, go to a planetarium or observatory.

JANUARY

Start thinking about Thinking Day. Check out the People of the World Try It as a place to begin. Find out what the Association event will be this year, because sometimes troops need to come up with an activity or food to share. Choose your country, and start researching. You can often take several meetings really concentrating on your special country.

The cookie sale shouldn't be overlooked as a source of program. Sometimes games or other materials are provided to kick off the sale. Also, spend some time deciding what your troop will be earning money for. Do some budgeting: if we all want to go horseback riding, and it costs so much per person, how many boxes of cookies do we need to sell? Definitely spend some time role-playing making cookie sales, so that the girls feel confident and prepared. Make sure that they understand that they don't need to feel hurt or rejected personally if someone doesn't want to buy cookies. Brainstorm ideas of why someone might not want to buy cookies (as well as selling techniques for these e.g. we do have a low fat cookie.) The cookie sale is a great source of self-esteem for girls who get out there and have the experience of talking to adults, etc.

In the early days of Girl Scout cookie sales, troops made their own cookies to sell according to the following recipe: 1 cup butter, 1 cup sugar, 2 eggs, well beaten, 2 tbsp. milk, 1 tsp. vanilla, 2 cups flour, 2 tsp. baking powder, 1/2 tsp. salt. Cream butter and sugar. Add flour, and baking powder and mix. Add eggs, milk, vanilla. Mix well. Chill. Roll very thin and cut out with 2" cutters. Bake at 425 for 8-10 minutes. Sprinkle baked cookie with sugar. Imagine how much work it would be if we not only had to sell cookies, but bake them, too? Try this recipe for Original Girl Scout Cookies.

Celebrate the New Year with noisemakers.

Paper-Bag Dramatics. Split the troop into groups and provide each group with a paper bag of props to use in a play. Items might include a flashlight, a spoon, gloves, a cowboy hat, a vegetable peeler, etc. Give groups a chance to plan before performing for the rest of the troop. OR, perform puppet shows or drama plays with their own ideas, or provide some well-known children's stories to get them started.

Make puppets for a puppet show.

Try different exercises such as blindfolding or taping thumbs to your wrist and try to do everyday activities to know what it might feel like to be disabled.

Blind Walk: Before the meeting set up a simple obstacle course. You may want to have some items to go around or under and some to go through or over. Discuss with the girls so that they understand what it might be like to not be able to see. Have the girls choose buddies. Blindfold one girl and let the buddy guide her through the course. When the girls trade places, you may want to modify the course so they are not as familiar with it. Also, the blindfolded person may

try to drink water or eat something. Follow up with a visit from a person who has to deal with blindness all of the time. Or perhaps an introduction to Braille would be another good activity.

Commemorate Martin Luther King Day. Talk about dreams, hopes and wishes. Talk about having convictions. Work on the Patch program “Heritage and Culture: Black Americans” available from Council.

As an opening, tell the girls to pair up with the person who “looks like them”. Some girls will have trouble pairing up, but some will start finding someone who has similar features. When they do pair up, point out something that is different about the two girls so that they can’t be partners. Let them try for awhile. Eventually, they will all realize that nobody is exactly like anyone else. Talk about this and the fact that everybody is special and unique. Then, let everyone have a chance to make fingerprints, and talk about how they are all unique, too. You can even get fingerprint cards from the local police and send them home with the girls. If you have extra time, make a fingerprint, and then add features onto it to make a creative picture (e.g. the fingerprint can become the head of a person who is riding a horse - add the cowboy hat, body, horse, etc.)

Draw names for secret pals. Let the girls exchange small notes, stickers, little gifts, etc. for a month or six weeks until Thinking Day.

Talk about nutrition and the food pyramid. Test different foods for fat content by rubbing them on a paper bag. Fattier foods will leave oil stains on the paper. Test for starch by adding about 20 drops of tincture of iodine to a glass of water (be sure not to drink or touch wash hands and glass well before using as iodine is poisonous.) Pour some of this solution into a glass with about 1/2 tsp. of cornstarch. The dark blue color tells you that starch is present. Add a few drops of the iodine solution to small pieces of bread, cake, or a raw potato. You might test sugar, flour, baking soda, and salt in addition to cornstarch. Vitamin C or ascorbic acid is necessary for prevention of bleeding gums, for repairing damaged tissue, and for wounds to heal properly. It cannot be stored in the body, so people must consume this chemical regularly. Make a vitamin C indicator by stirring a teaspoon of cornstarch into a cup of boiling water. Cool this mixture. Add drops of iodine slowly while stirring the solution. Keep adding until the mixture is blue. You are ready to test fruit juices, such as orange, grapefruit, lemon, tomato, and apple. Pour a small amount of the indicator into a glass. Start adding drops of some juice until the blue color disappears. Record the number of drops it took. Repeat with each juice using fresh indicator each time. The more drops it takes, the less vitamin C is present. Now try a variation. Boil a juice and test it. What did you find out? Let the juice stand for a couple of days in an open container. Test it for vitamin C. compare your results with your reading before. What happened? What does this tell you about the nature of this vitamin? Add a little bicarbonate of soda to a juice and then test for the presence of vitamin C. Baking soda is often added to vegetables to preserve their green coloring. What happens to the amount of Vitamin C under those conditions?

Make some different paper airplanes and test which ones fly best. Have an air show.

Learn about how a checking account works. Print up some dummy checks and let the girls make a few transactions. Show how they can keep track of their checks in the register and learn how to reconcile a bank statement.

Spa night. Who says Girl Scouting has to be all about roughing it? Pamper yourselves with an evening of beauty treatments. Make homemade bath salts: 2 1/2 pounds Epsom salts, a few drops of food coloring, a few drops favorite perfume or cologne. Mix ingredients well in a large bowl until color is even. Put into smaller jars and let stand 4-6 weeks before using, so odor blends with salts. (Possible Mother's Day gift!) Do facials: Mix approximately two cups of oatmeal with enough water to make a paste. Have buddy smear on face and let dry. Let the girls sit with cut cucumber on their eyelids. Do manicures. Let the girls bring bottles of their favorite nail polish colors.

Make finger puppets to donate to a hospital to give to children after they have had a finger stick for a blood test.

Sing around the campfire. It would be fun to sip hot chocolate and sit around a fireplace.

FEBRUARY

Keep working on Thinking Day activities. Have an imaginary trip around the world and play songs or games or have food from different parts of the world. Make Thinking Day paper chains to count down to Thinking Day. On each chain, write one good deed or nice thing they should do that day for someone.

Celebrate Lunar New Year. Especially easy if you or a parent in the troop is Asian. Do some origami or calligraphy. Sample foods, learn about customs, try chopsticks, etc.

Have a 'loud singing' contest - especially good for a rainy day when everybody feels cooped up.

Spend time going over personal safety - calling 911, fires, strangers, how not to get lost, what to do if you get lost etc. There are a few patch programs that help with teaching these topics and keeping information age-appropriate. Healthy Kids, Healthy California is one of many.

Celebrate Valentine's Day. There are lots of crafts, foods, etc. to try. Have the girls bring Valentines for each other, or have them write positive notes about each girl in the troop to exchange. Or, have a Valentine, cookie, sticker or ??? exchange.

Discuss the fact that our founder, Juliette Gordon Lowe, was deaf. Learn the alphabet in sign language. Learn how to say your name. See if you can have a person visit who knows sign language. Perhaps they could teach you to sign a favorite song or the Girl Scout Promise.

In February, the French people have a lemon festival in the town of Mentone. A parade of lemon-filled wagons in the lemon parade travels through streets lined with lemon, orange, grapefruit and tangerine decorations. Make a lemon meringue pie, lemonade or?

Have a Father/Daughter dessert night, or perhaps even a decorated cake contest, with Dads and daughters creating their cakes together before the meeting.

Hold a coat or blanket drive in your community to benefit a homeless shelter.

Learn how to jump rope. Play Double Dutch.

Plan a Mother-Daughter Tea. Role-play introductions and practice table setting. Play a table-setting relay race. At the Tea, have mothers and daughters bring baby pictures. Pass the pictures around and let everyone guess the identities. Let the girls act as hostess to their mothers. Play a game like Bingo.

Attending the Thinking Day event is a must! This is a great chance for the girls to participate and know that they are part of a larger organization than just their own troop.

Celebrate Lincoln's birthday with building log cabins or making old-fashioned vegetable or stone soup. Celebrate Washington's birthday - anything with cherries seems to work. Or, get a copy of the children's book "George Washington's Breakfast," and make the food from the book. Or, talk about the Presidents in general. How many have there been? What are the requirements for becoming President? Make silhouettes of the girls heads by shining a light past their profile and tracing onto a piece of black construction paper. Mount on a circular piece of paper. How do the girls think *they* would look on a coin?

In February, the Vietnamese people celebrate Tet, a seven day festival. A symbolic farewell is bid to "kitchen gods" who are supposed to ascend to heaven to report on members of the family. Firecrackers are set off to mark the departure of kitchen gods. There is a ceremony to welcome the return of ancestral spirits at midnight, then bid farewell three days later. A leafy branch covered with fruit and flowers symbolizes a prosperous year to come. Perhaps you could find some way to celebrate this festival, especially if you or someone you know is Vietnamese and could help you.

Much of the world celebrates Shrove Tuesday or Carnival, or Fat Tuesday. This is the last day before Lent for Christians, a period of forty days of quiet and self-examination, as well as fasting. In South America, there are parades, tricks and revelry, masks and games, and feasting. In Denmark, there are Shrovetide buns. In England, there is Pancake Day. In the Netherlands, they eat bread filled with sausage. Make plaster masks. Put cold cream on faces and cover with 'Faster Plaster' a product available at craft stores like Michaels. It is gauze with plaster that you

wrap. Put cotton balls over eyes and straws in mouth to breathe. Have the girls work in partners. Or, cut half-masks out of 'Fun Foam' and decorate with feathers, sequins, etc.

Have a Teddy Bear's picnic. Let all the girls bring their favorite bear, dress up, and have a tea party. It might be fun to have a troop bear who could visit the homes of the girls in turn, with a journal to tell about his adventures. After he's been to all the homes in the troop, perhaps you could send him on some adventures with other troops, and even mail him away to different places.

First Aid. Teach some simple First Aid skills such as what to do for a nosebleed or a knocked-out tooth. There are many books and programs that cater to different age groups such as S.T.A.R. by Sheila Greeley.

Sew dunk bags. These could be made out of open-weave dish rags or heavy duty lace curtain material, or any kind of heavy (not tulle) netting material you can find. Sew two pieces of fabric together around three sides. Sew a casing around the top, and insert a drawstring. Practice proper dishwashing techniques for camping.

Play the Feelings Game. Start the discussion by relating an incident where someone's feelings were hurt because of something said. Ask the girls to name some feelings. As they name them, write them down on strips of paper (e.g. happy, sad, scared, proud, mad.) Have the girls take turns taking a strip and acting it out without words or sounds. Discuss how you can tell how a person feels by looking at her.

Assemble Autograph Books. Let the girls gather autographs from the other troop members. Instruct the girls that they need to write a note to each girl with at least three things that they admire about that person.

Make jewelry. String beads, make bread dough beads, use friendly plastic, shrink art, knotted friendship bracelets or anklets or ??? There are many local bead and crafts shops that can help you come up with appropriate projects, or even check out jewelry making kits in toy stores.

Have a weather relay race - each group has a set of boots, jacket, hat, gloves, scarf. First in line puts on all items, runs to the designated spot and back, takes off items and gives them to the next girl, etc.

Have a pet sharing day. Ask the girls to bring their pet to the meeting (if appropriate.) Discuss proper care and feeding of a pet. Or, visit a pet shelter. Or, ask a vet to come and visit. Learn about first aid for pets. Collect used rugs and towels to donate to an animal shelter.

Make pet rocks. Have the girls find rocks and decorate them with wiggly eyes, felt, fur or hair. Cut out feet from fun foam.

MARCH

Have a cookie booth sale! Be sure to contact your Association booth manager to schedule the place and time. Plan for potty breaks, and rotate the girls if you have more than one location. The girls usually have a great time working at booths, and you can have a treat afterwards like pizza, ice cream or ??? If you have younger girls, you might consider letting them bring their own money and going for fast food and letting them order their own food. Many young girls may not have had that experience before!

Learn knife safety. Practice on soap bars or peel carrots for a snack.

Tie some knots. Its fun to practice with thin licorice ropes.

Make plans to celebrate the Girl Scout birthday with another troop. Make and decorate cupcakes to share. If you have candles, remember to stress fire safety (put hair up, or down back of shirt; stop, drop and roll with demonstration, etc. They can't hear this stuff enough.) Make friendship bracelets- two identical; one to keep, and one to give to a new friend. You could have the five colors of the world of Girl Scouting plus green and then use three colors at a time. The bracelets could be braided or just knotted at intervals depending on their ages. When they exchange bracelets, have them describe why they chose those colors (my favorite world of GS or my favorite colors etc.)

Make a Time Line of major events in the Girl Scout Movement on a piece of really big butcher paper. You can get all the dates in the handbook. Then let the girls add in their birthdays. Have the girls make their own Life-Lines with major events from their lives.

Plant trees for Arbor Day.

Make a collection of tree leaves. Arrange the leaves carefully between sheets of newspaper or blotting paper and press them under bricks or books for several days. Mount the leaves neatly on sheets of poster board or drawing paper. Label each leaf with the name of the tree. Make sets to show which are deciduous and which are conifers. Or, make plaster casts of leaves.

Carry out a survey of local trees. Make a large sketch-map of the area around your meeting place. Write in the names of the streets. Draw in landmarks such as schools, churches, shops and parks. Now carefully draw in small colored circles showing where trees are growing. Write the name of each tree. Which trees are the most common? Why have these particular kinds of trees been grown? How did they get there?

Be careful to be sensitive if you have girls of different faiths if considering "Easter-type" activities such as Easter bonnets, egg crafts, bunnies, etc. It might be a better idea if you just do "spring-time" activities instead. Also, remember to check your calendar in order to plan around the different religious holidays of this season.

On March 3, Japanese Children's Day and Doll Day are celebrated. Fifteen special dolls are arranged in ceremonial fashion, with the Emperor and Empress in a place of honor. Artificial cherry and orange trees and household utensils are included. Girls dress in formal kimonos and serve tea and cakes to friends. Perhaps you could sample some Japanese food or do origami.

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on March 17. Have a green meeting where you make green/shamrock crafts or eat green food. Eat potato soup, Irish stew, or make Irish soda bread or even baked potatoes. Have a potato toss.

Learn about snakes (St. Patrick allegedly chased them out of Ireland.) How many kinds of snakes are there? How many are poisonous, and how many are beneficial.

Have a shamrock relay by making two large shamrocks out of green paper. Divide into two teams of equal players. Each team receives two shamrocks. At a signal, the team moves forward by stepping on the shamrocks. While standing on one, they must move the other one forward for their next step. If you take a step off the shamrock before getting to the finish line, that player must start over. The first team with all the players across the finish line wins.

Have a Potato Relay. Make a line on the floor with masking tape for each team. The object is to roll the potato down the line with a shillelagh (or a fairly thick, knotted stick). The player then runs the potato back to his team for the next player to use. The first team to get their potato over the finish line wins.

Beginning on March 21, Iranians celebrate the twelve day festival of No-ruz (Noh-rooz). This Muslim festival is symbolic of new life and growth, and the goodness of Allah. The festival table is spread with seven foods, all beginning with the letter 's', plus symbolic items. There is a legend that the earth trembles as the new year begins, so an egg is placed on a mirror and when cannons are shot, the egg trembles. Gardens of Adonis are grown with quick-growing seeds such as lentils and wheat. Practice earthquake safety and plan what emergency supplies families should have on hand for when the big one hits.

Plant some seeds and watch them grow, or plant some seedlings or plants. You could do some beautification at a local park or open space, or even join an effort to rid an area of non-native plants.

Passover is celebrated, which commemorates the Israelites' departure from Egypt and the first barley harvest. This is a family feast of Thanksgiving and freedom, with unleavened bread and many other traditional foods. Sample some of these foods and learn about the traditions.

Talk about good outdoor manners and conservation skills. Know how to protect and appreciate the natural world.

Take part in a conservation service project, such as planting seedlings on a hillside to prevent erosion, repair trails, clean fire circles at a park, organizing a newspaper or aluminum can

recycling project at the girls' school. Trim bushes to keep a path open, adopt a highway, take down old yard sale signs or flyers posted in the neighborhood. The possibilities are endless!

Go on a Nature Scavenger Hunt. Have the girls find (but not pick - just show to somebody else!) a smooth edged leaf, a Y shaped twig, something alive, a smooth rock, a pebble smaller than a pea, a pebble as big as a grain of rice, something that looks like something else, something prickly, somebody's food, dark green and a light green leaf, a pinch of dust, a pretty thing besides a flower, something with more than four legs, something you can pick things up with, a leaf with symmetrical veins, something dead, something yucky, something bumpy, a seed that travels by wind, something soft, something furry, etc. etc. etc.

Hold a "Baby Shower" to benefit babies born to mothers in shelters or jail.

"Adopt" a grandparent at an elder care home.

Make and fly a kite.

Go on a train ride, a bus, ride, or ride BART.

APRIL

Have a 'Silly Party' to celebrate April Fools Day. Call the girls prior to the party and tell them to wear whatever they have on at that moment (a 'come as you are' idea.) Have everyone bring something 'different' to share as the food part of the party. Then, exchange presents - a totally useless/tacky item from around the house, wrapped beautifully. Play goofy games and sing silly songs.

Take a walk and notice all the spring-time changes. Don't forget to take a trash bag with you to pick up any trash you find along the way.

Learn about Flag Etiquette - the proper way to display, fold, and salute the flag. Practice having a flag ceremony. If possible, perform a flag ceremony at your local city council meeting, school board meeting, or other community event. Learn about the history of the flag.

Celebrate Earth Day. Talk about recycling, cutting up six-pack rings, waste from fast food, etc. Bury different waste products (lettuce, apple, plastic, paper, Styrofoam). Plan to dig them up in six weeks, and again in six months.

Make recycled paper. Tear up paper and put in water in a bowl to soften. (You can add a small amount of colored paper to color your finished product. Put softened paper in blender, pour out onto open section of newspaper. Put a piece of window screen over it and squeeze out excess water with a board. Let dry for several hours.

Make invitations to Court of Awards ceremony on the recycled paper.

Make “Food Chains” - paper chains starting with one thing and each ring is something that eats that thing. Play some nature games.

Make travel sit-upons for bringing to Camporee. Decorate a square of fabric with markers, laminate with clear contact paper. The sit-upon can be folded and carried in a pocket.

Have a troop overnight in the backyard.

Walk to a nearby park and have the girls make a map of the park. Have each girl hide a piece of candy and mark the spot on her map with an ‘X’. Let the girls swap maps and find her ‘treasure’.

Practice setting up a tent and rolling a sleeping bag. Have a relay race rolling sleeping bags. Play ‘Kim’s Game’ with camping equipment: have a bunch of camping equipment and let the girls look at it. After a couple of minutes, cover all the items and have the girls write down as many things as they can remember. Talk about the uses of each item. Have the girls brainstorm a list of personal equipment needed to take camping. Brainstorm a list of troop and cooking equipment needed. Plan menus and prepare shopping lists.

Talk about fire safety and practice fire building skills with edible fires. Have the girls tie back hair and check for clothing that may dangle into the fire. Give out paper napkins (fire circle) and clear with fork (rake). Make woodpile by stacking wood according to size (coconut-tinder, pretzels-kindling, and tootsie rolls-fuel.) Fill cup with beverage (water bucket) and have a straw (poker.) Check for wind direction (back should be to wind.) Add two “mini-handfuls” of coconut-tinder. Make an ‘A’ with kindling in center of fire circle. Place red-hot (firestarter) under top bar of ‘A’. Put candy corn (match) on firestarter to light fire. Add more candy corn (flames) and add more kindling and tootsie rolls (fuel.) Put flames out by sprinkling from fire bucket (sip.) Eat everything so you leave a clean fire circle.

Practice fire escape routes in your troop meeting place , home and school. Practice using alternate escape routes, in case exit is blocked. Know first aid for burns - submerge burned area in cool water. NEVER use butter or grease on burns. Cover the blister with sterile gauze. Do NOT break the blister. SMOTHER the flames by rolling person in the dirt or covering with a blanket if clothing catches fire.

Collect small flowers and press them between heavy books. At your next meeting, make bookmarks for Mother’s Day. Cut two pieces of clear contact paper, arrange pressed flowers with thin ribbon around the edges. Punch hole with paper punch and string with additional thin ribbon. Trim contact paper with pinking shears.

Make wrapping paper with tiny potato prints to wrap Mother’s Day and Father’s Day gifts with.

April 6 is North Pole Day, a celebration of Arctic and Antarctic wilderness. Do some activities with magnets, discovering polarity. Learn how to use a compass. There are lots of compass games available.

April 7 is World Health Day. Is there a service project your troop could become involved with that promotes good health? Perhaps you could hold a drive to collect hygiene products to send to people in need. Tuck toiletries such as soaps, shampoos, razors, toothbrushes, tooth paste, face cloths, etc. into a pair of new socks and tie with a ribbon. Perhaps you could even include gift certificates for fast food chains as well. Donate to a homeless shelter.

April 14 is National Dolphin Day, in remembrance of all sea creatures. Take part in a beach clean-up or learn about sea creatures. Eat goldfish crackers and do a craft with fish. Make fish prints by painting a fish and pressing it onto paper. If you use pretty paper, these can be strangely beautiful. Try mixing complimentary colors a little bit, like yellow and red or blue and green.

Celebrate Spring! Decorate a pot with rubberstamps or paint and plant a pretty flower.

fold the paper from short side to short side. Take a pipe cleaner and wrap it around the middle of the flower. Carefully open up each individual piece of paper and watch the flower bloom! If you want to get fancy, you can cut the ends of the paper after it is folded in a semi-circle, a point, or fringe for a carnation effect.

Make butterflies with tissue paper twisted in the middle with a pipe cleaner or an old-fashioned clothespin.

Have a Mother/Daughter game day at a local park. You could have teams of Moms and girls taking part in different activities like three-legged races, egg toss, etc.

Learn how to do Morse code or semaphore code. The Association has semaphore flags to borrow.

Check out one of the activity boxes from Council "The Case of Juliette Low's Missing Diary." This is good fun - a who-dunnit with role playing, science experiments, mystery and intrigue. There is a little bit of preparation involved, so plan ahead.

Collect toys or books for a children's shelter. Or, put together a "Party in a Box" with non-perishable snacks and bag drinks, decorations and party bags, as well as a birthday gift for that child. Also include directions for several party games.

Initiate a book swap. Check out the Patch programs from Council on literacy.

Learn some simple facts about women scientists. Then put the name of one scientist on the back of each girl and let her go ask yes/no questions to figure out who she is. Only one question asked of each person!



Celebrate Cinco de Mayo. Have a piñata.- Make tortillas. Mix approximately 2 teaspoons of Masa Harina with about 2 teaspoons water in a ziploc bag. When it is well mixed, make patties and cook on a griddle.

Plan menus for Camporee and make Kaper Charts.

Go shopping for Camporee food according to the menus and shopping lists prepared by the girls.

Make SWAPS for Camporee if that is being planned this year. SWAPS are small items that can be pinned to a hat. Each girl should make about 10 or 12 to share. Call a team member to get ideas for fun, easy, and inexpensive items to make.

Have balloon rocket races and make different kinds of gliders. Cut a piece of yarn or string to about 6 feet in length. Insert the string through a drinking straw. Attach ends of string to stable objects such as chair backs, etc. Push straw to one end of the string. Roll a small piece of masking tape, sticky side out. Attach one side of tape to the straw. Have a girl blow up a balloon. While holding the closed end, have the girl attach the balloon to the tape with the open end toward her. She then lets go the the end and the other end will propel itself to the end of the straw.

Make Air pictures. Place a small amount of poster paint on a piece of paper and blow the paint with a drinking straw.

Practice singing camp songs.

Go to Camporee! Camping is a highlight for the girls, and there is no easier way for the leaders to do it than to attend Camporee. Don't forget that at least one adult must attend Outdoor Training.

Walk to a local park and play some rowdy outdoor games. Or, go to where there is a par course and do those activities. Get silly and loud.

Make your own puzzles by drawing a picture on a piece of poster board. Cut it up into small shapes (specify the number of pieces based on age and ability.) Trade puzzles and try to put them back together.

Have a Bike Rally. You might be able to arrange for the Juvenile Officer from your local police department to come and talk to the girls about the rules of the road and safety rules. The girls would also have a chance to license their bikes. Decorate the bikes with crepe paper streamers. Set up some cones to ride in and out of. Practice hand signals.

Plan a Court of Awards ceremony and some entertainment. Remember that the ceremony doesn't have to be fancy or elaborate. The most meaningful ceremonies are planned by the girls!

May 1 is May Day in England. Celebrate with any kind of flower craft or activity, or have a maypole.

Memorial Day is celebrated in May. Take part in decorating the graves with flags at the National Cemetery.

Spin Yarns. Take pieces of yarn in various colors and lengths. Tie the pieces together and roll into a ball. Let each girl tell a story as she unwinds the ball until she reaches a knot. Hand the ball to the next girl and let her continue the story.

Make 'Me Dolls' . Outline girl on a doubled piece of butcher paper. Cut out both pieces of paper together. Color facial features, hair etc. or make yarn hair. Stuff with balls of newspaper and staple around edges. Depending on the age of the girls, they may need quite a bit of help getting the stuffing and stapling done. Have the girls dress their doll in their favorite outfit and have a fashion show. Invite the parents, and serve refreshments.

A simpler project would be to make a "Paper Doll Autobiography". Cut out doll shaped pieces of heavy construction paper. Have the girls cut out pictures from magazines and glue them onto the poster. Let each girl have a chance to share what she chose to include and why.

Try making a color wheel. Let the girls experiment with mixing different colors of paint. Or, make Rainbow Stew. Mix 1/3 cup sugar and 1 cup cornstarch. Add 4 cups cold water. Heat until it begins to thicken, stirring constantly. Cool. Divide the mixture into three containers and add food coloring to each container in the primary colors. Add three heaping tablespoons of each color to a heavy-duty sealable bag. Seal the bag and tape it closed. Have each girl knead the bag, mixing the colors into a rainbow stew. Hang the finished stew on a wire stretched over the window so everyone can enjoy the creations.

Be a clown. Create clown costumes, paint faces, practice mime, develop a clown walk try juggling, or group juggling (all girls stand in a circle. A sock ball is thrown from one person to another across the circle in the same order every time. Once the ball is going smoothly, add more balls in the same order until the group has several going smoothly.) Make up clown routines.

Learn about flower arranging and have a troop display for parents or another troop.

Learn some basic needlework, knitting, or crocheting and do a project.

Make a troop banner with girls' handprints and signatures. Bring to Camporee.

Blow Bubbles! Just use the store-bought kind or make your own: 3 tbsp. glycerin, 3 tbsp. Dawn liquid dishwashing soap, 1 cup warm water, a pinch of sugar. Mix with egg beater. Use the

store bubble wands or make some with thin wire. Try differently shaped wands. Or cut slits about 1/2" long into the end of a drinking straw.

Learn how to take a pulse. Do some experiments with heart rate, such as taking a pulse before and after jumping up and down for two minutes. If you wrap a goldfish very carefully in a wet cotton ball, you can see the blood circulating through the tail with a microscope. Be sure to only do this for very short periods at a time!

Have a magic show! There are books at the library or check out the kids' magic kits at toy stores. Let each girl perform a trick, and take your show on the road to a preschool, a children's hospital or a children's shelter.

Make bird feeders. Roll a pinecone in peanut butter and then bird seed and hang in a tree. Or, try building a wooden house. There are lots of kits available - the Girl Scout Shop has them available, or check out the Boy Scout Shop (check the phone book for the one nearest you.)

Make candles. You can make sand candles by making a depression in wet sand, ice candles by pouring in wax into a small milk carton and adding ice cubes in with the wax, beeswax candles, or tie wicks to a stick and repeatedly dip into the melted wax. (You can tie several wicks to one stick.) Keep in mind that it takes a long time to melt wax! Be careful! Wax can get very hot and can burn easily. When you melt the wax, make sure you use a double boiler or a water bath. Wax placed in a container right over the heat can be very unstable and dangerous.

JUNE

Have an Outdoor Cook-out. Perhaps it could be at a local park, and families could be invited to attend after the girls have prepared the food.

Go swimming, or have a big water fight at a park. Visit an aquatic center or community pool. We have several in our area: San Bruno Pool, Oceana Pool in Pacifica, Hayward Plunge, Arroyo Swim Center in San Lorenzo, Orange Swim Center in SSF, Wallin Dive Center in Redwood City.

Make firestarters for Father's Day gifts. Fill empty egg cartons with sawdust, pour melted wax over to bind.

Have a Court of Awards ceremony. Invite your families. Have a Pot-Luck dinner or dessert.

Have a backwards meeting. Have everybody dress in backwards clothes. Do everything in the opposite order that you usually do them.

Make a solar cooker. You can make three different kinds and have a marshmallow-roasting contest to see which one works fastest. For the first one, all you need to do is to line the inside of a large mixing bowl with aluminum foil, shiny-side up. You may want to try two or three bowls to see which works best. For the second cooker, you need a piece of cardboard thin enough to bend. (The backing of a legal pad works well.) Cover one side of the cardboard with aluminum foil, shiny-side up. Then bend the cardboard into a semi-circle, with the foil on the inside of the curve. Use string to tie the cardboard in this position. This is easier to do if you wrap the string around twice and tie the knot in back. Solar cooker No. 3 is made with an empty cylindrical oatmeal box. Cut a long window in the side of the box. Line the inside with aluminum foil, shiny-side out. Now it's cook-out time! It is important to remind the girls of these rules: Never look directly into the sun. Be careful with the concentrated spots of sunlight your solar cooker will gather. It can burn your skin! Also, don't look directly at any glaring or bright spot on your solar cooker. Set your three cookers in a bright sunny spot. Try to aim them so that the sun is shining directly on the foil. Put a marshmallow on the end of a long stick, and the race is on! The trick to toasting the marshmallows is to find out where the reflected sun's rays are criss-crossing. For each cooker, this spot will be in a different place.

Make a sculpture: Set a plastic bag in a bowl. Pour 1 cup of water in the bag. Slowly sprinkle 2 1/2 cups of Plaster of Paris into the water. Hold the top of the bag closed with one of your hands. Squish the bag with your other hand until all the lumps of Plaster of Paris are mixed with water. Squeeze out all the air in the bag. Use a twist tie to close the bag. Put the bag on a smooth, flat surface. The mixture will look runny and won't hold a shape. Suddenly, it will begin to harden and feel warm. Quickly form your sculpture. Pull the mixture into shapes. Or, press the bag around a bowl or other object to shape the mixture. As you work, keep pulling the plastic bag up, so it won't get stuck in the plaster. Let your finished sculpture dry for 30 minutes. Then carefully cut the plastic bag. Strip it away from your sculpture. Use a plastic knife to draw criss-cross lines or other designs on your sculpture. After 24 hours, you can decorate your sculpture. If you want, you can smooth it with fine sandpaper.

Go to a local pond and watch the surface carefully. You may see insects on the surface or around plants on the water's edge. Sweep a pond net quickly just under the surface of the water and lift it up. Empty into a tray and watch carefully. After awhile, you may see some movement. Use a magnifying glass to examine the life and record the different types of creatures. Be sure to return the creatures to the pond as soon as possible. Take plaster casts of any animal prints you may see at the water's edge. Fill small jars with half sand and half water from the water's edge. Leave 1/2" of air space at the top. Give the jars to the girls to shake. Watch the sand as it settles. Compare the various jars of sand to see if they are the same or different. Compare sand collected in different locations. Try various types of jars. Add objects to the sand to change the pattern.

Try some stargazing.

Learn about clouds. Go outside, lay on your back and study cloud formations. Use your imagination and make up stories to fit the shapes of different clouds.

Have a “movie appreciation sleep-over”. Be sure to include old and new, musicals, comedies, mysteries, drama, etc. Be movie critics. Don’t forget lots of popcorn!

Practice photography. Let the girls use the disposable cameras and take pictures of nature. Arrange into scrapbooks. Before beginning, have someone who is a photographer (professional or hobbyist) talk with the girls about composition, distance, light, etc.

Make pinhole cameras and take some pictures.

Make a bug zoo. Needed are two 6 oz. tuna or cat food cans, a piece of 6”x12” piece of screen wire (like window screen), three round head brass paper fasteners, a stick or branch, plaster of Paris and a pop bottle cap. Roll the screen wire into a tube as big around as the inside of the can. Fasten screen together with paper fasteners : one in the middle, and the others equidistant from the edge to the middle. Mix enough plaster to fill the can 3/4 full, then press the screen down into the wet plaster. While the plaster is still wet, press a small stick or branch and the bottle cap (open side up for water) into the plaster. The lid (second can) sets on top so it can be easily removed and replaced for entrance and exit of the critters. Remind the girls that when they capture an insect alive and keep it for observation, they must remember to feed it and give it water. After a little while, it should be released.

Make tin can ice cream. Place a 3 3/4 oz. pkg. **instant** pudding mix (any flavor - this will be the flavor ice cream you get!) and two 6 oz. cans evaporated milk in a one pound coffee can. Stir well. Add enough regular milk to fill can 3/4 full, mix well. Cover with lid and tape securely with duct tape. Place one pound can in a three pound can. Add layers of crushed ice and rock salt, making sure to surround smaller can with ice and salt on all sides. Put lid on larger can. Tape securely. Form two lines and roll the can back and forth on table or ground for fifteen or twenty minutes. Carefully un-tape large can and remove small can. Be sure to wipe off all salt before removing lid. If ice cream is not set, push down from sides, re-tape and place back in large can with ice and salt for five more minutes. One makes enough for 5-6 girls. Have an ice-cream eating contest. Tie spoons together with a 6” piece of string. Partners have to eat together. First team done wins!

Do some leaf prints. For a shirt, paint leaves with acrylic paint and gently press onto shirt. Lift off gently. Acrylic paint will not wash out of clothing, so be careful!

Have a roller skating/blading party. Either go to a rink or use a playground.

Shari Teresi