



Program Aide Award

Leadership looks different for every person, and in this award, you'll find out what it looks like for you. As a Program Aide, you'll turn some of your favorite activities into fun experiences for younger kids. In doing so, you'll help build their confidence as well as your own. These leadership skills will open doors everywhere—in school, future jobs, and any role you take on. Get ready to see what you can do!

Steps

1. Get to know your group
2. Prepare to lead
3. Plan and lead one activity
4. Reflect and prepare
5. Lead a full meeting

Purpose

When I've earned this award, I'll have planned and led multiple activities for a group of younger kids.

Getting Started

This award involves working with younger Girl Scouts (Daisies, Brownies, or Juniors) or another youth group. Ask a coach or a troop, camp, or religious leader to connect you with younger Girl Scouts or other youth. You might join troop meetings, camp sessions, or any other local opportunities. You can earn this award on your own, or with a group of Cadettes.

Use this guide to help you earn your award. After each step, use the Program Aide Plan template to capture your thoughts. You can write, sketch, take photos, or share your thoughts with someone you trust—whatever works for you!



Explore leadership and take the first big step toward the Silver Award. This award stands strong on its own—and it's a prerequisite for Silver!



Meeting tools and additional resources for leaders can be found within the Volunteer Toolkit on mygs.org.

Step 1: Get to know your group

Join in and explore how the group works.

There are many ways to be a leader, and in this step, you'll start thinking about the kind of leader you want to be. As you get to know the kids you'll be working with, see how the group's leader acts as a role model to them and think about ways to be a role model yourself.

To get started, join in the activities as a group member. This may be your very first time meeting the group, and that's okay!

In this step:

- 1. Learn about the group members.** Ask everyone's first names and get to know their personalities. Observe their behaviors, friendships, and interests. Notice what they share about themselves with the group and which activities seem to excite (and which ones seem to bore) them.
- 2. Observe how the meeting is organized.** Pay attention to details like the number of activities, whether there's an introduction or reflection, and how the group moves through the different parts of the meeting.
- 3. Explore what type of leader you want to be.** When you're participating, notice how the group members work together and how you can be a good group member and leader. You might volunteer to pass out supplies or invite someone to be your partner during an activity if they seem left out. Pay attention to the leader and what they do to support the group. What leadership qualities do you see in them? Which ones would you like to develop in yourself?



How Do You Like to Lead?

What makes a leader? Leaders might be good at:

- Breaking complicated tasks into simple steps
- Making everyone feel part of the group
- Coming up with creative fixes to challenges
- Staying calm when plans need to change
- Giving everyone the chance to participate
- _____
(another talent you've noticed)
- _____
(another talent you've noticed)

Circle the talents you feel apply to you and add your own ideas. These are your natural leadership strengths! What new leadership skills would you like to develop?

Program Aide Plan

*As you're filling out this worksheet, remember to keep your comments constructive!
The purpose of reflection is to learn and grow.*

Step 1: Get to know your group

Join in and explore how the group works.

While you participate, notice...

- When group members are most and least engaged
- Each group member's personality
- How the meeting moves from activity to activity

Spot moments of leadership:

- How instructions are shared
- How each person is included
- When and how support is given
- How problems are solved
- Anything else that helps the group!

Meeting notes:

Group members: Who's in the group? What interests them? How do they work together?

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Meeting flow: How was the meeting organized? What activities did you do?
Which activity most engaged the group?

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Leadership moments: How does the leader lead?
What did you do to help? What else can you do?

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Step 2: Prepare to lead

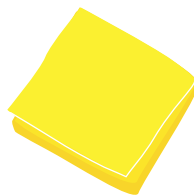
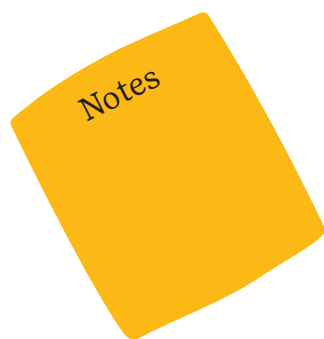
Assist the leader with a meeting.

Have you ever heard of the **Girl Scout Leadership Experience**, or GSLE? The GSLE is the foundation for everything you've done and learned in Girl Scouting. It includes three core processes—girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning—and it's a great way to teach others, whether they're Girl Scouts or not. Keep these three ideas in mind as you're assisting the leader in your second meeting.

- **Learning by doing:** Hands-on activities are more fun and help kids stay engaged, learning as they go.
- **Cooperative learning:** When groups learn together, they find out how to use respect, teamwork, and collaboration along the way.
- **Girl-led:** Kids follow their own lead, in a way that's adjusted for their age, which helps them build confidence. Kindergartners or first graders might choose from a few activity options; second or third graders might suggest new ideas or larger projects.

In this step:

- 1. Talk to the group's leader before the meeting.** Explore the topic of leadership. If you're working with a Girl Scout troop, ask the leader how they use the three processes of the GSLE. Ask any other questions you have about leading the group. Then go over the setup time, meeting agenda, what your role will be, and how to prepare.
- 2. Prepare for the meeting.** Gather any materials you've been asked to bring. Then think about how else you can prepare. Do you need to practice any songs or games or review activity sheets? What will you do if you're nervous or need help? How will you stay organized?
- 3. Assist with the meeting.** Stick to the plans you made with the group's leader and be prepared to adjust as you go. Things rarely go exactly as planned, especially when you're working with young kids, and that's totally fine! You'll all be learning by doing.



Step 3: Plan and lead one activity

Share what you love with the group.

Now that you've been part of and assisted the group, you have a better idea of what everyone is like and what they might find engaging. With input from the group's leader, choose an activity that you think will be fun and engaging. Then put your leadership skills to work guiding the group through it.

In this step:

- 1. Choose what activity to lead.** This is where your interests and talents come into play! Pick something you love and design an activity that gets your group excited about it, too. Are you a science whiz? Create a cool experiment. An artist? Design a creative project. An outdoor fan? Plan a nature adventure. Into tech? Share a digital skill. Full of energy? Lead a dance or sports activity.
- 2. Prepare for the meeting.** Once you've decided on an activity, review your idea with the group's leader and brainstorm ideas for how you'll lead the group. Create an activity plan by breaking instructions into clear steps, as well as a backup plan in case your activity doesn't work out. As a leader, you'll need to give clear instructions and be ready to answer questions. Gather materials (with some extras!) and practice with friends and family. Make sure to also prepare for any other parts of the meeting you might be helping with.
- 3. Lead the activity.** Nervous about leading? That's okay! Take three deep breaths and remember all you've observed and learned so far. Put your plans and notes where you can use them if needed. Remember: you've got this! Success isn't about being perfect—it's about helping everyone feel like they belong.



Program Aide Plan

Step 3: Plan and lead one activity

Share what you love with the group.

Activity:

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Materials needed:

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-
-
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Backup activity ideas

If someone finds the activity too hard:

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If someone finds it too easy:

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Steps:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.

Teaching ideas

Girl-led:

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Learning by doing:

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Cooperative learning:

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Meeting notes:

Make general notes about anything you noticed. What went well? How did you handle any challenges? What ideas do you have for the next meeting?

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Step 4: Reflect and prepare

Use what you've learned to get ready.

You've led a group of younger kids through an activity—that's quite an accomplishment! Use that experience as you prepare to lead a full meeting in the next step. Think about how you'll guide your group to learn new skills by working together.

In this step:

- 1. Reflect on your experience.** Now that you've led an activity, think about what you learned as you prepare a full meeting. You know your group pretty well now—think about how you'll keep them engaged and feeling included.
- 2. Choose a focus and goal(s) for the meeting.** What skills would you like to share with the group? How can you

make sure everyone has fun while they're learning? The group leader might want to help you plan the meeting and set goals. You might focus the meeting on a badge you loved as a younger Girl Scout, a project that helps your community, or other ways to share a topic or interest you enjoy.

- 3. Create your meeting agenda.** Brainstorm activities that will help the group reach your goal(s) and use the activities to create your session agenda. Start with a quick activity that grabs attention and move into an opening moment where you explain what's to come. Mix active and quiet moments and include time to share thoughts. Create smooth transitions between activities and end with time for reflection.



Program Aide Plan

Step 4: Reflect and prepare

Use what you've learned to get ready.

Meeting focus:

Meeting goal(s):

Activity brainstorm: What activities would help the group reach the goal(s)?

Meeting agenda:

Start time	End time	Activity	Materials
		Opening activity:	
		Main activity:	
		Main activity:	
		Main activity:	
		Closing reflection:	

Girl Scout Leadership Experience: *How will you incorporate the three processes of the GSLE?*

Other success strategies: *What will you do if something unexpected happens, for example if the group is distracted or an activity runs short?*

Step 5: Lead a full meeting

Share what you love with the group.

You got some great leadership practice during step 3. Your confidence and skills are growing! Now you're ready to lead an entire meeting using everything you know about your group and yourself as a leader.

In this step:

- 1. Share your agenda.** Talk with the group's leader for their input and approval. They can share their valuable experience and help you streamline your plan.
- 2. Lead the meeting.** Use all you've learned and prepared to lead the session. Set up the space early so everything is organized and ready. Keep directions short and clear. Get everyone involved. And remember to stay flexible—sometimes the best moments aren't planned!
- 3. Reflect as a group.** When the meeting's activities are complete, reflect as a group on the experience. Talk about what you've all learned and how you'll continue to use those skills.

Reflect and Grow

You've discovered so much about leadership while helping others grow! Take a moment to think about your experience and reflect upon...

- **What worked:** What helped everyone stay involved? How did you encourage quieter members to join in?
- **What challenged you:** How did you handle unexpected moments? How did you adjust when something wasn't working?
- **What's different:** What surprised you about being a leader? What new strengths did you discover?
- **What's next:** How will you use these leadership skills next? What leadership skills do you want to develop further?



Keep Going!

Now that you've earned this award, you can:

- Keep practicing leadership with other **Leadership Awards**
- Become a **Silver Award Girl Scout**

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Program Aide Plan

Step 5: Lead a full meeting

Put everything you've discovered into action!

Tips for leading a meeting:

- **Stay calm.** You might feel nervous, and that's okay! Take a deep breath and don't be afraid to ask the group leader for help.
- **Let everyone share their ideas.** Support the group in brainstorming on their own, in pairs, in small groups, and together as one large group. Make sure everyone has the chance to provide input on any decisions.
- **Consider your group members' strengths and knowledge.** Some may need more help in understanding what to do, while others may be able to guide themselves and even help their peers.
- **Encourage the group to reflect.** When they think about what they've experienced, the group understands what they've learned and how they might use it in the future.
- **Have fun with it!** Get involved, get creative, and get silly. Encourage the group to work together, think outside the box, and have fun no matter what you're doing.

Meeting notes:

Make general notes about your experience. What surprised you? What did you learn? Draw, write, or add photos of your favorite moments as a Program Aide.



A large, empty grid of small dots for taking notes, enclosed within a red oval border. The grid is intended for the user to write or draw their meeting notes.

Reflect & Grow

Take a moment to think about your experience and reflect on...



What worked?

Grid of dots for writing.



What challenged you?

Grid of dots for writing.



What's different?



Grid of dots for writing.

What's next?



Grid of dots for writing.