



Daisy / Brownie / Junior Level Activity Facilitation Guide: ***Grow a Green Thumb!***

From the Daisy “Use Resources Wisely” Petal Badge, Brownie “Household Elf” Badge, and Junior “Gardener” badge

STRUCTURE AND TIME:

This activity is designed to be presented as a **20-30 minute “mini troop meeting”**. Adaptations at the end of this document show how to use this same content at a “walk-by” table.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Participants in this activity may not have any knowledge of Girl Scouts. Throughout the activity, focus on fun and friendship (K-1), trying new things (Gr 2-3), and growing independence (Gr 4-5). Think about the words you’re using to ensure that everyone feels welcome and included.

This activity is written to be accessible for both current and potential Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors although throughout participants are referred to as Girl Scouts

MATERIALS:

- Printout of the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- A bucket of plain soil; and a bucket of composted soil
- Natural scraps that could be used as examples of compost (vegetable peelings, fruit, leaves, sticks, etc.)
- Paper cups, two per participant
- Coriander seeds (or any seed packet); 6-8 seeds per participant
- Water-filled spray bottle
- Ingredients for Pest Spray
 - Spray bottle
 - 1 cup dish soap
 - 1 cup vegetable oil
 - ¼ cup baking soda

- ½ cup skim milk
- 1 tablespoon of water
- Pest Spray recipe copied on ¼-page sheets of paper (one per participant)
- Copies of the Daisy Handbook, Brownie Household Elf Badge Booklet, Junior Gardener Badge Booklet, and associated badges

ARRIVAL:

Ask Girl Scouts who arrive early to help you unpack and set up any snacks and activity materials for later.

If participants are non-members, welcome families and answer any general questions about Girl Scouts. Explain that in Girl Scouts, girls help to set up and clean up after every meeting.

WARM-UP:

As participants arrive, ask them to join age-based groups (K-1, Grades 2-3, Grades 4-5). Give each group a piece of paper with a level-appropriate phrase: “Daisies: Fun and Friendship”, “Brownies: Try and Explore”, and “Juniors: Discover and Lead”. Challenge each group to come up with what those words mean to them and share two or three different activities that the words inspire. As new people arrive, ask the girls to introduce themselves and explain the activity to the newcomers. Once everyone has arrived, come together and ask each group to share their definition and activity ideas. Explain that these are all things that Girl Scouts can do.

OPENING CEREMONY:

Gather the group in a Friendship Circle. Teach the Girl Scout sign and have them say the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law together. Display a printed copy so that participants new to Girl Scouts can read along.

EXPLAIN (in your own words):

Earth is our home. If we all work together, we can take care of our planet! Earth only has limited natural resources—like trees and water—so it’s important not to use too much and to take care of what we have. In this activity, we’re going to plant some seeds and learn how to take care of plants using environment-friendly products.

ASK:

What do plants need to be healthy? Plants need the right amount of sunlight, soil, and water. *Does every plant need the same amount of sun, soil, and water?* Nope. Every plant needs a different mix of sun, soil, and water – some like just a little light, and some need almost no water!

SHARE (in your own words):

Before you plant seeds, do some research! If you're buying seeds, the back of the seed packet is full of information. If you're using seeds from food scraps or spices, you can go online with a parent or other adult to find out what keeps different plants happy and healthy. We're going to explore different kinds of soil, pest control, and seeds and see what we can grow!

ACTIVITY: Plant seeds in different kinds of soil and learn to make a chemical-free plant spray.

- 1) **Learn about composting.** Composting is one way you can throw away less trash. Compost is made from mixing leftovers in nature with soil. These leftovers are things like fallen leaves, sticks, fruit and vegetable peels, and eggshells. Compost gives the soil more nutrients and helps plants grow stronger.
- 2) **Dig into soil.** Farmers and gardeners mix compost with dirt to help new plants grow. Give participants two paper cups and ask them to fill ONE cup 3/4-full with compost soil. Fill the SECOND cup 3/4-full of plain soil. Encourage everyone to feel and smell the compost soil, making note of how it is the same or different than plain soil. Label the two cups "compost" and "plain soil".
- 3) **Study some seeds.** Show seeds from a variety of household scraps (i.e., dry coriander seeds, pepper seeds). Explain that you can grow food out of scraps – as long as you dry out the seeds first.
- 4) **Plant seeds.** Guide participants as they plant the same number of coriander seeds in each cup. Use a water-filled spray bottle to soak the soil. Ask: *Which plant do you think will grow best and why?* Encourage them to keep their plants watered and see what happens over the next week!
- 5) **Make a pest-control spray.** Guide the group in making a chemical-free plant spray by putting 1 cup dish soap, 1 cup vegetable oil, 1/4 cup baking soda, 1/2 cup skim milk, and 1 tablespoon of water into a plastic spray bottle. Explain that the mixture includes things that insects don't like, so spraying it on plants will safely keep bugs away. Give a copy of the recipe to each participant so they can try it at home.

CLOSING:

Form a Friendship Circle. Congratulate everyone on participating in this activity. Pass around copies of the Daisy Handbook, Brownie Household Elf Badge Booklet, and Junior Gardener Booklets and the associated badges. Ask, what part of today's meeting inspired you? What was the most fun? *Give all participants the opportunity to share their thoughts about the activities.*

Then, teach them the Make New Friends song to end their time together. If there are meeting items to gather or areas to straighten up, ask everyone to choose a song and challenge them to tidy everything up before the song ends!

ADAPTATION FOR “WALK-BY” EVENTS:

Set up three stations on a long table that visitors can explore on their own. One or two recruiters can guide visitors through the activities.

- 1) **Compost soil vs “plain” soil:** Display a sign that asks visitors to fill (and label) one cup $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way with plain soil and one with compost soil. Be prepared to explain what compost is.
- 2) **Plant and water:** Display a sign that asks visitors to plant the same number of seeds in each cup and water their soil. Encourage them to guess which plant will grow best and why!
- 3) **Give copies of the natural pest-control spray recipe:** Share the recipe for the chemical-free plant spray described above for visitors to try at home. ($\frac{1}{4}$ -sized pieces of paper)

Display copies of the Daisy Handbook, Brownie Household Elf Badge Booklet, and Junior Gardener Booklets; and associated badges.

These activities can also be found in the Daisy “Use Resources Wisely” petal, the Brownie “Household Elf”, and the Junior “Gardener” meeting plans in the Volunteer Toolkit. Visit the Volunteer Toolkit to see how to earn the complete badge.