

# Reflection

## *Basics and Benefits*

Have you ever talked through a problem with a friend? Do you keep a journal? Do you paint, play music, or do some other type of art to express your feelings? When you've made a mistake, do you try to figure out your error so that you can act differently next time?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, then you've reflected! Reflection offers us the opportunity to think about how something affected or influenced us. This process gives us information about ourselves and how we interact with the world. With this new knowledge, we're able to make decisions and choices based on experience and wisdom gained through both successes and failures.

During troop meetings, we ask girls to reflect as part of the **learning by doing** process. This action and reflection cycle gives girls a chance to not only gain new skills but also to develop an understanding of how and why those skills are useful and/or meaningful to them. For example, a Brownie learns the **action** of how to paint while completing the activities for the Painting badge, and she gains the insight that painting helps her express what she can't say with words during **reflection**, when asked, "How does painting make you feel?" by her girl program mentor.

Reflection is just as important for you! You're putting a lot of effort and care into providing a safe, fun space for girls to learn new skills, build friendships, and grow in ways they never imagined! Sometimes, you might wonder, "Am I on the right track? Am I doing this right?" Reflection will help you see the answers to those questions. By taking just 5-15 minutes after each troop meeting to jot down some thoughts, you'll gain understanding into what the girls enjoy, where they'd like to go next, how to make sure activities run more smoothly, where you might need additional volunteer help, and more. In short, taking time to reflect saves you time in the long run, since it helps you address the troop's needs much more quickly. (It also gives you a chance to appreciate your own effort and celebrate the fun you had during the meeting, which is always important!)

Over the next couple of pages, you'll find resources for reflection for both girls (tip sheet) and volunteers (worksheet). These are a great place to begin. Chances are, the girls and you will find your own favorite reflective practices over time!

# Reflecting with Your Troop

Make every meeting count

While we often think of reflection as an activity that occurs at the end of a troop meeting, reflection can happen anytime! For example, if a Junior correctly identifies the ‘guilty’ suspect while working on her Detective badge, you might ask, “What made you choose that person?” This type of question gives her the chance to think about how she knows what she knows: that’s reflection! So, keep engaging with the girls and asking those great questions! Check out the activities below for additional, intentional reflection methods.

## Reflection Activities

**Highs and Lows.** This method is very simple and works with all ages. Girls state the worst of their day/meeting first and then discuss their favorite part of the day/meeting second.

**Rose, Bud, Thorn.** This is a variation of highs and lows. Rose is a high. Thorn is a low. Buds are something the person is looking forward to. This is best used with Juniors and older.

**Popsicle sticks.** This method involves some preparation. Gather some popsicle sticks and on each stick write a question. The girls can then each pull out a popsicle stick and take a turn to answer the question written on it. Questions might include, “How did today make you feel,” “What part of today made you happy,” and “What did you learn today?”

**Emotion Cards.** This method involves some preparation. Print out or design cards that have different faces on them. Each face should show a different labeled emotion: happy, sad, excited, proud, frustrated, satisfied etc. Each girl takes a turn to pick a face that reflects how today made her feel and explain why.

**Object or Animal Cards.** This method is similar to emotion cards, except the cards can have objects like a key or a sunset, or animals like a lizard and a koala. Each girl picks a card that relates to her day and explains why she chose that card. For example, “I chose the monkey because monkeys like to play around and we got to play a lot today and I liked that.”

These activities are thought-provoking and encourage the girls to process all that has occurred. Girls leave the meeting knowing what they learned and realizing what they are proud of. Through reflection, girls learn to identify emotions and individual thoughts.

You can even use these activities to kick off your meeting! For example, ask the girls, “What’s the best thing that has happened to you since the last Girl Scout meeting?” or “Is there something you are looking forward to doing today?”

# Reflection Worksheet

**Date:**

**Volunteers Present:**

## **Girl-Led**

- How was this meeting girl-led? (For example, did girls choose activities? Did a girl lead a song or the Promise/Law? Did girls make presentations that they created?)
  
- Where do you think the girls could have led or contributed more?

## **Learning by Doing**

- What skills or experiences did the girls gain during today's meeting?
  
- When did they have the most fun?
  
- Were you surprised or excited by anything the girls shared during reflection?

## **Cooperative Learning**

- What was a shared goal of the troop today?
  
- Did girls have an easy or difficult time working together? Why do you think that is?

## **To consider for the next meeting...**

- If you were to repeat this same meeting, would you change anything (different activities, more volunteer help, different sequence of activities, etc.)? Why or why not?
  
- What made today's meeting special, meaningful, and/or fun for you?