



Boy Scouts of America

JPL Troop 509

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La Cañada Flintridge, CA

jpltroop509.org



Guide for Board of Review Members

Before serving on a Board of Review, adults should read this guide and print the page containing sample questions for the appropriate rank.

Mechanics of a Board of Review

Scouts must be in full uniform including neckerchief and merit badge sash. If they are not, ask them to reschedule. The Board members can point out missing patches on the uniform but may decide to continue with the Board of Review even if some patches are missing.

The chair of the board introduces the Scout.

The chair asks the Scout to come to attention and recite the following:

- The Scout Oath
- The Scout Law
- The Scout Motto
- The Scout Slogan
- The Outdoor Code (optional)

Scouts working on the lower ranks usually need some help getting through these. Some re-tries are appropriate, especially for younger scouts, or if the scout appears nervous. For higher ranks, greater competency is expected.

The board members are invited to ask the scouts questions (see the sections appropriate to each rank). The questions should be open-ended, offering an opportunity for the scouts to speak about their opinions, experiences, activities, and accomplishments. Avoid questions which require only a simple one- or two-word answer. If an answer is too brief, follow up with a "Why?" or "How can that be done?" to expand the answer. The questions should focus on Scouting topics; but may include questions regarding home, church, school, work, athletics, etc. as related to Scouting. The chair should be aware of any "out-of-bounds" areas; these should be communicated to the Board before the Board of Review begins (e.g., if a scout is experiencing family difficulties due to a divorce, it would be prudent to avoid family issues.)

The time for a Board of Review should be from 15 to 30 minutes, with the shorter time for the lower ranks.

When all members have had an opportunity to ask their questions, the Scout is excused from the room. The board members then consider whether the Scout is ready for the next rank; the board's decision must be unanimous. Once the decision is made, the Scout is invited back into the room,

and the chair informs the Scout of the board's decision. If the Scout is approved for the next rank, there are general congratulations and handshakes all around, and the Scout is encouraged to continue advancing. The chair signs the Scout's Handbook, and all board members sign the Scoutmaster Conference – Board of Review form and return the form to the Scout.

If there are issues which prevent the Scout from advancing to the next rank, the board must detail the precise nature of the deficiencies. The Scout must be told specifically what must be done to be successful at the next Board of Review. Typically, an agreement is reached as to when the Scout may return for a subsequent Board of Review. The chair must communicate clearly to both the Scout and the Scoutmaster the deficiencies and the course of action needed to correct them.

Nature of the Questions

The following pages list typical Board of Review questions for each rank. Questions for lower ranks are simpler and generally deal with factual information about the Scouts' participation in the troop and their approach to applying the skills learned toward earning the next rank. The questions for the higher ranks deal less with facts, and more with what the Scouts are getting out of their Scouting experiences and understanding of how Scouting is becoming an integral part of their lives. Remember: The Board of Review is not a test and does not re-test individual skills. However, a review of critical knowledge and skills like first aid is okay. Questions like, "Where did you learn about ..." or "Why do you think it is important for a [rank] Scout to have this skill?" can also probe competency of critical knowledge and skills.

If a Scout appears nervous or anxious about the Board of Review, it might be appropriate to ask one or two questions from the list for a lower rank, to help "break the ice" and establish some rapport. In general, within a rank, the questions are arranged from "easiest" to "most difficult".

For each rank, there is a question about advancing to the next rank. The purpose of this question is to encourage advancement, but it should not be asked in a way that pressures the Scout.

[Note: If the Board of Review is for the Life rank, and scouts are at or near their 17th birthday, some pressure towards Eagle may be in order. At the very least, be certain that the Scout realizes that their time is running out.]

For higher ranks, there is a question from the Scout Handbook about basic Scouting history.

More questions are provided than can typically be accommodated in the time suggested. The Board of Review will need to select the questions which are appropriate for the specific Scouts and their experiences.

Conclusion

These questions are intended to only serve as a guide. Board members are free to add to or skip questions from these lists, as they feel appropriate.

This guide is a summary in nature and Scouts should always refer to their Scout Handbook for more complete and detailed information about rank advancement requirements.

Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law

A Scout is:

- Trustworthy,
- Loyal,
- Helpful,
- Friendly,
- Courteous,
- Kind,
- Obedient,
- Cheerful,
- Thrifty,
- Brave,
- Clean,
- and Reverent.

Scout Motto: Be Prepared

Scout Slogan: Do a good turn daily.

Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to --
Be clean in my outdoor manners,
Be careful with fire,
Be considerate in the outdoors, and
Be conservation-minded.

Tenderfoot Board of Review Guide



This is the scout's first experience with a Board of Review. The process may require some explanation on the part of the Board of Review Chair.

The first few questions in the Board of Review should be simple. The Board of Review should try to gain a sense of how the scout is fitting into the Troop, and the scout's level of enjoyment of the troop and patrol activities.

Encourage advancement to Second Class. Point out that the scout may have already completed many of the requirements for Second Class. The approximate length of time for this Board of Review should be about 15 to 30 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. When did you join our troop?
2. What do you like best about Scouting?
3. What do you think is the most challenging part of Scouting?
4. How many troop meetings have you attended in the last two months?
5. What have you done with your patrol that was fun?
6. Tell us about your last campout with the troop.
7. What kinds of tents have you used? Which is your favorite? Why?
8. How would the first aid skills you must know for Tenderfoot help on a campout?
9. Where did you learn how to fold the American flag? Tell us about your first experience with this skill.
10. How would you avoid poison oak (poison ivy, sumac)?
11. Where did you go on your last hike? How did you choose the location?
12. If you were on a hike and got lost, what would you do?
13. Why do we whip or fuse the ends of a rope?
14. What is the "Buddy System" that we use in Scouting? When do we use it?
15. Why do you think there are physical fitness requirements (push-ups, pull-ups, etc.), and a retest after 30 days, for the Tenderfoot rank?
16. What does it mean to a Tenderfoot Scout to "Be Prepared"?
17. Do you feel that you have done your best to complete the requirements for Tenderfoot? Why?
18. What "good turn" have you done today?
19. Please give an example of how you obey the Scout Law at home (school, church)?
20. What do you like best about our troop?
21. What does it mean for a scout to be "Kind"?
22. Do you plan to attend summer camp with the troop? Or, are you planning any good turns?
23. What work have you done towards your Second Class rank?
24. When do you plan to have the requirements completed for Second Class?

Second Class Board of Review Guide



This is the Scout's second Board of Review. The process should be familiar unless it has been some time since the Board of Review for Tenderfoot.

Questions should focus on the use of the Scout skills learned for this rank without completely retesting these skills. The Board of Review should try to perceive how the Scout's Patrol is functioning, and how the Scout is functioning within the Patrol.

Encourage work on the remaining requirements for First Class; many of the easier ones may have already been completed. The approximate length of time for this Board of Review should be about 20 to 30 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. How many Troop meetings have you attended in the last 3 months?
2. What did your Patrol do at its last meeting?
3. What can you do to make your Patrol better?
4. Tell us about a service project in which you participated.
5. Where did you go on your last Troop campout? Did you have a good time? What was best?
6. What type of outings do you prefer? Why?
7. Why is it important to be able to identify animals found in your community?
8. What is the longest hike you have taken? Where? How was it?
9. Tell us about the flag ceremony in which you participated.
10. What is in your personal first aid kit?
11. What have you learned about handling woods tools (axes, saws, etc.)?
12. How are a map of the area and a compass useful on a campout?
13. Have you ever done more than one "good turn" in a day? Ask for details.
14. Have you earned any merit badges? If "Yes": Which ones? Why did you choose them? Who was your counselor? If "No": Encourage getting started and suggest one or two of the easier ones.
15. Did you attend summer camp with our Troop last summer? If "Yes": What was your best (worst) experience at summer camp? If "No": Why not?
16. Do you plan to attend summer camp with our Troop next summer? If "Yes": What are you looking forward to doing at summer camp? If "No": Why not?
17. What suggestions do you have for improving our Troop?
18. How do you help out at home, church, school?
19. What class in school is most challenging for you? Why?
20. One of the requirements for Tenderfoot is to participate in a program regarding drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse. Tell us about the program in which you participated.
21. How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
22. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Trustworthy"?
23. When do you expect to complete the requirements for First Class?

First Class Board of Review Guide



By this point the Scout should be comfortable with the Board of Review process. The Scout should be praised for the accomplishment reaching the First Class Board of Review (particularly if the scout joined Scouts BSA less than a year ago).

In achieving the rank of First Class, the Scout should feel an additional sense of responsibility to the Troop and to the Patrol. The First Class rank offers additional opportunities for the Scout (Order of the Arrow, leadership, etc.). Merit badges will begin to play a role in future advancement to the Star and Life ranks.

Encourage merit badge work if it has not already begun. The approximate length of time for this Board of Review should be about 30 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. About how many Troop meetings do you attend each month?
2. What part of Troop meetings are most important to you?
3. What is your favorite part of the Scout Law? Why?
4. What is the Scout Slogan? What does it mean for a First Class Scout?
5. Tell us about your last campout with the Troop. Where did you go? How did you help with meal preparation? Did you have a good time? (If "No", why not?)
6. If you were in charge of planning and preparing a dinner for your next campout, what would you select? How would you go about planning and preparing this meal?
7. What does it mean to become a First Class Scout?
8. As a First Class Scout, what do you think the Star, Life, and Eagle Scouts will expect from you on an outing?
9. Does your family do any camping? What have you learned in Scouts, that you have been able to share with your family to improve their camping experiences?
10. Why do you think that swimming is emphasized in Scouting?
11. What are the parts of the Safe Swim Defense?
12. Why is it important for you to know how to transport a person who has a broken leg?
13. Why is it important for you to be able to recognize local plant life?
14. What did you learn about using a compass while completing the orienteering requirement?
15. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Courteous"?
16. Why are merit badges a part of Scouting?
17. How frequently do you attend religious services? Does your whole family attend?
18. What is your favorite part of Scouting? Least favorite?
19. What would you tell a 6th grader who asked you about Scouting?
20. How does a Scout fulfill "Duty to Country"?
21. How do you define "Scout Spirit"?
22. What is the Order of the Arrow? What is the primary function of OA?
23. Who was Lord Baden-Powell?
24. When do you think you might be ready to be a Star Scout?

Star Board of Review Guide



With the Star rank, emphasis is placed upon service to others, merit badges, and leadership. Scout skills remain an important element for the Star Scout; however, the emphasis should be on teaching other Scouts these skills.

Explore how the Star scout can assist with leading the Patrol and Troop. Attempt to understand how the Scouting philosophy is becoming part of the Scout's life. Often the Star rank is a place where Scouts "stall out".

Encourage the Scout to remain active and participate fully in the Patrol and Troop. If the Scout appears to be looking for additional opportunities, suggest leadership positions such as Den Chief or Troop Guide. The approximate length of time for this Board of Review should be about 30 to 45 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. About how many Troop meetings do you attend each month?
2. How many Troop outings have you attended in the last three months?
3. What have you done to help other Scouts advance in rank?
4. Tell us about the last service project in which you participated.
5. What does it mean for a Star Scout to "Be Prepared" on a daily basis?
6. How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
7. How many merit badges have you earned? What was the most fun, difficult, rewarding, etc.?
8. Which is more important: Becoming a Star Scout, or learning the skills to be a Star Scout?
9. Why do you think a Scoutmaster's Conference is required for advancement in rank?
10. What is the most important part of a Troop Court of Honor? Why?
11. What can you do to make your Troop better?
12. What leadership positions have you held outside of your Patrol? What challenges did they present? What are your personal leadership goals and objectives?
13. What leadership style is usually the most effective?
14. How would you get a Scout to do an unpleasant task?
15. What extracurricular activities do you participate in at school?
16. What responsibilities do you have at home?
17. What is our "Duty to God"?
18. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Loyal"?
19. How are the Scout Oath and Law part of your daily life?
20. How has being a Scout changed your life?
21. What is your favorite point of the Scout Law. Why is it important for other people to live by?
22. What is the Outdoor Code? Why is it important?
23. If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow: When did you complete your "Ordeal", "Brotherhood"? What does membership in the OA signify?
24. Have you received any special awards or accomplishments in school, athletics, or church?
25. Baden-Powell's first Scout outing was located on an island off the coast of Great Britain; what was the name of that island? [Answer: Brownsea Island]
26. When do you plan on achieving the Life rank?

Life Board of Review Guide



The Life rank is the final rank before Eagle. The Life Scout should be fully participating in the Troop, with emphasis being placed on leadership in the Troop, as well as teaching skills and leadership to the younger Scouts.

Merit Badge work should be a regular part of the Scout's career. Scouting values and concepts should be an integral part of the Scout's daily life. At this point, the Scout is starting to "give back to Scouting" through leadership, training of other Scouts, recruiting, keeping Scouts active in the program, etc.

Explore suggestions for improving the program. This Board of Review should last about 30 to 45 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. What have you done to help other Scouts advance in rank?
2. What is the most ambitious service project with which you have assisted? Where?
3. Why do you think that Star and Life Scouts are required to contribute so much time to service projects? What service projects are most rewarding to you? Why?
4. How many Troop outings have you attended in the last three months?
5. What has been your best camping experience in Scouting?
6. How do you help with Troop meetings and outings?
7. What is your current (most recent) leadership position within the Troop? How long have you held that position? What particular challenges does it present? What is Leadership?
8. What would you say to a Scout who really wanted the position you were just elected to fill?
9. Have any of the merit badges you have earned led to hobbies or possible careers?
10. What are your hobbies?
11. Of the merit badges you have earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult? Why?
12. Why do you think that the four "Citizenship" merit badges are required for the Eagle Rank?
13. What is the hardest thing a new Scout has to learn about the Patrol method? At what stage in your Scouting advancement were you when you learned this?
14. Do you have any brothers or sisters who are in Scouts (any level)? What can you do to encourage them to continue with Scouts, and to move forward along the Scouting Trail?
15. How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
16. Why do you think that a Board of Review is required for rank advancement?
17. How has Scouting prepared you for the future?
18. What is your favorite part of the Scout Law. What do you do to live it?
19. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Reverent"?
20. What does "Scout Spirit" mean to a Life Scout?
21. The Scout Oath refers to "Duty to Self"; what duty do we have to ourselves?
22. If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow: What role does OA play in Scouting? What honor do you hold in OA? What is the difference between scout ranks and OA honors?
23. In what year was Boy Scouts of America founded? [Answer: February 8, 1910]
24. Have you started to think about your Eagle Service Project? What are you thinking about doing? When?