Ceremonies (Narrative)

**Grab & Go**

**Ceremonies**

What is a ceremony? Why do we have them?

*Wait for answers….*

Ceremonies are an important part of Girl Scouting. They mark special events throughout the year. They can commemorate accomplishments or simply make meetings special.

We can have ceremonies as part of every meeting such as a Flag Ceremony or a closing using the Friendship Circle.

It can be a special day where guests are invited to celebrate special days in Girl Scouting or celebrate something special the girls have done or accomplished.

Can you think of some reasons to have a ceremony with your troop?

*Answers can include:*

*Flag Ceremonies*

*Court of Awards*

*Bridging Ceremonies*

*Investitures and Rededications*

*Girl Scout Own*

*Outdoor/Campfire Ceremonies*

*Thinking Day*

*Girl Scout Birthday*

Discuss with your group those that were missed or what they mean. Here is a listing for you to follow:

**Flag Ceremonies** – any ceremony that honors the American flag

**Court of Awards** – a time to celebrate accomplishments the girls have had, and to hand out awards and badges.

**Bridging Ceremonies** – a special celebration as girls move up from one grad level to another. Bridging activities and suggestions for ceremonies can be found in the Girls Guide to Girl Scouting

**Investitures and Rededications** – a special ceremony at the beginning of the year to welcome girls to Girl Scouting and rededicate those that are returning.

**Girl Scout Own** – a special ceremony (usually in an outdoor setting) to reflect on the good that is around us.

**Outdoor/Campfire Ceremonies** – various ceremonies to have around a campfire to commemorate the comradery of the girls around the fire.

**Thinking Day** – celebrating Girl Scouting around the world – with emphasis on the World countries, cultures and customs.

**Girl Scout Birthday** – celebrating the birthday of Girl Scouting, March 12, 1912, when the first meeting was held.

What should these ceremonies look like?

When planning a ceremony there should be an opening, a middle section that includes the purpose or theme of your event, and a special closing that includes all of the participants. Refreshments are usually served as well.

There are many suggestions/ideas on the internet for Ceremonies that you can look at for ideas. But make sure that you include the girls in the planning. What are their favorite things to do at a meeting that they would like to show their guests? What is one thing that was so much fun, that they want to tell them or show them like a song, dance or activity?

The handout that you are being given is from the GSUSA website. All the highlighted underlined words have links to additional help for that specific ceremony so CHECK IT OUT!

Last thing to remember:

If it’s for the **girls, let them plan it.**

**Keep it as simple** as possible. Don’t make it complicated.

**Be creative**, think outside of the box.

Remember to keep it **appropriate to the age of the girls** and the **purpose of the ceremony.**

Ceremonies (Handout)

**Grab & Go**

**Girl Scout Ceremonies**

Ceremonies help Girl Scouts mark special events throughout the year, such as bridging to another level, earning a National Leadership Journey award, or getting a Girl Scout pin.

Ceremonies can commemorate accomplishments or simply make the beginning or end of a group's meeting special. Girls can plan a ceremony around a theme, such as friendship or nature, and express themselves in thought, words, or song. Whatever its purpose, every Girl Scout ceremony enables girls to share Girl Scout [history](http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history/) and [traditions](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/traditions/) and create their own special memories.

**Important Ceremonies in Girl Scouting**

[**Bridging ceremonies**](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/traditions/ceremonies/bridging.asp) mark a girl's move from one level of Girl Scouting to another.

[**Flag ceremonies**](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/traditions/ceremonies/flag.asp) can be part of any activity that honors the American flag.

A **Fly-Up** is a bridging ceremony for Girl Scout Brownies bridging to Girl Scout Juniors. Girls receive the Girl Scout pin along with their Brownie wings.

**Founder's Day or** [**Juliette Low's**](http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history/low_biography/) **Birthday, October 31**, is a time to remember the important role Juliette Low played in the development of the Girl Scout movement in the United States.

**Girl Scout Birthday ceremonies** can be held on or near March 12, the date Juliette Gordon Low started Girl Scouting in the United States of America.

A [**Girl Scout Bronze Award** ceremony](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/highest_awards/bronze_award.asp) honors Girl Scout Juniors who have earned the Girl Scout Bronze Award and is usually held at the troop/group level or combined with council recognition.

A [**Girl Scout Silver Award** ceremony](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/highest_awards/silver_award.asp) honors Girl Scouts who earn the Girl Scout Silver Award and is often combined with the Girl Scout Gold Award ceremony at the council level.

A [**Girl Scout Gold Award** ceremony](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/highest_awards/gold_award.asp) honors Girl Scouts who have earned the highest award in Girl Scouting and often takes place at council level.

**Girl Scouts' Own** is a girl-planned program that allows girls to explore their feelings around a topic, such as friendship or the Girl Scout Promise and Law, using spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other expressions. It is never a religious ceremony.

**Investiture** welcomes new members, girls or adults, into the Girl Scout family for the first time. Girls receive their Girl Scout, Girl Scout Brownie, or Girl Scout Daisy pin at this time.

[**Journey ceremonies**](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/journeys/) honor Girl Scouts who have earned the final award along a Journey. The ceremonies are usually held at the troop/group level and invite the girls to develop a themed celebration of their Journey, often including friends and family.

**Opening ceremonies** start the Girl Scout meeting.

**Pinning ceremonies** help celebrate when girls receive grade-level Girl Scout pins.

**Rededication ceremonies** are an opportunity for girls and adults to renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

**Tips for Holding Ceremonies**

1. **Devote sufficient time to planning the ceremony.** Good ceremonies have a clear purpose and enrich the meaning and mood of the ceremony.
2. **Use Journey adult guides and** [***The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting***](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/girlsguide/) to help girls plan their ceremonies.
3. **Take safety precautions** when using candles or fires, or when the girls construct bridges or platforms. Refer to *Volunteer Essentials* and the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* (available through your council) for specific advice.
4. **Add personal elements to traditional ceremonies.** Use favorite poems, songs, stories, and sayings, or have the girls write something new.
5. **Consider the role of colors and symbols** that the girls might use in their ceremony.
6. **Observe flag etiquette** when the girls hold flag ceremonies.

**If you need a little help planning your ceremony, this chart might give you some ideas! Mix and match one idea from each column.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Setting | Opening | Middle | Closing | Refreshments |
| Park | Flag ceremony | Skit | Moment of silence | Tea & cookies |
| Mall | Greeting from volunteers and girls | Poetry or stories | Final moment of sharing | Fruit salad, chees, and crackers |
| Playground  | Thought of the day | Present Membership Pins | Light or put out candles | Sandwiches and juice |
| Living room | Form a Circle | Present Take Action project or artwork | Girl Scout motto or slogan | Pizza |
| Backyard or Patio | Song or dance | Personal thought | Special reading  | S’Mores |

Taken from <http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/traditions/ceremonies> .. The highlighted areas are links that can be additional help for you.