

Girl Scout Leadership Experience

What is the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)? Some volunteers think that GSLE, rolled out by GSUSA in 2008, is a big change for our organization. However, it's really just new words and categories for the same mission and ideas we've had for almost 100 years. It focuses our attention where it should be: how to effectively develop leadership skills in our girls, while staying fun and relevant. Here's how to make it relatable!

What you'll need:

Leaders and advisors

An enthusiastic facilitator

Positive attitudes

Approximately 10 minutes

What are T³?:

T³ are topical mini-trainings woven into meetings and other events.

These trainings can be facilitated by any interested volunteer.

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GSLE background:

Explain that the Girl Scout Leadership Experience spells out the type of activities the girls should be doing, and how they should be doing them. Using input from girls, parents, and volunteers through the country, GSUSA has determined these activities to be effective leadership-builders. GSLE forms the basis for the format of the Journey programs. Let leaders know if they have taken Leadership Essentials, this should sound familiar. This lets new leaders be the experts!

3 Leadership Keys:

In terms of the types of activities, there are 3 categories. They are called the 3 Leadership Keys:

- **Discover** activities—explore and learn about themselves individually
- **Connect** activities— learn about the community around them
- **Take Action** activities— allow them to act in the world & make it better

You might have an activity that fits into several categories.

Let Leaders Practice: Take a common troop meeting activity: crafts. How can different types of craft activities be re-imagined into Discover, Connect, or Take Action activities? Ask the leaders to share ways craft activities might fit (or be reworked) into these categories. For example, a craft that allows them to try a new skills (e.g., pottery or weaving) would be a Discover activity; one from a different culture could be a Connect activity; a mural in a public place to beautify the community could be a Take Action activity.

3 Girl Scout Processes:

In terms of how the activities should be implemented, there are 3 processes:

- **Girl-Led**—girls choose, plan and implement the activity (age-appropriate)
- **Cooperative**— girls work together toward a common goal
- **Hands-on**— girls explore the activity themselves

Again, you might have an activity that fits into several categories.

Let Leaders Practice: Let's return to the same meeting activity, crafts.

Girl Led: Imagine you have a Daisy troop. How can a craft activity be girl led? (e.g. give them 2 to choose from, give the girls specific tasks). Consider the difference in "girl led" at different age levels (refer to T³ #1 if your SU has done it). Share ideas.

Cooperative: How can a craft activity be cooperative? Share ideas.

Hands-on: Why are hands-on experiences better?

See? For many activities, you're probably already implementing GSLE. However, if every week the girls are doing basic crafts and earned award activities that you select, they may not be stretching their leadership muscles. If for every activity, you can name one of the Leadership Keys and one of the Girl Scout Processes that apply, you are helping shape the leaders of today!