

Den Activity to Appreciate the 100 Year Anniversary of Scouting

Introduction

Scouting in the USA is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2010. You might have seen the special 2010 logo on official Scouting materials. This is a special achievement, so what is it that helped Scouting survive and prosper in a country that did not “invent” it? Scouting was founded by Lord Baden Powell in Britain a few years before it was introduced into the United States. Actually Scouting evolved from ideas and activities that Lord Baden developed during his army career in Africa. Perhaps Scouting was successful because it encouraged self-sufficiency and a “can-do” attitude, which were instrumental in developing this country. Scouting is also popular in many other countries throughout the world.

Objective

To help our Scouts get a better understanding of the universality of Scouting and the impact it has on the youth of other countries. Scouts will also discover how Scouting’s values are similar, regardless of the country, religion or form of government.

Activity, Part 1

Parents, please go to the following web site for the World Association of Scouting;

http://www.scout.org/en/around_the_world/countries/national_scout_organisations

This is a link to a list of virtually every country in the world’s Scouting organization. Scroll through the list and pick a country. A lot of countries have an English version of their web page. I have visited the web sites for Hong Kong, China, India and Saudi Arabia and found them to be very interesting. Perhaps each Den or patrol could choose a different continent and then select two or three countries from that continent. You might have to “scout” around some of the sites to find the English version, or you could just enjoy the photos. Look out for the blue Fleur de lis patch that we wear on our uniforms.

Or you can think of a country and do a “Google” search for Scouting in that country. For example, do a “Google” search for Scouting in Holland and see what links are shown. You will notice that a lot of links are in English, which makes things easier. It might be more interesting if you chose the country of your origin or of your family’s origin. Perhaps you have a friend who is from a different country? **Please do not visit the Boy Scouts of America web site just yet.**

Try to find the Mission or Values Statement from each of your countries’ web sites and/or make note of one or two other pieces of interesting information or facts about Scouting in those countries. A mission statement is essentially a statement that says what a company or organization aims to accomplish and usually lists its values. For example, the 3M Company mission statement is "To solve unsolved problems innovatively", Wal-Mart’s is "To give ordinary folk the chance to buy the same things as rich people" and Walt Disney’s is "To make people happy."

Activity, Part 2

Get together with other members of your Den and compare notes. Pick one or two countries and prepare a short presentation about what you have learned about Scouting in other countries. Each Den will be asked to give a short presentation on one of its countries in front of the entire Pack. The hope is that we will get an idea of Scouting is like in many countries, rather than the countries we originally picked as individual families.

Visit the official Boy Scouts of America at <http://www.scouting.org> to read the BSA Mission or Values Statements. Then compare these two statements with those from the other countries.

Observations

I hope that you will quickly notice that the mission and values statements are very similar and that the “Scouting” values are quite universal. However, there might be some differences from country to country, such as uniforms, types of activities and gender integration. Do these differences have a major significance or change the value of the Scouting program? Your opinions would be appreciated.

Useful Web Sites

The following web sites offer a glimpse into the wonderful world of Scouting.

http://www.scout.org/en/about_scouting/facts_figures/fact_sheets

http://inter.scoutnet.org/units_ww.html

<http://www.scout.org>

<http://scouts.org.uk>

<http://www.ktc-bsa.org>

<http://www.kisc.ch> (World Scout Headquarters)

Summary

After completing this quick survey into the wonderful world of Scouting, we should feel as though we are part of a very large universal organization that is committed to making the world a better place to live, that we can be friends to all people, no matter their country, class or creed. We should also remember that our character is one of our strongest assets. Perhaps Lord Baden Powell was a bit naïve when he proclaimed that adhering to the Scout Oath and Law would make wars unnecessary, but the organization that he founded all those years ago is still active. The values that he attempted to instill in young people are as relevant today as they were over 100 years ago when he gathered together the first group of would-be Scouts. I hope you enjoy doing this activity with your children and friends. I hope that we can compare notes at a Pack 12 meeting in the fall.

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