

Showman Activity Badge Outline -- Mental Skills Group Drama Option

There are three options for the Showman Activity Badge: Puppetry, Music and Drama. The Showman Activity Badge is recommended to be presented in a one month format, as outlined in the Webelos Program Helps booklet. This example outline presents all requirements of the Drama Option of this Badge in four weekly meetings. Each Scout who attends all meetings will satisfy all of the requirements.

Use the Webelos book in the meeting. Have the Scouts read sections from the book. Use all the resources you have available, such as the Program Helps and the Webelos Den Activities Book. Make sure you sign off their books each meeting.

Week 1

Requirements to be fulfilled:

Do Four of These:

1. Give a monologue on a patriotic, humorous, or holiday subject.
2. Attend a play. Describe the story. Tell what you liked about it.

Discussion :

1. Read the introduction and requirements on pages 305 and 316. Discuss the requirements and how they will be worked on in and outside the Den. Make sure you alert the Scouts and the parents about any field trips that will be planned. Also, make sure you telephone the parents a few days before the field trip -- it helps attendance.
2. Read Page 317 on Performing a Monologue. Ask the Scouts if they have had to do this in school. Give them the opportunity to do that one again for the Den. If they haven't, demonstrate one yourself. Choose something to read, or memorize something ahead of time. Get up in front of them and do it so they can see how it is done. It would be particularly helpful to choose something that has dialog, so they can see how one actor does two voices.

For those Scouts who do not have material to do as a monologue, assign them something. There are a bunch of short stories, tall tales, and shaggy dog stories attached to this outline. Hand each scout one to do. You may have time to do some of them in this meeting, finish them up next week.

3. Read page 318 and 319 on Attending a Play, and Stage Setting. Plan ahead your trip to see a play, so that you will have a handout for the Scouts as early in the month as possible. The handout should tell the Scouts and their parents what the play is, where and what time, and what the cost will be. Free is better than not free. Make sure the parents know about this trip ahead of time. Since more than four requirements will be fulfilled during this month, make sure the parents know that attendance at the play is optional.

Homework:

1. For those Scouts who have yet to do their monologue, practice at home and be ready next week.

Week 2

Requirements to be fulfilled:

3. Read a play. Make a model stage setting for one of the acts.
4. Write, put on, and take part in a one-act play.

Discussion :

1. Complete the monologues.
2. Find a short play to read in the Den. Assign the parts. Reading this play should take no longer than about 10 minutes. If you have time you can make a stage scene using the construction project plans as shown in the Webelos Handbook. If you do not have time, then set up the stage

scene in the meeting room. Have the scouts help you set up down stage and upstage. Have them help set up props, pretending that chairs and other things in the room are the necessary props.

3. Have the Scouts take out paper and start writing a play. The very best thing to do is to plan ahead with a punch line, and have them develop a skit from that punch line. The Skit can be performed at the next Pack meeting. Have them write down notes about their play, and have them assign each other parts to act out.

[Note: From experience I have found that the Scouts cannot put this together without your help. You must arrive with a punch line or some structure for them to work from. If you ask them what they want to write a play about, you will get 10 different bizarre ideas and no work will be accomplished.]

Homework:

1. Think about how the skit can be improved. Can you add anything to your dialog in the skit to make it funnier?

Week 3

Requirements to be fulfilled:

5. Make a list of stage directions. Tell what they mean.
6. Describe a theater-in-the-round. What are its good and bad points?

Discussion :

1. Read pages 319 - 320 on Stage Directions. Have the Scouts take out paper and discuss the stage directions. Have them draw a stage and mark it with the stage directions. Talk about your skit and how it will be performed regarding the stage directions. Talk about who is upstage, down stage, stage left and stage right.
2. Read pages 320 - 321 on Theater in the Round. Discuss the difference between theater in the Round and regular stage theater. Discuss the good points and bad points. There are no bad seats in theater in the round, but there are also no good seats either!

Homework:

1. Go on your field trip to a play. Tell the Scouts as you go that you will be discussing it at the next meeting.

Week 4

Requirements to be fulfilled:

- (2. Attend a play. Describe the story. Tell what you liked about it.)
7. Tell the difference between an opera and a light opera. Tell how a musical and a dramatic play are different.
8. Read a story about Shakespeare. Draw a picture of his theater.

Discussion :

1. Discuss the play you saw. Have the Scouts each tell a little bit about the story. Have them tell the rest of the Den what they liked about it. Some of the Scouts may not have gone to the play. The descriptions should be complete enough so that those who did not go can get a pretty good idea of the plot and characters.
2. Read pages 321 and 322 on Opera and Musicals. Discuss the differences between opera and light opera. Has any Scout been to a performance of either? Have they watched either on PBS? Discuss the difference between a musical and a dramatic play. What kind of play did the Den go see? Are television programs typically dramatic plays or musicals? Name some musicals that you have seen. [Mary Poppins, Peter Pan, lots of Disney things]. If you discuss things they are familiar with it will surprise them how they are categorized.
3. Read page 322 on Shakespeare. Also read the attached information about Shakespeare. Have the Scouts take out paper and pencil and draw a picture of his theater.

Aesop's Fables

The Lion and the Mouse

A LION was awakened from sleep by a Mouse running over his face. Rising up angrily, he caught him and was about to kill him, when the Mouse piteously entreated, saying: "If you would only spare my life, I would be sure to repay your kindness." The Lion laughed and let him go. It happened shortly after this that the Lion was caught by some hunters, who bound him by stout ropes to the ground. The Mouse, recognizing his roar, came gnawed the rope with his teeth, and set him free, exclaim

"You ridiculed the idea of my ever being able to help you, expecting to receive from me any repayment of your favor; I now you know that it is possible for even a Mouse to con benefits on a Lion."

The Hare and the Tortoise

A HARE one day ridiculed the short feet and slow pace of the Tortoise, who replied, laughing: "Though you be swift as the wind, I will beat you in a race." The Hare, believing her assertion to be simply impossible, assented to the proposal; and they agreed that the Fox should choose the course and fix the goal. On the day appointed for the race the two started together. The Tortoise never for a moment stopped, but went on with a slow but steady pace straight to the end of the course. The Hare, lying down by the wayside, fell fast asleep. At last waking up, and moving as fast as he could, he saw the Tortoise had reached the goal, and was comfortably dozing after her fatigue.

Slow but steady wins the race.

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

A COUNTRY MOUSE invited a Town Mouse, an intimate friend, to pay him a visit and partake of his country fare. As they were on the bare plowlands, eating there wheat-stocks and roots pulled up from the hedgerow, the Town Mouse said to his friend, "You live here the life of the ants, while in my house is the horn of plenty. I am surrounded by every luxury, and if you will come with me, as I wish you would, you shall have an ample share of my dainties." The Country Mouse was easily persuaded, and returned to town with his friend. On his arrival, the Town Mouse placed before him bread, barley, beans, dried figs, honey, raisins, and, last of all, brought a dainty piece of cheese from a basket. The Country Mouse, being much delighted at the sight of such good cheer, expressed his satisfaction in warm terms and lamented his own hard fate. Just as they were beginning to eat, someone opened the door, and they both ran off squeaking, as fast as they could, to a hole so narrow that two could only find room in it by squeezing. They had scarcely begun their repast again when someone else entered to take something out of a cupboard, whereupon the two Mice, more frightened than before, ran away and hid themselves. At last the Country Mouse, almost famished, said to his friend: "Although you have prepared for me so dainty a feast, I must leave you to enjoy it by yourself. It is surrounded by too many dangers to please me. I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear."

Tall Tales from the Wild West

from Daniel R. Mott Assistant District Commissioner District 23

The West - How tough was the West? I'll tell you. In a local paper from a frontier Texas town in the 1840's comes a description of a day's activities: two street fights, one hanging, three men ridden out of town on a rail, a quarter race, some turkey shooting, a gander-pulling, a match dog fight, a rousing sermon by a circuit rider who afterward ran a foot race for applejack all around, and, as if this was not enough, the local judge after losing his year's salary at poker and horsewhipping a person who claimed he didn't understand the game, went out and helped lynch his grandfather for hog stealing. And this all happened on a Sunday.

Too Much Talk - Two cowpokes had punched cattle together for years, and one time they went out on a long haul. Each day, the two men would get up, ride off in different directions to corral the herd, and at the end of the day's trek they'd cook dinner and go to sleep. Day after day this continued. One night as they were about to fall off to sleep they heard a bellowing noise coming from the cattle.

"Bull," said the first one.

"Sounds like a steer to me," said the other.

The Next day they delivered the cattle to their destination and the first cowboy saddled up his horse to depart.

"Leaving?" asked the other cowboy.

"Yep. Too much argument to suit me," came the reply.

A Cowboy's Comforts - A cowboy's life was rugged, and out on the range he had known few pleasures. There was once this man from back East who thought he would fancy the life of a cowpoke, so he joined up for a cattle drive. The first night, as the men were bedding down, someone tossed him a piece of wood. "Here enjoy this," he said. "Tomorrow we're hitin' the plains an` you cain't git no kind of pillow out there." They say the fellow gave up and went home the next day.

No Complaints - You know the rules in a cow camp when they have no regular cook. When anybody complains about the chuck, they have to do the cooking. One cowboy broke a biscuit open and he says, "They are burnt on the bottom and the top and raw in the middle, and as salty as all get out, but shore fine, just the way I like them.

A Scared Crow - Shotgun Charlie believes in the worth of scarecrows. He told me that for some years he had one that terrified crows throughout Nash County. In fact it worked so well that one crow brought back the corn it had stolen three days before.

Saddle Song:

My home is my saddle,

My roof is the sky;

The prairies I'll ride

Till the day that I die.

What the Cowpoke Saw - See, I was ridin' along the Blackfoot Ridge on a roundup of some strays and I looked down and saw comin', hell-bent, from the south a train doin' sixty miles an hour, sure. The I looked to the north and there was another train goin' even faster on the same track headin' straight for the other one. It looked like they were goin' to meet right at the curve of the track.

"What did you do?" asked another cowhand.

"Nothin'."

"You mean, you didn't try to stop them or signal them some way?" asked another man.

"Nope. Didn't think of that."

"Well what in the world were you thinking about?" cried still another.

"Well, not much, I guess. But I was thinking it was sure one strange way of running a railroad."

Some Shaggy Dog Stories

Just a Pain in the Neck

Once there was this Indian who found that every time he bent over to pick up the paddle for his canoe, he'd get this terrible crick in his back. He went to see the doctor the next time he was in town, and the doctor said, "If this happens to you again, simply grasp the paddle with both hands, shove the bottom of the paddle into the ground, and pull yourself up." The next day the Indian was reaching for the paddle when he once again got the crick in his back. Remembering what the doctor had told him, he grabbed the paddle and managed to slowly work his way up it. When at last he was able to stand up again, he was very surprised to find himself up a paddle without a crick.

Kids will be Kids

Mother Lion and Father Lion had gone off hunting, and had told their two children not to wander away. However, a couple of small gnus wandered by, and the baby lions could not resist the temptation to try out their own hunting skills. They ran out, chased after the gnus, killed them, and started eating them.

Just as the baby lions were reaching the end of their meal, the parents appeared in the distance. One of the baby lions turned to the other, and said:

"That is the end of the gnus. Here again are the head lions."

The Warship

A few years ago the nuclear aircraft carrier Enterprise was returning to its base at the Oakland-Alameda Naval Base when the ship's captain, misreading the tides, managed to run the carrier aground on the mud flats of San Francisco bay. True story. This event went down in history as being one of the finest examples of grounding the warship you walk on.

The Witchdoctor

A witch doctor kept the members of his tribe in virtual subjugation by means of powerful magic. Whenever one of the tribesmen tried to overthrow him, he would be turned into an apple! One night a group of tribesmen sneaked into his hut, opened his book of magic, learned the apple spell, and turned the witch doctor into an apple!

But the book warned that if the apple ever dried out and changed significantly in weight, it would turn back into the witch doctor, more powerful than ever! So every day the tribesmen placed the apple on a scale to make sure that its weight remained the same. Moral: A weigh a day keeps the doctor an apple.

Farmer Jones and the Big Quake

On a bright and sunny morning in May, Farmer Jones went out to plow his fields. He led old Bessie, his plow horse, out of the barn and hitched her up to the plow. The aroma of newly plowed earth wafted behind him as he produced a ruler straight furrow across the field. Suddenly his reverie was broken as a strong earthquake struck. As the ground shook beneath his feet, he fell to his knees. His plow fell over almost on top of him, as did old Bessie. But, beyond the fence in the next field, the bull remained standing.

Farmer Jones stood, dusted himself off, and grabbed the reins to right old Bessie. He pulled the plow upright, hitched up the horse again and began to plow. Shaken somewhat by the strange experience, the furrow began to zig a little from side to side as Bessie pulled the plow blade through the fertile ground. After only a few seconds a strong aftershock rolled through the farm. Again it was strong enough to knock Farmer Jones from his feet, topple his plow, and with a loud protest, drive old Bessie to the ground. This time the farmer looked back across the field toward the house and noticed that the goats and cows had fallen over, too But, beyond the fence in the next field, the bull remained standing.

Shaken and puzzled, Farmer Jones picked himself up and dusted off his overalls. Righting the horse and plow, he quieted old Bessie as best he could. She seemed more rattled by all this than he was. As strong as the two earthquakes were, Farmer Jones could not understand how the bull remained standing. So he started toward the other field to see if he could find out what was going on with the bull. As he crossed the field, and climbed through the fence into the field where the bull stood, a very strong aftershock struck -- much worse than either of the preceding earthquakes -- putting him on the ground flat on his face. Looking behind himself he saw Old Bessie and the plow had fallen down again. Down toward the house the goats and cows had fallen down again. In fact, this aftershock was so strong that the chickens had fallen over as well. The front porch on the farmhouse had crashed down and the walls looked as though they would not last much longer. But, only a few feet away from him, the bull remained standing.

He picked himself up, dusted off, and without bothering to right either horse or plow, marched toward the bull. Shaken to the core, puzzled and angry, Farmer Jones shouted, demanding to know why everything on the farm had been knocked over by the earthquakes and the bull had remained on his feet. Much to Farmer Jones' astonishment, the bull replied, "We bulls wobble, but we don't fall down!"