



# American Heritage

## Merit Badge Workbook

This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.

The work space provided for each requirement should be used by the Scout to make notes for discussing the item with his counselor, not for providing the full and complete answers. Each Scout must do each requirement.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in **Boy Scout Requirements** (Pub. 33216 – SKU 34765).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2006 • This workbook was updated in March 2012.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor's Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about improving this workbook to: [Workbooks@USScouts.org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.org)

1. Read the Declaration of Independence. Pay close attention to the section that begins with "We hold these truths to be self-evident" and ends with "to provide new Guards for future security." Rewrite that section in your own words, making it as easy to understand as possible. Then share your writing with your merit badge counselor and discuss the importance of the Declaration of Independence. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Do TWO of the following:

- a. Select two individuals from American history, one a political leader (a president, senator, etc.) and the other a private citizen (a writer, religious leader, etc.). Find out about each person's accomplishments and compare the contributions each has made to America's heritage.

Political Leader 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments & Contributions \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Political Leader 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Accomplishments & Contributions \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. With your counselor's approval, choose an organization that has promoted some type of positive change in American society.

Find out why the organization believed this change was necessary and how it helped to accomplish the change.

Why: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss how this organization is related to events or situations from America's past. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- c. With your counselor's approval, interview two veterans of the U.S. military. Find out what their experiences were like. Ask the veterans what they believe they accomplished.

Veteran 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Experiences & accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Veteran 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Experiences & accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- d. With your counselor's approval, interview three people in your community of different ages and occupations. Ask these people what America means to them, what they think is special about this country, and what American traditions they feel are important to preserve.

Person 1 \_\_\_\_\_

What America means to them \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do they think is special about this country? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What American traditions are important to preserve? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Person 2 \_\_\_\_\_

What America means to them \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do they think is special about this country? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What American traditions are important to preserve? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Person 3 \_\_\_\_\_

What America means to them \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do they think is special about this country? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What American traditions are important to preserve? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do the following:

a. Select a topic that is currently in the news. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe to your counselor what is happening. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Explain how today's events are related to or affected by the events and values of America's past. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- b. For each of the following, describe its adoption, tell about any changes since its adoption, and explain how each one continues to influence Americans today: the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, the seal, the motto, and the national anthem.

The Flag:

Adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Changes since its adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Influence today \_\_\_\_\_

The Pledge of Allegiance:

Adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Changes since its adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Influence today \_\_\_\_\_

The Seal:

Adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Changes since its adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Influence today \_\_\_\_\_

The Motto:

Adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Changes since its adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Influence today \_\_\_\_\_

The National Anthem:

Adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Changes since its adoption \_\_\_\_\_

Influence today \_\_\_\_\_

- c. Research your family's history. Find out how various events and situations in American history affected your family. Share what you find with your counselor. Tell why your family came to America. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

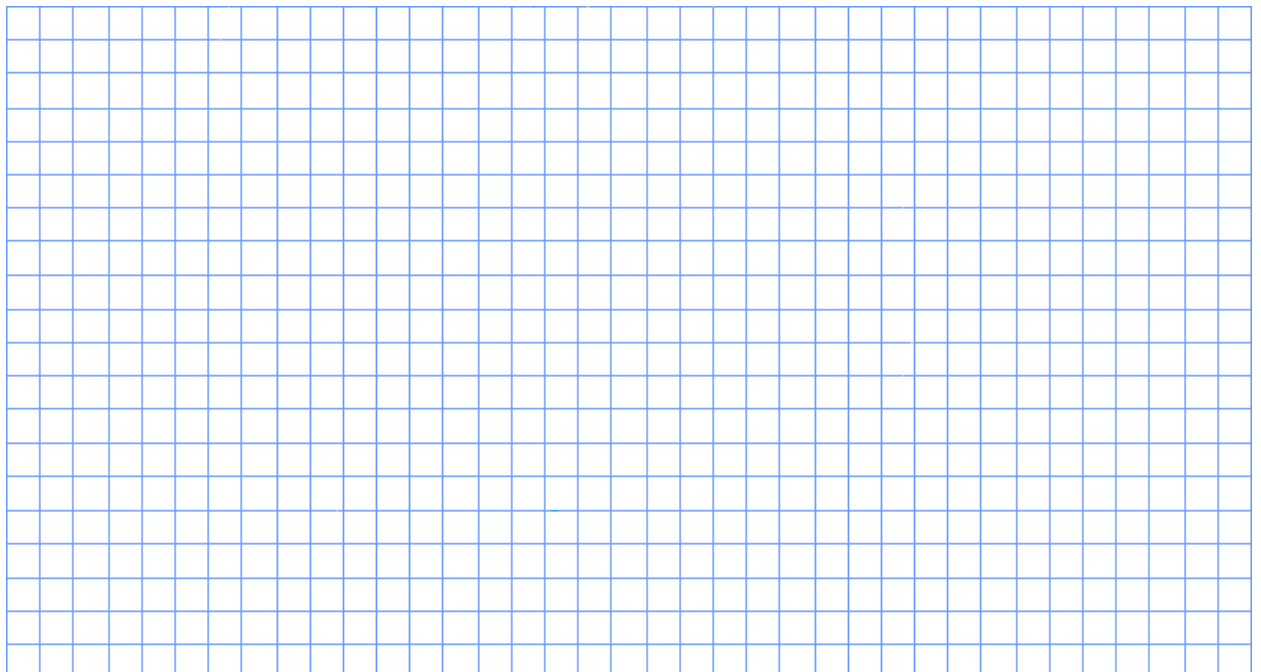
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4. Do TWO of the following:

- a. Explain what is meant by the National Register of Historic Places. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how a property becomes eligible for listing. \_\_\_\_\_

Make a map of your local area, marking the points of historical interest.



Tell about any National Register properties in your area. Share the map with your counselor, and describe the historical points you have indicated. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- b. Research an event of historical importance that took place in or near your area. If possible, visit the place. Tell your counselor about the event and how it affected local history. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe how the area looked then and what it now looks like. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- c. Find out when, why, and how your town or neighborhood started, and what ethnic, national, or racial groups played a part.  
When: \_\_\_\_\_  
Why: \_\_\_\_\_  
How \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What groups: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Find out how the area has changed over the past 50 years and try to explain why. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- d. Take an active part in a program about an event or person in American history. Report to your counselor about the program, the part you took, and the subject. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- e. Visit a historic trail or walk in your area. \_\_\_\_\_  
After your visit, share with your counselor what you have learned. Discuss the importance of this location and explain why you think it might qualify for National Register listing. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do ONE of the following:

- a. Watch two motion pictures (with the approval and permission of your counselor and parent) that are set in some period of American history. Describe to your counselor how accurate each film is with regard to the historical events depicted and also with regard to the way the characters are portrayed.

Film 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Accuracy of time \_\_\_\_\_

Accuracy of characters \_\_\_\_\_

Film 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Accuracy of time \_\_\_\_\_

Accuracy of characters \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Read a biography (with your counselor's approval) of someone who has made a contribution to America's heritage. Tell some things you admire about this individual and some things you do not admire. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Explain why you think this person has made a positive or a negative contribution to America's heritage. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- c. Listen to recordings of popular songs from various periods of American history. Share five of these songs with your counselor, and describe how each song reflects the way people felt about the period in which it was popular. If a recording is not available, have a copy of the lyrics available.

Song 1. \_\_\_\_\_

How it reflects the period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song 2. \_\_\_\_\_

How it reflects the period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song 3. \_\_\_\_\_

How it reflects the period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song 4. \_\_\_\_\_

How it reflects the period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song 5. \_\_\_\_\_

How it reflects the period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Discuss with your counselor the career opportunities in American heritage. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Pick one that interests you and explain how to prepare for this career. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Discuss what education and training are required for this career. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Requirement resources can be found here:**  
[http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/American\\_Heritage#Requirement\\_resources](http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/American_Heritage#Requirement_resources)

## Important excerpts from the [‘Guide To Advancement’](#), No. 33088:

Effective January 1, 2012, the ‘Guide to Advancement’ (which replaced the publication ‘Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures’) is now the *official* Boy Scouts of America source on advancement policies and procedures.

- **[ Inside front cover, and 5.0.1.4 ] — Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program**  
***No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements.***  
(There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with disabilities. For details see section 10, “Advancement for Members With Special Needs”.)
- **[ Inside front cover, and 7.0.1.1 ] — The [‘Guide to Safe Scouting’](#) Applies**  
Policies and procedures outlined in the ‘Guide to Safe Scouting’, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects. [Note: Always reference the online version, which is updated quarterly.]
- **[ 7.0.3.1 ] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion**  
Youth members must not meet one-on-one with adults. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative —or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge— along with him attending the session. When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult certification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.
- **[ 7.0.3.2 ] — Group Instruction**  
It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways or similar events. Interactive group discussions can support learning. The method can also be attractive to “guest experts” assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material.

There must be attention to each individual’s projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout — actually and *personally*— completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like “show,” “demonstrate,” or “discuss,” then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions. Because of the importance of individual attention in the merit badge plan, group instruction should be limited to those scenarios where the benefits are compelling.

- **[ 7.0.3.3 ] — Partial Completions**  
Scouts need not pass all requirements with one counselor. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished — a “partial.” In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, he or she does not retain the counselor’s portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his Scoutmaster to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partials have no expiration except the 18th birthday.