OBJECTIVES
This month’s activities should:

- Help Scouts become better communicators and listeners.
- Introduce Scouts to a variety of communication methods.
- Help Scouts understand and overcome communication barriers.
- Emphasize the importance of Internet safety.
- Encourage Scouts to pursue communication-related awards.
- Introduce Scouts to careers in the communication field.
- Build self-confidence by learning and demonstrating skills.

LEADERSHIP PLANNING
During your planning meetings, you and your leadership team may want to discuss the following items when choosing communication as your program feature:

- What do we want our main event to be?
- Which merit badges would we like to focus on this month?
- What adults in our unit have communication expertise?
- Who else do we know who could serve as a communication instructor?
- Are there areas in our unit where we struggle to communicate?
- How can we involve parents?
- To meet our needs, what should we change in the sample meeting plans?

PREOPENING IDEAS

Preopening Ideas on Troop Program Resources

- As Scouts arrive, give them copies of the Scout Oath and Scout Law from other countries (in the original languages). Challenge them to translate the texts into English.
- Post pictures around the meeting room of sports officials giving signals. Challenge Scouts to correctly identify what the signals mean.
- Invite a ham radio operator to set up at your meeting place so Scouts can experience amateur radio as they arrive. Introduce Scouts to the Morse Code interpreter strip.
- Play Slow Motion Telephone: Give a verbal message of 20 or so words to the first Scout who arrives. He passes the message on to the next Scout who arrives, and so on. At the opening, have the last Scout who received the message repeat it out loud to show how much the message changed in transmission.
OPENING IDEAS

Opening Ideas on Troop Program Resources

GROUP INSTRUCTION IDEAS

Communicating Effectively

- Have the Scouts list as many ways as they can think of to communicate with others (face-to-face, by telephone, by email, by texting, etc.). For each type of communication, have them name instances when that method would or would not be appropriate or effective. Note: This activity relates to Communication merit badge requirement 1d.

Nonverbal Communication

- Have a Scout working on the Communication merit badge give his five-minute speech, or show a YouTube video of a speech such as an inaugural address.
  - Have half the group watch the speech and the other half listen with their eyes closed.
  - Afterward, invite Scouts to discuss how persuasive the speech was and how the speaker’s body language, delivery, and mannerisms affected the message.
  - Discuss whether and why those who watched the speech reacted differently from those who just listened to it.

Communicating Online and Over the Air

- Have a guest speaker discuss the dos and don’ts of Internet safety. Watch a video from the NetSmartz Workshop website.

Careers in Communication

- Recruit representatives from three or more careers in communication. (Ideally, these individuals would also be counselors for communication-related merit badges.)
  - Set up a round-robin so that Scouts in small groups can visit all the representatives and learn about their careers.
  - Representatives should discuss the education, training, and experience required for their careers (Communication merit badge requirement 9).

SKILLS INSTRUCTION IDEAS

Communicating Effectively

- Learn and practice the EDGE method.
- Work on Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class requirements as needed.
- Review the EDGE method.
- Work on Communication merit badge requirement 1c together

- Review the EDGE method.
- Working with the unit leader, review the ways the unit communicates with members and parents.
- Discuss what works and what doesn’t, and make a plan for improving communication.
Nonverbal Communication

- Play "Charades" to experience a form of nonverbal communication.
- Work on Communication merit badge requirement 4 together.
- Begin planning a campfire program or interfaith worship service to be conducted during the main event.

Communicating Online and Over the Air

- Review the Cyber Chip requirements for grades 6–8.
- Read and sign the Intermediate Internet Safety Pledge from NetSmartz.
- Review the Cyber Chip requirements for grades 9–12.
- Read and sign the Middle and High School Internet Safety Pledge from NetSmartz.
- Make plans to use the EDGE method to teach Internet safety to a patrol or Webelos den.
- Continue plans for the main event campfire program or interfaith service.

Careers in Communication

- Review the list of communication-related merit badges.
- Encourage each Scout to pick one to work on in the months to come.
- Review the list of communication-related merit badges.
- Encourage each Scout to pick one to work on in the months to come.
- Finalize plans for the main event campfire program or interfaith service.

BREAKOUT GROUP IDEAS

Getting Ready for the Main Event

- Menu Planning (if applicable)
- Duty Roster Planning (if applicable)
- Patrols discuss what special items they will need for the main event.
- Plan the group's portion of the campfire program or interfaith service.

Preparation for the meeting's game or challenge

GAME AND CHALLENGE IDEAS

Team Building Activities on Troop Program Resources

- Who Am I?
  - Materials: For each Scout, a card or piece of paper at least 2 inches square, each printed with a famous name (can be those of real people or of fictional characters—Spider-Man,
Christopher Columbus, a current or past U.S. president, Robert Baden-Powell, etc.)

- **Method:** Each Scout has a name card pinned on his back but does not know whose name is on the card. The Scouts circulate and ask yes-or-no questions such as “Am I alive?” and “Am I an American?” Only two questions can be asked of one person, then the Scout must move on to ask another person questions. Scouts who identify the name on their card may stop or get another name and start over.

**Signaling**

- **Materials:** for each patrol: small flag to be used as a signal flag, two *morse code references*, paper and pencil
- **Method:** Two Scouts from each patrol, serving as the senders, are stationed a fair distance away from the rest of the patrol, so they and the patrol are out of ear shot. The senders are given a short message to send that can be already written in morse code, or can be written in letters of the alphabet along with a *morse code reference*. The patrol has a blank paper, a pencil, and there own morse code reference for recording the message that will be sent.
- When all are in position and ready, one sender uses the flag to send each letter of the message in morse code by *wig-wagging*. The flag held up straight and tall = the start of a letter. A swipe to the right = a dot. A swipe to the left = a dash. The flag swished downward = the end of the word. The other sender dictates to the Scout with the flag. They obviously need to communicate and cooperate with one another.
- The patrol needs record on their paper the dots and dashes being sent. Afterwards, they can refer to their reference sheet to decipher the message.
- **Scoring:** The first patrol to correctly decipher the message, wins.
- **Variation** Send the message in the dark using flashlights.

**Follow My Voice**

- **Materials:** Blindfold
- **Method:** Blindfold one Scout and assign a second Scout to be the guide. Without touching the blindfolded Scout, the guide should direct the Scout to a specified destination across the room, being careful to avoid any obstacles along the way. The catch is that the other players can shout contradictory directions to the Scout. Continue playing with different Scouts in the two roles until time is up.

**CLOSING IDEAS**

- *Leader’s Minutes*
- *Ceremony*
TROOP LEADER RESOURCE LINKS

Advancement Resources
Awards Central
Boy Scouts
Guide to Safe Scouting
SCOUTBOOK
Scouting Forms from the National Council
ScoutCast
Scouting Magazine
ScoutStuff.org (Retail Site)
ScoutingWire
Sign in to MyScouting.org
Take Youth Protection Training
The Outdoor Adventure Planning Guide
Troop Leader Guidebook Appendix
Uniforms

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