

*Taken from the Volunteer Toolkit Badge Year for Brownies  
My Family Story 2*

## Overview

### Note to Volunteers

The excitement and fast pace of running troop meetings for the first time can sometimes leave us tongue-tied. For that reason, scripting is included for guiding girls through a meeting; these "lines" are under the heading "SAY." However, you know your girls best. If you feel you don't need the script, do what makes sense for you and your girls.

### Prepare Ahead

- Print out a PDF of the Girl Scout Promise and Law, one for each girl.
- Print out a PDF of the "My Story Tree" on page 5 of the badge booklet, one for each girl.
- Find 2-3 sticks that have interesting bends and twists in them to make a "tree."
- Poster or whiteboard with questions that girls can ask each other for Activity 5:
- What are your favorite subjects in school?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- What is your favorite activity or sport?
- How would you describe your style?
- What music do you like to listen to?
- Find five photos of families in funny situations – they can be your own, from a magazine, greeting cards, or from online. Print them out and bring them to the meeting.
- Make a crest out of construction paper or poster board for each girl. (Approximately 4" x 4")

### Get Help from Your Friends and Family Network

Your Friends and Family Network can include:

- Girls' parents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, etc.
- Other volunteers who have offered to help with the meeting.

Ask your network to help:

- make snacks
- welcome girls to the meeting
- supply materials for the session

### Meeting Length

90 minutes

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The times given for each activity will be different, depending on how many girls are in the troop. Plus, girls may really enjoy a particular activity and want to continue past the allotted time. As much as possible, let them! That's part of keeping Girl Scouting girl-led! And what do you do if you only have an hour for the meeting? Simply omit some of the activities.

## Materials

### Activity 1: As Girls Arrive

- PDF of page 5 in My Family Story badge booklet
- Markers and crayons

### Activity 2: Opening Ceremony

- PDF of Girl Scout Promise and Law

### Activity 3: Story Sticks

- Markers
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- 2-3 sticks with bends and twists, for each girl
- Ribbon, enough for each girl
- Hole puncher
- Large plastic cup, one for each girl
- Sand, enough for each girl to fill her large plastic cup

### Activity 4: Family Grab Bag

- Bag from last meeting with family item

### Activity 5: Growing Good Stories

- Timer
- Paper
- Pencils
- Whiteboard/Poster board with sample questions for girls

### Activity 6: It's My Story and I'm Sticking to It

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- Five funny family photos
- Hats
- Scarves
- Funny props

### **Activity 7: Snack break**

- Snack items for trail mix in separate bowls: cereal, granola, raisins, nuts, chocolate chips, shelled pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- Drink-size paper cups or small paper bowls, one for each girl
- Spoons to scoop snacks
- Juice or water

### **Activity 8: Family Crest**

- Crest shapes, one for each girl
- Markers/crayons
- Ruler

### **Activity 9: Closing Ceremony**

- My Family Story badges, one for each girl

## **Detailed Activity Plan**

### **Activity 1: As Girl Arrive**

#### **Time Allotment**

10 minutes

#### **Materials**

- PDF of page 5 in My Family Story badge booklet
- Markers and crayons

#### **Steps**

As girls arrive, have them fill in the story tree with fun things about their Brownie family.

#### **SAY:**

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- *As you arrive, talk to each other about what makes each of you special.*
- *Ask each other questions like:*
- *Do you have a nickname? What is it?*
- *What's your favorite color?*
- *What's your favorite food?*
- *Do you have a pet? If so, what kind and what is its name?*
- *Then, fill in the story tree with drawings and fun facts about the girls in your Brownie family.*

## **Activity 2: Opening Ceremony**

### **Time Allotment**

10 minutes

### **Materials**

- PDF of Girl Scout Promise and Law

### **Steps**

Gather girls in a circle. Welcome them to the My Family Story meeting.

Girls say the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law together.

### **SAY:**

- *Welcome back to another fun-filled meeting about families.*
- *Since our last meeting, I hope you have learned more about your family and your family's stories. This week we are going to have a good time working on some cool family projects.*
- *When you came in, you worked on creating a story tree for your Brownie family.*
- *What were some of the fun things you learned about each other?*
- *Was there anything that surprised you?*
- *Today, we will create your family story tree, just like the one you did for your Brownie friends. You'll find out how to talk to your family members to learn more about them. You'll also make some cool crafts for your families. Let's get started!*

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### Activity 3: Story Sticks

#### Time Allotment

20 minutes

#### Materials

- Markers
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- 2-3 sticks with bends and twists, for each girl
- Ribbon, enough for each girl
- Hole puncher
- Large plastic cup, one for each girl
- Sand, enough for each girl to fill her large plastic cup

#### Steps

Each girl should fill the cup with sand, then push sticks into the sand to make a “tree.” Then, use the construction paper to make leaves for members of their family. Tie ribbon to the leaves and hang them on the tree to display.

#### SAY:

- *You’ve probably heard of a family tree, but a story tree takes it to the next level! Instead of just listing members of your family, a story tree tells special details about each family member. It could be a fun fact, a favorite color, a favorite place to vacation, a favorite hobby – anything that you think of when you see that person.*
- *Let’s make a tree that you can display at home that gives anyone who comes over some special stories about our family.*
- *Start by taking a cup, and filling it with sand.*
- *Then, find 2-3 sticks that you like, and stick them in the sand so it looks like a tree.*
- *Once you have your tree finished, cut leaves out of the construction paper.*
- *Then punch a hole in each leaf. [I can help you with this.]*
- *On each leaf, write your family member’s name, and then write or draw something special about that person. Don’t worry if you don’t know anything, you can always ask them later and keep adding to your tree.*
- *Feel free to add family friends as well.*
- *Hang the leaves on your story tree so all can see!*

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## Activity 4: Family Grab Bag

### Time Allotment

15 minutes

### Materials

- Bag from last meeting with family item

### Steps

Each girl talks about the item they brought in and how it reminds them of a special family member.

### SAY:

- *At our last meeting, you made a special bag that showed a family member that you really like or are close to. Hopefully you were able to find an item at home that reminded you of that family member. Even if you didn't, you can still share who the person is and what makes them special to you.*
- *So let's share some of the cool objects that you brought in, and hear more about everyone's fun family members!*

## Activity 5: Growing Good Stories

### Time Allotment

10 Minutes

### Materials

- Timer
- Paper
- Pencils
- Whiteboard/Poster board with sample questions for girls

### Steps

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Girls interview each other to practice getting good stories from people.

**SAY:**

- *You might remember, we talked about how you might feel closer to some family members more than others. That's okay! But, you could be missing out on getting to know people in your family, just because you don't know how to ask the right questions.*
- *Pair up into groups of two.*
- *Spend three minutes asking the other person questions about themselves.*
- *You can use the questions on the board, or feel free to ask your own.*
- *Then switch places.*
- *After you've had a chance to ask each other questions, we'll come back together, and you will tell the story of your partner to the group.*
- *You can use the paper and pencils to write words down to help you remember.*

**Activity 6: It's My Story and I'm Sticking To It**

**Time Allotment**

15 minutes

**Materials**

- Five funny family photos
- Hats
- Scarves
- Funny props

**Steps**

Girls take a look at a funny family photo, and act out what they think might have happened.

**SAY:**

- *Have you ever had a photo taken, and then when you look back on the photo, it reminds you of that day? Well to you, the photo might bring back a memory. But to someone else who wasn't there, it may seem like something completely different.*
- *Let's break into groups – I'm going to hand each group a photo of a family.*



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- *Look at the photo and think of a story that might begin or end with that moment.*
- *Think about what might have been happening. Then, act out what you think was going on.*
- *We'll perform our skits for each other and I'll tell you how close you are to what really happened.*

## Activity 7: Snack Break

### Time Allotment

5 minutes

### Materials

- Snack items for trail mix in separate bowls: cereal, granola, raisins, nuts, chocolate chips, shelled pumpkin or sunflower seeds
- Drink-size paper cups or small paper bowls, one for each girl
- Spoons to scoop snacks
- Juice or water

### Steps

Have girls create her unique snack by scooping a mixture of snack item offerings.

### SAY:

- *Just like every family is unique, so are you. That's why your snack is unlike any of the other girls' snacks. You picked what you wanted.*

[While girls are snacking...]

- *In what ways are you similar to other people in your family?*
- *In what ways are you different?*

## Activity 8: Family Crest

### Time Allotment

10 minutes



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### Materials

- Crest shapes, one for each girl
- Markers/crayons
- Ruler

### Steps

Girls make a family crest incorporating what they've learned about their own families.

### SAY:

- *We've spent a lot of time talking about what makes our own families special and what family means to us.*
- *Many years ago—in the medieval time period, family crests were used to represent a family group. These crests often appeared on fighting shields and had colors and pictures that told the family story. For example, a picture of a boar meant the family was strong. These crests were handed down from generation to generation.*
- *Let's create a crest for your family.*
- *Use a ruler and pencil and divide the crest into 4 sections.*
- *Inside each section, draw something that describes your family. It can be a picture, a color, a symbol, a letter, a number...whatever you think!*
- *Then, let's show each other our family crests and what each symbol means.*

### Activity 9: Closing Ceremony

#### Time Allotment

5 minutes

#### Materials

- My Family Story badges, one for each girl

#### Steps

Girls form a friendship circle and sing a song.

#### SAY:

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- *You've heard so many amazing family stories today, as well as figured out how to tell your own stories in cool ways. Remember to keep gathering your families' stories, and tell them to younger family members or others who may not know them.*

Ask a girl to end the ceremony by starting the friendship squeeze.