



American Cultures

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

Choose THREE groups that have different racial, cultural, national, or ethnic backgrounds, one of which comes from your own background. Use these groups to meet requirements 1, 2, and 3.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. Do TWO of the following, choosing a different group for each:

- a. Go to a festival, celebration, or other event identified with one of the groups. Report on what you see and learn.

- b. Go to a place of worship, school, or other institution identified with one of the groups. Report on what you see and learn.

- c. Talk with a person from one of the groups about the heritage and traditions of the group. Report on what you learn.

- d. Learn a song, dance, poem, or story that is traditional to one group, and teach it to a group of your friends. _____

- e. Go to a library or museum to see a program or exhibit featuring one group's traditions. Report on what you see and learn.

- 2. Imagine that one of the groups had always lived alone in a city or country to which no other groups ever came. Tell what you think the city or country might be like today. _____

Now tell what you think it might be like if the three groups lived there at the same time. _____

- 3. Tell about some differences between the religions and social customs of the three groups.

Religions:

Social customs:

Tell about some ideas, or ways of doing things that are similar in the three groups. _____

4. Tell about a contribution made to our country by three different people each from a different racial, ethnic, or religious background.

Person 1. _____
Background _____
Contribution _____

Person 2. _____
Background _____
Contribution _____

Person 3. _____
Background _____
Contribution _____

5. Give a talk to your Scout unit or class at school on how people from different groups have gotten along together. _____

Lead a discussion on what can be done to help various groups understand one another better. _____

Requirement resources can be found here:
http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/American_Cultures#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.