



Session Two

Reflection

Time Allowed

15 minutes

Teaching Objectives

- Model an effective reflection experience.
 - Emphasize that in a variety of formal and informal ways, Scoutmasters can use reflection to bring out the deeper meanings of Scouting experiences.
 - Discuss ways that reflection can help reinforce the values of Scouting.
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Materials Needed

- *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009A
 - PowerPoint slides or overheads from CD, if desired
 - Flipchart or other means of writing discussion notes
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Recommended Facility Layout

- Session meeting area. Each participant should have a comfortable place to sit, take notes, and organize written materials. That setting most often consists of tables, each accommodating six to eight participants forming a patrol, and enough chairs for all participants.
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Delivery Method

- Instructor-led discussion
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Instructors' Note

The discussion on reflection can be presented, in part, by involving participants in a reflection of their experience so far with Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. For greatest effect, do not explain the format of the presentation; simply ease into an easygoing visit about their experience, shaping the discussion to highlight some of the key aspects of leading reflection in any Scout setting.

Experiencing Reflection

Open an informal discussion with participants, inviting them to share some of their reactions to their experience with Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training. Encourage the sharing of ideas by asking questions that cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. Guide participants toward thinking through what they have experienced in this training, the effect of that experience, and the lessons they can draw from it.

Allow the conversation to flow for a few minutes, guiding the discussion as if it were a reflection. Use some or all of the following pointers for making the most of an opportunity for reflection:

1. Avoid the temptation to dominate the conversation. Nondirective questions can inspire others to share their understandings, concerns, and vision.
 - What did you think about this activity?
 - What did you like best?
 - What did you like least?
 - What did you learn?
 - How would you do this activity differently next time?
2. Be positive. Reflection can be enlightening and often fun.
3. Remind everyone that the environment of Scouting is a "put-down free zone"—we want to build up others, not put them down.
4. Encourage the group to determine the value of the experience they just had, focusing first on positive aspects.

5. Generalize the experience. A frequent goal of reflection is to help participants make the connection between the activity they have just completed and regular troop experiences. "How could we use the ideas we learned today in our troop?" "How can we use what we just learned about decision making when we're on our next campout?"
6. Steer participants toward setting goals based on what they have learned about their recent experience. Begin with the positive but leave the door open for discussion of changes that will improve activities in the future.

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Exploring Reflection

Reveal to participants the fact that they have been involved in a form of reflection. Based on what they have just experienced, ask them to describe their understanding of *reflection* and how it can be used to enrich the Scouting experience for boys.

"Reflection is a form of careful listening and sharing that allows Scouts and leaders to assess an experience and get from it the greatest value it has to offer."

— *The Scoutmaster Handbook*,
Chapter 11, "Working with Boys"

Ask participants to describe what they saw you doing in guiding the recent discussion and how the guidance you provided turned a normal visit into a meaningful reflection.

Review your perception of the ways in which you guided the group discussion. Mention the six pointers for leading reflections that you were prepared to use during the reflection. (The pointers are noted above in the guidelines for leading the "Exploring Reflection" activity.)

Opportunities for Reflection

Reflection can happen at any time during a Scouting experience and can take any number of shapes.

FORMAL

Perhaps the most formal form of reflection is a Scoutmaster's conference with a Scoutmaster guiding a boy in exploring the meaning of his completion of requirements for a higher rank. A board of review can also serve as a reflection. So can a Scoutmaster Minute at the close of a meeting.

An organized reflection can also be important at the end of an activity or it may take place in the middle of an event, especially if Scouts are struggling to solve a problem or need to stop and work through a disagreement. One exam-

ple of a reflection that you have seen is the video segment "Activity Review," which showed the patrol leaders' council discussing a failed service project.

INFORMAL

Reflection can be very spontaneous. Scouts and adult leaders visiting around a campfire, under a tree during a sudden rainstorm, or on the sidelines during a troop interpatrol game may find tremendous value in sharing thoughts on the recent events and finding the fuller meaning of their experiences.

Reflection and the Values of Scouting

Regardless the form it takes, reflection is also a means by which Scoutmasters can instill the values of Scouting. Boys may not always realize when they have behaved honorably, been trustworthy, or acted in service to others. Encourage them to think through their experiences so that they can recognize how the Scouting ideals are serving as guidelines for the decisions they are making.

Summary

The ease Scoutmasters feel in leading reflections will increase as they gain experience. Scouts becoming accustomed to taking part in reflection will also become better at participating, and can lead similar discussions in the future.

For an in-depth discussion of reflection, see *The Scoutmaster Handbook*, Chapter 11, "Working with Boys."
