

Digging Through the Past



Eco-Action

Eco-action is the Girl Scout name given to efforts to sustain and improve the quality of the environment—air, food, water, land, people, and animals. Eco-action informs you on ways to “walk the talk” for a quality of life that includes caring for the earth.

Each interest project contains activities which are organized into four different categories: Skill Builders, Technology, Service Projects, and Career Exploration. By doing these activities, you will gain insights about yourself—your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes. You will have a range of new experiences, and you will develop valuable skills and expertise in specific areas. *To earn an interest project award, you must complete at least seven activities as follows: two Skill Builders activities; one Technology activity; one Career Exploration activity; Two activities from any category that you choose.*

Skill Builders

1. Learn what you and your family can do to be more environmentally aware. Investigate recycling, composting, reducing water consumption, energy conservation, and precycling (purchasing products with less packaging and buying some things in bulk). Find alternatives to the use of chemicals and pesticides that harm the environment. Incorporate eco-action steps into your lifestyle for one month. At the end of that time, evaluate your actions and make adjustments as needed to continue your commitment.
2. Choose an environmental issue that affects your community, such as water quality, land-use planning, or use of pesticides. Gather information on all sides of the issue, and evaluate it scientifically on the basis of short-term and long-term effects. Share your findings with others through a presentation, “hands-on” activity, debate, or display.
3. Record some pleasant, relaxing sounds and some sounds that make you feel tense. Share your findings with others and exchange ideas with them on ways to minimize annoying or harmful sounds. Find out how loud sounds affect human hearing. Does your community have a noise ordinance? Does it need one?
4. Trace the contributions of someone deeply concerned with environmental quality. Find out how this person became interested in environment problems and how she pursued her interests. Or, find out how different cultures, such as the Navajos in North America, the Yanomanmos in the

April Online IP for Girl Scouts 11 - 17, Page 2

Digging Through the Past: Eco-Action

Amazon Rainforest, or the Aborigines in Australia viewed their relationship to the earth. Ask your librarian to recommend a recent book about one or more of these groups.

Technology

1. Find out about an alternative source of energy (such as solar or wind power) that can cut down on personal consumption of nonrenewable resources and demonstrate to others how this energy source is tapped.
2. Find out about how new technology is used in testing air, water, and soil quality.
3. Participate in an online discussion about one worldwide environment issue to get different perspectives on the issue. Find out if there are any networks or bulletin boards used by young people for environmental action.
4. Recycling has become a major effort in many communities. Find out about one recycled resource and how it is recycled. What products are made from the recycled materials?

Service Projects

1. Create and display posters on energy-saving actions at a mall or other public place and have people sign energy-saving pledges.
2. Volunteer to work on an ongoing environmental project. Or, work as a docent or interpretive guide at an aquarium, botanical garden, zoo, nature center, or museum that addresses environmental issues.
3. Create a directory or display of local, state, or national groups concerned with environmental issues and actions. Include groups that provide materials and opportunities for young people to get involved. Distribute this information to others.
4. Collect information from an organization concerned with environmental issues of particular interest to women and children (for example, birth defects related to pesticide exposure). Create a display or make a presentation on the organization and the issue.

Career Exploration

1. Do a computer search for careers related to the environment. Follow it up by contacting an organization, business, or individual on information on a specific career in this field.
2. Identify three or more degree programs in fields concerned with the environment. Compare the course requirements and list the career possibilities with each of these degrees. Try to visit or speak with someone enrolled in the program or a faculty member.

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April Online IP for Girl Scouts 11 - 17, Page 3
Digging Through the Past: Eco-Action

3. Learn about careers related to the environment and the law. Find out the education requirements and nature of work in those fields.
4. Identify three past and present environmental activists in your community, nation, or the world and learn more about the work of at least one. Using photos, excerpts of speeches, media clips, etc., arrange a display or special ceremony honoring their contributions.

This badge can be found in the book *Interest Projects for girls 11 - 17*, page 58. This text has been reproduced with permission from Girl Scouts of the USA—this document may not be copied or reproduced in any way.