

Section J: **CAMPFIRES, REFLECTIONS, GUIDES' OWN**

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PLANNING THE CAMPFIRE PROGRAM

Units often have casual singsongs, where songs are not sung in any specific order, and requests are allowed. However, on occasion, it is interesting and fun to have a planned or a formal campfire.

1. The structure of a formal Campfire in the Guiding tradition reflects a real campfire. It starts off with a lit match and slowly builds up until it reaches its peak, and then the flames slowly settle down. A formal campfire begins with a campfire opening, some familiar songs, followed by fun songs, action songs and/or skits. Then the campfire quietens down with thoughtful, quieter songs. It closes with a vesper, a closing and taps. A sample list is provided below.
2. A formal campfire has a theme – e.g. Nature, Friendship, International, On the water, etc. All the songs should be linked by this thread with a storyline. The campfire leader makes introductory remarks about each song that continues the story. For this reason, requests are not part of a formal campfire.
3. The campfire is led by one and up to 3 campfire leaders (more is not recommended). Adults should only step in if the group needs to be reminded to be respectful to the campfire leader. The campfire leader announces the page in a songbook and how it will be sung – e.g. in a 2 part round, and shows when the groups are to start and when to end.



Loud Songs, Skits

Fun / Actions Songs

Quieter Songs

Familiar Songs

Vesper

↗ Campfire Opening

Campfire Closing, Taps

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TIPS FOR THE CAMPFIRE LEADER

1. Speak to be heard. Speak clearly and speak with confidence. The more you seem to be in control, the better the group will respond to you.
2. Don't leave big gaps between songs which will give girls opportunities to begin chatting.
3. Not everyone in a patrol is ready to be a campfire leader, so it's best to use only 2 or 3 people as campfire leaders. Otherwise there will be more gaps.
4. Ask the group that is doing a skit how much lead time they will need to get ready. Give them advance notice so there's no gap.
5. Announcements should be done before the campfire begins.
6. Save the teaching of new songs to informal singsongs.
7. Be flexible. Keep a couple of extra songs to be added if the campfire is too short, or be ready to cut a couple of songs if time is running out.

CAMPFIRE ETIQUETTE

1. Give your full attention to the campfire leader(s). Pockets of conversation spoil the mood. Show respect by not fooling around, even quietly. It gets tedious if a campfire leader has to put her hand up often to get everyone back on track.
2. Enjoy the fun songs, but don't go overboard to draw attention to yourself. Campfire is a group activity, not the time to show off.
3. Use the flashlight sparingly so that everyone can appreciate the glow from the fire and the stars above. If you need to use a flashlight, point it down so it doesn't shine into other people's eyes.

REFLECTIONS

Reflections are done every day usually after "O Canada" has been sung and the colour party has returned to the horseshoe. (Make sure someone announces to the campers to "Stand at ease"). Since announcements can be done at breakfast or anytime, it is not necessary to do them at Reflections.

Therefore Reflections are usually fairly short and can include the following:

- A thought for the day
- One or 2 readings interspersed with 1 or 2 songs.

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CAMP OPENING OR CLOSING CEREMONY

A camp opening is like Reflections, but will be longer due to the announcements.

1. After the flag(s) are raised, and the colour party has returned to the horseshoe, the rest of the opening ceremony begins. (Make sure someone announces to the campers to “Stand at ease”).
2. The Responsible Guider (RG) usually makes some welcoming remarks and perhaps announces the theme for the camp. She can let other people plan and carry out the readings and the singing.
3. One or 2 readings interspersed with 1 or 2 songs such as:
 - Guide Marching Song (can be used to march into horseshoe)
 - Guiding Law Song (can be used to march into horseshoe)
 - I Like the Flowers
 - It's a Small World
 - Make New Friends
 - On My Honour
 - Thunder, Thunderation
4. The RG makes important announcement regarding camp set up or upcoming events.

CLOSING CEREMONY

1. March or stand in horseshoe formation.
2. One or 2 readings interspersed with 1 or 2 songs. (Some of the same songs can be sung again.)
3. The Responsible Guiders thanks the people who made the camp possible, and make announcements regarding the take down of the camp, transportation issues, etc.
4. The colour party retires (lowers) the flag(s).

GUIDES' OWN (BROWNIES' OWN, GUIDERS' OWN, ETC.)

Guides' Own is a time for reflection. It is planned and conducted by girls (or adults). It can be thought provoking and inspirational.

- It is usually done outside – in the camp chapel at Camp Olave, on the beach, in an opening in the forest, or around the campfire.
- It can be done any day of the week – whatever suits the program or the weather, etc.
- If the words of a song fit the theme, but the girls don't know the song, use the words as a reading.
- As with Reflections, Opening Ceremonies etc, intersperse readings with a few songs. (It doesn't need to be a sombre event.)
 - Allelu, Praise Ye the Lord
 - Guide Marching Song (can be used to march into horseshoe)
 - Guiding Law Song (can be used to march into horseshoe)
 - I Like the Flowers
 - It's a Small World

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- Make New Friends
 - On My Honour
 - Thunder, Thunderation
- There are many books and the internet where you can find a lot of inspirational stories or sayings, such as the one in Campfire Activities called “Frogs in Cream” (page 95). You can also extend this reading by asking a few girls to express how they would apply this in their own lives.
 - If you don’t have readings, you can get girls to pair up (before they walk into Guides’ Own) with someone they didn’t know before camp or didn’t know well. Have them sit beside each other and at the appropriate time, have each girl tell her partner one of the following:
 - What being in Guiding has done for them.
 - What they like about this camp.
 - What they have learned from living close to nature.Then have a few girls share their thoughts with the whole group.

OTHER RESOURCES

1. <http://tuneguide.e-guiding.com> has about 100 songs that any musical person (parent, older girl, etc.) can download and learn from the computer or an iPod. This website however, only provides the tune, and not the music notes or the lyrics.

Tune Guide Companion is an Excel spreadsheet for the songs above that will give you the songbooks where those songs can be found (and what page), as well as other useful information such as the theme, the type of song, and which country (or Canadian province) the song came from.

2. <http://www.ultimatecampresource.com/site/camp-activities/camp-songs.html>
3. http://www.ontariocamps.ca/campers/songs_poems.html
4. http://dragon.sleepdeprived.ca/songbook/songbook_index.htm Becky’s Campfire Songs
5. <http://www.acacamps.org/campmag/1007/camp-songs-history-and-traditions>
6. <http://www.wholesalecentral.com/n-lets-go-camping.html>
7. In Lions Area you can contact the Music Resource Person, Ming Berka to come to your unit on your usual meeting night to teach campfire songs. No charge.