



Introduction to a project approach in Scouting
LET'S DO A SCOUT PROJECT!



World Organization
of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale
du Mouvement Scout



STRATEGY

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World Scout Bureau
P.O. Box 241,
1211 Geneva 4, Switzerland

worldbureau@world.scout.org
<http://www.scout.org>

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FOREWORD

“Let’s do a Scout project!” is intended for Scout leaders. It explains, step-by-step, how you can use a project approach to provide a rich and exciting learning environment for young people¹.

You may find a project approach useful if, for example, you are having difficulty in motivating young people to progress, or in applying the Scout Method in practice or in accommodating different needs, abilities and interests in the unit².

While a project approach may be particularly suited to the needs of the adolescent age range, it can be used with any age group in Scouting - provided that the approach is adapted in scope and complexity to the age range that you are working with.

As an educational tool, a project approach is equally effective in industrialised countries and in the developing world. The nature and scope of Scout projects will evidently vary according to the needs and interests of the young people that you are working with and the level of resources available.

Whatever the nature of the project, each Scout project is unique - created by that unique Scout unit which is yours. This is why a booklet such as this cannot offer solutions to every problem that you may encounter. However, it is hoped that *“Let’s do a Scout project!”* will help you to find some of the answers.

¹ This booklet is not intended as a guide to project management in the administrative sense of the term (e.g. accounting procedures). There are many good manuals available in bookshops. If you feel that such a book could be a useful complement, choose one that is adapted to the management of small-scale projects.

² Throughout this booklet, “team” and “unit” are used in a generic sense referring to the small group of young people and to the totality of small groups operating together at local level in any age section.



“Of course, there had been problems... like the afternoon when there was strong wind and rain and some of the stage decorations blew away... or like one day when the Chefs had mixed up market days and there was little to eat for supper... or like the day when the mule stood on the improvised steel drum and squashed it... But what an adventure!”

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A SCOUT PROJECT?

First, what is a project?

In general terms, a project is something that one intends to achieve by a given time in the future. It involves setting a clearly defined goal to reach, working out what needs to be done - when and how - and then... doing it! A project is not one activity, but many different activities - each of which needs to be planned, organised and carried out in order to reach the goal.

A project is not something that you simply need to remember to do tomorrow. It requires effort and perseverance.

Reaching the goal of a project is certainly something to celebrate - but before that, taking time to think about the whole adventure, what you learned along the way, what you would do differently next time, and so on, can give the celebration more meaning.

What then, is a Scout project?

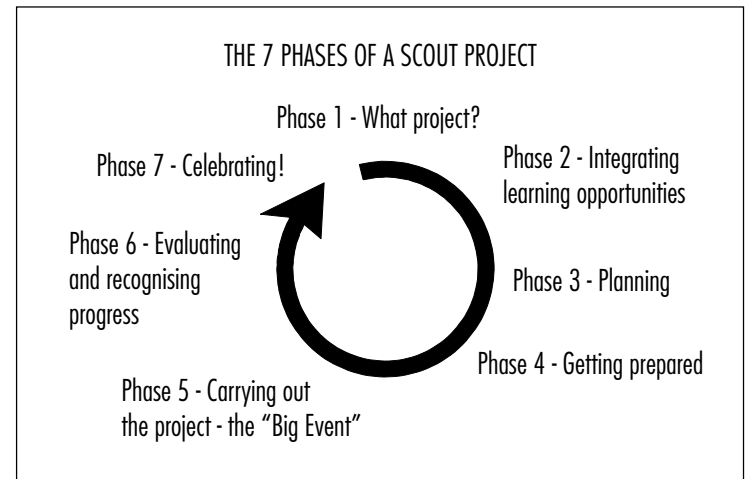
A Scout project is an educational approach which involves:

- a collective enterprise
(i.e. something that a team or unit decides to undertake together, e.g. an expedition, a play or musical show, the renovation or construction of a building, etc., etc.)
- with a clearly defined goal
(i.e. what the project sets out to achieve)
- involving 7 phases
(i.e. it involves a clear process, bringing the project from the initial ideas expressed to a celebration of achievements)

A Scout project is:

- A collective enterprise
- with a clearly defined goal,
- involving 7 phases,
- based on the use of the Scout Method,
- that incorporates a variety of learning opportunities and
- takes into account varying interests, talents, capacities and needs,
- that all of the young people in a team or a unit are committed to achieving through personal effort,
- by a given time in the future.

- based on the use of the Scout Method
(i.e. the way in which the project is planned, organised and carried out makes full use of the Scout Method)
- that incorporates a variety of learning opportunities
(i.e. it enables each person to gain knowledge, skills and attitudes in a variety of areas)
- that takes into account varying interests, talents, capacities and needs
(i.e. within the framework of the project, the young people are able to make choices as to the ways in which they will contribute to its success)
- that all of the young people in a team or a unit are committed to achieving through personal effort
(i.e. the project is not imposed on the young people - it is based on a clearly defined goal that they take part in establishing and that they want to achieve)
- by a given time in the future.
(i.e. it has a clearly defined beginning and end - it does not go on forever).



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A SCOUT PROJECT?

A Scout project involves two kinds of “purposes”.

The first, referred to in this booklet as “educational objectives” or “objectives”, is the opportunities for young people to progress in their personal development plan (e.g. to develop a greater ability to work with others, to become more involved in decision-making, to be able to assume greater responsibility, to develop a greater understanding of others, to become more actively involved in the community, to discover or pursue talents, gain practical skills, etc.). The “objectives” should answer the question: “What will the young people have learned/gained/understood as a result?”

The second, referred to as the “project goal(s)”, is what a specific project sets out to achieve. The project goal should answer the question: “Why are we doing this particular project?” (E.g. to conduct a survey on X, to create awareness about Y, to build Z.)

WHAT KIND OF PROJECT CAN BE A SCOUT PROJECT?

A Scout project can be an expedition, a musical show, the construction or renovation of a building, a campaign to promote child or adolescent health, or whatever. A project approach could even be applied to making a meal together! It is not the nature of a project that makes it a Scout project, but the use of the Scout Method.

Each phase of a Scout project involves activities which contribute towards achieving the project³. Each activity offers specific learning opportunities. Thus, the young people are actively involved in the process of deciding upon, planning, organising, preparing, carrying out, evaluating and celebrating the project in ways appropriate to their capacities.

While some activities may involve an emphasis on certain elements of the Scout Method, by the end of the project all of the elements should have come into play in a natural way.

Whatever the nature of the enterprise, a Scout project is one which is:

- based on the young people’s needs and interests;
- challenging (offering the young people opportunities to go beyond their current capacities - both as a group and as individuals);
- rewarding (offering constructive learning experiences);
- useful (i.e. by the end of the project, something should have changed for the better as a result of having undertaken the project).

A Scout project may involve only one team, or it may involve the whole unit. Doing a Scout project, however, does **not** require excluding other, non-project related activities for the duration of the project.

³The young people are not directly involved in Phase 2: Integrating learning opportunities (as this involves only the adult leadership team). However, at a later stage in the process, each young person is nonetheless fully involved in deciding how he or she intends to progress towards the objectives through the variety of ways in which he or she chooses to take part in the project.

A Scout project is **not** an enterprise which is entirely decided upon, planned by and involving mainly adults in which the young people only take part in minor or unchallenging ways. The active participation of young people is an essential part of a Scout project.

HOW LONG AND HOW COMPLEX SHOULD A SCOUT PROJECT BE?

A Scout project may be simple and short in duration (for example a few activities linked towards an outcome within the space of one or two Scout meetings). A Scout project may also be more complex, constituting a framework of activities for several months.

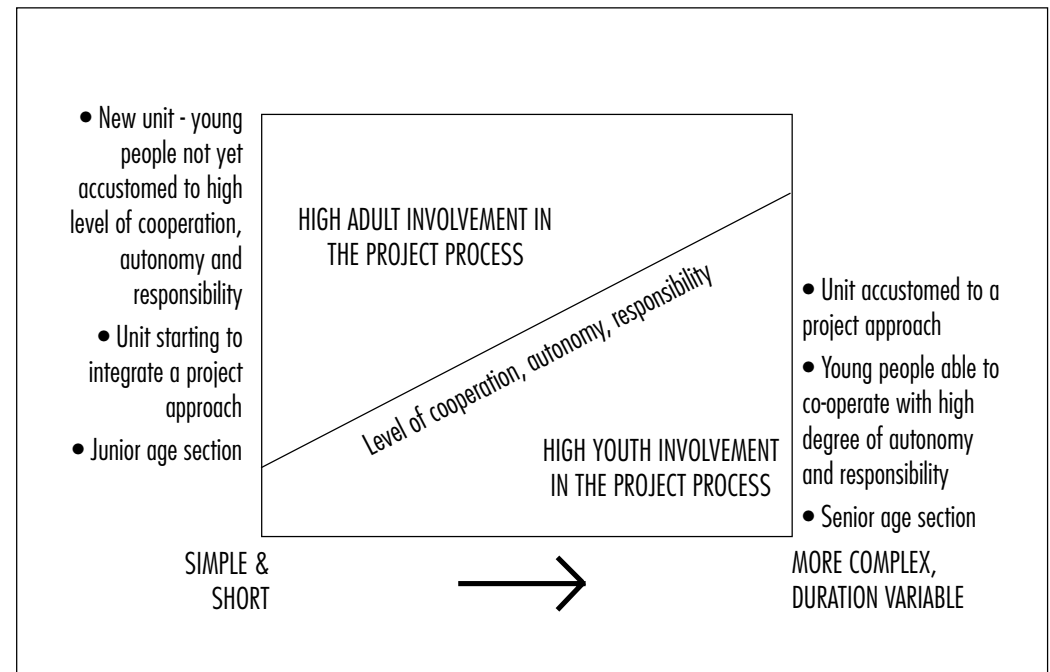
The ideal duration and complexity of a Scout project depends on many factors. These include:

- the level of maturity of the young people you are working with (which is not always just a question of age);
- the experience that they - and you - have of working together in this way; and
- the amount of time and energy that all of you are willing to commit to a project.

Generally speaking, the younger the age group the shorter their attention span and the more difficult it is for them to remain motivated.

The various phases need to be adapted to the capacities of the young people and take place over a time span that is adapted to the age group.

As the young people - and you - gain experience, the projects can become gradually more ambitious. The more ambitious the project, the greater the need to cooperate and to make a personal contribution to the collective enterprise. The more ambitious the project, the greater the learning opportunities in all areas of development.



WHAT CAN A PROJECT APPROACH OFFER?

A project approach provides a framework which can help you to:

- promote *a rich learning environment* in which all of the elements of the Scout Method come into play.
- offer young people *a sense of purpose*. A project approach can help young people to see practical and useful reasons to learn. When the young people are really motivated to make their project a success, they can often make a great effort to progress. Young people can thus enjoy a real sense of achievement, both personally and as a group.
- provide *a real life context*. Real decisions have to be made, real responsibilities undertaken, real difficulties and disagreements overcome.
- stimulate *constructive peer relationships*. A project approach can help you to stimulate a sense of group life. What each person gains is used for the benefit of the group, and the group supports each person. The success of a project depends on everyone's participation.

If some young people avoid doing what they had agreed to do, the others in the group will make their dissatisfaction clear. As young people have a substantial influence on each other, a project approach can help you to channel peer influence in a positive direction.

- offer *a memorable learning context*. The highlights shared, the difficulties overcome, a sudden sense of belonging, a particular turning point in personal

progression, etc., all tend to be more clearly situated in time and context for young people.

- accommodate *individual needs and a variety of interests*. In a project approach, some activities may be undertaken by all of the teams; others may be specific to each team. Still others may involve only 2 or 3 young people. At the same time, each person is able to contribute in an equally meaningful and valid way to the success of the collective enterprise.
- offer an *enriched progressive scheme*. It can help to broaden and deepen reflection on the educational needs and interests of young people at a given time in a particular society.
- promote *value-based learning*. A project approach requires a concrete code of living, based on the Scout law. The code of living is used as a constant reference throughout the project process (e.g. when disagreements need to be settled, or when evaluating what went well or less well). As a result, the values underlying the Scout law can become more meaningful to the young people.
- address the needs and interests of *the adolescent age range*. However, you can also adapt the approach in complexity and duration for other age groups.
- stimulate *a meaningful and constructive relationship between young people and yourselves, as adults*. In different ways, both the adult leadership team and the young people become involved in, and committed to, the successful outcome of the project.

- enjoy *an enriching role as an adult leader* - provided you truly wish to extend beyond organising and monitoring activities toward becoming a true educator. Mistakes and nearly missed deadlines are part of the learning process - patience, common sense and a sense of humour are definitely recommended - but then, what a sense of achievement!

YOUR ROLE AS AN ADULT LEADER

Whatever the age range that you work with, the role that you play, as an adult leader, is of crucial importance.

Your role is not to impose your own project idea, organise everything yourself - or with other adults - and invite the young people to take part in one or two aspects of the project. Neither is your role one of “laissez-faire”, i.e. to simply stand back and watch what happens, without ever intervening.

Your role is about:

Establishing a partnership

A Scout project involves a partnership between young people and you, as an adult leader. The partnership needs to be based on mutual trust and respect.

Guiding towards feasible projects

You will need to guide them towards project ideas that are feasible and that they are likely to be able to achieve if they all make an effort.

Incorporating learning opportunities

You will need to incorporate learning opportunities into the general project idea so that each young person can progress towards a number of educational objectives.

Ensuring educational progress

It is up to you to always bear in mind the purpose of a Scout project: the progress that each young person makes towards his or her educational objectives through the multitude of experiences that the project offers.

Ensuring a successful outcome

A Scout project also involves reaching a number of goals determined by the nature of the project. It is therefore also up to you to keep the global picture of the project in mind and always aim for a successful outcome (e.g. successfully providing the intended service to the community, completing the expedition, etc.). Both the educational purpose of the project and the project’s goals are important.

Using the Scout law as a practical code of living

There are bound to be disagreements along the way. It is thus important to have a practical code of living, based on the Scout promise and law, which sets out the rights and obligations of each person, and to which the young people agree to do their best to abide.

Making the best use of all of the elements of the Scout Method

A project approach provides a context for the Scout Method to be used to its full potential (the practical use of the Scout law and promise, as described above, is only one element of the Scout Method). However, making full use of all of

the elements will not happen automatically - you will have to think through the project and examine how you can strengthen the use of the various elements. As you do so, you may discover new ways of improving the way in which the unit operates.

Keeping motivation going and offering support

You will need to support the young people in achieving their project. They will probably find some aspects to be really enjoyable and others less so. You will need to think how to make the less enjoyable - but necessary - aspects of the project more stimulating.

Bear in mind that it may often be tempting when, halfway through the project, the young people fall behind schedule, to do yourself what they should have done. In such cases, your role is not to replace them, but to help them to succeed by remotivating them and helping them sort out their difficulties if necessary. The rewards of achievement will soon outweigh the difficulties encountered.

Judging what young people are capable of achieving requires a little experience. This is why it is always makes sense to build on a small success than to recover enthusiasm after a big failure!

WHAT DOES A SCOUT PROJECT INVOLVE?

The phases and the steps within each phase are outlined in the following pages, accompanied by an illustration of a project.

The project illustrated is based on a true Scout project involving 14-17 year olds. A project of the richness described in this booklet does not happen overnight - it took a year for the adult leader to help the newly constituted group of young people to operate according to the Scout Method.

Gradually, through a variety of short-term projects, mostly in the wilderness, with an accent on developing a sense of group life, the young people eventually formed close-knit, dynamic teams.

It is not at all recommended that you start with a project of the duration and complexity described in the following pages. It is described solely with a view to illustrating the richness of the learning experiences that a project approach can provide.

THE 7 PHASES OF A SCOUT PROJECT

1 WHAT PROJECT?

- Step 1: Time to dream**
Discussing, in teams, what the young people would like to do.
- Step 2: Sharing ideas with the whole Scout unit**
Sharing teams' ideas and discussing them as a unit.
- Step 3: "Decoding" the ideas**
Reflecting as a unit on what is really important to young people in the ideas expressed.
- Step 4: Building consensus**
As a unit, creating a project through incorporating what was considered important in the ideas and linking them together towards an agreed project goal (e.g. an expedition to X in order to do Y).

2 INTEGRATING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

(This phase needs to be carried out by the adult leadership team)

- Step 1: Assessing the level of difficulty**
Considering and modifying, if necessary, aspects which are too difficult, not feasible, too expensive.
- Step 2: Building a project outline**
Taking a preliminary look at what learning opportunities could be integrated to enrich the outline of the project.
- Step 3: Working out the learning opportunities**
Examining the project outline in terms of the learning opportunities.
- Step 4: Making full use of the Scout Method**
Checking how to make the best possible use of the Scout Method.
- Step 5: Making full use of the dynamics**
Checking how to make the best possible use of the dynamics of Scouting in the unit.

3 PLANNING

- Step 1: Sharing the enriched project with the team leaders' council**
Working with the team leaders.
- Step 2: Working out the organisational aspects and a time schedule**
Listing everything that needs to be done and when.
- Step 3: Estimating a budget**
Establishing a preliminary budget.
- Step 4: Working out the structure of roles and task forces**
Working out the various areas of responsibility.

4

GETTING PREPARED

Step 1: Sharing Phase 3 with the unit

Presenting the enriched project to the entire unit.

Step 2: Matching personal educational objectives to the tasks

Guiding each young person towards roles and task forces which correspond to personal interests and which present challenges for personal progression.

Step 3: Learning to do the job

Helping the young people to gain the knowledge and skills needed.

Step 4: Particular tasks for the adult leaders

Monitoring progress and dealing with aspects beyond the young people's capacities.

5

CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT - THE "BIG EVENT"

Step 1: Carrying out the project

6

EVALUATING AND RECOGNISING PROGRESS

Step 1: Evaluating the project and each person's progress

Examining, as a unit, what went well and less well, the highlights and low points. Examining what the young people gained out of the project and to what extent they managed to make personal progress.

Step 2: Recognising progress

Formally recognising the progress made by each young person.

7

CELEBRATING!

Step 1: Reflecting on spiritual values

Organising a time for spiritual reflection based on the young people's experiences.

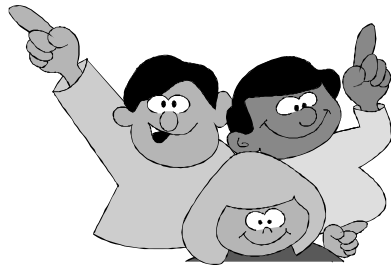
Step 2: Organising the festivities

Organising a celebration (e.g. a parents' evening) with refreshments and an exhibition of photos or a slide show, or some other form of describing and celebrating the project.

PHASE 1 STEP 1 - TIME TO DREAM

WHAT PROJECT? What it involves

→ Invite the young people to work in their teams and discuss ideas of something that they would really like to do. Brief the team leaders to encourage a brainstorming exercise where each team member can offer ideas. The team leaders should encourage the team to discuss the ideas, then help the team to choose one or two. The team leaders can express their ideas, too, but should not dominate the team discussion. The team leaders need to keep a written record of the ideas retained.



→ You could establish a simple list of criteria to guide them. The ideas in the criteria suggested below are to:

- help them think beyond the specialised interests or capacities of a few towards the needs and interests of the larger group;
- help them reflect on what could be achieved through the project (for example, how the project could make a contribution to a better world);
- guide them away from duplicating the opportunities available to them elsewhere.

Learning opportunities...
 Time to dream:
 • Intellectual: creative thinking/imagining;
 • Social: communication skills (learning to express oneself and listening to others); getting to know each other better.

CRITERIA	PROJECT IDEA		
Is it something that - we could all actively be involved in? - we would really: - like to do, - find challenging, - find rewarding and useful? - we would not normally do at school, in our clubs, or with our family?	NO.1	NO.2	NO.3

The list of criteria should be kept simple. They should not spend time trying to develop the perfect project. You will see why in Step 3.

→ Give them a deadline for submitting their ideas to the unit, e.g. 15 minutes for new units or a young age section, or by the next meeting for units that want to think their ideas through more seriously.

Possible difficulties...

What if the young people are unlikely to present any ideas?

Try to reflect on why you think this. Do they not know each other well enough? Do they have ideas but feel too shy to express them? Do they need examples of what they could do to start the discussion?

Depending on how you sense the situation and on your knowledge of the young people, you could:

- check with your national Scout association to see if they have a slide show, video clip, booklets, etc., on exciting projects that other units have done to stimulate interest and discussion.
- offer a few ideas of your own, based on what you think might interest them. (Do not forget, however, that doing so is only a temporary measure, until they start to have ideas of their own.)
- start with a game of a more physical nature related to your project idea - for example a simulation of an exploratory expedition, or whatever. Once the physical energy has been expended, you could

build on the excitement of the activity and ask them what they think of going on a real expedition.

- spend some time with them in the preceding weeks to help them to get to know each other better and build up a climate of self-confidence and trust. Make sure that they know that you are interested in their ideas in general. You could organise a mini-youth forum on problems that they face or that they have encountered in their community. Then you could ask them to think about what action they could take to improve the situation.
- simply take advantage of informal moments and listen to their conversations in order to discover what interests or worries them.

STEP 2 - SHARING IDEAS WITH THE WHOLE SCOUT UNIT

What it involves

There are many ways of getting the young people to share their ideas with the unit.

- You could, for example, ask each team to present their ideas by writing them on pieces of paper and sticking them on the wall or spreading them out on the floor; or to represent the ideas by drawings; or to act out the ideas and have the others guess what the idea is.

You could also mention different ways of presenting their ideas and let each team decide for itself.

Learning opportunities...

Sharing ideas:

- Intellectual and social (psycho-social): developing openness and tolerance towards others (realising that others have valid ideas, too); developing a sense of belonging to a larger entity: the unit.

Decoding the ideas:

- Intellectual and emotional (psycho-affective): developing the capacity to analyse an idea and find what is personally meaningful in it; developing the self-confidence to express what is personally meaningful or worrisome;
- Social: developing constructive contact with other young people and with the adult leader.



STEP 3 - "DECODING" THE IDEAS

What it involves

Remember that you gave them free reign to use their imagination. The ideas are likely to range from the impossible to the totally mundane. This is perfectly normal!

Sometimes, what young people initially say they want to do is only loosely connected to what really is important to them. It is up to you to try to find out what lies behind what they say.

- Encourage the teams to explain their ideas to you. Make the discussion light-hearted, but make sure that the young people feel that they are being listened to.
- Listen to what seems important to them in the explanation and encourage discussion.

For example, if a team wanted to cross a continent by donkey (!), was it the idea of discovering somewhere completely new, an unusual form of transportation, or contact with animals that seemed most important to them?

STEP 4 - BUILDING CONSENSUS

What it involves

- Summarise the main ideas that you thought seemed to be important to the young people.

Example:

One team wanted to put on a play, another wanted to put on a musical concert, another wanted to ride horses, another wanted to travel.

- Think with the young people how these different ideas could be incorporated into one project which would become the unit's project for a determined period of time.



Learning opportunities...

Building consensus:

- Intellectual: developing the capacity for creative thinking, perceiving relationships between different ideas;
- Social: developing an awareness of democracy through the way in which the unit functions. There is no competition for one team's idea to "win" (as all the others would feel that they had "lost"). Each team contributes to the global project - no team's main idea is ignored; developing an awareness of being part of a larger entity: the unit.



Example:

The project that resulted from these ideas was: traveling in teams by horse/mule and wagon. The unit was to cover a circuit of 200 km. over a two-week period, putting on a musical play in a number of villages along the way.

Possible difficulties...

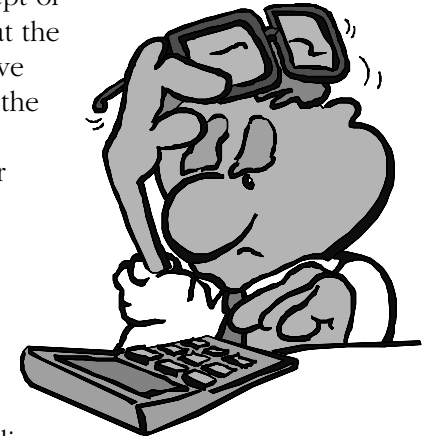
What if the project is likely to be expensive?

Any project is going to cost money. If the likely cost of the project is far beyond what can be raised through a reasonable amount of effort, then this can be discussed openly with the young people and a compromise found.

A key educational concept of a project approach is that the young people can achieve something that is out of the ordinary, but that it will require an effort on their part.

Developing autonomy requires developing resourcefulness and becoming actively involved in finding the resources needed, including earning money through fund-raising initiatives and odd jobs.

In some cases, parents may be able and willing to contribute financially. You may wish to request their assistance, but they should only be asked to contribute a proportion of the costs, never the totality.



PHASE 2 INTEGRATING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Everything that needs to be done to prepare and carry out the project constitutes a framework of activities. (This does not exclude other activities unconnected to the project, especially if the main event of the project is scheduled to take place later in the year.)

The learning opportunities offered by the activities and the way in which the young people take part in the life of the team and unit (e.g. general attitudes, responsibilities, etc.) provide a basis for personal progression.

This phase involves only the adult leadership team. These meetings therefore take place outside of the regular Scout meetings.

An essential part of your role as an educator is to examine the project from an educational perspective so as to make sure that it offers rich learning experiences for everyone.

If you are the only adult leader in the unit, it may be helpful, in consultation with your District Commissioner, to invite other leaders working with the same age section, or leaders of other age sections in your Scout group to take part in this exercise with you. Doing so may bring forth new ideas, serve to point out problem areas, and help to clarify your thinking.



STEP 1 - ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

What it involves

Most projects will involve aspects that the young people will not be able to deal with themselves. It will be up to you and your adult leadership team to deal with those aspects.

At the same time, a Scout project is primarily the young people's project. The fact that you, as adults, are dealing with some aspects of the project should not detract from their sense of "ownership" of it. A project in which the adult leaders plan, prepare, and organise everything and in which the young people simply arrive for the big event is not a Scout project.

→ Check through the project idea to see what aspects, if any, are too far beyond the young people's capacities.

The project should present a degree of challenge for each person and for the unit as a whole. However, the work that needs to be done in order to achieve the project should not be so far beyond their capacities as to risk resulting in failure.



- Discuss the project with your adult leadership team. Decide how to adjust any aspects that you consider not to be feasible.

Example:

This isn't going to happen for free! Is it reasonable to think that the young people will be able to earn enough funds? Is the educational value of this project worth the effort?

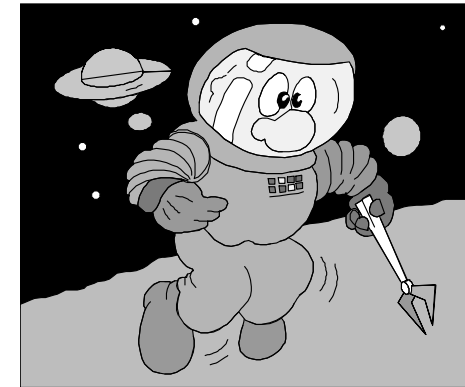
- Work out which aspects will need to be dealt with by the leadership team, and which aspects represent a reasonable challenge for the young people.



Possible difficulties...

What if there are aspects of what they want to do in which none of the adult leaders has any experience/competence?

There are bound to be aspects of what they want to do that you know nothing about, have never tried to do and, perhaps, have no personal interest in doing!



You do not need to be an expert at everything, nor can you be expected to have exactly the same personal interests as the young people.

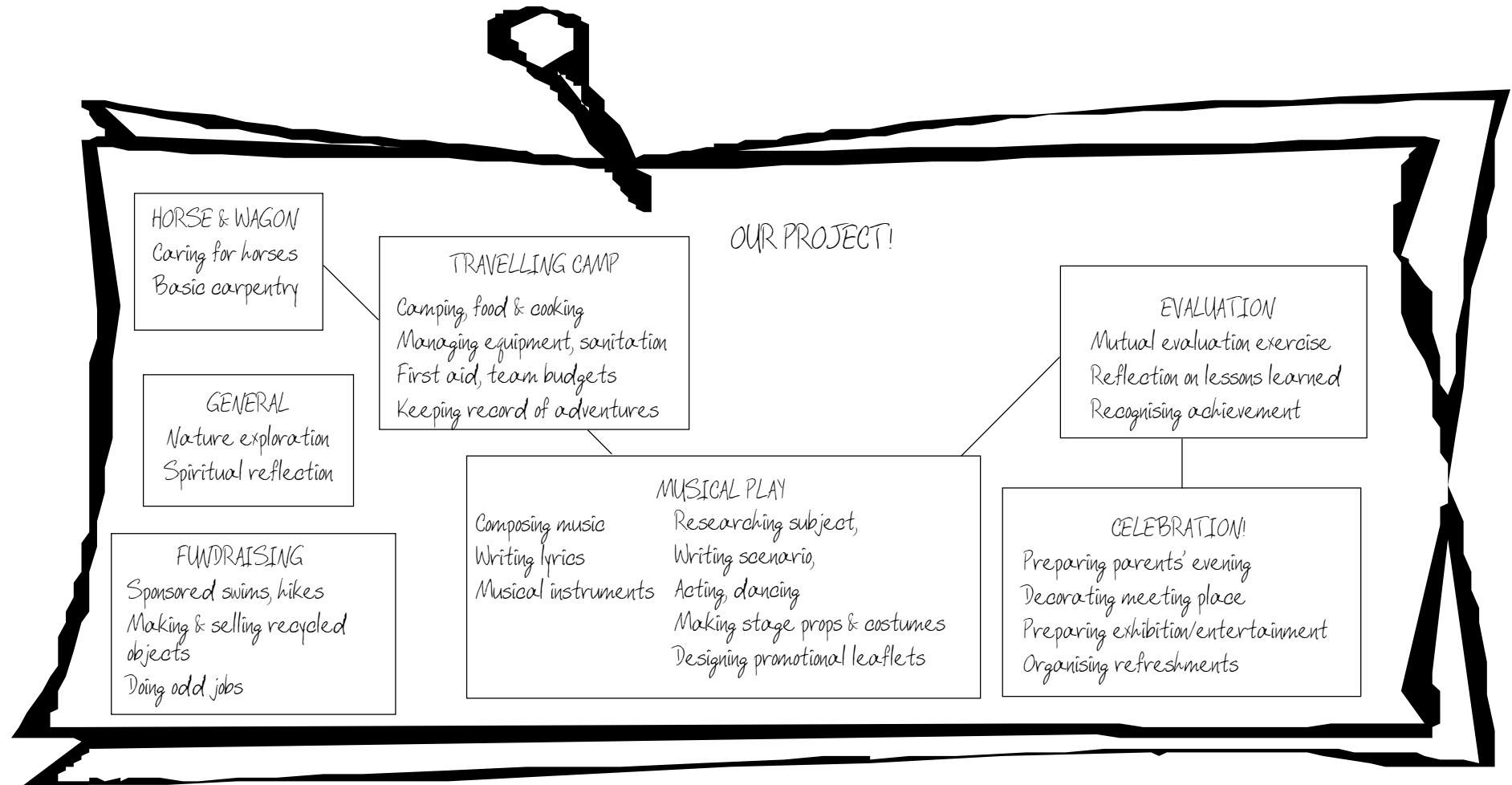
However, you will need to find people who are competent in those aspects and who would be willing to help the young people to gain the necessary skills and experience. These resource persons will also need to be sufficiently qualified so as to be able to monitor safety precautions.

STEP 2 - BUILDING A PROJECT OUTLINE

What it involves

Once you are satisfied that the project is feasible, you will need to review all the various aspects from an educational perspective.

→ You may find it helpful to draw a sketch of the outline of the project. Write up key words to represent the main components of the project (e.g. horses + wagons, travelling camp, music + play, fund-raising, etc.).



STEP 3 - WORKING OUT THE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

What it involves

- Make notes on the learning opportunities that the project could provide and how they could help the young people to advance in the requirements of your association's progressive scheme.

Example:

The adult leaders considered the project outline and examined each of the tasks to see what learning opportunities the tasks could offer. They then considered how these learning opportunities matched the educational objectives for the age section. While it was unrealistic to

PROJECT TASK No. _

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

CARING FOR HORSES

- Know what/when they need/like to eat, drink/rest; what scares them/what soothes them; what hurts them/common ailments - remedies; what to do in case of an accident/limits of non-specialised help; know where to find specialised help if needed; gain the animal's trust.
- Gain the skills necessary;
- Put the skills into practice in a responsible way during the project.
- Be able to coordinate effectively with the carpenters, and with one's team, etc

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES in terms of educational objectives

To develop the ability to:

- Lead an active life through the discovery and pursuit of a hobby or sport
- Analyse and evaluate a situation, consider options, make an appropriate decision and carry it out
- Think both analytically and creatively in order to overcome obstacles
- Manage one's emotions in daily life
- Actively explore future career possibilities (e.g. veterinarian)
- Contribute to a collective enterprise through personal effort
- Act in a caring and responsible way towards others
- Stand back from one's experiences and be open to moments of spiritual reflection

expect any one young person to make progress in all of the objectives, this exercise helped the adult leaders to examine the educational potential of each task.

- Some young people would need to learn the basics of caring for horses.

- Some of the young people would need to learn the basics of carpentry so as to be able to fix the wagons if necessary.

- Some would need to work together to develop the lyrics, create the music - and learn to improve at whatever instruments they want to use.

- Some would need to learn how to make the stage decorations and props.

- Some young people might be interested in making costumes.

- Some young people would need to work out the meals: establishing a healthy diet, what foods they would need to take with them, what could be obtained during the journey; how to preserve fragile foods for health security; work out quantities; take into account dietary restrictions, etc.

- Others would need to learn about first aid in case of minor accidents and obtain emergency materials; obtain emergency phone numbers according to the planned itinerary in case of a more serious accident.

- Some would need to take care of the camping equipment needed: calculate how much equipment and

materials were going to be needed; to contact other Scout groups to see if they could borrow missing items.

- Everyone would need to think what resources they might be able to borrow, and how they were all going to earn the money needed!

→ A question to consider is:

- Is there any other aspect of the project that could be strengthened from an educational point of view?*

Example:

When the adult leadership team considered the learning opportunities identified so far, it became apparent that the project did not offer many opportunities for active citizenship.

The adult leadership team discussed how this dimension could be integrated into the project. As part of their discussion, they recalled that the national Scout association had launched a campaign against drug abuse. National headquarters had recently sent information leaflets for the young people. As it turned out, however, the young people in the unit had already learned at school what different drugs looked like and how different drugs damaged the body and mind. The subject of drugs had not been raised in the unit since that time. After a little more reflection, the adult leadership team found an idea to discuss with the unit.

After a brief consultation with the unit, it was agreed that the story of the play would be about how a young person facing a number of difficulties became a drug user and how that person overcame the addiction.

The key citizenship goal of the project would therefore be to help the general public watching the play to gain a better understanding of why young people were tempted to take drugs in the first place. It was important to stimulate reflection on the difficulties faced by young people and on what kind of support could be provided so as to help young people to overcome their problems in constructive ways.

In order to develop a good play on this theme, the unit would need to go on a fact-finding mission in their community. The unit would need to find out more about peer pressure, bullying at school, family difficulties, adolescent depression, etc. They could also contact health authorities and care institutions. They could organise informal interviews with people who had overcome drug addiction.

Apart from gaining more knowledge about drug-related issues, the young people would also have opportunities to develop contacts with the outside community, empathy with the socially excluded, as well as interview skills, etc.

In addition, acting out the drama on stage could provide a powerful experience (developing self-knowledge, understanding the issues on a deeper level than simply “knowing about” them).

→ Another question to consider is:

- *What learning opportunities can be incorporated through fund-raising initiatives?*

Fund-raising initiatives can provide a wide range of learning opportunities in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, depending on the nature of the activities. In general terms, fund-raising can help to develop a sense of growing autonomy and responsibility. It can serve to stimulate a respect for the value of work. It can stimulate a spirit of enterprise, contact with others in their community, exploration of potential careers, etc.

Example:

Some young people had expressed an interest in a number of artistic activities. All sorts of opportunities for developing creativity and resourcefulness could be developed out of learning how to make and sell decorated T-shirts, household decorations out of recycled materials, etc.

STEP 4: MAKING FULL USE OF THE SCOUT METHOD

Always bear in mind that a project is only a Scout project when it makes full use of the Scout Method⁴.

Beyond the evident knowledge and skills offered by the activities, it is the use of the Scout Method and the dynamics of the Scout Method in action in the unit which will really determine what young people gain out of Scouting. In other words, if activities help young people to progress towards their educational objectives through what they do (content), the Scout Method and the dynamics in the unit also contribute to achieving less obvious educational objectives through how they experience life in the unit (process). This is especially true in terms of development related to dealing with feelings and emotions, relationships and attitudes in general.

What it involves

→ Consider the project in the light of the opportunities to make full use of the educational tools that form the Scout Method.

→ A question to consider is:

- *How can the project help you make full use of all of the different tools that form the Scout Method?*

⁴ A publication available from the World Scout Bureau, entitled "Scouting: an educational system", explores the Scout Method in detail.

IN BRIEF, THE SCOUT METHOD INVOLVES...

• The Scout law ...

Helping each young person to explore, experience, understand and subsequently to identify with the values underlying the Scout law.

→ Questions to consider include:

- *Do we really make the most of the Scout law in a practical way in the unit?*
- *Do we make use of appropriate moments to help young people reflect on their actions and experiences?*
- *How can we use this project to reinforce the use of the Scout law?*

Example:

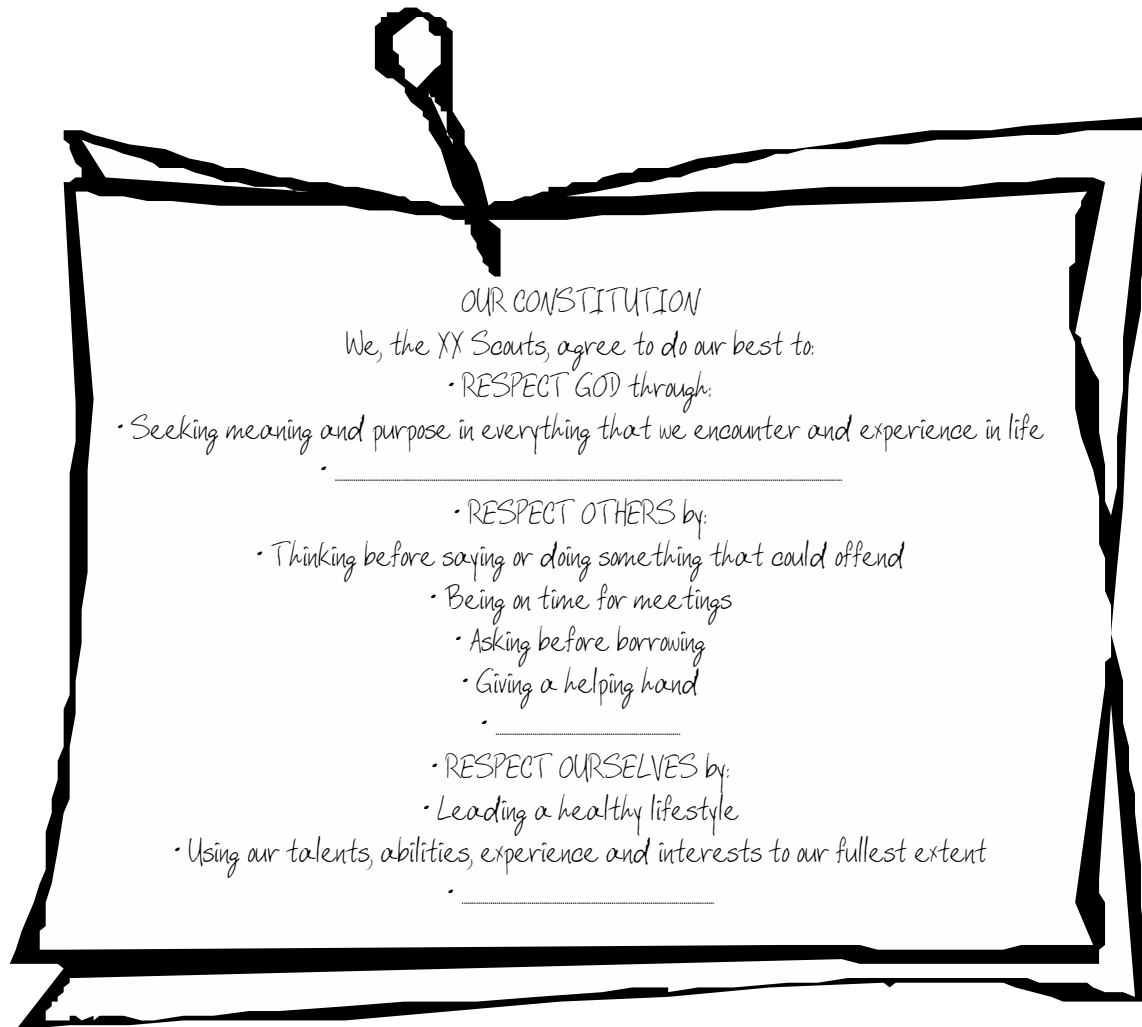
The unit's "Constitution" had already been discussed and written up in the form of a poster in the meeting place, signed by each young person.

The "Constitution" had been developed with the young people through examining the different aspects of the Scout law and how it translated into the rights and duties of each person in the unit. It would serve as a reference for the unit for the year.

The Scout law would also be used during evaluation sessions to help the young people to think about how they had tried to reflect the values inherent in the Scout law during the course of the project, etc.

... and promise

Helping each young person to be true to the promise made to do his or her best to adhere to the code of living and to progress.



Example:

Several newcomers had not made their promise yet. This could be discussed with them when the leaders discussed personal development plans with the young people in Phase 4 - Getting prepared.

The extent to which each young person had done his or her best would be a key point to bring out during evaluation sessions.

• Learning by doing

Helping each young person to gain knowledge, skills and attitudes in all areas of development through first-hand experience.

→ Questions to consider include:

- *Are we offering all of the young people an appropriate level of challenge?*
- *Does our project enable young people to take initiative, make decisions and experience responsibility?*

Example:

Concerning the practical skills and knowledge that would be needed for the project, the leadership team had already gathered some handout sheets that the young people could use as a starting point.

Then the young people would have to learn how to find out further information for themselves and find people who could help them improve their skills. There was nothing like being faced with a real obstacle to learn how to overcome them!

Of course, the adult leadership team would be there to help them solve their difficulties before anyone became really discouraged.

It was in this way in particular that the adult leaders would seek to integrate the attitudes objectives: developing responsibility through taking on and dealing with responsibility, developing a team spirit through needing to work closely with others, etc.

- **The team system**

Helping each young person to:

- develop his or her personal and collective capabilities through pooling and building on their individual skills, talents and experience;
- develop constructive relationships with other young people and adults based on mutual respect, trust and support;
- learn to live according to a democratic form of self-government in partnership with adults.

→ Questions to consider include:

- *For our project, should we encourage each young person in a team to have a completely different task, or should we examine the possibility of 2-3 young people working on the same task?*
- *Do the team members know each other well enough to be able to work together on the project?*

- *What can we do to help the newcomers to become integrated?*

Example:

Through the course of the project there would be aspects in which the young people would work in teams. Each person would have his or her own area of responsibility.

There would be team hikes and weekend camps, community activities, etc., during which the young people would be able to get to know each other better, learn to live together and develop a sense of belonging to a group.

There would also be opportunities to get to know the young people in the other teams through inviting the young people to sign up for task forces, according to their areas of interest.

Occasions would be built into the project for the young people to meet as a unit. Periodic evaluation sessions, a short-term project in nature that was already underway, the musical play itself, the final evaluation and the celebration at the end would all provide opportunities to work together as a unit.

- **The symbolic framework**

Helping the young people to build on their natural capacity for imagination, adventure, creativity and inventiveness in a way which:

- stimulates each person's development;
- helps each one to identify with the directions of development and the values which underlie Scouting;

- invites each young person to explore their own identity through temporary role models;

- fosters cohesiveness and solidarity.

→ Questions to consider include:

- *What is our project really about? What theme could make the project come alive for the young people?*

Example:

In the previous age section, the young people were called Scouts (they could have been called Explorers or Pathfinders).

The name chosen was symbolic: it was intended to encourage the young people to develop through adventures with an emphasis on personal and collective survival. The names given to the meeting place, the teams, the way in which the progressive scheme was explained and the way in which the unit functioned, were all intended to reinforce this message.

In the current age section, the names have changed and the way in which the unit functions has been adapted to the new level of maturity of the young people.

The young people could have been called Venture Scouts (adventure and daring to go forth), "Pionniers" (building something new beyond familiar territory), or another name. The educational emphasis is on taking action to expand one's horizons (discovering new places, new kinds of people, new perspectives on issues, etc.). An emphasis is also placed on discovering a variety of careers. The names chosen for the different areas of responsibility relate to the world of work (e.g. Reporter, Carpenter, etc.).

In view of the theme of the project, the team leaders agreed to find pictures of people in their country who had done similar things, find a poster on the charter of human rights, poems on hope, etc., to decorate the meeting place.

Once the project was over, it was quite likely that the young people would choose new names for their teams based on what had been particularly important to them during the project, e.g. the name of a village where something special happened, a character in their play or even one of the horses, etc.

For a shorter project, a different symbolic framework could have been invented in order to add to the excitement, while still reinforcing the educational messages (e.g. the Sailors of Peace), or the use of names from mythology, another culture, nature or history).

Note: the general theme must also be in line with the basic values underlying Scouting: the theme should never contradict the promotion of peace and human understanding, respect for others, etc.

• **Contact with nature**

Helping each young person to grow in all of the areas of development through contact with the natural world.

→ A question to consider is:

- *What opportunities does our project offer to help young people to develop, in one way or another, through nature?*

Example:

The young people would be spending two weeks in the outdoors, camping, caring for the horses, etc. Stops would be arranged to explore rivers and forests along the way. An ideal setting for moments of spiritual reflection! A number of activities would be organised to help the young people to discover aspects of the natural world that they may not have noticed before. Then the leaders would invite them to reflect on the significance of their discoveries.

In addition, environmental protection would be emphasised to the public in the sites where the shows were to take place. Panels would be made to make sure that people threw their litter in litter bags, and to warn them about fire hazards.

- **Personal progression**

Helping each young person to develop the inner motivation to:

- take charge of his or her own development;
- progress in his or her own way, at his or her own pace, in the general direction of the educational objectives of the age section; and to
- recognise the progress made.

→ A question to consider is:

- *How can we make use of this project to help each young person to progress, in his or her own way, towards personal educational objectives?*

Example:

A general educational objective for the age section concerned demonstrating the capacity to take responsibility for one's health.

A personalised objective for a young person who had been physically weak involved paying more attention to building up muscles and endurance, etc.

When the leaders were ready to help the young people to match their personal progression objectives to the tasks that needed to be done for the project (see Phase 4, Step 2), they would encourage this young person to take part in some of the physically challenging aspects of the project.

- **Adult support**

Helping each young person to develop through building a rich learning partnership between adults and young people, based on mutual respect, trust and acceptance of each other as a person.

→ Questions to consider include:

- *How best can our adult leadership team provide support to the young people?*
- *Is there anything in the way that we currently operate that could be improved so as to provide better educational support?*

Example:

The leadership team were very conscious of the fact that their role was to prepare the way for the young

people to discover by themselves within limits appropriate for the age group.

They tried to help the teams to operate as autonomously as possible, while trying to find occasions to get to know each young person better.

They treated the young people as people who were worthy of trust and respect, but did not hesitate to point out the limits of acceptable behaviour when necessary.

The project would provide many opportunities for informal moments between the leaders and the young people. Also, the variety of jobs that needed to be done would help the leaders to guide the young people towards their interests and to stimulate them to progress in their personal development plans.

STEP 5 - MAKING FULL USE OF THE DYNAMICS

In a general sense, dynamics can be described as forces which tend to produce energy and change in a given situation. In a Scout unit, the dynamics refers to the way in which four key aspects of Scouting in practice will influence the learning experience (consciously or unconsciously). These four aspects are: educational objectives, activities, group life and the way in which the unit is structured and functions.

Let us look briefly at these four aspects:

- **Educational objectives**

What you are seeking to help young people to gain (knowledge, skills and attitudes) in one or more of the areas of personal development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual).

- **Activities**

Everything that the young people do - planned activities (e.g. camps, service activities, etc.) and informal activities (e.g. conversations, eating together, etc.).

- **Structure and functioning**

Everything related to the way in which the Scout unit is structured and operates. This includes:

- Structure: imagine a diagram that represents how your unit is organised. In the diagram, you would represent the adult leadership team, the different teams, the lines of authority, the different kinds of meetings for various purposes, etc.

All of these elements represent the structure within which you and the young people operate.

The way in which a unit is structured and operates needs to support the educational objectives sought. However, in practice, this may not be the case. For example, a unit that is structured and functions to maximise efficiency may not leave room for creativity and vice versa⁵.

- Application of the Scout Method: the way in which the various elements of the Scout Method are used in practice in the unit. For example, how the young people operate in their teams or as a unit; when and how the young people make the Scout promise, the nature of the educational role played by the adult leadership team.
- The “culture” of the unit: its traditions, the emphasis given to certain values, the extent to which decision-making is centralised or participatory, whether team leaders are appointed or elected and according to what criteria, etc.
- The level of resources:
 - human: the abilities and quantity of adult leaders, other helping adults in the community, the association’s support structure, etc.;
 - infrastructure: e.g. a meeting place. For example, a meeting place in nature may have a different impact to meeting in a schoolyard, just as meeting in temporary, borrowed rooms may

⁵ You may wish to consult a tool produced by the World Scout Bureau entitled “Argos: To explore the “culture” of an association”.

have a different impact to having one regular meeting place decorated by the unit. Practical and financial considerations may mean that there is little choice, but you need to be aware of how such details can affect the educational process;

- time: e.g. the frequency and duration of Scout meetings, the extent of the availability of the adult leaders, etc.);
- financial and material;
- etc.

Example:

During the previous year, some young people had complained that there never seemed to be opportunities to discuss aspects that they felt were not working in the unit. The leadership team realised that more time and attention needed to be given to enabling the young people to provide feedback during evaluation sessions.

The fact of not having done so was detracting from the young people’s emotional development. This was because the situation was contributing to a build-up of frustration and a lack of self-confidence in being able to express their feelings and emotions. In turn, the frustration was affecting the quality of group dynamics (see below).

- **Group life**

All of the aspects concerning:

- group dynamics: what takes place during and as a result of the interaction between the members of the unit (e.g. we all know of situations

where someone going through a “difficult” phase manages to demotivate an entire group, or, on the contrary, where one person’s ability to make everyone laugh can defuse tension);

- the relationships between the young people (e.g. whether they consider each other to be close friends or simply acquaintances);
- the relationships between the young people and the adult leaders;
- community spirit: the extent to which the group supports each person and the each person contributes to the well-being of the group;
- the level of a sense of belonging to a group (including the integration of newcomers); and
- the general “atmosphere” of the unit.

Example:

By tradition, the unit used to meet once every two weeks on a weekday evening. Unfortunately, for various reasons, the unit could only meet for just over an hour.

The adult leaders noticed that more and more young people did not show up for meetings on a regular basis.

In consultation with the unit, they decided to meet once a week on an afternoon when the young people did not go to school. There was more time for activities in nature, more time for informal chats between planned activities, and more time to help newcomers to become integrated.

As a result, the young people and the adult leaders got to know each other better and the general atmosphere improved. After a few months, there was hardly ever anyone missing at Scout meetings!

The need for a coherent approach

What young people learn, therefore, is not solely the result of what they do during the activities. What they gain through Scouting is also the result of the relationships with their peers and with the adult leaders. While it may be less obvious, what the young people gain is also influenced by the way in which the unit is structured and functions.

What it involves

→ Consider the project in the light of the dynamics of Scouting in your unit.

By this stage, you should have established clear educational objectives, have a clear idea of the activities that will help the young people to progress and have considered how to make the most of the Scout Method.

However, have you considered whether there are any aspects of the way in which the unit functions, the general atmosphere, or the way in which you encourage the young people to relate to each other, etc., that might be inconsistent with what you are trying to achieve?

Even if you cannot think of anything at the moment, you may suddenly become aware of inconsistencies when you evaluate the project.

PHASE 3 PLANNING

STEP 1 - SHARING THE ENRICHED PROJECT WITH THE TEAM LEADERS' COUNCIL

What it involves

The team leaders' council involves the team leaders and the members of your adult leadership team.

- Present the enriched project to the team leaders, explaining where necessary why details needed to be modified. This enables the team leaders to better understand the global picture of what the project should achieve.
- Invite questions and develop a consensus with the team leaders.

Learning opportunities (for the team leaders)...

Sharing the enriched project with the team leaders' council:

- Psycho-social: Becoming aware of their developing maturity through greater interaction and responsibility-sharing with adults.

Working out the organisational aspects and a time schedule:

- Intellectual: developing managerial knowledge and skills.



STEP 2 - WORKING OUT THE ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS AND A TIME SCHEDULE

What it involves

- Use the project outline to examine everything that needs to be done in order to achieve the project. Make sure that everything is written down for the record!

If your project is fairly complex, a simple book on project management could be helpful.
- If the project involves specialised technical help, list the qualified people that you know and whom you think might be willing to give a hand (former Scouts, parents, personal friends, work associates, etc.). Your national association may have suggestions as well. Voluntary associations, local authorities and even local businesses may also be willing to help.
- With the team leaders, work out a tentative time schedule starting at the end - i.e. when the project finishes. Then you can work backwards, filling in the major deadlines for when certain tasks need to have been completed and in what order things need to be done.

The schedule needs to bear in mind when the young people will be working hard for school exams or family obligations so as to not expect too much to happen during this period.

Time also needs to be set aside for regular progress evaluation meetings!

STEP 3 - ESTIMATING A BUDGET

What it involves

Any project will require funds. Estimating the budget more or less accurately will take time. This is your last chance to scale down the project if the cost is prohibitive!

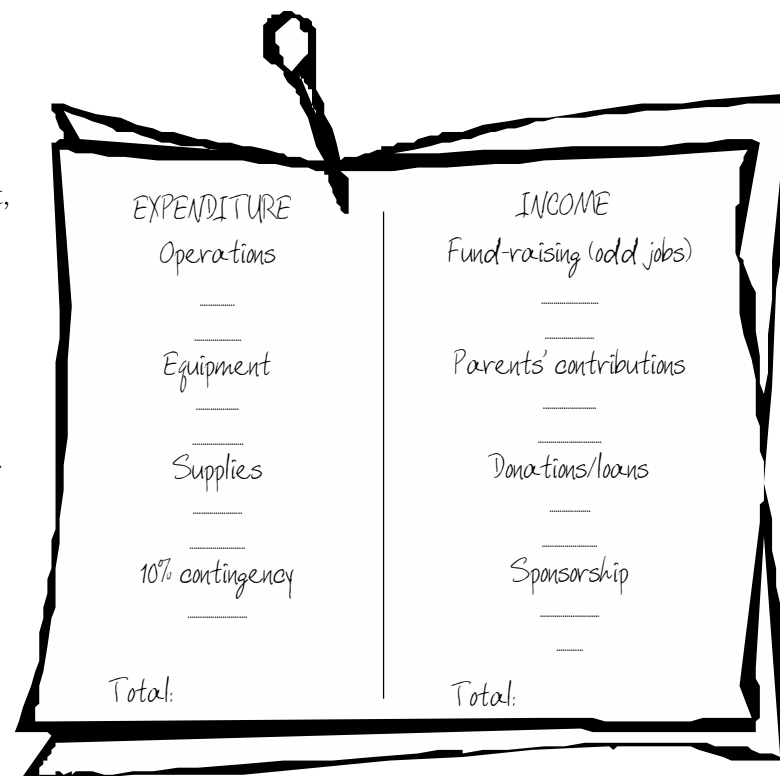
- Try to find a simple book on basic project management. Some bookshops, libraries, development agencies or volunteer associations may be able to help you.
- Calculate and write down the costs of each item on your list. Here is one way of organising your list:

Expenditure

- Operations (e.g. training costs, transport, rentals, phone/fax/postage, etc.)
 - Equipment (i.e. durable items, e.g. tools, equipment, etc.)
 - Supplies (i.e. consumable items, e.g. paper, photographic film, food, first aid items, nails, cloth, etc.)
 - 10% Contingency (i.e. a percentage of the total to cover unexpected costs)
- Make a new list called Income. Make an estimate of potential income, including in-kind support.

Income

- Fund-raising initiatives
 - Parents' contributions
 - Donations or loans of items
 - Sponsorship from local companies, etc.
- Examine the lists that you have just made. Can you reasonably raise enough money to cover the costs? What items do you know that you can borrow? What "equipment" items could be resold after the project? For how much? Does your national association have any resources that you could use?



STEP 4 - WORKING OUT THE STRUCTURE OF ROLES AND TASK FORCES

What it involves

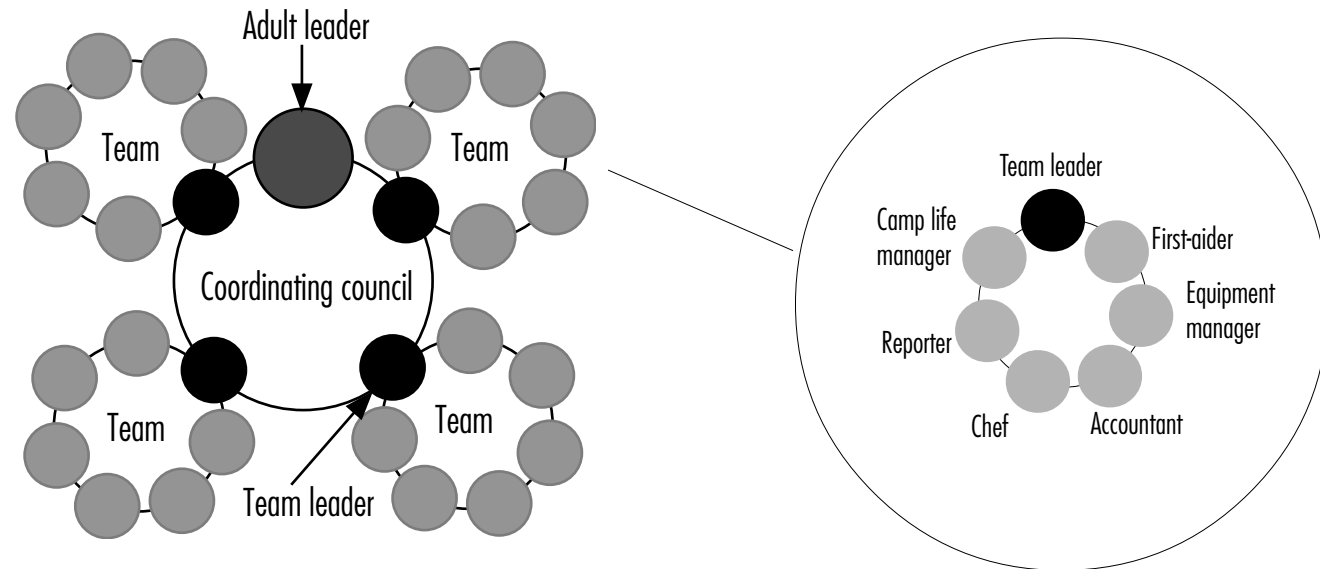
Your leadership team and the team leaders will need to work out how to structure and organise the way in which the unit will need to work so as to maximise the learning opportunities while operating as efficiently as possible. One way of doing this is through a system of team roles and unit task forces.

Team roles

A team role is a responsibility that a team member carries out in the team. Each team member has a role. Together, all the roles, or responsibilities, are intended to provide the young people with a variety of skills and experiences

which help them to progress towards their educational objectives and to increase the autonomy of the team (the ability to cope on their own with everyday needs, such as during meetings or camps). Normally, team roles vary little from one year to the next as they are based on responsibilities that will need to be carried out irrespective of the project chosen.

Each young person plays the role for a certain length of time on the basis of an agreement between the adult leaders and the young people involved. At the end of that period, which could be six months or a year, the young people would choose new roles within the team. In this way, the young people do not get bored with the same responsibility, but learn the basic skills involved, gain experience and help out in the beginning when a different team member takes on the job.



The fact of assuming a role in the team does not imply that only that young person performs all the tasks involved all of the time. For example, the “Chef” would not do all the cooking and washing up on his or her own - the other team members will need to give a hand too. The “Chef” would, however, have overall responsibility. Likewise, the “Equipment Manager” would not carry all of the camping equipment alone, but would have overall responsibility for ensuring that the equipment needed is available and in working order.

This form of organisation permits a 3-step approach to the progressive scheme. Each young person:

- 1) learns what the job involves (gaining knowledge) and gains the practical skills involved (gaining skills);
- 2) makes use of the knowledge and skills for the benefit of the team (developing attitudes);
- 3) once the term of office is over, helps another team member to understand the job and learn the skills (helping someone else to learn involves gaining new knowledge, skills and attitudes). The young person then takes on a different kind of responsibility.

The fact that each person has overall responsibility but that everyone in the team is expected to help out when needed serves to stimulate a sense of interdependence, solidarity and a respect for each person’s job. The young people in the team soon learn that if they do not help out when needed, then the others will not exactly rush to help when they need assistance! The person who coordinates the team members and the roles to be played is the team leader (which in itself is a role).

Task forces

A task force is a small group of young people from different teams who get together to work on a number of tasks defined by the project. The young people group according to their interest areas and educational objectives.

A task force would normally be led by a senior youth member - either one of the team leaders or another senior youth member who has some experience in the task to be accomplished. Thus, the same 3-step approach to progression can apply to task forces as well.

Each youth member would have a role in the team and would also be a member of one or more task forces.

The fact of having a role in the team helps the teams to structure themselves and to develop relationships through team life. The task force responsibilities provide greater flexibility and enable the young people to group together according to more personal areas of interest (and also to get to know the other members of the unit better).

Example:

A number of the jobs that needed to be done for the project fell naturally into the categories of the team roles that had been established at the beginning of the year. Each team would need:

- *A Chef*
- *A Camp Life Manager*
- *An Equipment Manager*

- *A First-Aider*
- *An Accountant*
- *A Reporter*

Task forces specifically related to the project included:

- *Scenario writing*
- *Lyrics writing*
- *Musical score composition*
- *Stage management*
- *Stage decoration*
- *Costume management*
- *Carpentry*

→ With the team leaders' council, work out a "job description" for each of these tasks. The team leaders could produce a written version for distribution in the next phase.

The job descriptions should be attractive and motivating. They could be designed to look like real advertisements in a newspaper with drawings or artwork. The description should include:

- what the job involves;
- the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed;
- the time commitment involved.

CARPENTRY TASK FORCE (3 people)

The job involves: _____

You will need to know: _____ You will need to be: _____

You will need to know how to: _____ Time commitment: _____

Candidate's signature: _____

PHASE 4 - GETTING PREPARED

STEP 1 - SHARING PHASE 3 WITH THE UNIT

What it involves

- Arrange with the team leaders for them to prepare the presentation of the project to the unit. Decorations related to the theme of the project could liven up the meeting place. If any preparatory visits to the proposed site of the project have already been made, photos and slides would certainly be welcome. Flip charts, diagrams, etc., could be prepared to explain what needs to be done and the task forces that have been identified.
- Even though you will not have a detailed budget yet, do not forget to discuss fund-raising! Have a flip chart ready with whatever fund-raising ideas that you may have thought of with the team leaders. Keep a few sheets free and invite the young people to think of things that they could do to help raise the funds. Create extra task forces for the best fund-raising ideas. You will probably find other ideas as you all become more involved in the project.

Learning opportunities...

Sharing Phase 3 (for the team leaders):

- Intellectual and social (psycho-social): working out how to present the project in a way that will be easy for the unit to understand; gaining practice in communication skills: chairing meetings, developing their artistic skills through decorations intended to convey the theme of the project and a sense of adventure, etc;
- Intellectual and emotional (psycho-affective): recognising their growing maturity as they do so;
- Social: learning to cooperate more efficiently in order to prepare and present the project.

Matching personal educational objectives to the tasks:

- Intellectual and emotional (psycho-affective): developing the capacity to reflect on oneself; acknowledging strengths and weaknesses; feeling appreciated for effort made; setting personal objectives.

STEP 2 - MATCHING PERSONAL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES TO THE TASKS

What it involves

- You can organise this as an informal meeting with each team. Arrange for more private meetings with any young people that you sense have particular difficulties that they may not wish to discuss in front of the rest of the team. Make sure that the young people have reviewed the contents of their progressive scheme booklets beforehand.

The purpose is that each young person commits him or herself to progress towards some of the educational objectives of the age section through various forms of personal contribution to team life and to the project. (Eventually, by the time that they are senior members of the unit, all of the young people should have experienced all the roles in a team and have varied the kinds of task forces that they take part in.)

- Invite the team leaders to explain how the team members can work towards the requirements of the progressive scheme through the roles and task forces.
- Take time with each young person to establish how he or she intends to progress towards the educational objectives in several of the areas of development (physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual).
- Guide each young person towards areas of interest, but make sure that the young person is not already an expert in the areas chosen! Guide them away from any role or task that you feel is too difficult for them at this stage, or on the contrary, not challenging enough.

Some young people may be very enthusiastic and want to join a large number of task forces. Make sure that they understand the time commitment involved. Do not let them take on too many tasks if you feel that they will not be able to cope.

- Find out if the young person is experiencing any particular difficulties, for example, difficulties in establishing relationships with others, a lack of tolerance for other people's ideas, physical difficulties, etc.

Before discussing difficulties, congratulate the young person first on any special efforts to progress or talents that you have noticed recently.

If you sense that the young person is reluctant to discuss problems in front of the others, arrange to have a more private discussion later.

Help the young person to try to talk about the difficulty in his or her own words. Listen to what the young person is trying to express and encourage him or her to think of practical ways in which to try to overcome these difficulties. An extra emphasis on these areas will form part of the young person's personal progression plan.

- Invite all the young people to sign up on the flipcharts for the roles and task forces agreed upon.

Possible difficulties...

What if no one volunteers for a particular role or task force?

Attention needs to be paid to making sure that all the roles and task forces are perceived as being of equal importance. Sometimes, young people develop a perception that certain roles are to be avoided. If a particular role is considered as a "boring chore", then there is a problem.

It is up to you to listen to what the young people object to and to expand the role to make it more challenging and interesting. No one should consider that they have ended up with the "worst" job, as this is very demotivating. At the same time, of course, some of the roles and tasks will need to be less demanding for junior or new members with less experience.

What about newcomers with little experience?

Young people who have just joined the unit are likely to feel a little bewildered at first. Hopefully, they feel excited at the prospect of the project, but probably feel worried about whether they will be able to fulfil a role and be a useful member of a task force. It is generally a good idea for them to take on a role and join a task force at the same time as the others as, until they do, they will not feel that they really belong to the group.

It is not all recommended to invite potential new youth members to join just before the implementation phase (i.e. without having taken part in the other phases). They will feel - and be treated as - outsiders.

What about roles and task forces in mixed gender units?

Avoid stereotyped gender roles, but respect the needs and interests of each young person - including gender identity!

If you have separate gender teams, the girls would assume all the roles to be fulfilled in their teams (from chef to equipment manager) and so would all the boys in their teams. Thus, not all the girls are automatically the Chefs and all the boys Equipment Managers.

If you have mixed teams of boys and girls, do not force the young people towards, or away from, roles and task forces that may be judged “for girls” or “for boys”. Make sure that the general atmosphere in the group does not prevent anyone from taking on a particular role or joining a particular task force if it corresponds to an interest.

If, by chance, you find that certain task forces are composed of all boys or all girls - through their own choice - then it can be an expression of a need to spend time together as one gender. This need should be respected.

STEP 3 - LEARNING TO DO THE JOB

What it involves

Roles

If the unit already functions according to a role system, then you may just need to help the young people to work out the implications of their roles in terms of the project. Help them to work out what they already know how to do and what skills they need to acquire. Facilitate contact with others in the group who have undertaken that role before to help them. If this is a new way of working in your unit, then you will need to help them yourselves or facilitate making contact with others outside of their unit.

Encourage them to practise on their own, but also encourage team activities whereby they can practise in a real-life setting - a weekend camp, for example.

Task forces

Evidently, the nature of the task forces will vary from project to project. There may be task forces in which neither you nor anyone else in your unit will have any experience. Facilitate contact for the young people with people in your community who do. This may involve helping them to enrol in a particular course, inviting an expert to come and help them, or for the young people to go and learn the basics of a trade through helping out over a weekend. If you explain the project, most people will willingly support you.

STEP 4 - PARTICULAR TASKS FOR THE ADULT LEADERS

What it involves

Ensuring progress

Apart from dealing with the aspects that you had agreed to do, you will also need to monitor the progress both of the project and especially of the young people!

You will need to pay attention to needs expressed directly or indirectly, e.g. time to relax, expend energy, defuse a tense atmosphere, etc.

Public relations

Your Scout unit is part of a larger community. Your exciting project is an excellent opportunity to help more people in your community to discover what Scouting is about!

→ With the Reporters, prepare a small dossier of information about your project.

→ You may wish to invite a local journalist or the local radio host to come and interview the unit. Perhaps the journalist or radio host will invite the Reporters to come and see where real journalists and radio hosts work and offer a few tips!

By increasing public knowledge of what you are trying to do, more people in your community will be willing to give a hand when needed, or lend things that you need.

Constructive contact with the community will not only help the project and Scouting, but it corresponds to an educational objective: helping young people to develop constructive contact with their community.

Parents and schoolwork!

→ Make sure that you have informed parents about the project and enthused them with what the young people will learn from the experience.

Remember that, especially by the time their youngsters are in adolescence, parents become increasingly worried about school achievement and the time that Scouting takes up.

On the one hand, you must help parents to understand the very real educational benefits for their child and, on the other, envisage a slower pace of work (built into the time plan) around exam time.

If you work with young people whose parents depend on their help at certain times of the year (e.g. farmers, etc.), then this, too, needs to be taken into account.

Fund-raising

The need for funds is not going to go away, nor is money going to fall from the trees! Once you have exhausted your contacts in the community who can lend you various things, or give you discounts on certain items, it is possible that there will still be a certain amount of money missing in the budget.

→ With your public relations dossier, make contact with local businesses to see if they would be willing to help sponsor the project. Try to involve the team Accountants in the process.

Fund-raising initiatives

Everyone should be involved in fund-raising.

→ Help the young people to set themselves a feasible fund-raising target.

Fund-raising operations offer all kinds of opportunities to progress towards educational objectives: sponsored swims or hikes, making and selling useful objects, cleaning or painting houses, giftwrapping during festivity times, being the odd-job person for a local business....



**PHASE 5 -
CARRYING OUT
THE PROJECT
- THE "BIG EVENT"**

Example:

The Adventure!

On the appointed departure date, the adult leaders arrived at the meeting place several hours early. The wagons had been brought and the horses were grazing in the field. Well, actually, they had only been able to find two horses... and one mule and a donkey.

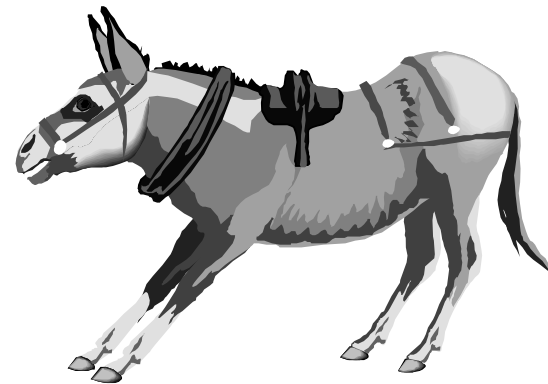
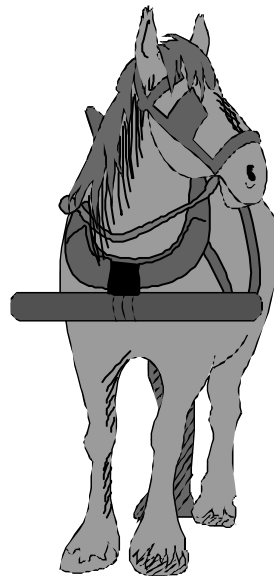
The Horse Task Force was already in the field... discovering that dealing with a stubborn mule or a sleepy donkey was not the same thing as dealing with two well-trained horses.

The Carpentry Task Force wanted to check whether any adjustments needed to be made to the wagons for the smaller mule and donkey. Aligning the donkey with the wagon and harnessing him was not too much of a problem. However, doing the same with the mule was another story.

When they eventually got the mule harnessed to his wagon, he stood still for a few seconds... then took off at a gallop across the field, nearly turning the wagon on its side. An adult leader suggested not to run after him, but to wait. Sure enough, after a few minutes, the mule stopped. The Horse Task Force called him, but did not move. Eventually, the mule walked slowly back, allowed himself to be stroked and that was the end of that problem.

Luckily, two of the team Reporters who had arrived in the meantime had managed to capture the scene with cartoon drawings and a borrowed camera.

Soon, the rest of the unit arrived, carrying all the equipment and materials. The teams packed their wagons and they were ready to go. The adult leaders travelled by car - one behind and one in front - in order to warn traffic and to be able to get help if anything went wrong.



As the wagons approached the first village on their itinerary, they could see the large banner that they had made to announce the play strung between two lamp posts. Children had gathered on both sides of the road to cheer the wagons as they passed. They were delighted to hear the teams rehearsing the songs of their play.

The field that was to be their home for the next two days was in sight. It was time to set up camp and rest a while. The First-Aiders attended to a few scratches and sore muscles, while the Equipment Managers and the Camp Life Managers organised the tents and worked with the Chefs to set up the cooking area. Everyone in the teams helped make lunch and clear up afterwards.

After a short rest, the adult leaders could hear an argument going on. The members of the Stage Management Task Force and the Stage Decoration Task Force had started to set up the stage for the first show the next day.

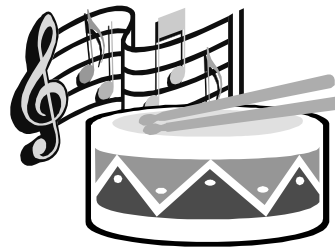
In the meantime, the cast of the play had arrived and did not agree with the way the stage was being set up. The Stage Management Task Force wanted the stage to be established so that the spectators could view the setting sun behind the actors. This, in their view, would add to the effect of the drama. The cast complained that if the sun was setting behind the stage, then the spectators would have the sun in their eyes and would find it difficult to see what was happening.

The argument continued until one of the Accountants stopped by to listen to what was going on. After a minute or two, she pointed out that, seeing as they had not been able to raise enough funds to pay for torch lights after sunset, everyone had agreed that the show would have to take place during the afternoon. There was therefore no reason to be arguing. After a minute or two, everyone looked at each other and started laughing. The tension had gone and they soon agreed on how to set up the stage.



The next day was the first day of the show. The young people involved in developing the music, the lyrics and the scenario of the play had already done their work. They were therefore free to welcome and guide the audience as they entered the field. They also handed out small leaflets to each family to explain what the show was about (drug prevention, adolescent depression, etc.).

The show was to begin. The cast was nervous. They were also worried that the audience - mainly families who had not seen each other for a while and who had lots of news to share - would not stop talking during the show. One of the musicians decided to draw the audience's attention to the stage by beating on a drum that they had made out of tin cans, a rubbish bin and two broken chair legs. The hum of the audience stopped and the show started...



At the end of the show there was a stunned silence. The entire Scout unit - including the adult leaders - held their breath, wondering how the audience would react. After what seemed like a very long time (although probably only a few seconds), the first rows of the audience stood up and started to clap. Soon the entire audience was doing the same.



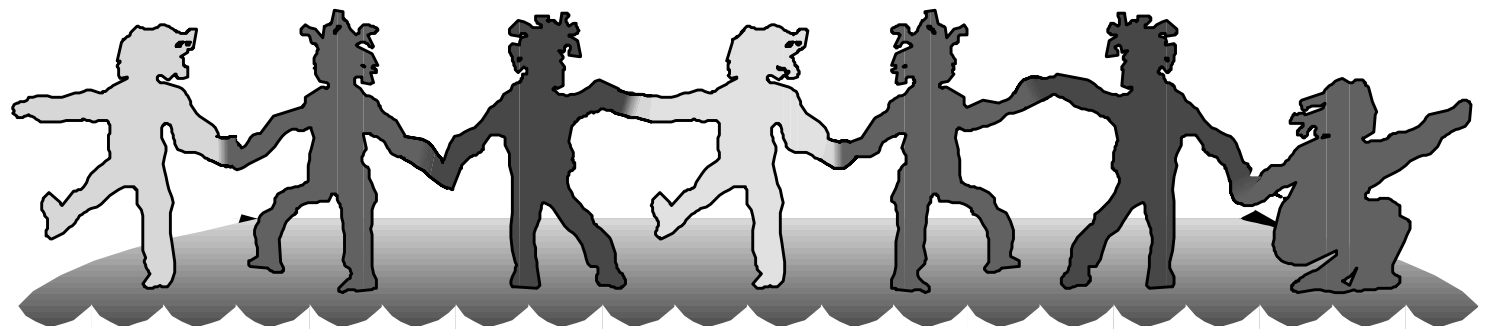
When the actors and musicians heard "Encore, encore!", they performed the last song again. It was a very touching song about looking at the past in order to move towards the future with hope and confidence.

As they took another bow, the cast invited the rest of the unit and the adult leaders on stage. The adult leaders explained briefly what their project was about and the importance of the issues underlying the play. They invited the entire audience to sing along to one final rendition of the last song...

The next day, it was time to pack up and move on to the next village. And so they did, putting on their show in eight villages until they arrived back at the local Scout headquarters, exhausted after a two-hundred kilometre circuit by horse and wagon. Parents, relatives and friends were waiting to take the young people home.

Of course, there had been problems... like the afternoon when there was strong wind and rain and some of the stage decorations blew away... or like one day when the Chefs had mixed up market days and there was little to eat for supper... or like the day when the mule stood on the improvised steel drum and squashed it...

Yes, there had been problems (and arguments), but what an adventure! Now it was time to go back home, get some rest, take time to explain the adventures to friends and family and to think about what they had all lived through. In a few days, they would meet again to evaluate the success of the project and what each person had gained, recognise achievement and... celebrate!



PHASE 6 EVALUATING AND RECOGNISING PROGRESS

STEP 1 - EVALUATING THE PROJECT AND EACH PERSON'S PROGRESS

This phase involves the entire unit and ideally should take place shortly after the Big Event has taken place (i.e. a few days or a week or so afterwards), so that the project is still fresh in everyone's minds.

What it involves

This step is intended as an evaluation of the entire project and of each person's progress towards his or her educational objectives.

You may wish to establish an outline of the evaluation session before you start the meeting. The outline for the session proposed here is based on personal assessment and feedback. It can be very effective, provided attention is paid to constructive group dynamics.

Introduction

→ Remind everyone of the purpose of the exercise: that it is an evaluation exercise on the project and on each person's progress.

Also, remind them of their code of living:

- Everyone should start with the good points, before going on to the problems.
- Everyone should bear in mind that only constructive criticism is allowed and that they are expected to respect each other's feelings, i.e. if there are problems to discuss, to discuss the problem and not to attack anyone personally.
- Each person should have a chance to speak.

Learning opportunities...

Evaluating the project and each person's progress:

- Intellectual: learning to reflect and analyse, to place events and experiences into perspective;
- Intellectual and emotional (psycho-affective): deepening self-awareness; learning to accept constructive criticism; developing self-esteem and confidence through experiencing praise for one's efforts and achievements;
- Intellectual and social (psycho-social): learning how to provide critical feedback in a non-threatening way.

General project evaluation (adult leaders)

- You may wish to start by giving your own general impressions of the Big Event and of the project process as a whole.
- Start with the *good points*.
 - Then mention any major *difficulties* that you thought the unit did a good job in overcoming.
 - Last, explain any aspects that caused you *disappointment*.
- Give the young people a few minutes to add their own comments, before moving on.
- Offer your own thoughts on any aspects that were personally meaningful to you, e.g. anything that you feel that you have learned or understand better as a result. You can also add anything that you think that you would prefer to do differently next time.

General project evaluation (young people)

- Invite the young people's comments and thoughts. Ask them what they found best in the project, then the difficulties, then any disappointments.
- You could invite them to think back to the start of the project when they first decided upon it, so as to encourage them to move from the Big Event to the project as a whole.

Gradually, you should direct the discussion from the project itself (what went well, what went less well, the major difficulties, the disappointments etc., what should have been done differently), to an individual reflection

on what each person felt was important and meaningful, their perceptions of their teams and task forces, and of individual progress.

Evaluation by young people of the role of the adult leadership team

→ Ask the unit for feedback on how they feel that you fulfilled your roles as adult leaders during the course of the project.

Evaluation of teams and task forces

From this point, you could invite the young people to reflect on their experiences as teams.

→ Invite the members of each team in turn, starting with the team leader, to offer thoughts on the good times and the difficulties encountered in each team.

Invite them to offer their thoughts on the way they worked as a team and to what extent it influenced what went well or badly (e.g. how they managed to overcome difficulties). What aspects would they prefer to have done differently?

→ Go through the same process with the task forces.

Personal and mutual evaluation

By this time, the young people will have had time to think about their personal involvement in the project.

→ Ask each young person what he or she feels has been gained personally as a result of the project and through working with others. To what extent does the young person feel that he or she fulfilled the role in the team and in the task force?

Once a young person has offered his or her comments, you can invite the others in that person's team and task force to provide feedback.

→ Ask the young person's team and task force members to point out first what they think that the young person did well. Have they noticed any positive changes in the young person since the beginning of the project? Ask for any (constructive) comments on any less positive aspects.

→ Finally, provide your own feedback to each young person in the same way - starting with noticeable progress in knowledge, skills and attitudes. Remember to mention the degree to which you believe the young person made an effort - effort is just as important as achievement!

Concluding the evaluation

→ Close the evaluation session by summarising the key points. Here you could start by the difficulties and conclude with what went well so as to end on a cheerful note.

EVALUATION

Introduction

Purpose: evaluation of project and personal progression

General project evaluation (adult leaders)

What do I (we) think: Went well? Were the biggest difficulties? Went badly?

What has been personally meaningful to me (us)?

General project evaluation (young people)

What do we think went well? What were the biggest difficulties? How well did we overcome them? What went badly? What would we do differently?

What did we appreciate/find difficult with the adult leaders?

Evaluation of teams and task forces

How did we work in our teams? What went well/badly? Why?

How did we work in our task forces? What went well/badly? Why?

Personal progression

What have I learned as a result? What will I remember as being important? In what areas do I still need to try to do better?

How far do the others agree with my assessment?

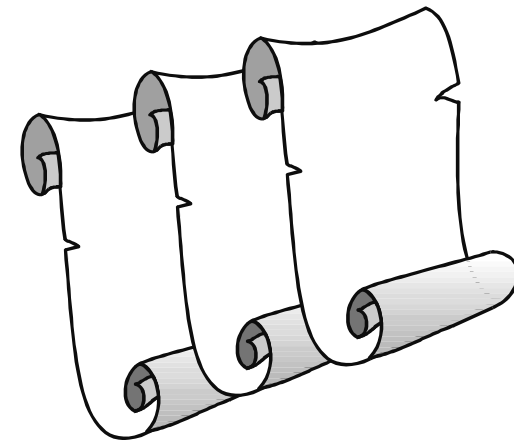
Conclusion

Things to improve. The good points.

STEP 2 - RECOGNISING PROGRESS

What it involves

→ Organise a small ceremony to present the young people with the achievement badges or certificates or whatever is provided for in your progressive scheme as a token of recognition of personal progression.



PHASE 7 - CELEBRATING!

The project has been carried out and the evaluation has been done, but there is still one more phase in the project process. The adventures shared, and difficulties overcome and the personal and collective achievements are all good reasons to celebrate!

STEP 1 - REFLECTING ON SPIRITUAL VALUES

What it involves

The evaluation has ended and progress has been recognised. This can be an opportune time to invite the young people to gather for a moment of spiritual reflection.

- With the team leaders, you could build upon any reactions of wonderment or lessons that nature may have taught during the course of the project.
- In addition (or alternatively) you may wish to work with the team leaders to find lessons, texts, prayers or songs from your religion (or from the different religions if you have young people from a variety of religious backgrounds) that seem to capture the essence of what you have lived through together during the course of the project.
- If appropriate in your culture, invite the team leaders to conduct the ceremony, or at least make sure that they are actively involved in its preparation.

Learning opportunities...

Reflecting on spiritual values:

- Spiritual: deeper understanding of the meaning of spiritual values and their expression in religion.

Organising the festivities:

- Intellectual and emotional (psycho-affective): deeper sense of achievement and self-esteem;
- Intellectual and social (psycho-social): reinforcing a sense of group life, belonging, interdependence, etc;
- Other learning opportunities will depend on the nature of the activities.

STEP 2 - ORGANISING THE FESTIVITIES

What it involves

However short and simple your project may be, it should always end with a joyful celebration of some kind.

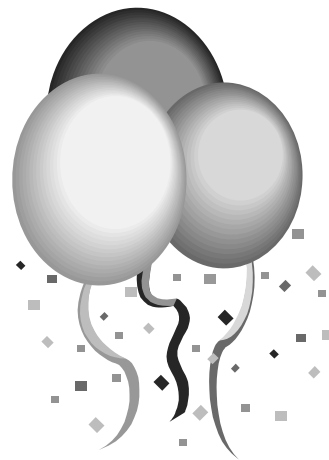
A festivity to conclude the project has several educational objectives:

- The fact of celebrating reinforces the sense of achievement and self-esteem and helps to put difficulties and disappointments into perspective. It also serves to reinforce a sense of group life.
- The festivity itself involves activities which need to be planned, organised, prepared and carried out - thus providing further learning opportunities.
- For a short-term project, you could invite the teams to organise refreshments and music.
- At the end of a longer-term project, the unit could organise a small party involving just the young people and the adult leaders, then organise, perhaps at a later date, an evening with parents and the people in the community who helped with the project. Or, the two could be combined.

When possible, avoid speeches and other formalities addressed at other adults. If you feel that you must do so, make this part as short as possible, or organise it with your adult leadership team as a separate event for adults.

→ With the team leaders, you could envisage a number of activities:

- decorating the venue;
- organising refreshments or a meal;
- preparing an audiovisual show;
- preparing a mime show;
- inventing a song and dance related to the theme of the project;
- setting up an exhibition;
- etc.



CONCLUSION

As mentioned at the beginning of this booklet, using a project approach may require you to reflect on how you have been putting Scouting into practice.

If, until now, the young people in your unit have simply taken part in activities that you have prepared and organised for them, it will take time to gradually bring the young people to become more involved in decision-making and in assuming responsibilities. It will probably also take time for you, as an adult leader, to entrust them with aspects that you have always done yourself in the past.

If, until now, you have been carrying out projects with your unit, you may still have questions that you need to ask yourself. Are the projects really based on the needs and interests of the young people? To what extent are the young people really involved in the various phases? Are the projects so complex that the young people can only participate in minor or unchallenging ways? Are the projects really conceived so as to contribute effectively to the young people's personal development? Or have the goals of the projects been so important that the educational purpose has become a secondary consideration?

Whatever your situation, it is hoped that this booklet has provided you with food for thought on the rich learning experiences that a project approach can provide.