

Senior GIRLtopia Journey-Visionary Award Activity Plan 2

Purpose: When girls have earned the Visionary Award, they will have envisioned an ideal world for girls, shared a creative representation of this GIRLtopia with others and taken steps to move the world one step closer to their vision. After completing Activity Plan 2, girls will have completed the Create It and Guide It portions of the Visionary Award. Girls will still need to complete the Change It portion to earn the Visionary Award.

Planning Guides Link: Leadership

Activity Plan Length: 1.5 hours

Involve Family and Friends: Participation from family and friends can enrich your troop's Girl Scout experience, both for the girls and for you. Use the suggestions below to make it easier for you to connect with additional support.

- Before the meeting:
 - Send a note to families to find those with interest in or expertise with the topic. Ask them to lead or support an activity or two, or even lead the whole meeting.
 - Offer this activity plan as a starting place and point out that they may choose alternative activities using the *Customize It!* section as a guide. For example: If an activity plan directs girls to sit outside and observe animal habitats, you may choose to go to the zoo and learn about animal habitats there instead.
- At home:
 - Encourage families to ask questions about their girls' badge activities. Some examples that work for any badge include: What did you learn? What surprised you? What does it make you think of trying next?
- Throughout the year:
 - Suggest to families ways that girls can share or display their Girl Scout accomplishments. Possibilities include a bulletin board, a scrapbook, a special memories box or family sharing time.

Girls Take the Lead: Include girl leadership through long-term planning, short-term meeting prep and specific activities at meetings.

- Long Term Planning
 - If you use "Plan Your Senior Year", share this with the girls at the start of the year. Have them ask friends and family to help out with specific meetings or activities. Let the girls brainstorm ways to make the plans their own, such as thinking of related field trip activities. If a girl has experience with a field trip, ask her to be assistant tour guide.
 - If you are adapting the "Plan Your Senior Year", get the girls' input on which badges to choose. Offer just a few choices in each category or timeframe to make decisions easier. Every girl should have at least one badge or journey she's excited about.
- Short Term Planning
 - Ask a family to help lead a badge. Make sure they have access to activity plans and any resources you might have. Keep additional requested materials to a minimum.

- Choose two helpers to stay after a meeting for 15 minutes. Give them each an activity to introduce and either instruct or help guide at the next meeting.
- Before a meeting, ask everyone to vote on some aspect of the activity: draw posters or perform skits, open with a song or game, etc.
- Use a rotating list of helper tasks, called a 'kaper chart', to share responsibilities. Examples include acting as emcee of the meeting, leading an opening game, bringing a snack next meeting or taking attendance.
- At the Meeting
 - During the opening, have 1-2 girls share their answers to a get-to-know-you question.
 - Have girls fulfill their kaper chart responsibilities.
 - Try to find something in each activity that you can let girls decide or manage.

Customize It: If your group wants to expand work on this portion of the award, or simply try different activities, go for it! There are many ways to complete this portion of the award, including: completing the activities as listed in the GIRLtopia *journey*; completing this activity plan; attending a council-sponsored event; or customizing activities. Pick the one(s) that work best for your group. Girls will know they have completed the Guide It portion of the Visionary Award if:

- They have shared their visions of an ideal world with others.
- They have explored various GIRLtopia topics with others.
- They have created ways to examine relevant issues and see how well their community supports girls.

Girls can continue their GIRLtopia journey by completing the remaining part of the Visionary Award: Change It.

Moving to Take Action: To complete the GIRLtopia journey, girls plan and carry out a Take Action project that addresses the root cause of a community issue in a sustainable way. During the process, here are some things to think about.

- Girls should play an active part in determining the "what, where, when, how and why" of their project, but will need your support and guidance throughout the process.
- Help girls scale the project to a manageable size, so they can have a successful experience. Even if the project has a small scope, what they are doing is important.
- Take Action projects are different from community service projects. Take Action projects pick up where short-term community service projects leave off and are long-term solutions, rather than short-term ones. Take Action Projects are also:
 - Measurable (can be evaluated in a concrete way, such as number of people involved or number of recycling bins placed in the park)
 - Sustainable (continue on, even after the girls' specific role in it is complete)
 - Developed to identify the root cause of an issue (address the underlying problem(s) that are causing an issue to occur).

Examples:

Community Service	Take Action
Take part in a park clean-up.	Organize a park clean up with your neighbors.
Assemble and give first-aid kits to flood victims.	Teach younger kids about severe weather procedures and have them help you make first aid kits to give to flood victims.
Plan a meeting for a younger troop.	Mentor younger girls on healthy friendships.
Make and donate blankets to an animal shelter.	Teach younger kids about the responsibilities of owning a pet and have them help you make blankets to donate to the animal shelter.

- It's up to the girls to find a Take Action project that they are passionate about, but to get started, here are a few ideas:
 - Family project: Girls work with their families to think of things they can do at home to make their neighborhood a safer, more supportive place for girls.
 - School project: Girls create a girl mentorship program between high school and middle school girls. They meet twice a month to build positive relationships between younger and older girls.
 - Community project: Girls are concerned about violence against women and girls in their community. They get their local community center to offer self-defense classes for teen girls several times a year. They promote places in the community where women and girls can receive support and resources.

Resources

- This activity plan has been adapted from *It's Your World - Change It GIRLtopia*, which can be used for additional information and activities.

Getting Started - Session 1

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Girl Scout Promise and Law printed out on poster board

Steps:

1. Welcome everyone to the meeting.
2. Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Use repeat-after-me or say it as a group, if girls know it by heart.

Girl Scout Promise	Girl Scout Law
<i>On my honor, I will try:</i> To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law.	<i>I will do my best to be</i> honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, <i>and to</i> respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

3. Have girls gather in a circle and share an example of something they did that made the day better for someone else in the last week.

Activity #1: Sharing GIRLtopia

Journey Connection: Session 1—Why GIRLtopia?

Time Allotment: 15 minutes (dependent on group size)

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.
- Complete the GIRLtopia Inspiration Box activity from Activity Plan 1. Since the last lesson, girls should have shared their creations with others and collected related ideas and items.

Materials Needed:

- GIRLtopia Inspiration Boxes completed in Activity Plan 1, with ideas and items that the girls have gathered since the last session.
- Large paper or whiteboard
- Writing utensils

Steps:

1. Give girls a few minutes to individually look over the ideas and items they collected since the last session.
2. Instruct each girl to share her inspiration box and collected ideas and items with the group. She should reflect on the GIRLtopia discussions she held with others, as well as any other things she learned, questioned, or explored along the way. Here are some questions to help guide her:
 - Do the ideas and items that you collected from various people have anything in common? If so, what?
 - How do different people's views of an ideal world for women/girls differ? Why do you think that is?

- What do people view as obstacles to an ideal world?
- Do different people have different ideas for how to create a GIRLtopia? In what ways do they differ? In what ways are they similar?
- What do you consider to be the most important thing you learned while discussing GIRLtopia with others?

Activity #2: Map It!

Time Allotment: 30 minutes

Background Information:

- A *community map* is a drawing that shows a community's needs and resources. The purpose of a community map—regardless of whether a community is rural, urban, or suburban—is for girls to identify the needs in their community and find resources that they can use for their Take Action Project. A community map is simply a starting point for determining community needs, not an end in itself. When creating their community maps, girls should be thinking about what needs might exist for each street, park, home, school, community center, and so on that they identify and draw. In this activity, girls should develop their community maps within the context of creating a GIRLtopia.

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Large paper or newsprint (one sheet per small group of 2-4 girls)
- Writing and coloring utensils
- Markers
- Optional: stickers

Steps:

1. Divide girls into small groups of 2-4 girls.
2. Give each group a large sheet of paper or newsprint, writing and coloring utensils, markers and stickers (optional).
3. Have girls find a spot where they can spread out and work. Because there will not be time to go out and explore a real community, encourage girls to use their imaginations to envision how their community looks. Remember, community is defined by the girls. It can be a school, neighborhood, city, religious community, park and so on. **Ask that girls choose a community in which they can address a girl-related issue.**
4. Within each group, girls will need to describe and draw the features and characteristics of the community they would like to "explore" and map out.
5. Each team should work together to draw the map. Girls shouldn't worry about scale or tiny details—simple boxes, lines, and symbols work just fine. Groups can draw the buildings, streets, landmarks, businesses, libraries, schools, and parks that are located in the community. They could be even more specific and draw a school, with its classrooms, cafeteria, and school grounds.
6. After groups have created their community maps, ask them to look at what they drew and identify any girl-related issues or needs they see by circling them on the map. What prevents this place from being a GIRLtopia? For example, a group might circle the school cafeteria and note that a lot of girl bullying happens there.
7. If desired, the girls can create a key or legend for their map, and identify different types of girl-related issues/needs on their map with different stickers.
8. Groups should also look at their maps to identify potential resources they could use when completing their project. What currently exists in this place that could help to move it closer to a GIRLtopia?

9. If desired, the girls can add these resources to their map's key/legend, and identify them on the map with select stickers.
10. As girls work on their maps, walk from team to team making suggestions, or just observe their progress.
11. After the maps are complete, and the girl-related needs/issues and resources have been identified, gather everyone together and ask groups to share their community maps, including needs and resources, with the large group.
12. Ask the group to use the information they have gathered in this activity, as well as what they discovered through the GIRLtopia Inspiration Box activity, to identify 3-5 needs/issues that seemed most pressing to them and to others in their community. Document the needs/issues that the girls identify.

Activity #3: Taking Action Snack Chat

Journey Connection: Links to multiple GIRLtopia sessions

Time Allotment: 15 minutes Prep Needed:

- Review Moving to Take Action at the beginning of this plan, and the additional Take Action information at the end of this plan.
- Prepare snack.

Materials Needed:

- Writing utensils
- Snack items

Part I Steps:

1. Along their journey, girls have explored their ideas of what an ideal world for girls looks like, and turned those ideas into artistic creations. They've connected with other people in their communities to share their own GIRLtopian ideas and hear the ideas of others.
2. Now it's time for girls to use what they've learned to move their communities one step closer to an ideal world for girls through a group Take Action project.
3. Give an overview of the provided Take Action information, helping girls to identify the key components of a Take Action project.

Part II Steps:

1. While enjoying a healthy snack of your choice, here are some things for girls to talk about:
 - Of our 3-5 most pressing "girl issues" which one do you think affects the most girls?
 - Which is the most important to you and why?
 - What are some ways that we could address some of our top issues? Think of some specific things we could do to take action for each.
 - What issue do you want to address as a group, and what specifically do you want to do? (If desired, take a vote to see what issue the girls want to focus on, and some potential ways that they might do so.)
 - With whom might you connect to help make your project happen?
 - What resources are available to you?

Wrapping Up - Session 1

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- None

Steps:

1. Gather in a friendship circle. Begin by calling out a letter of the alphabet at random.
2. Ask girls to pass the friendship squeeze around the circle; as they do so, have them share a personal skill or characteristic that will help the team Take Action. The skill or characteristic should begin with the letter you called out.
3. Play another round by calling out a different letter, and so on.
4. End by rotating around in the traditional friendship circle.

More to Explore:

- Field Trip Ideas
 - Visit a local community (school, neighborhood etc.) and complete the community map activity on location. Girls can draw what the community actually is, instead of imagining what the community might look like.
- Speaker Ideas
 - Invite a city planner or other city official to your meeting to help you create your community map and identify needs and resources.

Family Follow-up Email: Use the email below as a template to let families know what you did at the meeting today. Feel free to add additional information, including:

- When and where you will be meeting next
- What activities you will do at the next meeting
- Family help or assistance that is needed
- Supplies or materials that girls will need to bring to the next meeting
- Reminders about important dates and upcoming activities

Hello Girl Scout Families:

We had a wonderful time today exploring ways that we might move the world one step closer to ideal through a GIRLtopia Take Action Project. We are on our way to earning the Visionary Award in the GIRLtopia journey.

We had fun:

- Sharing our GIRLtopia Inspiration Box collections - ideas and items we've been collecting that relate to what the world is like for girls now, and how we want it to be.
- Creating a map of different communities that we are a part of, and identifying needs and resources within those communities.
- Exploring ideas for our GIRLtopia Take Action Project.

Continue the fun at home:

- Explore your family values together. How do your values shape your idea of a perfect world?
- Support your Girl Scout as she gets started with the GIRLtopia Take Action project.
- Look through the *GIRLtopia* journey book with your Girl Scout to find other activities you can try at home.

Thank you for bringing your Senior to Girl Scouts!

What's the difference between Community Service and Take Action?

Being of service to others means being helpful - doing the right and kind thing. Serving is often the immediate, and much needed, response to tragedy. But service is also an everyday kindness. We are of service when we feed the hungry, offer clothing to the homeless, or simply help a friend with a tough homework assignment. In serving, we are most mindful of basic human needs: food, clothing, shelter, care. Being of service is a vital way to help and care. When girls pursue service projects, they are addressing an immediate short-term need in the community.

When we move beyond immediate and necessary service to understand the root causes of a problem, we move toward action. When we team up and mobilize others in our efforts and find ways to solve that problem, we are taking action. Action can happen in many ways - from partnering with towns and schools, to organizing more sports events for girls, to getting the local toy store to stop following stereotypes when selecting its inventory of merchandise for girls, to holding "Take Back the Night" events so teens have a safe and fun place to hang out together once a month.

When girls pursue service projects, they are addressing an immediate short-term need in the community. When girls pursue Take Action projects, they take time to identify and understand the root cause of the issue they are addressing. For example, as service projects, girls might organize a book or clothing drive, paint walls to cover up graffiti, or hold a one-time march or fair to highlight a community problem. Although these projects address a need in the community, they do so for only a short period of time.

A Take Action project picks up from where a short-term project leaves off. For example, girls organizing the book or clothing drive could start a Take Action project by creating a clothes closet for the community. The girls who painted the walls to cover up graffiti can create a club that travels around the city painting beautiful murals on buildings that have been defaced. And the girls who held the march or fair could expand the event to include community artisans and make it an annual gathering.

Service makes the world better for some people "right now." Action strives to make the world better for more people for a much longer period of time. An easy way to remember the difference between short-term service projects and Take Action projects rests on whether the project is being done *for* the community or *with* the community. If a girl is doing something *for* the community, most likely she is working on a short-term service project. If she is doing something *with* the community, she is working on a Take Action project. As Girl Scouts, girls use both service and action to live out the Girl Scout Law and "make the world a better place."

Seven Steps to a Successful Take Action Project

Steps	Description
1. Map It - Investigate	<p>Girls explore community priorities and needs of concern to them. They work with community partners to identify community needs and to examine the root causes of community problems. Meaningful Take Action Projects engage with the broader community in planning and shaping the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many ways for girls to investigate community needs, like community walks, conducting surveys, community mapping, and interviewing key leaders. • Girls then interpret the findings from their investigation to identify community needs, root causes, solutions, and goals to determine their Take Action project.
2. Plan It - Prepare	<p>Planning and preparation involve getting ready for all aspects of the Take Action project. While the girls or the group of girls are leading, volunteers and community partners are active participants in project planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project plan addresses both the goals of the project as well as sustainability and measurability. Girls examine money-earning, safety requirements, participant training and any other elements needed for a successful project. • Girls set goals, make a timeline, and plan how and when to evaluate their project.
3. Do It - Act	The action phase is often the most visible and tangible part of a Take Action

	<p>Project, as it involves providing the measurable and sustainable service in the community. The primary aim is to be doing "with" the community not "for" the community. It moves social issues from girls' heads into their hearts and hands, and it motivates them to learn and grow while also contributing to community life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The action phase requires clarity in expectations, assignments, and schedules. • Encourage girls to build relationships with community members and their peers to ensure that the project is appropriate and meaningful for everyone. • Building bridges across differences is a core strategy in Taking Action. • Girls collect data, artifacts, pictures, and other documentation for reflection, demonstration, celebration, and evaluation.
4. Think About It - Reflect	<p>Reflection does not just occur at the end of a project. Girls reflect throughout their projects, as effective reflection is crucial for quality Taking Action. Reflection is more than talking about feelings; it involves critical thinking, analysis, problem solving and interpretation so girls integrate the experience into their learning & identity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls can select, design, and lead reflection times utilizing a variety of methods and approaches that match different learning styles. • Pose these core reflection questions: What? So what? Now what?
5. Advocate It - Demonstrate	<p>Teaching is said to be the best way to learn something. That's what advocating is all about; it gives girls a chance to synthesize and articulate what they have learned, why their issue is important, what difference they've made, and how they've grown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls can advocate and demonstrate what they have learned with a small audience or they may demonstrate what they've learned to key community leaders, the media, or a global audience on the Internet.
6. Be Proud of It - Celebrate	<p>Complementing and reinforcing demonstration is celebration. It invites girls and partners to step back and say "thank you" to all who are involved in the Take Action efforts. Recognition of others' contributions is not just gracious; it also helps to cement the experience in girls' lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating may involve public, high-energy recognition events with media coverage. Or it may mean writing and sending a personal note to participating youth acknowledging their contributions.
7. Keep It Going - Sustain	<p>Sustainability involves engaging others so that the community sustains the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts to sustain projects will need to be age/grade appropriate, and involve planning to guide future efforts. • Encourage girls to find ways they can use their own gifts and interests to pursue their next involvement.

Take Action Information adapted from "Take Action Volunteer Learning Module Facilitator Guide: Version 2." Girl Scouts of the USA, 2011.