



Journalism

Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.

This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor.

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.

You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in Boy Scout Requirements (Pub. 33216 – SKU 621535).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2007 • This workbook was updated in October 2016.

Scout's Name: _____

Unit: _____

Counselor's Name: _____

Counselor's Phone No.: _____

<http://www.USScouts.Org> • <http://www.MeritBadge.Org>

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: Workbooks@USScouts.Org
Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org

1. Explain what freedom of the press is and how the First Amendment guarantees that you can voice your opinion.

Freedom of the press

How the First Amendment guarantees that you can voice your opinion.

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In your discussion, tell how to distinguish between fact and opinion, and explain the terms libel, slander, defamation, fair comment and criticism, public figure, privacy, and malice.

Fact:

Opinion:

Libel:

Slander:

Defamation:

Fair comment and criticism:

Public figure:

Privacy:

Malice:

Discuss how these matters relate to ethics in journalism.

2. Do either A OR B:

a. Newspaper and magazine journalism:

1. All on the same day, read a local newspaper, a national newspaper, a newsmagazine, and (with your parent's permission) an online news source. From each source, clip, read and compare a story about the same event. Tell your counselor how long each story is and how fair and accurate the stories are in presenting different points of view. Tell how each source handled the story differently, depending on its purpose or audience .

Story

Local newspaper	
How Long?	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

National newspaper	
How Long?	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

Newsmagazine	
How Long?	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

Online news source	
How Long?	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

2. Visit a newspaper or magazine office Ask for a tour of the various divisions, (editorial, business, and printing). During your tour, talk to an executive from the business side about management's relations with reporters, editors, and photographers, and what makes a "good" newspaper or magazine.

Management's relations with reporters, editors, and photographers

What makes a "good" newspaper or magazine.

b. Radio and television journalism:

1. All on the same day, watch a local and national network newscast, listen to a radio newscast, and (with your parent's permission) view a national broadcast news source online. List the different news items and features presented, the different elements used, and the time in minutes and seconds and the online space devoted to each story. Compare the story lists, and discuss whether the stories are fair and accurate. Explain why the different news outlets treated the stories differently and/or presented a different point of view.

Story

Local newscast:

News items & features:

Elements Used:

Time given:

--

Compare story lists:

How Fair & Accurate?

Difference in handling?

Purpose or audience?

National Network Newscast	
News items & features:	
Elements Used:	
Time given:	
Compare story lists:	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

Radio Newscast	
News items & features:	
Elements Used:	
Time given:	
Compare story lists:	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

Online news source	
News items & features:	
Elements Used:	
Space given:	
Compare story lists:	
How Fair & Accurate?	
Difference in handling?	
Purpose or audience?	

2. Visit a radio or television station. Ask for a tour of the various departments, concentrating on those related to news broadcasts. During your tour, talk to the station manager or other station management executive about station operations, particularly how management and the news staff work together, and what makes a "good" station.

How management and the news staff work together:

What makes a "good" station:

- If possible, go with a reporter to cover a news event.

3. Discuss the differences between a hard news story and a feature story.

A hard news story

A feature story.

Explain what is the “five W’s and H.”

W	
W	
W	
W	
W	
H	

Then do ONE of the following:

- a. Choose a current or an unusual event of interest to you, and write either a hard news article OR a feature article about the event. Gear the article for print OR audio OR video journalism. Share your article with your counselor.
- b. With your parent’s permission and counselor’s approval, interview someone in your community who is influential because of his or her leadership, talent, career, or life experiences. Then present to our counselor either a written or oral report telling what you learned about this person.
- c. With your parent’s permission and counselor’s approval, read an autobiography written by a journalist you want to learn more about. Write an article that tells what you learned about this person and the contributions this person has made to the field of journalism.
- d. Attend a Scouting event and write a 200-word article (feature or hard news) about the event. Use either the inverted pyramid style or the chronological style. Review the article with our counselor, then submit it to your community newspaper or BSA local council or district newsletter for consideration.

4. Attend a public event and do ONE of the following:

Editor's Note: Use the back of this sheet or other paper for this work.

- a. Write two newspaper articles about the event, one using the inverted pyramid style and one using the chronological style.
- b. Using a radio or television broadcasting style write a news story, a feature story and a critical review of the event.
- c. Take a series of photographs to help tell the story of the event in pictures. Include news photos and feature photos in your presentation. Write a brief synopsis of the event as well as captions for your photos.

5. Find out about three career opportunities in journalism.

1.	
2.	
3.	

Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession.

Career:	
Education:	
Training:	
Experience:	

Discuss this with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

Requirement resources can be found here:
http://www.meritbadge.org/wiki/index.php/Journalism#Requirement_resources

Important excerpts from the Guide To Advancement - 2015, No. 33088 (SKU-620573)

[1.0.0.0] — Introduction

The current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* is the official source for administering advancement in all Boy Scouts of America programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. It replaces any previous BSA advancement manuals and previous editions of the *Guide to Advancement*.

[Page 2, and 5.0.1.4] — Policy on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program

No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with special needs. For details see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs".

[Page 2] — The "Guide to Safe Scouting" Applies

Policies and procedures outlined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects.

[7.0.3.1] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion

A youth member must not meet one-on-one with an adult. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative—or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge—along with him attending the session. If merit badge counseling or instruction includes any Web-based interaction, it must be conducted in accordance with the BSA Social Media Guidelines (<http://www.scouting.org/Marketing/Resources/SocialMedia>). For example, always copy one or more authorized adults on email messages between counselors and Scouts.

When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult verification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.

Note that from time to time, it may be appropriate for a requirement that has been met for one badge to also count for another. See "Fulfilling More Than One Requirement With a Single Activity," 4.2.3.6.

[7.0.3.2] — Group Instruction

It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways, fairs, clinics, or similar events. Interactive group discussions can support learning. The method can also be attractive to "guest experts" assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material.

There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and *personally*—completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like "show," "demonstrate," or "discuss," then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions.

It is sometimes reported that Scouts who have received merit badges through group instructional settings have not fulfilled all the requirements. To offer a quality merit badge program, council and district advancement committees should ensure the following are in place for all group instructional events.

- A culture is established for merit badge group instructional events that partial completions are acceptable expected results.
- A guide or information sheet is distributed in advance of events that promotes the acceptability of partials, explains how merit badges can be finished after events, lists merit badge prerequisites, and provides other helpful information that will establish realistic expectations for the number of merit badges that can be earned at an event.
- Merit badge counselors are known to be registered and approved.
- Any guest experts or guest speakers, or others assisting who are not registered and approved as merit badge counselors, do not accept the responsibilities of, or behave as, merit badge counselors, either at a group instructional event or at any other time. Their service is temporary, not ongoing.
- Counselors agree to sign off only requirements that Scouts have actually and personally completed.
- Counselors agree not to assume prerequisites have been completed without some level of evidence that the work has been done. Pictures and letters from other merit badge counselors or unit leaders are the best form of prerequisite documentation when the actual work done cannot be brought to the camp or site of the merit badge event.
- There is a mechanism for unit leaders or others to report concerns to a council advancement committee on summer camp merit badge programs, group instructional events, and any other merit badge counseling issues—especially in instances where it is believed BSA procedures are not followed. See "Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns," 11.1.0.0.
- There must be attention to each individual's projects and his fulfillment of all requirements. We must know that every Scout—actually and personally—completed them.

It is permissible for guest speakers, guest experts, or others who are not merit badge counselors to assist in the counseling process. Those providing such assistance must be under the direction of a registered and approved counselor who is readily available onsite, and provides personal supervision to assure all applicable BSA policies and procedures—including those related to BSA Youth Protection—are in place and followed.

[7.0.3.3] — Partial Completions

A Scout need not pass all the requirements of one merit badge with the same counselor. It may be that due to timing or location issues, etc., he must meet with a different counselor to finish the badge. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished—a "partial." In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, the counselor does not retain his or her portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his unit leader to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partial completions have no expiration except the Scout's 18th birthday. Units, districts, or councils shall not establish other expiration dates for partial merit badges.

[7.0.4.8] — Unofficial Worksheets and Learning Aids

Worksheets and other materials that may be of assistance in earning merit badges are available from a variety of places including unofficial sources on the Internet and even troop libraries. Use of these aids is permissible as long as the materials can be correlated with the current requirements that Scouts must fulfill. Completing "worksheets" may suffice where a requirement calls for something in writing, but this would not work for a requirement where the Scout must discuss, tell, show, or demonstrate, etc. Note that Scouts shall not be required to use these learning aids in order to complete a merit badge.