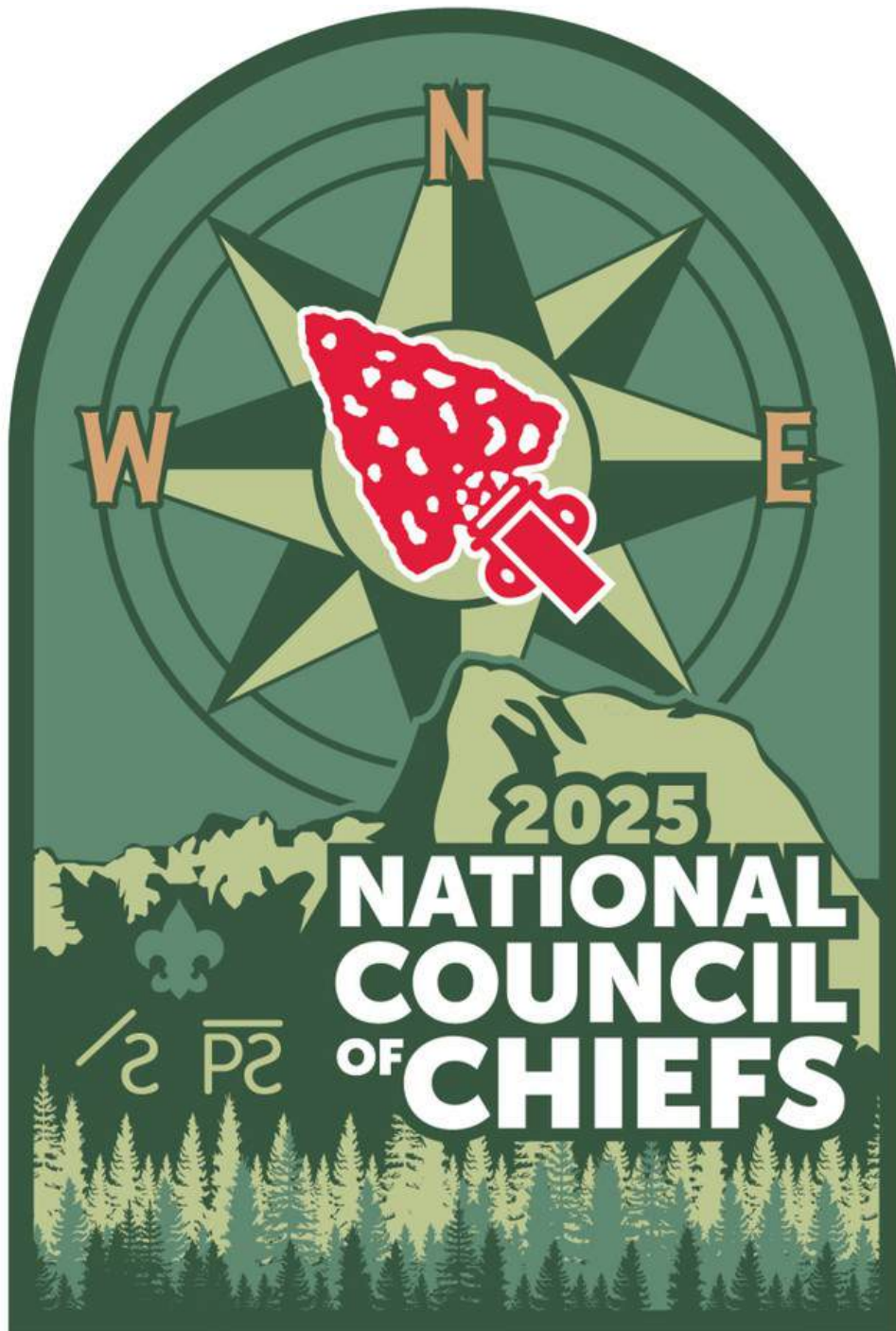


National Order of the Arrow New Induction Experience

NCOC — July, 26th 2025



Why is this document created?

This document exists as a “leak” to what National has been working on for our New Induction Experience. The National OA Committee will consider the revised proposed induction experience in January 2026. They will essentially be voting for the future of our induction right then and there. If approved, lodges will transition to the new induction between Spring 2026 and Spring 2027. Sections are offering opportunities to run trials in the spring.

How is this helpful to me?

Congratulations! If you are reading this before January you are special, very special! Why are you special? You can determine for yourself how you feel about it, and voice your opinion. You’d think the future of the first purpose of our organization (the induction) should be seen by YOU before it is set in stone, right? **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO VOICE YOUR OPINION!!!** This is the future of our organization, let it be known which parts you like and dislike of this pilot.

What is the problem with this?

The problem with this plan is very few members of our organization will have had the chance to see the induction before it becomes real. Lodge Chief’s and others deserve to see what could be our future and to be able to voice their opinions.

Information is current as of?

This version comes from NCOC from July of 2025. Since then there have been many pilots conducted by Lodges. Very little has changed according to reports from those who attended NCOC, and those pilots.

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SCHEDULE

9:30 – 9:45 PM	Introduction to IE
9:30 – 10:00 PM	First Meeting w/ Luminary
10:00 – 10:45 PM	Ceremony of the Arrow
11:45 PM	Night Alone Begins
7:00 – 7:15 AM	Morning Conversation
7:30 – 8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:00 – 8:30 AM	Activity #1 & Conversation
8:30 – 9:45 AM	Work Assignment
9:45 – 10:00 AM	Guidance # 1 & 2
10:00 – 11:15 AM	Work Assignment
11:15 – 11:30 AM	Guidance #3
11:30 – 11:45 AM	Activity #2
11:45 – 12:15 PM	Lunch Activity
12:15 – 12:30 PM	Conversation w/ Luminary
12:30 – 1:00 PM	Activity #3
1:00 – 1:15 PM	Break
1:15 – 3:00 PM	Work Assignments
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Guidance #4
3:15 – 3:45 PM	Activity #4
3:45 – 4:00 PM	Conversation w/ Luminary
4:00 – 4:30 PM	Silent Reflection
4:30 – 5:00 PM	Hygiene
5:00 – 6:00 PM	Dinner
6:00 – 7:00 PM	Training / Group Affirmation
9:30 – 11:00 PM	Ceremony of Affirmation

Ceremony of the Arrow

The order is a thing of the spirit. Let silence now fall upon this place, for here is where the story of our past is told and the story of our future shall unfold. The fire has been laid, our circle has been formed, but the fire before us remains unlit.

Remind us, first ambassador, of your responsibility before us and the task for which we have gathered. I am the first ambassador. Clothed in the honored vestments of our founders, I carry the memory of this place, of those who stood here, spoke here, and chose the path ahead.

I will see that the fire is lit once again, but in due time, for tonight we gather not for a blaze, but for a spark. A spark already glowing within the candidates who have joined us in our midst. I ask you, ambassador of light, call forth those who will encourage the candidates who will soon be welcomed as fellow members.

Let the ambassadors of fire come forward and be known. I am the ambassador of brotherhood. Mine is the responsibility to ensure that all members of our order find belonging and the warmth of friendship.

I will challenge each one who comes before us to embrace one another, that they may come to know and live by the admonition. In this, they will provide the fuel that feeds our council fire. I am the ambassador of cheerfulness.

Mine is the responsibility to ensure that all members of our order find the uplifting spirit that comes from within. I will challenge each one who comes before us to find hope, even in difficulty. In this, they will provide the air that lights our council fire.

I am the ambassador of service. Mine is the responsibility to ensure that all members of our order find the joy in serving others. I will challenge each one who comes before us to give of themselves in dedication and purpose.

In this, they will be the heat that radiates from our council fire. In our midst are those who have been chosen, but whose journey has not yet begun. Those we know as luminaries, bearers of light, have come forward to brighten our circle with the lights they bear, so that our circle may glow ever brighter during this, our endeavor.

Though our circle is now lit with the 15 blazes of Scouting's Merits, the fire does not yet burn in our midst. The ambassadors of fire are here to instruct the candidates, so that from the darkness of the night, and by their efforts, a new fire may be kindled. Let us now commence the ceremony of the arrow, so that these candidates may be encouraged as they come to know the ideals and purpose of the order of the arrow.

The presence of the newly chosen is most welcome, but they have not given their affirmation to this election. The presence of the newly chosen is most welcome, but they have not learned the ways of the order. The presence of the newly chosen is most welcome, but they have not heard the admonition.

Then I look towards those who have accompanied the chosen on their sojourn tonight. Can you attest that those assembled have been chosen by their peers to be admitted to the order of the arrow? Do you believe they are ready to pass through the challenges that were revealed to them the meaning of the arrow? Then I call on the first ambassador to prepare the candidates for the reception of the challenges, so that they may understand the honor for which they have been recognized, and come to hear the admonition, joining their ranks fully in our order. From the darkness, from the forest, we have come with words of warning.

We bring tokens of a challenge, three talismans we thus impart as aids to guide you to your heart. Yours is not an easy journey. Sometimes even friends will mock you, tempt you to betray your promise, and test your resolution often.

All the world may seem against you, and the paths seem dark and lonely when you face the isolation that a leader often faces. You need not fear nor shudder though, for in your wonder, wonder grows. You, who love the haunts of nature, love the moonlight on the water, love the sunshine on the meadow, love the shadow of the forest, love the wind among the branches, ever murmuring, ever sighing, love the rushing of great rivers through their palisades of pine trees, love the thunder in the mountains, whose innumerable echoes leap and bound from crag to cliffside.

Listen to these admonitions for your guidance on your journey. You were sent to seek a vision of yourselves and of your purpose. Our council fire lies before you with fuel prepared, but yet ablaze.

Witness how the spark within you, you may nurture and yield a flame. Pause and look you back on scouting, whose sign and motto you accepted. Long ago, you gave your promise, said you firmly, on my honor, I'll do my best, I'll do my duty.

It is plain to all who watch you. We know this, for your companions, taking note of your devotion to the high ideals of scouting, have proposed you to the order. We will soon entreat you fully with challenges for you to bear.

Let no setback keep you from an arrow's flight beyond compare. Ambassador of Brotherhood, speak to the challenge you offer these candidates. Behold, I share a mystery.

By knowing you, I come to see the other self I find in me. Through Brotherhood, with steadfast hand, our weary limits we transcend. Thus be reminded of this string, made close by many threads that cling and fuse in its tightening.

Each fiber pulls, yet holds its place. Drawn tight, new strength it does embrace. I challenge you with this intent.

Discover new on this event what by Brotherhood is truly meant. When guides do speak with wisdom known, open your minds to what you're shown. The Ambassador of Brotherhood challenges you.

Spend the day discovering the meaning of Brotherhood, as the signs, symbols, and manners of our order are explained to you. This will require coming to better know yourself and the members of this lodge. If this challenge is understood, I invite you to respond, it is understood.

Ambassador of Cheerfulness, speak to the challenge you offer these candidates. Through heavy doubt and weary days, true joy is not a fleeting blaze, nor hidden in a knotted maze. It lives beneath the weight you bear, a warmth that flickers even there.

By venturing the inward road, a deeper strength you will unfold. Treasure more pure than finest gold. As Bow wood tested proves the will, a cheerful heart is lively still.

I challenge you, cast out the din. Reflect on cheerfulness within and may your true self begin. And in that quiet you may find a cheerful, steady, sharpened mind.

The Ambassador of Cheerfulness challenges you. Spend time reflecting on cheerfulness so as to foster the resilience you bear inside. Tonight, sleep apart from others and be at rest in your thoughts.

Tomorrow, you'll be asked to take only what you need to practice gratitude, and to seek and affirm the good in others. If this challenge is understood, I invite you to respond, it is understood. Ambassador of Service, speak to the challenge you offer these candidates.

I offer now a proverb true, as I care for me, so do you. The enterprise of what we do is met with joy when done for all, whatever the task, both great and small. But what for us will point the way when doubt and pride would lead astray? Toward lofty goals to win the day? What marks the path we seek to know? This arrow loose will surely show.

I challenge you, set self aside. Let humble action be your guide. Offer service and thus provide a vision in what within we know.

In hearts that serve, the spirit grows. The Ambassador of Service challenges you. Spend the day in service to others.

This will require you to be selfless and to give freely of your time and efforts to the benefits of others. If this challenge is understood, I invite you to respond, it is understood. The candidates have confirmed that they understand the challenges that have been placed before them.

It is time now to unite the tokens of this ceremony, so they may affirm their desire to proceed. My friends, those who chose you need you. They have sent you on this journey and you were guided by these lights.

15 blazes led you to us. But the path that you have followed becomes rougher, steeper, fainter. You will need to light the fire.

In vanity, I once did seek to make this journey on my own. I climbed from peak and then to peak to hear a mystery unknown. You need seek no rocky summit.

These high places are within you. All the natural world around you shows you clearly your reflection. Witness the arrow in its flight and you will see the pattern clear.

The direction that you must follow are the whispers, urgings, promptings deep within your hearts and spirits. Who among you now is ready? Who will go upon this journey? You must choose. The first ambassador seeks a sign of your commitment.

If you decide to stop and go no further now, you may withdraw without discredit. If you're resolved to master every challenge faithfully, you'll be asked to take one step forward and then to draw the bow. If you accept the challenges presented to you, firmly now take one step forward.

For those of you who have stepped forward, please follow these instructions. When prompted by your luminary, step forward to the first ambassador who will invite you to draw the bow, thus uniting you to our common effort to send the arrow on its flight. Then proceed to the ambassador of service who will enjoin you to the arrow and its flight.

Finally, you will proceed here where you will receive the stash that will accompany you through the challenges of admission to the order of the arrow. Finally, return to your place in the circle. In reverence to these sacred rituals, please remain silent now and until your luminaries release you from the pledge of silence tomorrow morning.

Draw this bow, and so unite your efforts to those who came before you.

Soon this arrow will be launched on its turn, and as it springs forth from the bow, soon too will your turn be launched. You must seek to learn what the arrow means, and how it will guide you in a life of cheerful service. You must seek to learn what the arrow means, and how it will guide you in a life of cheerful service.

Congratulations! You have taken the first step. You have tested the bow and held the arrow. You now wear the sign that designates the members of our order.

This honor is afforded to you during the three challenges that have been given to you. To discover brotherhood, to reflect on cheerfulness, and to provide service. This symbol will rest close to your heart and guide you on your path.

Embed upon this sash the memories and experiences you will face as you seek to find the arrow. First Ambassador, please do us the honor of bringing the arrow to flight. Friends, your kept stillness is a sign.

You are ready for this journey. Hours spent in thoughtful silence help us make the right decisions more than days and days of talking. So now, observe in quiet thought how swift your path will now unfold.

As the archer draws the arrow most trustworthy from the quiver, you were drawn from many others. For the first shaft that is chosen must be straightest, must be surest. If, through many moons, unflinching, you hold fast to Scouting's pledges, swift and true, you each will travel.

As an arrow driven skyward, as an eagle soaring sunward. Find in this your true direction. For truest self thus becoming, you will be seen by all others, and by inspiration lead them.

Have found the arrow. You yourself will be the light which lights the way for others. Until that time, your journey will be illuminated by the spark within you and the spark within your fellow journeymen.

Our time of gathering is concluded. And so we dim the lights which first led us to this space. Lights which, though dampened as we part, the virtues which they represent will continue to glow in our hearts and minds and actions.

To be trustworthy. Loyal. Helpful.

Friendly. Courteous. Kind.

Obedient. Cheerful. Brave.

And reverent. May we always be mindful of our personal oath to do our duty to God and country, to help other people at all times, and to keep ourselves physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight. Now, with courage on these first steps, let us try to find the arrow.

Flight of the Arrow

Context for Flight of the Arrow: This is a guided meditation that is given during lunchtime (after the shared lunch activity).

Friends, welcome to your next activity during your induction week. Throughout the weekend, there will be other moments like these that will challenge you to follow the three tasks given to you last night at the ceremony of the year.

Discover brotherhood, reflect on cheerfulness, and provide service. We ask that everyone remain silent. I hope that you're ready for next steps on your journey.

It is a journey upon which you've already been traveling as a scout, and we are here to help you take the next steps. This activity is known as the flight of the arrow. As the symbol of our order, the arrow has been fitly chosen.

Its shaft cannot be bent or broken, and its points must be sharp. Aimed high, its course is undeviated. Its direction, onwards and upwards.

The flight of the arrow mirrors your own journey as a scout. For the next few minutes, we're asking you to participate in an activity that's used in a wide range of social circles and occupations called mindfulness-based stress reduction. Usually, some sort of object is imagined to help a participant eliminate distractions.

In this activity, we will utilize the image of an arrow. Participating in this activity will teach you to observe your thoughts and your feelings, and not let them overpower you, but rather allow you to manage them. This is core to our value as members of the order of the arrow.

A quote that is inspired by the teachings of Lao Tzu is a helpful way of expressing the connection between our thoughts and who we become. It goes something like this. Watch your thoughts, for they become your words.

Watch your words, for they become your actions. Watch your actions, for they become your habits. Watch your habits, for they become your character.

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny. It all starts with watching your thoughts. But how do you do that? It's something that as members of the order of the arrow, we practice and we can get better at.

So, let's start watching our thoughts. During this activity, it's a good idea to be in a mental space where you don't bother other people, and you don't let others bother you. It's likely going to be helpful if you close your eyes, and it's comfortable and safe, and if it's comfortable and safe for you to do so.

If at any time you need to open your eyes, that's all right. Start by allowing yourself to relax and let go of everything around you. You can listen to my voice for instructions on what to do, but if my voice becomes distracting to you, you're allowed to let your own mind and your own imagination take over.

Breathe deeply. Take one deep breath, and then another. Let each breath that you take allow you to clear your mind.

Keep breathing, and allow any concerns that you have to float away. Now, we're going to use our imagination. As you continue to breathe in while keeping your eyes closed, if you're comfortable doing so, imagine in your mind the upward flight of an arrow.

Always allow the arrow that you see in your imagination to move in slow motion. This arrow will never land, and will keep on going onwards and upwards. Perhaps you view the arrow from the side, or from the rear of the arrow, as you see it going forward through space.

Perhaps you view the arrow from below, or from above. It's up to you. As you picture this arrow, imagine the space around you, and allow the thoughts and feelings that you now have, or have on a daily basis, to take shape.

Flash back to the things that excite you, or to images of worry and anxiety that might begin to appear. These are your thoughts and feelings. It's okay to have them, but don't get distracted.

For every thought or feeling that you have, the arrow will always pass by the mind. Every time that you find yourself focused on something other than the arrow, just say, thank you. Thank it for being a part of your journey, and then return to the image of the arrow.

The arrow continues to fly through space, always moving onwards and upwards, always guiding you to the next moment of you, and who you are today. Keep breathing, and keep letting go of things. Know that it's okay to visualize the thoughts and feelings that you have.

Everyone has them. They aren't distractions, so long as you know that you're focused on the arrow, no matter what. They're all just a part of your journey, and sometimes they're important to you.

As easily as a thought, an image, a concern, or a feeling can appear, it can also disappear. Allow them to do so, in order that you may stay focused on the arrow. As the arrow climbs towards more lofty places, remember that these same high places are within you.

As easily as a thought, for now I'm going to discontinue the guided portion of this reflection, and allow you to continue imagining the flight of the arrow as it passes by the images of your thoughts and feelings. Keep breathing, and keep slowing down. Don't worry if something captures your attention more strongly than others.

Remember, the flight of the arrow allows you to pass by anything that might distract you. You can let go of anything that draws you away. This portion of our activity will soon be brought to a close.

You don't need to let go of the flight of the arrow just yet, but when you're ready, you can allow your imagination to see the arrow continuing on its way, for it will never stop leading you, never stop being the center of your thoughts and feelings. It is there to give you direction, even when you find yourself lost or struggling. When you are ready, you can open your eyes and come forward.

Thank you for being part of this activity. In a little while, we'll split up into a linear group, where you can talk about your experience as you're reflecting on the flight of the arrow. For now, please know that you can always do this activity.

You can do it on your own, on the way to school, or before you go to sleep. It can always be a way of helping you find focus and direction. It helps you to know that you are in control of your thoughts, and discovering that you have the ability can be very useful when you access your thoughts and feelings to make the decisions that only you will make.

Thank you, (name here). So, at this time, if you remember those orange cards that are currently in your pockets right now, we're going to go ahead and go join back together

with our joint luminary, so that would be myself, (other names listed here). So, we're going to do those joint luminary discussions.

So, find up, circle up with them, and then we will start discussing those breakout questions.

Ceremony of Affirmation

Context for Ceremony of Affirmation: Although candidates were given their sash during the Friday night ceremony, they are instructed to remove their sash before this ceremony and carry it with them.

What began as a spark has now become a flame, that brightens this, our circle. The fire belongs to you, and you belong to the fire. The fuel that feeds the fire is that of the brotherhood you have fostered with your fellow scouts.

The air that feeds the fire is the joy of cheerfulness you have shared with one another. The heat that radiates from the fire is the work you have given so selflessly today. As the fire burns, know that its brightness comes from the honor you have brought to scouting.

You are now called to carry that honor forward. In the direction of your luminary, please take your place within our circle. Having come before us as candidates for membership in the Order of the Arrow, and drawn near to the council fire, you are now ready to take up the obligation and affirm your dedication to the high ideals and purpose of the Order of the Arrow.

But before we begin, let us pause and reflect on the journey that has brought us here tonight. There should fall a solemn silence for the members of our circle. Our thoughts should now be centered on the noble goal and purpose that has called us all together.

We who love the woods and campus. We who strive in cheerful service. We who stand beside and urge them forward.

On the next step of their journey. On their long and toilsome journey. Each one ready now to help them through their toils and tribulations.

This, our purpose and intent, mark with silent reverence. It is now our solemn duty to share with you the story that lives at the heart of our order. A story whose chapters echo through the generations and whose legacy we now entrust to you.

My friends, be still and hear the story of the spirit that fills this moment. For this moment is but an heir to the timeless fire kindled at the center of this circle countless times. The Order of the Arrow, to which you have been called, is not merely an honor.

The Order is a thing of the spirit. This spirit is like the wind. You cannot see it, but you may feel it move through the trees, across the flame, within the quiet places of the heart.

No voice can say where the wind comes from, nor where the wind goes. But, if you listen with patience, you may be fortunate enough to glide along its ever-hidden whispers. So it was, many seasons ago, that an island rose from the waters of the Delaware River.

Treasure Island, they called it. Upon the island's ephemeral clay, from the wet water's tide, a scout camp was born. For many summers, Treasure Island rang with voices, filled with the sounds of scouts reveling in rendezvous invigorated by challenge, adventure, and lifelong friendship.

Perhaps you, too, have heard the echo of these voices. Gathered with hearts full of scouting spirit, perched upon the island's momentary passing, a question emerged among those assembled. How, friends, can we make scouting better? In that question, a spirit spark

caught flame, for they affirmed with united purpose that the one who serves their fellows is, of all their fellows, greatest.

Donning robes of ceremonial distinction, such as the ones I wear tonight, they formed a society of honor to recognize those whose actions would bring honor to their fellow scouts. From the island's soft sand, the fire spread. Carried by scouts to forest and field, mountain and plain, until it reached this place.

And now, to you. But take care. Membership in the Order of the Arrow is not a reward.

It is a call. A call to walk with humility. To lead not with pride, but with purpose.

To hear not the noise of praise, but the quiet voice of need. While I urge you to accept this noted distinction, I caution you. Still, pride's tempting posture often garnered from recognition.

Continue upon your journey, yet imagine steadfast in your newfound purpose. I entreat upon you to perpetuate the great traditions of the Order of the Arrow with an open heart that hears the hidden hole. For, even as I speak to you, Treasure Island has sunk into the Delaware River's timeless flow.

Footsteps trodden into softened silt persist no more, but what was kindled there lives on. In every campfire where scouts gather, in every hand extended in service, in every heart that asks, how will you make scouting better? You are here because you were chosen by and among your peers. You are the next to be asked the question.

To take up the promise. The next to carry the flame. The next in a long line of scouts who, each in their own way, met their moment.

They did their best. They did their duty. Listen, for their eternal voices are with us now.

They speak anew. I call forth the voice of scouting's past to witness and appraise the admonition which you will soon receive. I come before you from the past, a scout sincere, a vision vast, with legacy I trust will last.

For though my steps may fade from view, the trail I walked still calls to you. The challenges that once I faced, or which I toiled, trapped, and raced, are by the admonition placed as tokens of a guiding light to follow through the darkest night. So join with me in brotherhood for dreams I bore, as dreamers should, are strengthened by pursuit of good.

In word, in thought, in outward deed, the timeless scout is called to lead. The voice of scouting's past has challenged you to receive the admonition in the spirit of brotherhood. Though tempered by time, the admonition's value never fades.

I call forth the voice of scouting's present to witness and appraise the admonition which you will soon receive. A present scout like you I am, and offer only what I can. A thought, a guide, a hope, a plan, to find direction in the way our deepest selves might be portrayed.

Come to know our admonition, truest truth of our tradition. Hear with your heart our mission, which once heard cannot ignore. It guides us now and evermore.

Now join with me in cheerfulness, for in this moment we possess the wisdom tag loneliness. Not flounder, fade, nor merely cope, but rise once more and carry hope. The voice of scouting's present has challenged you to receive the admonition in the spirit of cheerfulness, as something to be lived out here and now.

I call forth the voice of scouting's future to witness and appraise the admonition which you will soon receive. What you may one day choose to be, I stand before you now to see, not

without a badge of property. Bagging, boasting what my worth is, the score to keep is my service.

Tomorrow comes without delay and questions us what values may forever last beyond the day. The admonition, when you hear it, is the fire that lights the spirit. Thus, as the arrow's bottom strikes, it erects and sharpens human sight.

So may you onward from tonight be bound to serve each to others, not alone, but sisters. Brothers, the voice of scouting's future has challenged you to receive the admonition in the spirit of service. Not as a reward for what you have done, but as a call for what you will do.

The spirit of the order of the arrow is a flame that time cannot dim. A legacy kindled anew in each generation. I have spoken to you from the past, where scouting's voice once made its mark.

I have spoken to you in this present, where scouting has lived, here and now. I have spoken to you from the future, where scouting's call is yet to be heard. Together, with these voices, with the memory of Treasure Island and our Order's foundation, with the friendships forged today and ones yet to be made, we find ourselves with a united purpose.

My friends, this is our moment. This is our time. Let us breathe it in.

This moment embraces you and gently asks, how will you make scouting better? This, our purpose and intent, mark with silence, Reverend. Friends, you have heard the foundation's story of the order of the arrow and are prepared to hear the admonition. But before our Order's most profound lesson can be shared with you, you must affirm that you are ready to receive it.

Last night, you were given three challenges. To discover brotherhood. To reflect on cheerfulness.

And to provide service. The challenges you have undergone were given not to prove your worthiness, for that was already apparent, but rather to strengthen your resolve and ready your spirit for the obligation you are about to take. Your conscience is the first witness to your readiness.

If you are satisfied that having risen to meet these challenges, you are ready to accept the obligation of the order of the arrow, state now and loud, I am ready. I am ready. Friends, as ambassadors of this ceremony, we have been entrusted to receive your affirmation.

It is only right that we acknowledge your affirmation. It is gladly received. We also desire to accompany your affirmation with the observations of those who have journeyed with you today.

I now call forward the luminaries of this ceremony to speak on your behalf. Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name).

He is loyal. This is (name). He is kind.

This is (name). She is brave. This is (name).

He is courteous. This is (name). He is strong.

He is brave. This is (name). He is kind.

Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name). He is loyal.

This is (name). He is trustworthy. This is (name).

She is reverent. This is (name). He is clean.

This is (name). He is cheerful. This is (name).

He is helpful. This is (name). She is brave.

Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name). He is kind.

This is (name). He is brave. This is (name).

He is reverent. This is (name). She is helpful.

This is (name). He is courteous. This is (name).

He is clean. Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name).

She is thrifty. This is (name). She is brave.

This is (name). He is kind. This is (name).

He is cheerful. This is (name). She is helpful.

This is (name). He is loyal. And this is (name).

He is helpful. Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name).

She is cheerful. This is (name). She is kind.

This is (name). He is helpful. This is (name).

He is courteous. This is (name). He is cheerful.

This is... This is (name). She is loyal. This is (name).

She is courteous. Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name).

He is friendly. This is (name). He is cheerful.

This is (name). He is helpful. This is (name).

He is kind. This is (name). He is friendly.

This is (name). He is reverent. This is (name).

He is brave. Luminary (name), please raise your voice in affirmation of those whose way you live. This is (name).

He is kind. This is (name). She is trustworthy.

This is (name). He is helpful. This is (name).

He is cheerful. This is (name). She is kind.

This is (name). He is helpful. This is (name).

He is courteous. The obligation is our collective promise to each other that united in brotherhood we will serve others before ourselves and uphold the spirit of scouting. Listen now to the obligation in the presence of this circle and before the council fire.

I do hereby promise on my honor as a scout that I will always and faithfully observe and preserve the traditions of the Order of the Arrow. Brotherhood, cheerfulness, service. I will always regard the ties of brotherhood in the Order of the Arrow as lasting and will seek to preserve a cheerful spirit even in the midst of irksome tasks and weighty responsibilities.

And will endeavor, so far as in my power lies, to be unselfish in service and devotion to the welfare of others.

If you accept the obligation, raise your right hand in the scout sign and repeat after the First Ambassador the obligation.

(they say obligation again)

You may now lower your hand. Let our circle bear witness to your promise, now spoken and now shared. You have all taken upon yourselves the obligation of the Order of the Arrow.

Ambassadors of Fire, do you believe the candidates are ready to receive the admonition? Yes, we do. Then let us widen our circle and share the admonition. We have often spoken of the admonition and its importance to our members.

The admonition is spoken reverently to fellow members as a heartfelt reminder of our solemn purpose. One member comes before another member face to face and places the right hand on the other's shoulder. With earnestness and sincerity, the first member speaks the words of the admonition.

To love one another. The other member responds in kind with the same words. To love one another.

The exchange is completed by the hand clasp of the Order of the Arrow, made with the left hand entwining the lowest fingers. The admonition is a bright, guiding light for our Order. To know and greet one another with the admonition is to be welcomed without reservation.

You are now invited to take the final step. You will come forward one by one and stand before an ambassador. Bring with you the sash you were given last night and follow your Luminary with silence and purpose.

This sash was placed upon your shoulder last night. Chosen by others to join the Order of the Arrow. Tonight, you choose for yourself.

This sash is now yours to wear, not as a symbol of honor received, but as a commitment accepted. It will no longer be placed upon you, for you must take it upon yourself. Every time you wear it, you affirm your commitment to carry out its meaning.

To uphold your obligation. To live out our admonition. If you affirm your membership, then place it upon yourself now.

Congratulations. Please return in silence to your place within the circle. Are you ready to continue your journey to seek the Arrow within this Brotherhood by cheerfully serving others? Yes.

May I please have your sash? Last night, this sash was placed on your shoulder in recognition that you were chosen by others to join the Order of the Arrow. Tonight, you

choose for yourself. This sash is now yours to wear, not as a symbol of honor received, but as a commitment accepted.

It will no longer be placed upon you, for you must take it upon yourself. Every time you wear it, you affirm your commitment to carry out its meaning. To uphold your obligation.

To live out our admonition. If you affirm your membership, then place it upon yourself now.

Congratulations. Please return in silence to your place within the circle.

I congratulate you, my brothers and sisters. I am pleased to greet you as such, for that is what you are. Membership in the Order of the Arrow is given not only for what you have done, but for what you are expected to do in the future.

Strive to fulfill the obligation and to live out our admonition. This is your crest for the Arrow, and it will lead you around the circle once again. As you complete that circle, you will find us waiting for you.

We will celebrate your journey together as a brotherhood family. Brothers and sisters, we challenge you. Strengthen the ties of brotherhood.

Build upon the fire of cheerfulness. Ease the burdens from the shoulders of your fellow Scouts. As you do these things, you will begin to see the full meaning of the Arrow and continue your journey in this circle, drawing ever closer to the fire.

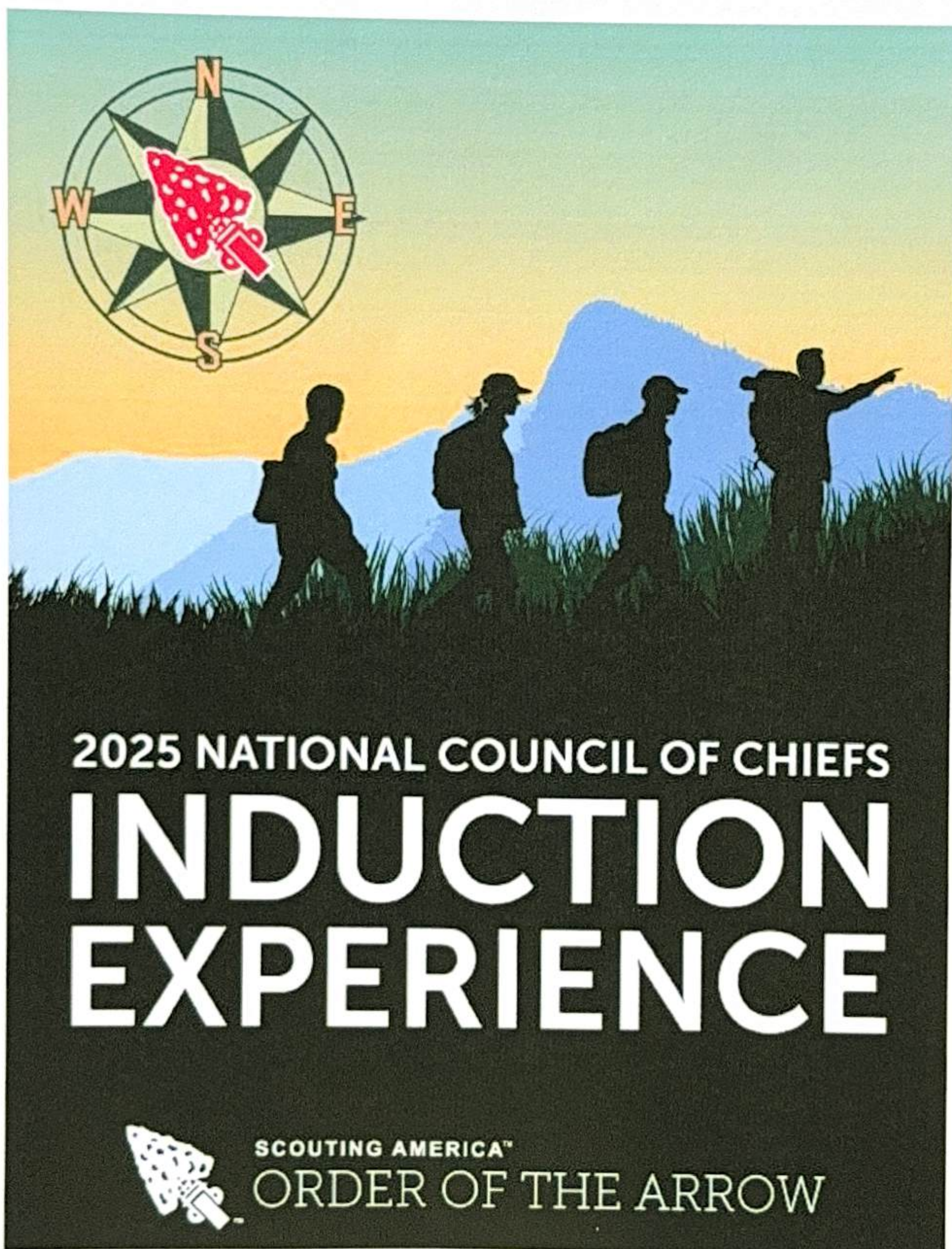
Put a huge cross right arm over left, and joining hands, sing the Order of the Arrow song together. One, two, three, four. Firm bound in brotherhood, gathered old service brings to fellow man.

(sings the OA song)

This concludes the ceremony of affirmation.

As we leave this place, let us carry the fire in our hearts and the Arrow ever as our guide.

Shortened Guidebook for
Luminaries



2025 NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHIEFS
**INDUCTION
EXPERIENCE**



SCOUTING AMERICA™
ORDER OF THE ARROW



Activity: Guidance 4 – History & Aim/Act/Appraise

Lead Adviser: David Heimann
2025 National Council of Chiefs

Activity Description

Guidances are brief moments throughout the day of the induction experience that are meant to help participants better understand the central values of the Order of the Arrow. The architects of the current induction weekend envisioned them as “quasi” ceremonies. These are shorter moments throughout the day that are clearer and easier for participants to engage with than the longer ceremonies of the past. If done in large groups, the thought would be that the ceremonialists from the major ceremonies would read the guidances to a larger group of participants. They are also designed so that a smaller group, such as one or two luminary groups, could gather and a luminary can read the guidance. This is especially practical if the group is working at service site that is farther away from the central meeting point.

Learning Objectives

- To know more about the history of the Order of the Arrow and equate that the participants are going through an induction just as the first inductees did in 1915.
- To understand how members of the Order of the Arrow are process oriented and continue to improve based on action and reflection. This is demonstrated by the act of shooting an arrow, which isn't about arrows at all.

Outcomes

After this presentation, participants should be able to make a connection between the name of the organization (The Order of the Arrow) is not about arrows or archery, but a way of life aimed at constant improvement and service to others.

Material Needs

- Script for Guidance 4 (History and Aim-Act-Appraise)
- Black colored Participant Card (#12)
- First Ambassador's robe (if done in large group)
- A bow that is strung (no arrow)
- Rehearsed luminaries to act out first ceremony
- A bundle of sticks
- If outdoors, this should be done by a large tree

Activity Plan

In either a large group in a central meeting area or in smaller groups if necessary, all participants are brought to attention to hear the reading of the following guidances. Luminaries help to act out the dialogue given by the guide. Between each guidance, a short time for journalling is allowed.

A GUIDE / FIRST AMBASSADOR:

Good afternoon, during the course of the day, we have stopped and shared several moments of wisdom and guidance. You have moved through several tasks and challenges and now find yourself ever closer to the Affirmation Ceremony in which you will be recognized fully as members of our Order and finally hear the Admonition.

But how did we get here? I don't mean, how did you get to this camp or this moment in your Affirmation weekend. I mean the Order of the Arrow? How did we get to the point where we held a weekend like this to induct you into Scouting's National Honor Society?

It has been the tradition since the beginning of the Order of the Arrow that those inducted would pass through a series of tasks from which they would derive some lesson. I will describe and some of our luminaries will act out what the first tests were and how members passed through them.

(luminaries act these scenes out as the reader giving the guidance describes the scenes)

In a ceremony at night, the founders of the Order would find a big tree and challenged one candidate to use their arms to encircle the tree. It had to be circled fully, or the challenge was not complete. The candidate was not able to do this alone

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because the trunk of the tree was too big. The founder would invite others to join in the task. What one person could not do on their own was accomplished easily with the help of others. This taught the importance of brotherhood.

The founders next had a group of sticks bound together, modelling the brotherhood that was just demonstrated. With everyone gathered around the council fire, they were told that each stick symbolized the talents and gifts that each one of them brought to their fellow scouts. They were then invited each to place the individual sticks on the fire and see how the fire grew brighter and broader. This taught the importance of cheerfulness.

The founders then took the candidates to a steep incline and challenged the members to go up the incline. Alone, this could not be done, but with the proper support and help from one another, the service provided to each other allowed for all the candidates to reach the top of the incline safely. This taught the importance of service.

(The luminaries return to their seats and another luminary comes out with a bow that is strung and models the description of the reader)

ANOTHER GUIDE:

As you can tell from your experience this weekend, the challenges that were given to the original candidates have changed, but the lessons have remained the same. What we wish to share with you now is the process which has guided the Order over decades of growth. This same process is something that involves you now. What we are sharing with you may seem like it is about shooting an arrow, but be mindful. It is not about shooting an arrow. It is about your life.

There are three steps in shooting an arrow. You must Aim – Act – and Appraise.

(Another luminary comes out and demonstrates the actions detailed in the following paragraphs as the speaker speaks. Only a strung bow is used. No arrow is launched in this pantomime.)

When sending an arrow on its flight, it must have direction. That direction comes from you. You must make adjustments that account for the distance to the target. By being self-aware, only you can determine if you need a greater strength or a broader arc. Are you grounded and stable or are you moving and shaky? How will the thickness of the air effect the arrow's flight or the wind or rain? To answer these

questions, you will draw from your experience and do your best. All of this must be considered as you draw your aim.

And that will all have been done for nothing if there isn't a moment in which you commit to action for which you have prepared. You must act. With steadiness and confidence, the snap of the string engages the resilience of the bow and launches the arrow on its flight. Excitement radiates from the persistence of possibility that resides in you alone. You have the choice. You make the decision. Your actions matter.

Too often, our world is confounded by those who only act but never aim. At the same time, sometimes it is confounded by those who aim, but never act. But both together unite in a profound moment that is over just as it has begun.

For once the flight of the arrow has started, you must begin the third process – appraise. As the arrow is in flight, what do you see? Is it going as you had planned? What factors did you not consider and would have changed had you got better information? Is the arrow on the path to meet its target? How much were you off? What would you do differently next time? Taking the mental notes of appraisal, sometimes writing them down, are important steps in shooting an arrow.

(The luminary who pantomimed the shooting of an arrow sits down.)

Sometimes people think that shooting an arrow is just about the moment you release the string and shoot the arrow, but it isn't. It is more about how you teach yourself to be attentive to what you are learning, even as the arrow is in flight. These insights and lessons bring a good archer back to the beginning of the process. With new information and experience, you can set out with new aim, a renewed ability to be better the next time. This process reminds us of the wisdom observed by the poet Maya Angelou who once wrote, "Do your best, until you know better. Then do better."

So remember the lessons on how to shoot an arrow. You must aim, act, and appraise. What we are sharing with you may seem like it is about shooting an arrow, but be mindful. It is not about shooting an arrow at all. It is about your life.

ANOTHER GUIDE:

[Distributing the black cornered Participant Cards]

Please take a few moments of quiet reflection to think about what you just heard. The questions on your Participant card may be used to write some of your own reflections in your journal



Activity: Laugh – Sing – Dance / OA Song

Lead Adviser: David Heimann

2025 National Council of Chiefs

Activity Description

At the heart of this activity, it is an icebreaker meant to motivate and energize a group for their morning activity. It is also designed to teach self-acceptance, acceptance of others, and build comradery. Designed by research professor Brene Brown, who writes in her book *The Gifts of Imperfection*, "Laughter, song, and dance create emotional and spiritual connection; the remind us of the one thing that truly matters when we are searching for comfort, celebration, inspiration, or healing: we are not alone."

Learning Objectives

- To discover the connection that comes from brotherhood
- To cultivate cheerfulness through the freedom that comes self-expression and self-acceptance

Outcomes

As the activity that comes right before going off to work sites and providing service, the success of this activity could be determined by a sense of comradery and trust built between the luminary groups. If members go to their sites with smiles on their faces, feeling like they belong, like others know their name, like they could sing while working (Hi ho! Hi ho!) and could laugh at the mistakes made along the journey, this would be a successful activity. There will be time for thoughtful silence, so the next few hours should be filled with joy and delight as we work together.

Material Needs

- Script for guide to read from.

Activity Plan

A GUIDE:

Friends, I hope that you are all doing well. There is a very good chance that you will remember what you have just gone through for years to come. The ceremony last night and your decision to make this journey are proof of why others chose you to be in the Order of the Arrow. You have incredible resilience and a lot of courage! Be proud of yourselves!

During the ceremony, you were challenged to discover brotherhood, reflect on cheerfulness, and provide service. We're going to do an activity this morning that helps us with the first two challenges. To have a relationship with one another as close as a brother or sister, we must let loose sometimes. We must be free to be ourselves and let go. Doing so helps us be more cheerful, because we cultivate an inner sense of joy that becomes contagious and brightens other people's day, just as it brightens our own. At first, it is natural to be cautious and careful and that's OK, but as we learn to trust one another, you'll find that others are here to support you and laugh with you.

So that's going to be the first part of this morning's activity. We're going to work not only on laughing, but also the freedom to laugh together. Laughter is a great gift! It helps reduce stress, it boosts our immune system, it improves blood flow, and releases endorphins. It also lowers the walls we sometimes put up that keep us from seeing each other eye to eye and connecting with one other. Brotherhood invites us to laugh, not to laugh at someone or make fun of them, but to feel comfortable being together in life. So, let's try it!

Even if you had a tough night, are a little sore from sleeping on a rock, feel a little out of sorts, or just focused on troubles you're facing back home, let's see what happens if we consciously laugh for 30 straight seconds. I'll keep a timer. All you need to do is try to muster up laughter for that long and while you do, see what happens and how you feel. Perhaps seeing other people will make you laugh too! We'll start on the count of three and go for thirty seconds. OK? Let me hear you laugh in one... two... three...

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[Laughter] ["Keep laughing! You're doing great! Don't stop! Keep laughing!"]

OK, that was great everyone! Good job, and for those who struggled because it was hard to laugh, thank you for taking the risk. As you could tell, in a good way, it helped other people laugh as well and maybe you felt joy for bringing joy to others. We're going to continue this exercise by going one step further. We're going to ask you to take another risk that helps build brotherhood and helps spread cheerfulness. It's by singing a short song together.

OK... I know some of you may be thinking... "I'm not a singer." That's OK. Our practice of brotherhood is an exercise in accepting each other as we are at the same time challenging each other to do our best. But as hundreds of generations of humanity can attest, there is something that connects us and makes us more cheerful when we sing. As we sing together, if you've got a great voice, sing loud to show it off. If you feel you don't have a great voice, sing loud anyway. It's OK. We're all here together and being a little vulnerable allows us to connect even more.

Here's how it is going to work. I'm going to start singing the first few lines of a song, and once you know it, start singing along. If you don't know it, then try to pick it up when we sing it the second time.

Here we go...

In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
Wee-hee-hee-hee
Wee-oh aweem away

In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
Wee-hee-hee-hee
Wee-oh aweem away

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That was great! Good job everyone. If you didn't pick up on the lyrics yet, they are pretty simple. They are:

In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
Wee-hee-hee-hee
Wee-oh aweem away

Now let's try it all together one last time! Sing out!

In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
Wee-hee-hee-hee
Wee-oh aweem away

OK! You are all much better than you think you are. That was great! Later on, we're going to have the chance for you to talk about this activity in your luminary group. When you do, I want you to be mindful of how you feel right now. How do you feel different after taking just a few moments to laugh? How did it feel to take a few moments to sing? Perhaps this was a big risk for you, but hopefully you feel that whatever risk you took was OK. If you stretched a little bit or a lot, laughing together and singing together has an impact on us. We believe that accepting each other for the risks that we take and supporting every effort that fellow scouts attempt is a critical part of brotherhood. Perhaps that is something for you to discover as we do these activities together.

Now there's one more step in this morning's activities. You've laughed. You've sang, I want to see what happens if you move and dance. When I say go, you are free to move to the music. You can simply sway. You can clap. You can wave your arms or do turns or wave your arms while doing turns. The only restriction is that you don't disturb someone else by running into their personal space with your own movements. Try not to think about it too much and just go with whatever moves you. Oh... and sing along too! A one, a two, a three... Let's go!

In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
In the jungle, the mighty jungle the lion sleeps tonight
A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh

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A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a weema-weh, aweema-weh
Wee-hee-hee-hee
Wee-oh aweem away

Again, that was awesome! Full disclosure, this activity was known as "Laugh-Sing-Dance" because that is what we did together. We laughed. We sang. We danced. And all the while others supported you for who you are. Throughout the rest of the day and throughout your time as a member of the Order of the Arrow, please know that you are always free to laugh, to sing, and to dance. This is one of the many ways that we can live out brotherhood and cheerfulness. We accept one another, even when we step a bit out of our comfort zone and we can cheer each other up by cultivating an inner joy, just like we did moments ago.

Before we end this activity, we want to introduce you to another song. You won't be asked to sing it or memorize it right now, but it is a song that is sung frequently at gatherings of members of the Order of the Arrow. It is our official song and we will sing it tonight at the Ceremony of Affirmation. We want to take this opportunity for you to hear it and learn part of it so that you'll know what you are hearing later tonight.

When we sing it, we cross our arms in front of ourselves with our right hand over our left and join hands with one another. We are also usually in a circle, but for now we will just form a line, just as the luminaries and I are doing right now. The song itself goes like this:

Firm bound in Brotherhood, gather the clan
That cheerful service brings to fellow man.
Circle our council fire, weld tightly every link
That binds us in Brotherhood, Wimachtendienk.

In your luminary groups, you'll get a copy of these lyrics and have a quick meeting with your luminary before we go to our work sites. Please meet up with your luminary now.