



Scouting Scotland

'You can see them thinking: Wow, I can really do something here, and I'm only seven!'

Intergenerational Scouting, page 50





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It is important to note the differing structures of UK Scouting in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, for ease of reading, this magazine refers to all variations of 'County'-level groupings simply as County.

At Scouting magazine, we make every effort to ensure that our content is accurate, complete and up to date at the time of going to press. Occasionally, inaccuracies may occur.

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The path ahead

I always get excited at the start of a new journey. An unexplored path leading into the horizon is such an inspiring invitation to new adventures. The future is filled with possibilities and it's such a great feeling knowing there are new friends, challenges and experiences ahead. In Scouting we're starting a new journey right now as we begin Skills for Life: Our Plan to Prepare Better Futures 2018-23.

Not only do we have a new strategy to inspire even more young people and better support our volunteers, we have a great new brand, too – built around skills for life and belonging. Both of these themes are so important to us as Scouts. I'm incredibly proud of being part of this amazing movement.

In this issue of Scouting, we visit the UK's first Buddhist Scout Group. Scouting and Buddhism share so many positive values and it's stories like this that prove we are a movement not afraid to change.

It's no secret that I'm a big believer in the transformative power of the outdoors. So naturally, I was intrigued

by our feature on how we can use digital tools to enhance our time in nature. Technology is not the enemy of the outdoor adventure. Far from it!

I love the quote 'If at first you don't succeed, try and try again'. Too often, we try to sweep mistakes under the carpet. Don't do that. Use them as learning experiences, just as UK Youth Commissioner Hannah Kentish did after an expedition didn't go to plan. Never be too proud to stand up after a slip. It will make you a better, more resilient person.

There will be both successes and setbacks on the path ahead. The important thing is that we look after each other on the journey and never lose sight of our goal: to create a more positive future for our young people.

I look forward to seeing you along the way,

Bear Grylls, Chief Scout

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The next five years

It is hard to believe that seven years has passed since I took up appointment as Chief Commissioner of Scotland. In that time, I have been privileged to meet many young people and adults from across Scotland and witnessed what quality Scouting really looks like. I have been so impressed with the dedication of our committed leaders and the passion they invest in Scouting.

I have witnessed the impact their hard work has had on our young members – many of whose individual stories have moved me and demonstrated a lasting commitment to our values.

The past seven years have seen much positive change, but I do not want to dwell on the past. Our new five-year strategy launched in May this year. It builds on the past five years by maintaining focus on growth, youth involvement, community impact and inclusivity. But it asks us to reprioritise three important aspects of what we do: our programme, our people and how we are perceived, both internally and by those outside Scouts.

Our programme defines us. It is our key product and unique selling point. Our people are our life blood. Without our volunteers, we have

nothing. We need to support, nurture and care for them better than we have done in the recent past. Finally, we need to shout to the world that what we do is valued and makes a real and meaningful difference. I hope you will all engage with this new strategy to help deliver Scouting to more young people.

Please accept my sincere thanks for your support and help my successor, Andrew Sharkey, take up the reins to help lead Scouting in Scotland to even greater heights.

Graham Haddock
Chief Commissioner of Scotland

Reactions to our new strategic plan and brand refresh

In May, we launched our new 2018–2023 strategic plan, Skills for Life: Our plan to prepare better futures in Scotland. Alongside the plan, we also unveiled the new brand for Scouting in Scotland and our new volunteer recruitment video, Nat's story. On launch day, members played a key role, sharing the video across social media and helping it reach more than 300,000 views. Many were particularly touched by Nat's story.

Lindsay Eyre wrote: 'By the end of the video, I had a lump in my throat. Having been one of the very first girl Scouts in our fantastic Group, I now arrive weekly at the very same hut where my elder daughter is just beginning her adventure as a very

enthusiastic Cub. Scouting has come full circle for our family.'

Section Leader Jen Rebecca agreed: 'I'm training to be a teacher with two small children. Everyone asks me why I still lead a Cub pack every Tuesday. This is why. My daughter starts Beavers in July. This video was so beautiful. Thank you.'

On the day, the hashtag #skillsforlife trended on Twitter in the UK and was featured across a range of publications, promoting our work to around five million people.

Thanks for all the work going on locally to embrace the changes to our brand and visual identity. Guidelines,

tools and resources are available on the Scout brand centre at scouts.org.uk/brand. While we have one unified visual identity across the UK, colour is used to show devolved nation identification. Scout Groups, Districts and Regions in the nations have logos that are the same, but in different colours. In Scotland, our logos are in 'Scout Blue'. Remember, locally and nationally we have until May 2020 to make the transition to the new visual identity.

To watch Nat's story, head to: scouts.org.uk/natsstory. An overview of the strategy and brand can also be found in the special supplement included with this issue of Scouting Scotland.





ScoutFest 2018

Booking is now open for ScoutFest – our festival for volunteers at Scout Adventures Fordell Firs, on 15–16 September. We've listened to your feedback and ideas about what would make this event special and useful for you. We're planning a weekend full of fun activities, practical skills development, programme ideas, training, social opportunities and loads more. There are different ticket options available. For more information and to book your tickets, head to scouts.scot/scoutfest2018.

New Scouts Scotland grants programme

We're really excited to announce our new Scouts Scotland Grants Programme. Earlier this year the Scottish Board agreed an exciting series of projects funded by legacies, including a new grants programme for local Scouting. The new programme brings together all of the grants we offer, making them more accessible and easier to apply for. We have created a new page on our website, which shows what

we can fund and is linked to a new user-friendly online application form and guidance notes. We can fund a wide range of projects, including starting a new section, supporting young people with additional needs, Scouting in areas of deprivation and more. We have also added funding for implementing the new brand and for travelling to our Scout Adventures Centres in Scotland. To find out more visit scouts.scot/funding.



Year of Young People



The Scottish Government has dedicated the whole of 2018 to young people, so our National Youth Advisory Group, in partnership with our SHQ Commissioners (Youth Involvement), has launched a special badge to help you take part in celebrating young people's successes.

The badge is available to all sections, including volunteers. You can achieve your Year of Young People badge by completing just one task from a list of requirements.

Learn more about how to get your badge at: scouts.scot/yoyp.

Stay up to date with GDPR

Not being aligned with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation could result in serious penalties and damage to the finances and reputation of Scouting.

To help you follow best practice throughout the year, there is an online training programme to provide you with an understanding of what GDPR means for you and your Scout Group, District and Region. To access this, visit: scouts.org.uk/gdprtraining.

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Introducing our next Chief Commissioner

We are really excited to be welcoming Andrew Sharkey as the next Chief Commissioner of Scotland. We've asked Andrew – known as 'Sharkey' by many in the movement – to answer a few questions so we can all get to know him a bit better

What are you most looking forward to in your new role?

Having the opportunity to help continue the great work done by Graham Haddock and ensuring Scottish Scouting continues to grow in numbers and quality. I'm really looking forward to getting around and seeing excellent Scouting happening all over the country and enabling the good practice to be shared widely and developed further. I would also love to help more adults have the confidence to join Scouting. I sometimes think we do such a good job telling people what great adventures we have that potential leaders don't feel confident enough about their own abilities to want to join us.

Why did you want the role?

I feel very humbled to have been given the role and hope I can do the position justice. I'm excited at having the opportunity to further develop Scouting. This will include getting Scottish Scouting to better reflect the diversity of our communities and getting Groups started in areas that currently don't have Scouting, particularly in our more deprived communities. Scouting can give young people so many skills for life, including leadership, confidence, problem solving, and interpersonal skills, as well as friendships that often last a lifetime.

What is your favourite moment from Scouting?

Am I allowed more than one? One of my current roles in Scouting is as Camp Chief of Blair Atholl Jamborette. I've attended the camp every two years since 1988. And a favourite moment every time is the final campfire. For the previous 10 days, 1,000 young people from around



the world have lived, worked and played together. It's a model of great international Scouting and friendship that never fails to move me.

How are you going to spend your first 100 days in the role?

Learning and listening! Graham was an inspirational Chief Commissioner, building on the great work undertaken by his predecessors. I've got to work hard to ensure that this progress continues and, while we need to continually adapt to today's young people and society, I also want to ensure I don't lose the essence of what makes Scouting in Scotland so special.

What is the best skill you've learned through Scouting?

I think what's great about being involved in Scouting is that you're

always learning. Last weekend I was at a Parent and Child Cub camp at Scout Adventures Meggernie with my eldest son and we learnt how to make fire by rubbing sticks together (and no they weren't matches!) I also discovered that I may be a bit old to be learning the skill of space hopper racing! Overall, Scouting has given me confidence to try new things and to explore and respect the world around us. I love working with my local Group, supporting them in giving my children and others these opportunities and skills. And now, as Chief Commissioner, I hope to help as many people as possible across Scotland find out what Scouting can do for them.

Andrew officially takes up his new role during the Blair Atholl Jamborette in July.



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Ask Team UK

This issue, the team is taking the opportunity to answer some questions about changes that are part of the Skills for Life plan. Got a question for Team UK? Head to scouts.org.uk/connect to complete the online form and it might be selected for the next issue

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Changes to Team UK

In May this year, we changed the structure of Team UK. We wanted to work more collaboratively, reducing the time we need to co-ordinate our work and increasing the time doing useful work. We also wanted to be able to support our new plan, Skills for Life, and by aligning our roles with the three pillars of work, we would be in a better position to do so. Finally, we wanted to distribute the load better – we now have posts reporting to Deputy UK Chief Commissioners, rather than everyone reporting to me.

Given the importance of the programme, we now have two UK Commissioners for Programme. Graeme Hamilton has been appointed UK Commissioner for Programme (Delivery) and will focus on supporting people delivering the programme. The UK Commissioner for Programme (Assurance) will focus on programme development and is currently vacant.

I am really pleased to welcome some new people to Team UK. CJ Ledger

has been appointed UK Commissioner for Perception and Tom Milson has been appointed UK Commissioner for Inclusion to ensure that we cover all areas of the strategy. Andrew Sharkey has also joined as Chief Commissioner of Scotland. I look forward to the exciting time ahead as we all work together to make the plan a reality. If you'd like to apply for the vacant UK Commissioner for Programme role visit scouts.org.uk/ukcpvacancy – the closing date is 20 July, so hurry. **Tim Kidd, UK Chief Commissioner**

Why did we review our brand?

While many people know that we wear a uniform and badges, the benefits of Scouting are not always clear. Our research showed that amongst the public, there were outdated perceptions of Scouting, with many still associating us with the '80s and '90s. Locally and nationally, there has been a lack of visibility, poor understanding and declining awareness of our diversity and impact.

Our new brand will make it much easier to talk about Scouting, leading to more effective recruitment. From now on, we will talk about skills for life while conveying a sense of belonging and showing fun, friendship and adventure. The new tools and resources available on the brand centre will make it easier to promote Scouting, improving our perception both locally and nationally.

Our testing showed that based on the new branding, mums, who are one of our key target audiences, would be 40% more likely to



The briefing: answered

volunteer. Also, 14–18-year-olds would be 33% more likely to join, parents from black and minority ethnic backgrounds would be 44% more likely to volunteer and nearly 70% more likely to send their children to Scouts.

Finally, our old logo was created in 2001, a pre-digital age. It has looked and felt dated for some time. The new logo is fit for a digital age while retaining our heritage. As one volunteer put it, 'It speaks to the future as well as where we come from'.
Kester Sharpe, Deputy UK Chief Commissioner

Who approved the brand changes?

The Board of The Scout Association approved these changes, following a recommendation from the Operations Committee. The respective Nation Boards and National teams approved the brand changes for Scouts Scotland, Scouts Cymru and Scouts Northern Ireland. The project was overseen by a project board made up of volunteers and staff from all nations.

Andrew Sharkey, Chief Commissioner of Scotland,
Stephen Donaldson, Chief Commissioner of Northern Ireland

Have the section brands changed?

The section brands were last reviewed in 2015 and remain well liked. Therefore, these remain mostly

unchanged. We have removed the fleur-de-lis and have altered the colours slightly to ensure they match our new colour palette. The new versions are available on the brand centre at scouts.org.uk/brand and the section templates have been updated.
Graeme Hamilton, UK Commissioner for Programme (Delivery)

What help is there to update our branding?

We've launched a new brand centre at scouts.org.uk/brand where there are lots of new templates and artwork for flyers, posters, banners, social media and much more. The new font, Nunito Sans, is a free Google font so it's easy to get hold of. We've also arranged a discount for new meeting place signs – visit the brand centre for more details. Our aim is to have changed everything over to the new brand by May 2020, giving everyone two years to make the transition.

CJ Ledger, UK Commissioner for Perception

The new strategy is exciting. Where have all these ideas come from and how was it developed?

The ideas you see in the plan have come from volunteers and young people in Scouting through 18 months of consultation and research.

At Summit17, a conference that brought together District/County/Area/Regional and Youth Commissioners from across the UK, we asked what game-changing ideas we should consider in the next strategy. The projects in the plan come from the ideas generated at the event and from further consultation with volunteers and young people.

We drafted a proposed plan and asked volunteers and young people (14+) to take part in consultation meetings to discuss the proposals, give feedback and help prioritise. Over 5,000 adult volunteers from



England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland helped review our objectives and consider our priorities. There was a clear steer by volunteers to keep the four strategic objectives from the Scouting for All strategic plan. During YouShape month in 2017, over 6,000 young people shaped the plan by telling us what was most important in Scouting. We also consulted members of the public, politicians and key influencers. A summary of the research from the consultation can be found at: scouts.org.uk/strategydevelopment.
Mark Tarry, Deputy UK Chief Commissioner

There is so much in this plan, how will UKHQ deliver it all?

There is a lot to do under our three pillars of work over the next five years and we can't start it all at once. We asked volunteers to help us prioritise what we should do first and the result of that was a clear focus on developing amazing Section Leaders. So we will begin by focusing on the projects that will help us support our Section Leaders. These include simpler training, practical skills support and useful tools for programme planning. For more information about how we will prioritise this work, visit: scouts.org.uk/pillarsofwork.
Jack Maxton, International Commissioner



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Beaver Scouts from Glasgow discovered how much there is to learn from older people with this intergenerational project



A little enlightenment

On visiting the UK's first Buddhist Scout Group, we discovered the many ways that Scouting and Buddhism complement each other

Words: Jacqueline Landey | Pictures: Jo Denison, BLIA image library



In a sunlit room in the Fo Guang Shan temple in Manchester, a group of Cubs are preparing for their upcoming Chinese New Year concert. 'Bring your costume in,' says one of the leaders. 'If you want to be a rock star, be a rock star. If you want to be a hawk, be a hawk. I want you to have your own creative idea.' This welcoming note sets the tone of our visit to the UK's first Scout Group based in a Buddhist temple.

Many of the young people and adult volunteers identify as Buddhist, but the Group is open to all. Group Scout Leader Munkit Choy says that members of the public come to the temple for all sorts of reasons, not only to practise Buddhism. 'Some come to do chanting, some because they like the food, some to learn the Chinese

language or for the cultural dances.' Like all Scout Groups meeting in faith buildings, the Group is respectful to the traditions of the space and observes temple etiquette. And so, as we sit in on a Cub session, our shoes are off and we're walking around a carpeted room in the comfort of our socks.

Leaders are gently reining in Cubs who have been laughing and cartwheeling around the room, finding that delicate balance between encouraging young people to focus and appreciating their natural unbridled joy – a balancing act familiar to most Scout volunteers.

Once the Cubs have settled down, they begin practising a poem they'll perform for their

Opposite: young Buddhists perform a Lotus Dance to celebrate Buddha's birthday

Above: members of the UK's first Buddhist Scout Group observe temple etiquette by removing their shoes



‘We’re not trying to make everybody Buddhist, we’re just trying to make society better. That’s the purpose of the temple. And that’s like Scouts as well’

Munkit Choy, leader of the UK’s first Buddhist Scout Group



Cubs and Scouts toasting marshmallows alongside parents and leaders

parents and community at the Chinese New Year celebrations. The poem encourages positive elements that we should nurture within us which, translated from Chinese, include: ‘I’m not going to blame other people for my problems, I’m not going to compare myself to other people, I’m just going to do my best and be myself.’

A meeting of minds

In these words it’s not hard to hear an echo of the Cub Scout Law – Cub Scouts always do their best. And just as the Cub Promise encourages Scouts to think of others before themselves, and do a good turn every day, Munkit explains that here at the temple they value the three good deeds. These are rooted in the belief in three sections of being: the body,

the mind and the speech. It’s through these three powerful entities that Buddhism encourages practitioners to do good things, speak good words and keep good thoughts.

In many ways the basic principles of Buddhism and Scouting are complementary. It was in fact the founder of the original Fo Guang Shan temple in Taiwan, Master Hsing Yun, who recognised Scouting as a fitting way for Buddhist children to practise Buddhist values.

Fo Guang Shan temples can be found in major global cities. Within them Mahayana Buddhism is practised. This stream of Chinese Buddhism emphasises Humanistic Buddhism, based on the belief that Buddhist principles can be useful to people in contemporary society. Munkit says



that because Buddhist philosophy can be quite complicated, they try to simplify the teachings to communicate the essential principles of their members: give confidence to others, give joy to others, give hope to others, make things convenient for others.

Instilling good values

He goes on to explain, 'We're not trying to make everybody Buddhist, we're just trying to make society better. So that's the purpose of the temple. And that's like Scouts as well.'

The way in which Humanistic Buddhism simplifies more complicated philosophy into something people can remember and practise easily, also makes it easier for young people to digest. Munkit says if you ask the Buddhist

young people what the three good deeds are, they all know. Christina, one of the young Buddhists at the temple, explains things well. She says: 'Buddhism is really about being a good person. Making life easier for other people. Thinking about people's wellbeing while at the same time caring for yourself, because to be able to help other people you have to be happy yourself.'

Because we want to make sure even more young people can access Scouting and see that it's relevant to them too, Scouting is taking shape in a great diversity of community settings around the UK. While Scouting at the Fo Guang Shan temple is rooted in Buddhism, the elements of Scouting remain the same. Cubs and Scouts wear neckers proudly, they show off

Cubs and Scouts join in activities; Munkit Choy, leader of the Buddhist Scout Group; the temple in Manchester where the Scout Group meets





The Scout Group takes part in events at the temple; the Lion Dance is performed for Buddha's birthday

their newly awarded badges with zeal, and it's no surprise to hear the young people say that their favourite things about Scouting are the activities and making new friends.

Whatever inflections individual Groups take on, at the heart of it, Scouting is simply young people supported by adults coming together to learn skills and make friends. And – as one of the Scouts in the Buddhist Scout Group reminds us – little will stop them...

After a recent hiking trip, she learnt: 'If you go hiking, bring wellies. If it's been raining, bring wellies. If it hasn't been raining, still bring wellies.' It seems that however your Scout Group varies, we're all at the mercy of the damp British weather.

The spirit of Scouting

Aspects of spiritual development in the Scout Programme are designed to make sure young people explore, learn and appreciate faiths and beliefs different from their own, which is integral to working towards a more peaceful and tolerant society. The alternative Promise creates flexibility to ensure every young person can promise to uphold a shared ethos to be kind and helpful, and to love the world based on their individual beliefs.

Visiting the temple enlightened us to the many ways Buddhism fortifies and enriches Scouting. Open to all, encouraging young people to do their best, and committed to making society better – Buddhist values are clearly well aligned to our own. But there's something else familiar



in Buddhism, and that is the strong sense of community.

At one point between Scouting activities, the Cubs, Scouts and fellow members of the temple lead into the main temple. Here, on the first week of every month, all members gather to celebrate everyone whose birthday has taken place during that month, taking care to honour each individual within a supportive community network. The young people talk about birthdays with joy. One Cub said, 'I was born in the tiger year,' another added, 'I was born in the ox year.' 'I was born in the year of the pig,' said one more. 'What year were you born in?' another asks. 'You could be a rabbit?' one Cub suggested. 'Or there's a monkey,' another offered. Although it's believed that

people born in the same animal year share certain traits, when I ask about this, Eloise responds with an important reminder, saying ultimately, 'we're all the same.'

And on Buddha's birthday, the community lights lotus lanterns and statues of him are doused with fragrant water, symbolising a fresh start to life. The enthusiastic celebration of birth, and rebirth, makes sense within a religion that honours the preciousness of all living things. As Munkit reminds us, 'In Humanistic Buddhism there aren't rigid rules, in many ways it's up to you, as long as you do no harm.'

As much as Scouting supports the principles of Buddhism, it's clear that Buddhism does a great deal to remind us of our Scouting values too. ☸

Bathing the Buddha and making offerings for his birthday; young people are taught that Buddhism honours all living things

Local lore

Read these stories of folklore to your young people and inspire them to discover the myths and legends of their own places

Words: Aimee-lee Abraham | Illustrations: Anja Sušanj

Transported through the centuries by word of mouth, folklore is a powerful form of communication, consisting of popular myths or beliefs relating to a particular place, activity, or group of people. Born out of our ancestors' need to pass on their life experiences at a time when only the elite were able to read, write and record, it's also one of the oldest and most democratic forms of storytelling. Transforming the mundane and the everyday into something more mysterious, it allows us to attach meaning to things that are otherwise hard to explain, and connects us to our histories and to each other. Whether we realise it or not, it's also a cornerstone of Scouting. As Scouts, we keep folklore alive whenever we huddle beside a campfire, or tell tales by torchlight; whenever we prepare a cherished family recipe at camp, or pack a pair of lucky socks for the road.

From the beloved faeries of Cornwall to the creature lurking in Loch Ness, folklore is woven into every city, town and village, and is particularly prominent in areas with Celtic heritage. Told well, its lessons can encourage young people to reconsider the history of their own hometowns, grapple with moral dilemmas, and open

their minds to the rituals and beliefs of different cultures. In an age of distraction, folklore can also offer a sense of reflection and a moment of escapism.

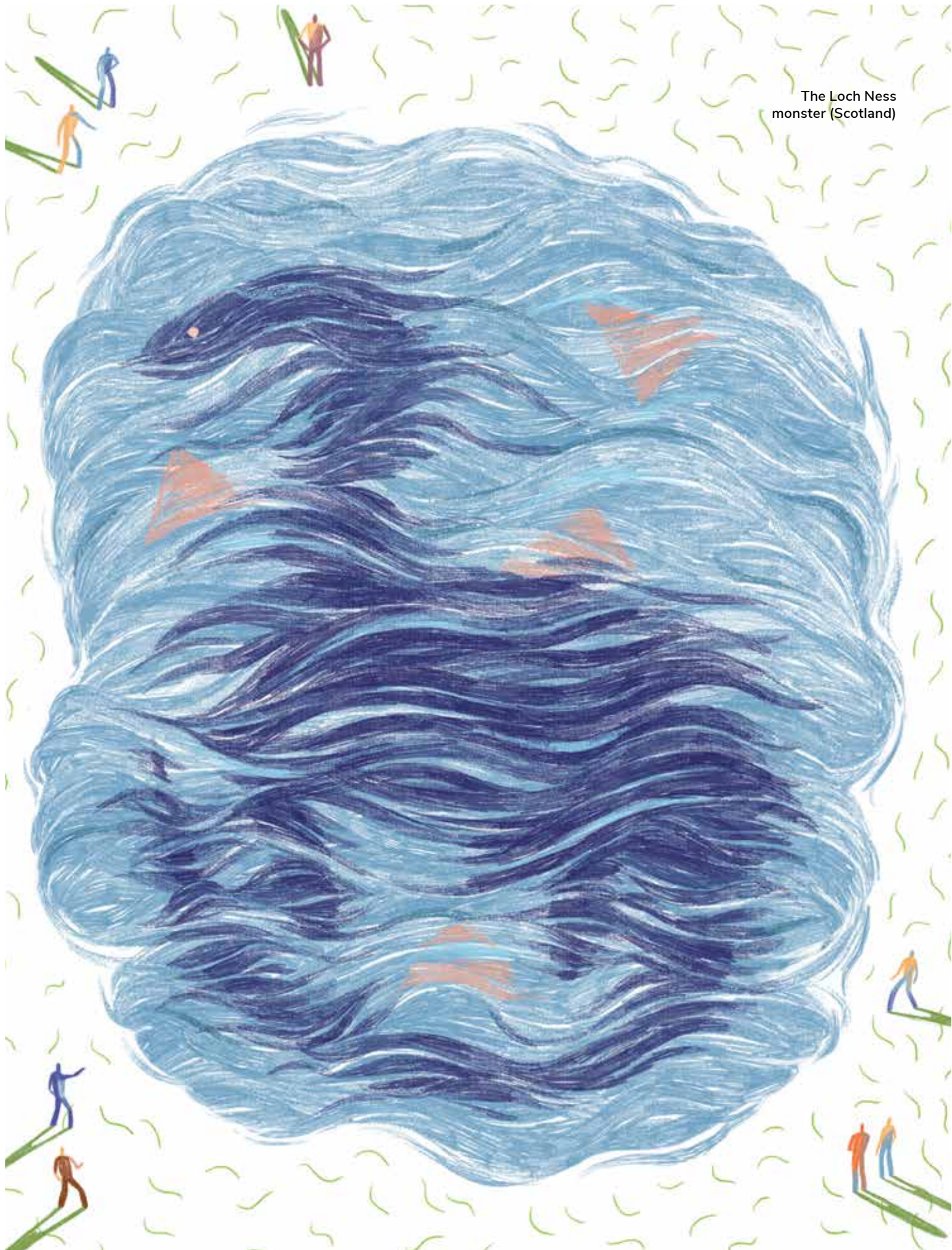
To introduce your young people to this ancient tradition, read these four examples aloud, and then head out to explore your very own local lore. You never know what you might find.

The Loch Ness monster (Scotland)

At 23 miles long and 775 feet deep, the vast waters of Loch Ness are famed for their picturesque beauty, but looks can be deceiving and, for centuries, people have prophesied that something mysterious lurks beneath the surface. The first alleged sighting of the Loch Ness monster – an elusive, unidentified creature of nightmarish stature – began in the year 565 AD, when the Irish monk Saint Columba visited Inverness to meet the King of the Picts, and stumbled upon a fearsome beast on the shore. Forming the sign of the cross, he demanded that the monster return to the depths, and watched in astonishment as it silently obeyed. But throughout the centuries, eerie events have continued, peaking in 2017,



The Loch Ness monster (Scotland)

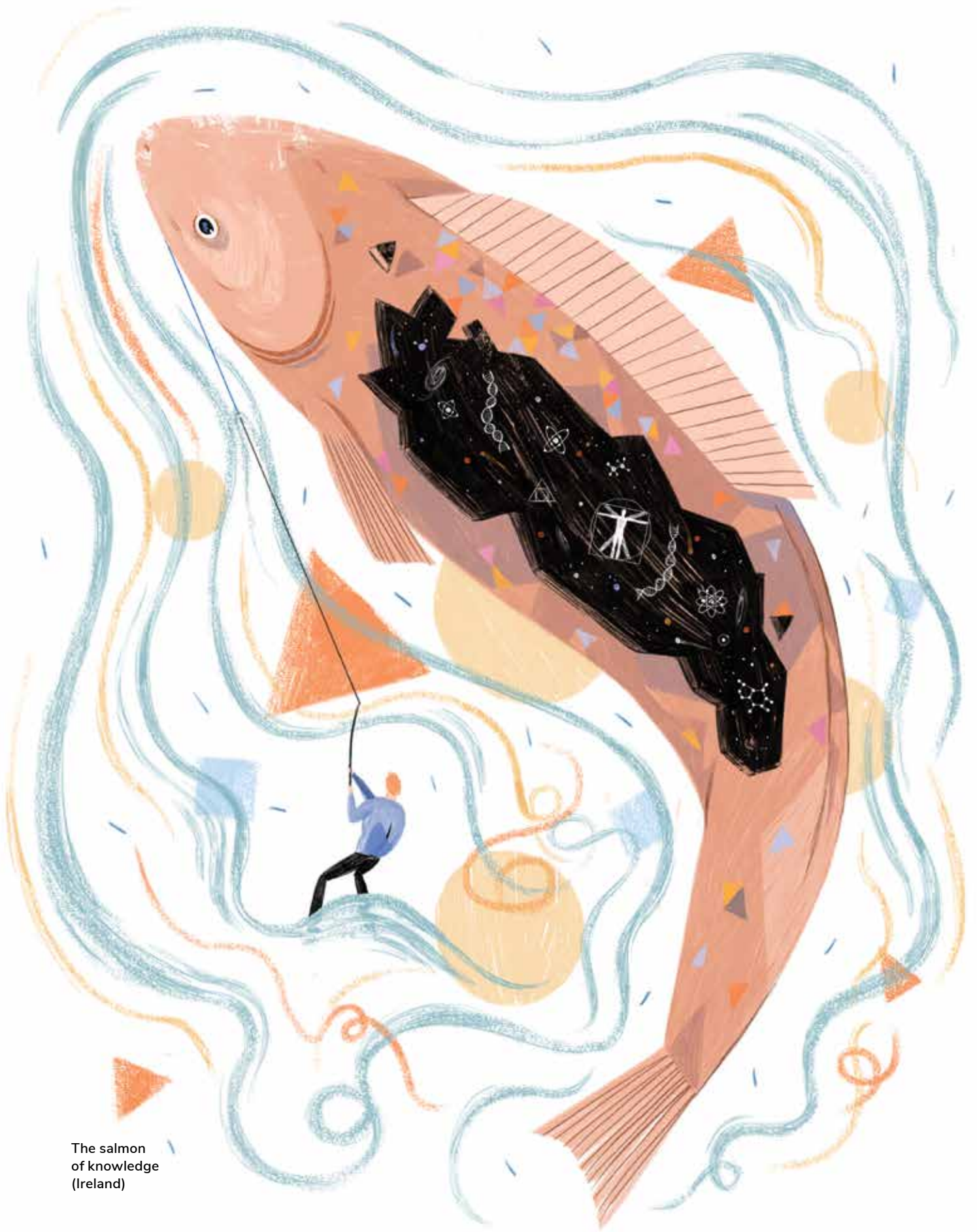


The faerie folk
(Cornwall)



The lady of
the lake (Wales)





The salmon
of knowledge
(Ireland)

Head out to explore your very own local lore. You never know what you might find

when 11 official sightings were recorded in almost as many months. It's no surprise then, that thousands of visitors still flock to the area centuries after the legend took hold. Cameras in hand, they gaze into the abyss with eyes wide, nervously dangling their hands over the edge of their tour boats, wondering if any unseen eyes are looking right back at them, perhaps innocently observing humans with just as keen an interest, or perhaps plotting to pounce. Though many of the photographs and camera footage of the creature have been disputed as hoaxes and get-rich schemes, many sightings remain unexplained.

The lady of the lake (Wales)

In the 11th century, a legendary family of herbalists known as the Physicians of Myddfai lived and worked on Carmarthenshire soil, famed for their unusual healing powers, and even more unusual ancestry.

According to legend, the family's journey to greatness began when a local farmer saw a woman sitting on a rock near the water's edge and made it his quest to marry her. She accepted his proposal on the condition that if he were to strike her three times throughout their partnership, she would return to the lake.

To his dismay, this would come to be. At the birth of their first child, the farmer touched his wife's arm. At a wedding, he laughed so hard he leant forward and accidentally tapped her on the back. At a funeral, he held her hand in grief, and watched in horror as she immediately withdrew from his grip, speeding back whence she came. As she rose to her feet and began to run, so did all of the animals in the vicinity. Powerless, the farmer was left grief-stricken, robbed of the family flock he'd grown to rely on, and forced to bring up their three sons alone. But, as each boy grew, it became clear they had inherited their mother's powers. Foregoing the opportunity to become warriors, they carved out their own path, harvesting natural products from the surrounding areas, communing with plants and animals, and developing cures for all manners of ailments. In their wake, many argue, modern medicine was built.

The faerie folk (Cornwall)


Perhaps the most beloved folk characters to evolve throughout the centuries are the faerie folk. According to Cornish mythology, there are many species of faeries living off the land and sea, each with a unique

temperament and role to play in society. Brownies – unseen household helpers famed for their kindness and sense of duty towards their adopted human families – inspired the name behind Girlguiding's equivalent of Cub Scouts. Knockers – mischievous inhabitants of tin mines – are known for disturbing workers with their racket, singing songs into the night and chipping at cave walls with their magical pickaxes. When mining was at its peak in the area, rumours circulated. Locals claimed that knockers were responsible for leading workers to rich ore veins, and believed that they could serve as helpful companions, pre-warning people of hazards. But, disrespected or treated unfairly, it was believed that knockers could quite easily change their tune, becoming mean-spirited and dangerous. To avoid a string of unexplained misfortunes, locals visiting Cornish mines today are still advised to leave a share of their daily meal behind, just in case.

The salmon of knowledge (Ireland)

Years ago, magical hazel trees bloomed on the River Boyne, flowering nuts of wisdom that contained all the knowledge of the world. As the seasons passed, the nuts of wisdom matured and fell into the water, where a young salmon was swimming. Devouring each morsel, he consumed all the wisdom of the world, growing fat with knowledge, and wiser than all mortals in Ireland.

Centuries passed. People visited the River Boyne, learning about the salmon of knowledge, but never successfully catching it. Then one day, a druid poet named Finegas settled in the valley with his student, Fionn. Every morning, Finegas patiently cast his line into the Boyne in the hope of hooking the fish. Eventually, he got lucky. Overjoyed, he handed the huge fish to Fionn and instructed him to set about building a fire, without eating the fish himself. Fionn obediently placed the salmon on a spit over the fire and started to cook it. When it was nearly finished, he called for Finegas to come for his meal. But, in the process, some burning fat scalded Fionn. Nursing his wound, he found himself transformed, and inherited all of the precious knowledge for himself. Though he was still a boy, he felt thousands of years old.

When Finegas arrived for dinner, it was too late. He immediately realised it was not his destiny to receive the great wisdom from the salmon, but the destiny of young Fionn Mac Cumhaill. It had been so all along. 

Finding the light

Nature photographer Fran Mart shares his insights on how to nurture creativity in young people and in ourselves

Words: Aimee-lee Abraham | Pictures: Fran Mart

Fran Mart is a photographer from Spain, now living in Scotland. Inspired by the natural light of the Highlands, he spends his days wandering mountains and glens, searching for details others might miss. Turning to photography at a time of loss, getting behind the lens proved to be an unexpected healing process, and before long, his passion became a profession.

We called him to chat about the value of embracing wintry weather, camera in hand, and to see if he had any advice for budding photographers in Scouting.

Your work focuses on your love and appreciation for the natural world. Do you remember where this interest started?

I grew up with the ocean on one side and the mountains on the other, and even as a child I was absorbed by the beauty and complexity of life on, above and beneath our planet. But it wasn't until much later that I realised the impact nature had on me. Photography awakened my longing to explore.

Were you always creative, or is it something that developed over time?

I was always a bit of a daydreamer, but I spent 10 years working as a mechanic in my father's garage before I picked up a camera. After losing my younger brother in a motorcycle accident, my priorities changed. I was inspired by a friend to start taking self-portraits and I soon found it was a way to express both my feelings and creative imagination. I'm completely self-taught and attribute everything to those early days of experimentation.

You talk openly about how photography helped you cope with loss. How did learning something new improve your wellbeing during that difficult time?

Photography allowed me to see life from another angle and channel my emotions differently. At first, there was

a sense something new was forming within me but hadn't quite developed, a bit like a negative from a roll of film. When I moved to Scotland, the intensity of the weather, changing seasons, and shifting light resonated so much with me, giving me a sense of stillness and freedom. The beauty of photography is that I have a visual reminder of those feelings that I can return to whenever I look at my pictures.

Volunteers may be wondering how they can encourage young people to explore their creativity. What skills are most important for an aspiring photographer?

What is it that makes your young people feel that little pang of excitement or wonder or nostalgia? Whatever it may be, encourage them to start taking pictures of it, then get them to think about light. Light creates colour, texture and mood. Understanding how to use it in a photograph builds emotion and a sense of story.

Any advice for young people who don't know where to start with photography?

Find photographers who inspire you, play with different editing tools, and develop your own style. You don't need fancy equipment, just enthusiasm, and a willingness to accept that you probably won't be brilliant at it the first time.

Which items are always in your kit bag?

My go-to camera is a Canon 5D with a 35mm lens. I always carry a torch, spare batteries, memory cards, plastic bags, and plenty of snacks.

Do you have a favourite season or time of day to work?

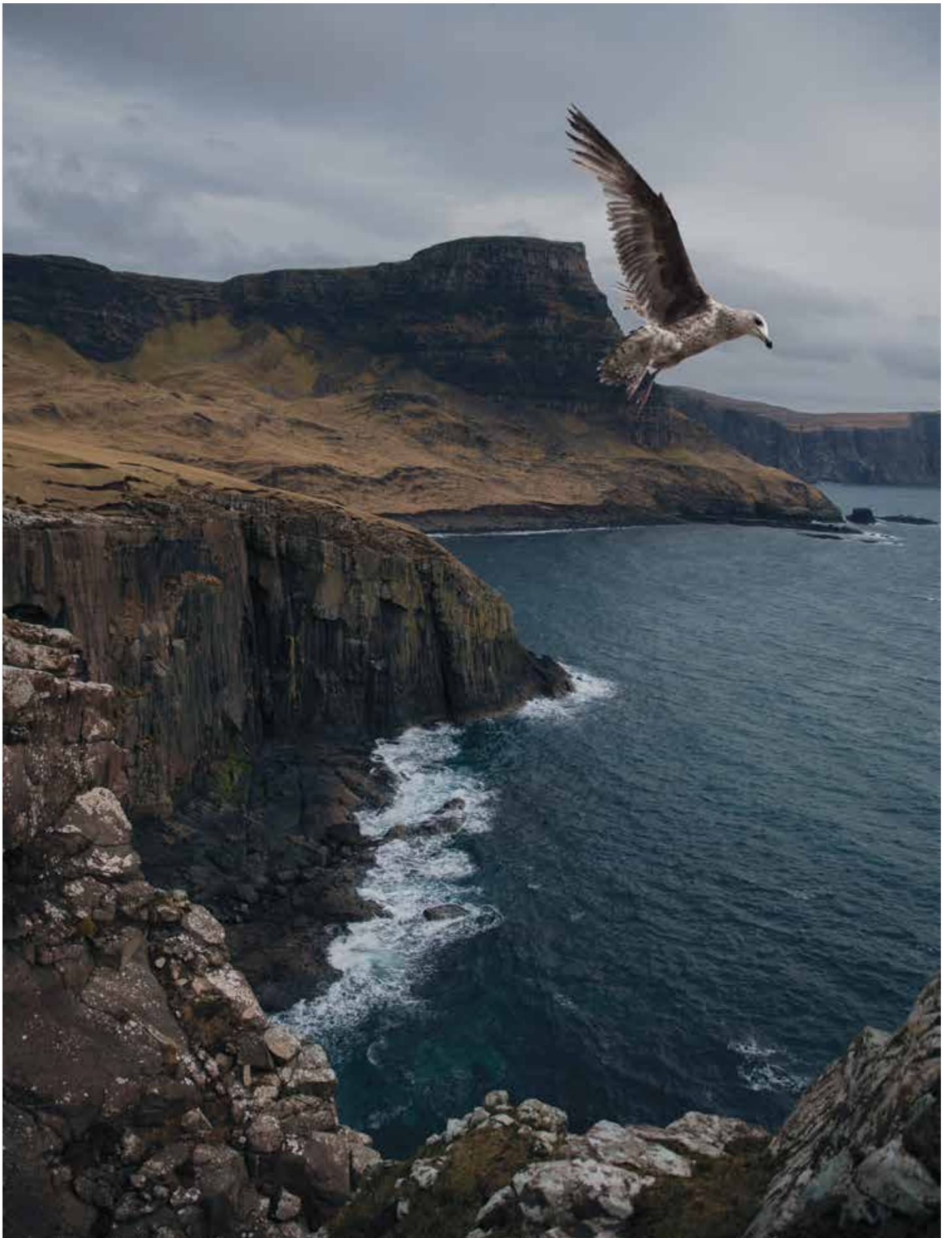
Despite the wind and rain, I've always thought autumn and winter are when the soul starts to feel most alive. The distance between the land and sky feels 'thin' and the light appears more delicate, especially when the sun's about to slip behind a mountain, and its golden rays bounce off the landscape. 🌿





Photographer Fran Mart uses Scotland's natural light, dramatic landscapes and intense weather to build emotion and create a sense of story in his work. Regardless of where they might live, young people could soon be producing their very own photographs. As Fran explains, all they need to get started is an open mind, a patient hand and a keen eye.











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PROFITS RETURNED
TO SCOUTING



22 May 2017
10.31pm

On 22 May 2017, Dr Darah Burke found himself caught up in the terror attack at the Manchester Arena, along with his family. Here, he talks about how Scouting prepared him to act in an emergency, and ultimately helped him to heal in the months that followed.

'It was a Monday evening. My wife Ann and I headed into the city with our youngest, Catherine, to see Ariana Grande perform at the Manchester Arena. We stopped to get something to eat, then headed inside. Catherine was so excited. It was a special treat.

After lots of singing and dancing, we were in a hurry to get home, so we decided to leave the arena during the encore. As we were walking through the foyer, there was a massive bang. An explosion. Everything was dark.

At that point, no one understood what was happening. Catherine was on the floor. Ann and I were still standing, although we were hurt, too. We made the decision to get out, scooped Catherine up and left as quickly as we could.

When we reached the bridge just outside the foyer we took a moment to re-assess. Catherine had sustained damage to her head, arms and legs, and we were struggling to carry her because of our injuries. We delivered first aid as best as we could, using a shirt I was wearing. We all had shrapnel injuries and would require multiple surgeries, but at the time we didn't even know metal had been used in the attack.

Once we were out of immediate danger, I made the decision to leave my injured family on the bridge and headed back into the foyer to help. I was in pain but, like many members of the public

who happened to be close by, I was working on autopilot – the primitive part of my brain kicking into overdrive.

I'm a doctor, but I deal with the typical ailments you might see in a GP's office – coughs and colds, chronic pain, check-ups. In 20 years, I can count the number of times I've had to react to a serious emergency on one hand. The trauma I saw was very severe. There wasn't an awful lot I could do, except to triage survivors and direct help to wherever it was most needed. It's not something you ever expect to see.

In hindsight, I think Scouting helped prepare me for the situation. I undergo mandatory training once a year at work, but Scouting is what keeps first aid at the forefront of my mind. Because of my background, I'm frequently called on to train young people. It's not just about practical first aid skills. It's the ability to take stock of a situation, to put one foot in front of the other under pressure. I saw recently that the London Ambulance Service commended a group of Scouts who intervened to save someone who was drowning. As a Scout, helping others is just what you do, isn't it? It's engrained.

In the aftermath, I couldn't drive for a month and needed support. Scouts stepped up, offering lifts to the hospital, delivering bundles of food. Our Cubs made cards, and a group in America shipped us a

banner of condolence shortly after the news broke. It's still hanging on the wall in our meeting place. People are so kind, aren't they? Catherine even had a hospital visit from Ariana Grande herself – it really boosted her spirits.

I went back to my volunteer role six weeks after the attack, as soon as my wife would let me. You've got to carry on in life to get the support you need. Undoubtedly, the attack has affected Manchester as a whole. Everybody knew someone involved, and the trauma we experienced is more apparent with time. Catherine lost her hearing in one ear as a result of the blast, and we're adjusting to the reality that she's never going to get it back.

At first, Catherine and Ann didn't want to go back into the centre of Manchester, but the support of the wider community gave them the courage. We were determined to visit St Ann's Square to see the tributes left by the public, and we achieved that with Ann and Catherine in wheelchairs and myself on crutches, the day before the flowers got taken away. When the permanent memorial is unveiled it'll be even more special, because the £67,000 Scouts raised by selling bee badges will have helped to build it.

Some good has come from all of this. I'm not much of a singer, but we perform as a family as part of the Manchester Survivor's Choir and it's been an incredibly valuable

experience. We've met amazing people who shared our ordeal, and we sang for thousands of people as part of the first anniversary remembrance vigil.

Through Scouting, we also attended Windsor as a family, where I received the Bronze Cross award. The night before the ceremony, I realised I'd conveniently left my uniform behind and was about to drive all the way home when Ann turned to me and said "Hang on, somebody in Scouts will be able to help you!" Within an hour, we found a guy from Stockport who was also coming to the event. My uniform made its way to him and he brought it to me just in time. I'd never met him. My fellow leaders had never met him. You can always talk to somebody in Scouts.

Unfortunately, after an incident such as this, your faith in humanity – your trust – is damaged. When it comes to feeling supported, it's great to be part of a worldwide movement, but the bottom line is your immediate group; the people you volunteer alongside week in and week out, the young people you watch grow. I know I can always rely on them, no matter what.'



In memory of those who died and those who were affected by
the Manchester Arena bombing.
Thank you to Dr Darah Burke, Ann Burke
and Catherine Burke for sharing their personal story with us.



Building resilience

How learning from our mistakes when something goes wrong can lead to future successes and a more positive outcome

Words: Aimee-lee Abraham | Illustrations: Mirjam Siim



What can we do to better equip young people to deal with setbacks? The answer could lie in a single dazzling skill: resilience

UK Youth Commissioner Hannah Kentish had never done less than extremely well in life. At 24, she has competed in a sport at an international level, excelled at school and university, represented the whole movement in her Scouting role, and even co-founded her own charity – Timu Rafiki – to support sustainable Scouting in Kenya. So, when her team's first Queen's Scout Award expedition attempt didn't go according to plan, it taught them all a lesson in perseverance that they'll never forget.

The expedition took place in Norway, near the Arctic Circle. Though the group had done months of preparation, the landscape was unforgiving, and tiny errors made in the earlier stages of the process soon become apparent, taking everybody by surprise. First, the group underestimated the differences between Nordic and British maps, miscalculating the height distance between each contour line. Unfortunately, they then stumbled across a labyrinth of obstructive boulders not present on the maps. By the time they had navigated their way out, they had already missed their only chance to complete the journey by boat, resulting in automatic disqualification.

But, rather than negatively dwelling on the experience, Hannah let herself mourn for one evening only, and vowed to embrace the experience as a lesson learned. Throwing her energy into a second expedition on Mount Kenya, which was a huge success, she combined the physical challenge of the trip with some worthwhile charity work, and soon saw her initial failure as a blessing in disguise.

Since then, Hannah has grown passionate about failure and the lessons it can teach us. She believes we need to talk about it more often, and that we need to do more as leaders to dismantle the perfectionism that can so easily creep in when young people are pursuing their top awards. 'Slip-ups can really knock anyone's confidence, and they can be especially damaging to a young person,' she says. 'But there's a lesson in humility lurking beneath those negative feelings. There's an opportunity to get back up again. Isn't that what Scouting is all about?'

'The pressure to complete awards can be quite damaging to people who are failing, especially if they already feel like the clock is against them. Young people can feel embarrassed to come home empty-handed after an expedition goes awry; to admit they've got it wrong.

'But the last thing we want to do in Scouting is to discourage young people from giving something another go, or three more goes, or 10 more goes if that's what it takes. I want young people to know that failure is a part of the process, that it's okay. Life is all about trial and error.'

Hannah encourages young people to appreciate all of the little everyday moments that make Scouting memorable, so that they see their journey as a full feature movie rather than a highlight reel of achievement. 'Awards are wonderfully fulfilling, but I want young people to realise they can do incredible things with or without the badge at the end of it. We all benefit from pausing to appreciate progress at every stage,' she says.

Of course, following Hannah's advice is easier said than done. When we're in the midst of something difficult, it can be hard to see the bigger picture. But despite this deep-rooted fear of failure, we know that those who approach their mistakes as a learning opportunity – as Hannah did – are more likely to do well than those who avoid them. And though we might assume that successful people are lucky or brilliant enough to dodge failure altogether, the truth is that the people who go on to change the world fail more frequently and spectacularly than the rest of the population. It's just that nobody ever talks about it.

Why is it that some people are able to embrace failure, while others find it impossible to accept? What can we do to better equip young people to deal with setbacks? The answer could lie in a single dazzling skill: resilience.

What does resilience look like?

In her study of the world's hardest workers, psychologist Angela Duckworth found the common thread between every spelling bee champion and elite athlete wasn't talent, as you might expect. It was a combination of resilience and perseverance, a 'sustained application of effort towards a long-term goal'.

She called this combination of traits 'grit', and used it to describe a strength of character, encompassing a range of hardy qualities like 'courage', 'perseverance' and 'pluck'. Most excitingly, she also argued that such a trait could be a better predictor of achievement than intellectual ability (IQ) itself.





Resilience can increase young people's chances of being who they want to be

As a society, Duckworth argues that we are obsessed with talent when we should be equally obsessed with effort. That's not to say that talent isn't valid, and it's not absolute. There are many gifted people who are not especially 'gritty', just as there are many gritty people who are not especially gifted.

Often, we assume that the people who change the world are somehow pre-destined to do so, because they are uniquely talented, but this isn't usually true. In reality, it's far more likely that they changed the world because they had a passion for their specialist subject and the resilience to apply it. When passion is combined with resilience, it can propel a person forward, giving them the stamina needed to 'stay on course' amid challenges and setbacks. The bad news is that young people today are growing up in a society obsessed with instant gratification. The good news is that (unlike IQ, which is relatively fixed) resilience can be mastered with time and effort. In fact, anyone can become more resilient, and it's a trait that can be found at the heart of all we do as Scouts. All that young people need to acquire it is a little hope and a lot of stubbornness.

If you'd like to encourage your young people to develop resilience, here's how:

Encourage them to develop a fascination

Young people don't have to find some instinctual, natural calling in order to develop their resilience (though it's wonderful if they do). What's most important is that they identify a topic they care about enough to revisit it frequently, however niche. To identify interests your Scouts are likely to stick with, make a note on any subjects that frequently crop up in conversation, regardless of the context. Is there something they can't seem to get out of their heads? By providing an imaginative and varied programme, you might just unearth an interest that has gone unnoticed at school.

J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter books, was fired from her secretarial job because she was caught writing stories about an 11-year-old wizard when she should have been answering the phones. Will Shortz, editor of the New York Times' crossword section, skipped out on trial advocacy lessons while studying law. Instead, he took two courses on intellectual property and somehow managed to link it to his real passion, writing

whole papers on copyright protection for puzzles and games. Some might say the clues were there all along.

Set a positive example, and strive to improve every day

James Dyson went through 5,127 design prototypes before he finally built the world's bestselling vacuum cleaner. Walt Disney was fired from his first job at a newspaper because his cartoons 'weren't creative enough'. Encourage your Scouts to improve just a little bit everyday, and remind them that all of their little steps could one day add up to a big leap.

Remind your Scouts of the greater purpose

'Purpose' is feeling like your work matters to you and to the rest of the world. To motivate your Scouts and make them feel empowered, talk about how their efforts feed in to the wider picture, and encourage them to collect experiences, not things. When Hannah Kentish was dealing with setbacks at the top of that mountain, her mind drifted towards all of the positives (the view, the connection she had made with her teammates, the exposure to a new culture, the air filling her lungs). This gave her the strength to get back up, which is what resilience is all about.

Adopt a growth mindset

The psychologist Carol Dweck's work looks at the distinction between 'fixed' and 'growth' mindsets in young people. In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are pre-determined. Therefore, they 'spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing it'. In a growth mindset, young people 'believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work'. This creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment over long periods of time.

Accept the limits of resilience

Resilience is a wonderful tool to have at your disposal, but it's important to remind young people that it's not a magical solution to the complex challenges of a complex world. Grit cannot solve structural inequalities or reshape policy or shatter dictators. It also can't account for other factors like luck. What it can do is give young people a greater sense of autonomy over their lives, and increase their chances of being who they want to be. 🌸

Nature cure

Every volunteer deserves a little 'me time' to take stock and tap into the motivations that launched their Scouting journey. Here are three rejuvenating activities from around the world to try, with or without young people in tow

Words: Aimee-lee Abraham | Illustrations: Cabeza Patata



Plogging (Sweden)

A combination of 'plucking' and 'jogging', this fitness trend is catching on outside of its native Sweden. It combines cardio with social action, encouraging joggers to sweat not only for the physical and mental benefits exercise brings, but for the greater good. Armed with gloves and bin bags, while they run, 'ploggers' scan the streets for stray cotton buds, crisp packets, bottles and other single-use plastics, cleaning up communities as they go. Once a bag of rubbish is full, it's deposited in an appropriate recycling bin, cutting down on the amount of plastic making its way to the oceans. To join in, all you need is a bin bag, some gloves and a desire to do good.



Moonlight hiking (Ancient Arab world)

The ancient Arabians were pioneering astronomers, but few are aware that their success was partly practical. From the ninth through to the 16th century, the heat of the day was so sweltering it forced desert-dwellers to travel at night, forging an intimate relationship with the moon. There's something uniquely magical about hiking in darkness, harnessing the light of the moon as it reflects some 3%–12% of the sun's rays. Without the din of daytime traffic to distract and irritate, we can marvel at the secret world of nature that we miss out on in sleep, tapping into all five senses, and setting our imaginations free.

Forest bathing (Japan)

Science suggests that those who spend more time in forests and other green spaces experience lower blood pressure, stronger immune systems, and have even recovered more quickly from surgery or illness. In Japan, *Shinrin-yoku*, or 'forest bathing' – defined as mindfully immersing yourself in nature – is considered so essential to public health, it's become a national pastime. Distinct from hiking, it has no goals attached. It does not focus on destinations reached or steps taken. It simply invites people to 'bathe' in the full sensory experience of being in a forest, drinking up every sound and sensation and returning to everyday life renewed.





Getting out of the mud

Following a life-changing event, Adele Govett found a new lease on life by volunteering with Staplehurst Scout Group

Words: Adele Govett | Illustration: Anna Hymas

Before I had my accident, I was a sports coach. After something like that happens I think it's easy to feel like you're going to be stuck in bed, and for a while I wasn't sure what I could do. But when my brother told me that our local Scout Group was short of leaders, I went along to offer my services as a swimming instructor, in case they needed any badges tested. The leader said they could actually use some help with their Beaver Group. I said, 'Oh, surely I'll never be able to do that now.' But they suggested I come along and see. That was 18 years ago and I've been volunteering ever since.

As my disability makes it difficult for me to have a full-time job, I'm on benefits, so I feel like I want to give back somehow, and I love Scouting. Today, I'm Appointments Secretary, Training Adviser, ADC Special Needs and I do all the DBS checks. Sadly, I had to give up my ADC Beavers role because I needed a special adapter for my car, which I couldn't afford.

Giving up the role was a great upset to me. I loved doing it but we live in a widespread District and I have to take two buses just to get to meetings. Once, I had to get a few things for Beavers and I spent more than six hours either waiting for or travelling on buses just to go a few miles up the road.

In those moments it can feel very challenging to keep going, but the young people keep me motivated. There are huge rewards in passing skills on and seeing young people grow. Often when they first join they'll be shy or crying or will refuse to let go of their parents' hands. They'll say, 'I can't do that, I'm not doing this.' But by the time they're


ready to move on to the next section, they're running in, getting involved and helping each other.

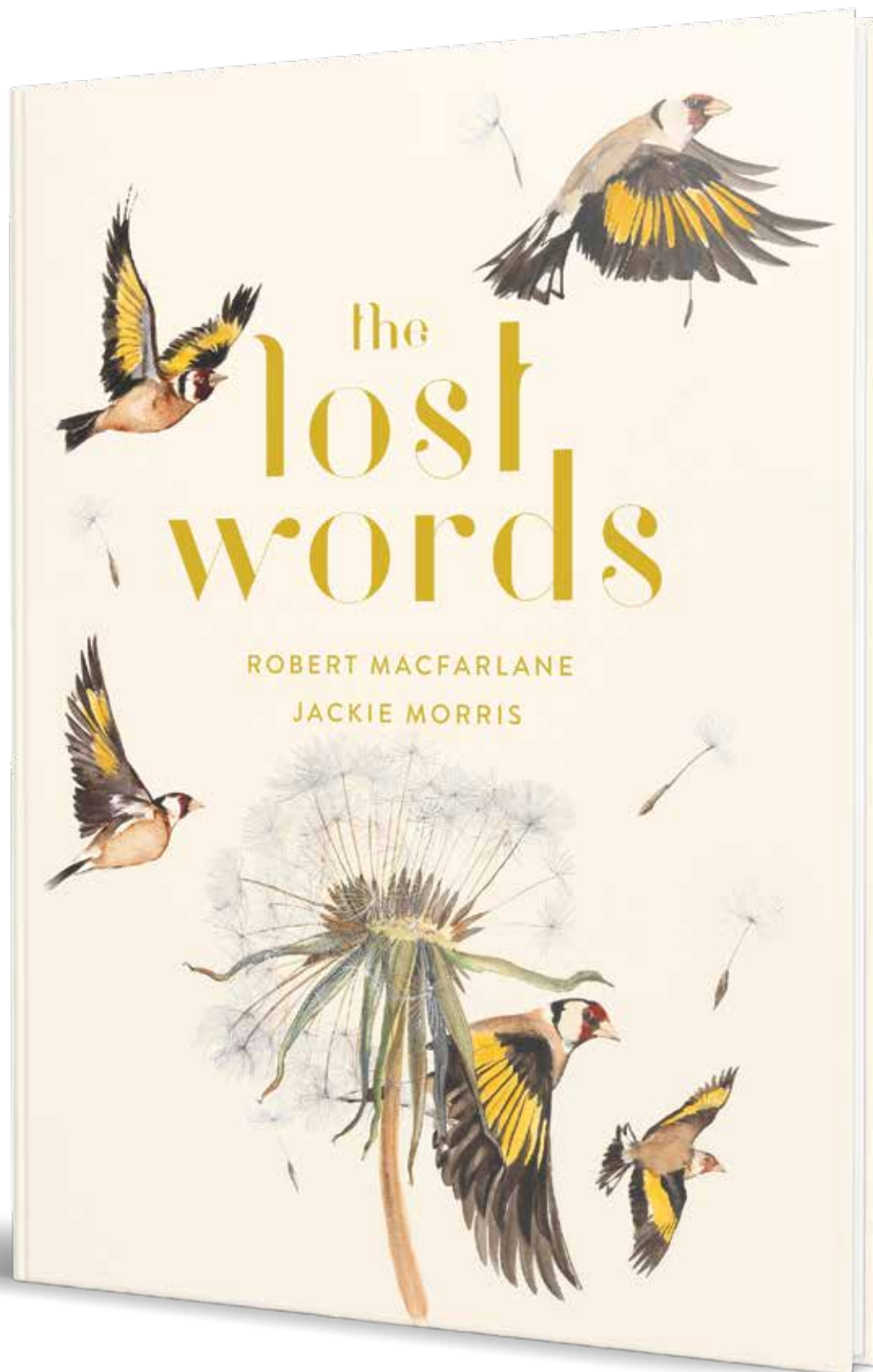
I'll sometimes see them in town holding a door open for a stranger; or if I drop something in a meeting, they're up in a flash saying, 'I'll pick it up, I'll pick it up.' That's what motivates me – that, the enjoyment of it, and, of course, the family atmosphere of Scouting.

On a recent day out, my wheelchair got stuck in the mud after some really wet weather. Oh, I was laughing, the wheels were spinning, flicking mud everywhere, and the young people all rallied about to help get me out, which just goes to show that when you get stuck in the mud, there's always a way out of it, especially with Scouting's support.

After the accident, I was surprised by how many friends I lost, but since joining Scouting there's always somebody there. Even on a down day there's someone to speak to so you can say, 'Well that's that, now let's get on.'

I've done so many amazing things in Scouting, from archery to meeting Bear Grylls at Windsor Castle when I was awarded a Meritorious Conduct Award for being an inspirational leader.

I hope young people can see that being in a wheelchair doesn't need to stop you from doing things. If you don't give something a go, you never know if you'll enjoy it. At Scouts, there's always somebody there to support you, somebody there to teach you and before you know it, you'll be teaching them something, too. 



Spell of the outdoors

As young people lose more and more green time to screen time, *The Lost Words* – a book of spell-poems honouring the natural environment – offers a way to reconnect

Words: Jacqueline Landey | Illustrations: Jackie Morris | Spell-poems: Robert Macfarlane

Of all the words describing the experience of being in the world, how does the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) decide what goes in and what words are kept (or kicked) out?

According to the OED, they develop the Oxford Junior Dictionary by analysing the language young people currently use, while reflecting the words they're encouraged to use in the classroom. By this logic, the words included give us a sense of the lives young people live today. So, what does it say about society and the modern experience of childhood when the words we use to articulate the natural environment fall off the page?

In the most recent edition of the Junior Dictionary, to make room for the digital phenomena that fill young people's lives, the OED made some substitutions. Where under 'b' you once found bluebell, you'd find broadband; instead of buttercup – blog.

But there is a limit to what broadband can connect us to. A movement of nature-lovers, conservationists and writers arose, in defence of the spurned words. Deeply concerned about what this representation signified, they urged the OED to reverse their decision. They said the technological words replacing the natural ones were associated with 'interior, solitary childhoods' and 'in light of what is known about the benefits of natural play and connection to nature, and the dangers of their lack, we think the choice of words to be omitted shocking and poorly considered.'

But the OED stuck to their decision. In response, two of the voices from the group of campaigners, writer Robert Macfarlane and artist Jackie Morris, created *The Lost Words*, a mesmerising illustrated collection of spell-poems that preserves words the dictionary discarded – such as kingfisher, dandelion and acorn. What's the fuss? – you might think – even without a definition, an acorn continues to exist. Yes and no.

Failing to name is failing to acknowledge. We name what we pay attention to, connect with, and ultimately conserve. A dictionary is more than a book of definitions; it's a vocabulary of what we value.

By excluding the language with which we identify the flora and fauna of the world, we take for granted our vital (and increasingly delicate) relationship with our natural environment. Definitions help us link one thing to another. They give context, a backstory, a heartbeat to the inanimate; connecting single entities to the eco-system of which we're all a part. *The Lost Words* preserves these words so we can admire what they represent.

The book's message spoke to people, quickly becoming a Sunday Times top 10 bestseller. Author Jeannette Winterson has urged, 'Give it to a child to bring back the magic of language – and its scope. *The Lost Words* is a kingfisher of a book – coloured, soaring, in flight, and with a fish in its mouth.'

Three of the book's spell-poems have been shared with us here. Designed to be read aloud, these spells conjure up images and scenes as they're spoken; scenes that young people can enter, be part of and get to know.

Read them aloud with young people to encourage them to reconnect with nature. Even from urban centres where nature can seem very far away, these spells offer a way to access the environment via the imagination. They may inspire young people to create their own poetry or illustrations, or to use technology to further their knowledge, and to get outdoors in search of the natural wonders behind them. 🍄

You can watch an enchanting live creation of one of the spell-poems by Robert and Jackie on YouTube here: [scouts.org.uk/wren](https://www.scouts.org.uk/wren). For free learning resources, including posters and an Explorer's Guide to *The Lost Words*, visit: [scouts.org.uk/lostwords](https://www.scouts.org.uk/lostwords).

starling

starling

Should green-as-moss be mixed with
blue-of-steel be mixed with gleam-of-gold
you'd still fall short by far of the –

Tar-bright oil-slick sheen and
gloss of starling wing.

And if you sampled sneaker-squeaks
and car alarms and phone ringtones
you'd still come nowhere near the –

Rooftop riprap street-smart
hip-hop of starling song.

Let shade clasp coal clasp pitch
clasp storm clasp witch,
they'd still be pale beside the –

In-the-dead-of-night-black, cave-black,
head-cocked, fight-back gleam of starling eye.

Northern lights teaching shoaling fish teaching
swarming flies teaching clouding ink
would never learn the –

Ghostly swirling surging whirling melting
murmuration of starling flock.



acorn

acorn

As flake is to blizzard, as

Curve is to sphere, as knot is to net, as

One is to many, as coin is to money, as
bird is to flock, as

Rock is to mountain, as drop is to fountain, as
spring is to river, as glint is to glitter, as

Near is to far, as wind is to weather, as
feather is to flight, as light is to star, as
kindness is to good, so acorn is to wood.



otter

otter

Otter enters river without falter – what a
supple slider out of holt and into water!

This shape-shifter's a sheer breath-taker, a
sure heart-stopper – but you'll only ever spot
a shadow-flutter, bubble-skein, and never
(almost never) actual otter.

This swift swimmer's a silver-miner – with
trout its ore it bores each black pool deep
and deeper, delves up-current steep and
steeper, turns the water inside-out, then
inside-outer.

Ever dreamed of being otter? That
utter underwater thunderbolter, that
shimmering twister?

Run to the riverbank, otter-dreamer, slip
your skin and change your matter, pour
your outer being into otter – and enter
now as otter without falter into water.



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Memory lane

Step back in time with 6th East Kilbride Beaver Scouts, who have been sharing memories with older people as their project for A Million Hands

Words: Aimee-lee Abraham | Pictures: Ashley Coombes and Jon Challicom

We're in a hospital room on the edge of Glasgow, though you might not realise it at a glance. There are very few wires and machines in sight. Instead, there are tea sets and biscuit tins, hat stands overflowing with vintage clothes, and newspaper clippings covering the walls, each declaring a major world event from the last century.

Members of the 6th East Kilbride Beaver Colony have come here to pay a visit to Memory Lane – a special room within Hairmyres Hospital that helps older people, and especially those living with dementia, to feel more at home during their stay. When the elderly care team first acquired the space, it was a storage cupboard. Today, it's a refuge beloved by patients, staff and visitors alike.

Activities Co-ordinator Carol McKechnie is also chief decorator. Working to combat the common anxieties that come with being in hospital, she's spent hours of her free time scouring charity shops and jumble sales to decorate the room in an authentic 1940s style, and even acquired some chintzy china dogs for the mantelpiece. 'They might seem random, but I assure you every household in Glasgow had that same set of china dogs!' she laughs.

The Beavers have come along to hand out customised memory boxes, lovingly packed the night before using materials that relate specifically to each person's life story. One of the patients they're meeting today, Thomas McCready, used to be a taxi driver, ferrying partygoers to





Beavers brought along boxes of things to bring back memories, like old-fashioned soap and sweets

and from the city centre. In his memory box, the Beavers have included photos of the popular Glaswegian dancehalls he may have frequented, maps of the roads he might have driven, and audio samples of the most popular rock and roll hits of the era. Since Thomas is the hospital's resident sweet tooth, they've made sure to pack plenty of sugar mice into the box, alongside bars of nougat, and enough of the traditional Scottish sweet known as 'tablet' to sink a ship.

Sparking the senses

That's not all. Tapping into all five senses – taste, sight, touch, smell and sound – is an effective way to help people with dementia to recall events. The Beavers have also brought a traditional shaving brush – which they use to tickle each other when no one is looking – and some very divisively scented samples. These include a bar of carbolic soap, which was used for laundry and bathing during World War II, and ribbons dipped in the most popular

perfumes and aftershaves of Thomas' youth. Beaver Ross thinks the Chanel N°5 smells like 'toxic waste'. Sofia thinks the smell is 'quite nice, actually'. Olly agrees with her; he also likes the 'flowery' scent, and thinks it smells precisely like his own nannie's house.

As well as handing out the boxes, the Beavers are here to share stories, visit the wards with some sweets, and take part in some arts and crafts. All morning, the room has been full of all the usual squeals of laughter and chatter. Beaver leaders will be accustomed to hearing. But when former artist Margaret Canning arrives, the Beavers put down their pens. Huddled around her, they listen, transfixed, as she talks about what life was like for seven-year-olds during World War II.

'I remember the war vividly. We'd be at school when an alarm would suddenly sound, and we'd all have to run outside to the Anderson shelter.'

'I had nowhere near that many badges. You've got so many they're practically an extra layer of insulation!'

Margaret Canning, a patient at Hairmyres Hospital



'Was it like a fire alarm?' asks Olly. 'I don't like the fire alarm at school. It's so loud!'

'Yes, it was a lot like a fire alarm, but it was much scarier because it was there to warn us about the bombs,' she replies. 'Mind you, I think we were all quite pleased to go down there... It was much better to go into the shelter and sing songs than to be sat in a stuffy classroom!'

When Margaret was evacuated from her home in Liverpool to a farm in Wales, she was the same age most of the Beavers are now. And though there are many differences between their childhood experiences, Margaret has much in common with the group.

Both parties share a mutual love for painting. Margaret's history working as an artist makes her the perfect colouring-in companion, and as she watches them draw, she gives them advice on the best contrasts and combinations to use.

They all have a passion for eating cake, though Margaret avoids sugar these days due to her diabetes.

Both have also been involved in earning badges as part of Scouting or Girlguiding. In fact, Margaret has even tried the very same egg-painting activity they're also doing together today. She remembers doing it herself as a child on wartime rations, using vegetable peel instead of commercial dyes, and practising it later on with her own children and grandchildren. She also remembers being 'pretty rubbish' at being a Brownie, earning far fewer accolades than the young people here today. 'Just look at you all! I had nowhere near that many badges. You've got so many they're practically an extra layer of insulation!' she laughs.

When the Beavers decided they wanted to do something to help 'nannies and granddads' for

Young people worked with the older people to do arts and crafts and share stories about what it's like being seven





‘Young people have fewer preconceptions... their openness can lead to awakenings in older people’

Andrew Craig, Beaver Scout Leader



their A Million Hands project, linking up with the staff and patients at Memory Lane was a natural evolution. Beaver Scout Leader Andrew Craig works for NHS Lanarkshire, and already had a strong network of dementia experts to lean upon for support and advice. Visiting the ward at Christmas with his children, he suspected that his Beavers would love it just as much as they did, and he was right.

All ages

Consulting with parents and with the Beavers themselves, the group shifted its focus firmly onto the issue of dementia and set about encouraging intergenerational relationships, within their own families and within the section. Though there were some hesitations at first, the whole thing has been a roaring success. First, they had a visit from Mairi Houldsworth, a dementia expert who organised activity sessions that Andrew says taught the young people, 'just a little about dementia, but more than enough for them to help'.

Next, they made several trips to the hospital, and put on an intergenerational, dementia-

friendly, screening of *The Wizard of Oz* at the local cinema. On the night, volunteers put up dementia-friendly signage and usherettes, handing out choc ices and sweets during the intermission. Before long, most of them had become registered Dementia Friends, an initiative by the Alzheimer's Society to change people's perceptions about the condition and help those living with it.

'This project was something we had to decide on as a whole section, involving the young people and parents at every stage, to make sure they were happy with it and knew what to expect,' explains Andrew. 'Children can be a little nervous entering a clinical environment. The lighting is stark. There may be wires and cables and noises they don't recognise. But young people have fewer preconceptions about the world, and their openness can lead to awakenings in older people. Children treat people like people if you let them.'

For Mairi, the project was all about changing perceptions. 'When young people visit the

Beaver Scout Leader Andrew helps the young people to share memories with Margaret



‘By raising a new generation who are engaged with the issue, we can really make a difference’

Dementia expert Mairi Houldsworth





Left: Beavers attend a dementia-friendly screening of *The Wizard of Oz*.

Above: A Beaver Scout gives a memory box to Margaret, a patient at the hospital, with Activities Co-ordinator Carol McKechnie

wards, there's no judgement. No stigma. They just go and have fun. It works for everybody and it's key for us: the intergenerational element. What we want to show wider society is that there's more than just a diagnosis. That a diagnosis is not the end. There are ways to live positively with dementia. By raising a whole new generation of people who are engaged with the issue, we can really make a difference.'

At the end of the visit, the Beavers do one last round to spend a little time with the other patients on Ward 13. One of the other 'nannies' they meet tells them she used to be an opera singer and excitement levels peak again.

Music is one of the Beavers' favourite topics, and whenever they listen to song samples selected for the visit, the room fills with glee. Ross leaps up to do his best 'Elvis legs' impression, while the others bury their heads in their jumpers, giggling and tapping their feet.

Among themselves, they regularly chat about which items they'd put into their own memory boxes. 'I'd include clips from *The Lego Movie*,

and my favourite song 'Everything is Awesome!'" says Cooper.

'I'd pick Ed Sheeran songs and my softball,' says Ross.

Leeanne, mum of Beaver Aaron, confessed: 'I was quite emotional when we last visited the hospital. But the kids were so amazing. They aren't fazed by any of it.'

Andrew concurs. 'You can see their whole body language change when they realise they're having an impact on the people they meet. You can see them thinking, "Wow, I can really do something here, and I'm only seven!" Their enthusiasm is infectious.'

He pauses before adding, 'Every week they amaze me.' 🌟

For more information about our A Million Hands campaign, visit amillionhands.org.uk. To access resources on how to talk about dementia with your young people, visit amillionhands.com/resource.

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Play the blues

Tap into nature

Rather than trapping young people inside, digital tools like mobile apps and websites can help them to explore and engage with the natural world

Words: Rachael Stiles | Illustrations: Marianna Gefen

Knowing what we're looking at helps us to appreciate that thing more deeply, and this is also true of nature. When you can tell the difference between one tree and another, or hear a bird singing and say, 'That's a blackbird', it takes on more meaning. For Scouts, who spend so much time outdoors, it's even more valuable.

And you don't have to be an expert or lug heavy books on hikes to unlock all that the natural world has to offer. It might seem illogical to get your phone out when you're trying to encourage young minds to tear themselves away from screens and immerse themselves in nature. But just because they're enjoying the outdoors doesn't mean there's no place for technology. It could even mean they enjoy it more, and the things they learn can help towards gaining a number of badges.

Why not try some of these useful apps and websites to help young people make the most of nature when they're in the great outdoors?

For bird spotting **The RSPB website**

In 2016 the Government reported a 56% fall in the number of UK farmland birds since 1970. Wildlife charity the RSPB says this is part of a significant decline in the numbers of many types of bird. This page on their smartphone-friendly website will help young people to identify a bird based on information like its location, size, colour and what it was doing. This will encourage them to take notice of the world around them and is a good opportunity to teach them about the threats facing birds, like farming and loss of habitat.

Price: free

Where to find it: go to scouts.org.uk/identifyabird or google 'RSPB bird identifier'

Might be helpful with: Cub Naturalist Activity Badge, Beaver My Outdoors Challenge Award.

For identifying trees **Leafsnap UK app**

We've probably all gazed up at a tree and wondered what kind it was. (Will

its dead branches make good firewood? Is it useful for building camp gadgets?) The Natural History Museum developed a UK version of the award-winning Leafsnap app to help. Young nature lovers can identify trees by taking a photograph of a leaf on a white background. From 156 UK species, the visual recognition technology will offer a list of trees it could belong to, starting with the closest match. Using this and the additional images and information the app stores, you can confirm the species and then label them for future reference. The mini fact files offer a way to find out more about them, too.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or Google Play or go to nhm.ac.uk/leafsnap

Might be helpful with: Cub Naturalist Activity Badge, Beaver Gardener Activity Badge, Scout Forester Activity Badge, Scout Naturalist Activity Badge, Explorer Naturalist Activity Badge.

Top tip

If you have no phone signal, the app's





Young people can use this app to learn their cirrus from their cumulonimbus while they are out on a walk

Snap It! function allows you to take pictures to identify later.

[For seeking out green spaces](#)

Nature Finder app

The Wildlife Trusts have developed this app to help people find 2,000 nature reserves – woods, meadows, moors, heaths, lakes – where they can explore and get closer to nature. There is also information on more than 900 species of wildlife, to help with identifying and learning about everything from bugs to badgers.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or Google Play

Might be helpful with:

Cub Naturalist Activity Badge, Scout Naturalist Activity Badge, Explorer Naturalist Activity Badge.

[For sharing discoveries](#)

iRecord website and app

Once they have successfully identified a species of wildlife, send your young people to the iRecord website or app, to share what they've found. This information is collated and checked by experts and then used to support research and to steer policy-making both locally and nationally.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or Google Play or go to brc.ac.uk/irecord/

Might be helpful with: Cub Communicator Activity Badge.

[For classifying clouds](#)

CloudSpotter app

Young people can learn their cirrus from their cumulonimbus while they are out on a walk with this app from the Cloud Appreciation Society. It stores hundreds of incredible photos and detailed descriptions of 40

different clouds and light phenomena, enabling budding cloud spotters to easily identify what they see in the sky. They can build their own cloud collection and receive Stars and Achievements, as part of a global community of cloud enthusiasts. The data gathered is also shared with scientists at NASA, who use it to research the role of clouds in climate change.

Price: £2.99

Where to find it: App Store.

Learn more at cloudspotterapp.com

Might be helpful with: Scout Meteorologist Activity Badge.

Did you know?

'Meteorology' (the study of weather) comes from the Greek word meteoros, which means 'high in the sky'.

[For recognising birdsong](#)

ChirpOMatic app

Is it a bird? Yes, but which one? The British Trust for Ornithology says the UK is a permanent or temporary home to 603 different species – which is why we need the Shazam of birding apps. Like the musical version, this app allows us to record a bird's tune and then helps to identify it – extra useful if you can't actually see the singer in question. The dawn chorus or a walk in the woods will never sound the same again.

Price: £3.99

Where to find it: App Store

Might be helpful with: Beaver My Outdoors Challenge Award, Cub Naturalist Activity Badge, Cub Animal Carer Activity Badge, Explorer Naturalist Activity Badge.

Did you know?

A bird's call and a bird's song are not

the same thing. A song has a definite structure and rhythm. A call is much shorter, usually just one or two notes.

[For finding new adventures](#)

Go Jauntly app

Young people can discover new things about their local habitats with this free app that suggests walking routes, with maps and simple photo guides for easy navigation. There are walks in cities and in the countryside, walks on your doorstep and ones a bit further afield, walks for dog owners and seasonal suggestions. It offers handy tips along the way, like points of interest and where to find the nearest loo. You can save the walks you enjoy so you can do them again, and create your own routes – with descriptions and photos – to share with other people using the app, as well as family and friends.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or Google Play. Learn more at

gojauntly.com

Might be helpful with:

Hikes Away Staged Activity Badge, Beaver Explore Activity Badge, Cub Local Knowledge Activity Badge, Scout Local Knowledge Activity Badge.

[For learning about endangered animals](#)

WWF Together app

This free, award-winning app from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) introduces young animal lovers to some wildlife that they won't see in their local park, like elephants, whales and rhinos. They can discover 16 species through interactive experiences, such as racing a jaguar or trying to





Geocaching is a great way for young people to spend time outdoors and explore their environment

outjump a snow leopard. By using 360° images, the young people can immerse themselves in 10 types of animal habitat. Plus, they can pose with an origami image of the animal to create their own unique photo, for sharing on social media and spreading the word about endangered animals.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or Google Play. To learn more, go to:

worldwildlife.org/together

Might be helpful with:

Beaver Global Issues Activity Badge, Beaver Photographer Activity Badge, Cub Photographer Activity Badge.

For navigating the night sky

Night Sky app (iPhone)

Sky Map app (Android)

Going on a Scout camp is the perfect time for some stargazing. These apps will help young astronomers explore the universe by putting an augmented reality planetarium in their hands. They can identify stars, constellations, planets, satellites and other celestial objects simply by holding their phones or tablets up to the sky and moving them around. They can journey to distant moons and even land on Mars to see the view from there.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store (Night Sky) or Google Play (Sky Map)

Might be helpful with:

Beaver Space Activity Badge, Cub Astronomer Activity Badge.

For saving the bees

Bee Count app

Bees are an essential part of our ecosystem – they pollinate plants, including food crops. According to the organisation Sustain, a third of the

food we consume relies on pollination done mainly by bees. Not to mention the delicious output from honey bees. But these insects, so familiar in the British countryside, have become less common due to industrial agriculture and climate change. In the spring, young people can use the app to take part in the Great British Bee Count to help conservationists protect bees, and use it to identify different species throughout the summer. It even makes your phone buzz like a bee when you launch the app.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or Google Play. To learn more go to:

friendsoftheearth.uk/bee-count

Might be helpful with:

Cub Naturalist Activity Badge.

Did you know?

In the UK, 35 bee species are at risk.

For treasure hunts

Geocaching app

Geocaching is a great way to encourage young people to spend time outdoors and explore their environment while having fun. Essentially a large-scale treasure hunt, geocaching uses GPS on a phone or other mobile device to help 'cachers' find treasures left by others around the world. At the locations are containers, sometimes with small trinkets, and a logbook so you can prove you found it. Once you've done a search and selected a cache to find, the GPS will usually only put you within 30 feet of it. They are often hidden or disguised, so the young adventurers will have to use their eyes, hands and geo-senses to find it.

Price: free

Where to find it: App Store or

Google Play

Might be helpful with:

Scout Geocaching Activity Badge.

Start geocaching

Go to geocaching.com to get some top tips for beginners.

For helping the environment

Zero Carbon app

Everyone can do their bit to help the environment and make sure the natural world is around for future generations to enjoy. Young people might not realise all the ways they could be creating a carbon footprint, or the impact this might have. This app will calculate their CO₂ emissions and suggest simple ways to reduce them, by changing daily habits like eating less meat or taking shorter showers. People are encouraged to set goals and share their carbon footprints on Facebook to encourage their friends to get involved too.

Price: free


Where to find it: App Store or Google Play

Might be helpful with:

Beaver Global Issues Activity Badge, Cub Global Issues Activity Badge, Cub Environmental Conservation Activity Badge, Scout Environmental Conservation Activity Badge.

Offset your footprint

Within the app you can offset your CO₂ by donating to certified projects working to reduce carbon emissions.

* Help young people to protect themselves when they're online and out in the real world by using the section-specific Stay Safe leaflets, available for free from local Scout Shops or online as PDFs to download at: scouts.org.uk/staysafe. 



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Creating safe spaces

How to create a supportive environment where young people feel they can speak up if something is wrong

Words: Helen Pearce | Illustration: Luke Best

As adults in Scouting, we are responsible for making sure that young people are protected from harm. This is our priority. Part of keeping young people safe is about making sure that they feel able to speak up if they are worried about something, in trouble or being harmed in any way, in or outside of Scouting.

But how do you create a safe space for young people to feel they can speak up? And what action should you take if they do? We've gathered some useful advice about how to create safe spaces for young people in Scouting.

How do we as volunteers ensure that we are creating safe spaces?

Tina Wilson, Head of Safeguarding at the Scouts:

For me, safe spaces are created and maintained by everyone knowing the

rules and everyone feeling able to challenge problematic behaviours. Our Code of Conduct 'Young People First' (the Yellow Card) outlines the Scouting policy and provides rules that all adult members must stick to. It's important that everyone, including young people and their parents, know the rules outlined in the Yellow Card. We want an open, transparent culture.

Kester Sharpe, Deputy UK Chief Commissioner and member of the Safeguarding Committee:

As volunteers in Scouting, we need to make sure that we keep young people safe, physically, emotionally and psychologically. The Yellow, Orange and Green Cards have evolved over time through our experience and learning, and are designed to keep us all safe. So, make sure you know what the Cards say, and share them with young people and their parents.

It's also important to be clear about the boundaries that apply to us all. In my Troop, when we are camping, just before or after tea on the first day, we talk about the rules and boundaries, where they can and can't go. We make clear that nobody goes into someone else's tent without permission, and that this applies equally to Scouts and leaders. We also make sure they know that nobody has the right to make them feel uncomfortable and if that happens, they should tell the person to stop and if they don't, find one of the leaders. It's about having open conversations and being consistent in what you say and do.

And there is an element of trust, both ways: I trust you to do this and you trust me to do that. Young people need to know they have a voice and that they can come and talk to you.



‘What a young person needs, more than anything, is to be heard’

Dr Noreen Tehrani, specialist in trauma psychology

Also, think about how your actions as a leader might be perceived by others. How you intend them might not be how they’re interpreted. You should never be scared to challenge other people’s behaviour.

If you see someone doing something that makes you feel uncomfortable or doesn’t feel right, you should approach them about it. You don’t have to accuse anyone of anything – keep it light and focus on how the behaviour looks to other people. Tell your line manager about it in case this behaviour has been seen or challenged before. If you continue to be concerned, raise your concerns with your line manager again.

Dr Noreen Tehrani, specialist trauma psychologist:

One of the great things about Scouting is that psychologically, it gives young people the opportunity to try out new ways of being and interacting with others, as well as new ways of thinking, responding and reacting that are safe for them and respectful of others.

It’s important to think about creating psychologically safe spaces in the same way as creating physically safe spaces. If you’re running an archery session with Cubs, for example, there will be an element of danger but if there are safety rules everyone follows, this danger is kept to a minimum. The same principle applies to maintaining a safe space psychologically. One of the crucial elements is that young people should feel comfortable speaking up if they are unhappy or uncomfortable, or are being harmed in any way, so it can be dealt with.

The way that volunteers in Scouting behave can encourage or prevent the creation of safe spaces. Leaders need to behave in a way that is encouraging, supportive and honest. They need to display acceptance toward young people in order for them to feel safe to speak up. It takes a while to build up a relationship of trust with a young person and leaders should be consistent in their behaviour because trust can easily be lost with a thoughtless remark or uncaring behaviour.

What do I do as a volunteer if a young person discloses something to me that highlights a child protection issue?

Tina:

If a young person tells you something and you are concerned, don’t try and sort it out or manage it alone. You just need to listen, make note of the details like times and dates, and call us immediately. Make sure the child feels listened to – ask them enough to understand what is going on, but don’t interrogate them or try to investigate.

Crucially, don’t make a promise you can’t keep. You need to explain to the young person that you have to tell the safeguarding team. Be open and honest about this from the outset, otherwise you’ll destroy the trust you’ve built up.

We’ve seen a year-on-year increase in Scout leaders recognising child protection issues within families and reporting them to the safeguarding team. We usually get children’s services involved and get support and help for the family. Quite often that’s what they need – support and help

– it’s rare that we get a referral that leads to a child being removed from the parents. We are here to help.

Noreen:

What a young person needs, more than anything, is to be heard. You need to explain clearly and honestly what you can and can’t do upfront. If you’re asked to keep things secret, you need to explain what secrets are and the secrets you can keep versus the secrets you can’t. If it’s a nice secret, like buying someone a surprise gift, then that secret can be kept, but if it’s a bad or scary secret, then you won’t be able to keep it. Explaining this difference very clearly, before the child says anything, maintains the young person’s trust. It’s about being absolutely truthful to their level of understanding.

Children have a very strong sense of right and wrong. But, of course, if they’re in a relationship where they’re being groomed to keep secrets, understandably, they will have a very difficult time in working out what to do, even though they may know that what’s happening to them is wrong.

Ultimately, all you can and should do is listen to them, reflect back what they’re saying (checking your understanding) and respond to their needs. You need to make sure you handle your own emotions and be clear about what needs to happen in order to prevent the young person from being harmed. You need a certain amount of resilience and acceptance to be able to do that. 🌸

For more information on safeguarding in Scouting visit: scouts.org.uk/safeguarding.



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Breaking bread, breaking barriers

Initiatives across the country are bringing people together to share two of life's greatest gifts: food and conversation. Let these hearty helpings of inspiration spark your own ideas for getting young people out into the community

Words: Jacqueline Landey | Illustration: Joy Miessi

Last year the UK appointed a minister of loneliness, a project started by the late MP Jo Cox. Research linking a loneliness epidemic to early deaths emphasised the need for greater social connection, with the elderly, refugees, young people and new parents thought to be particularly at risk.

In environments prone to isolation the idea of a pop-up supper – a temporary restaurant where strangers gather to share a meal together – seems ripe with possibility. These suppers are platforms to connect with others and an excuse to try out unfamiliar or unexpected foods, both a communal experience and a culinary adventure.

One Scottish couple have taken the concept to a whole new level. Alongside fellow old hands from the hospitality industry, they've challenged themselves to open not just one but 20 pop-up restaurants, in 20 countries over 20 months.

Serving under the name One Star House Party, they spend two weeks collecting ingredients and exploring a country's cuisine, before setting up a temporary restaurant with a menu that fuses their own culinary influences with the local flavours they've discovered. From Nepal to

Kenya, they've simmered up sauces on trains, hotel roofs and even at Mount Everest Base Camp, where for that one day it was the highest restaurant in the world.

But we don't have to go that far to discover new flavours. In our cosmopolitan communities we can travel via our taste buds by exploring the diversity of food in our own neighbourhoods. However, as these initiatives show, it's through the stories of the people behind the food that we discover the most.

Cooking up connections

Stories on Our Plate (SOOP) celebrates cuisines showcased by refugee, former refugee and migrant cooks, through their supper club series. SOOP believes we're all united by 'taste, memory and stories'. Their aim is to 'take diners to the kitchen table of our mothers and grandmothers' to dish out stories everyone can relate to, creating a platform for cooks with origins from around the globe.

On the day we joined SOOP to celebrate Nowruz, the Persian New Year marking the beginning of spring, it's snowing in London. But inside The London Cooking Project, it's warmly welcoming and we sit at long

communal tables dotted with bright red apples, symbolising health. Mandana Moghaddam, a home cook with Iranian roots and our host, introduces us to Nowruz and its rituals – how participants wear new clothes for the occasion, and spend weeks preparing their homes to say goodbye to the old year – before reciting a Persian poem in honour of spring.

A local judge was seated to my left and to my right the chef's father, who moved to London 30 years ago after he was banned from Iran for 'no reason but for not thinking like them'. He spoke about Iranian history and politics, kept my teacup of Assam filled, shared his Instagram feed of typical Iranian houses, and told me how much he misses home. He beamed while watching his daughter, granddaughter and grandson taking care of guests around the room, sharing a delicious feast from home with a room of joyful strangers.

These dinners showcase individuals with individual stories. They remind us to avoid categorisation, even when it comes to food. Instead of grouping Middle Eastern foods into one pot, for instance, they showcase the distinct characteristics of its various regions. Each SOOP cook is encouraged to share their personal take on their



SOFTENING THE

APPROACH WITH EACH other



THE KITCHEN WAS A SPACE TO CONNECT

past present future

the dinner table was
the start of conversations
+ bonding.

cultural cuisines, from their upbringing, from their home. SOOP is one-part supper club, one-part training programme for people (often home cooks) from migrant backgrounds wishing to launch their own food ventures. It builds their knowledge on everything from hygiene and safety to gluten-free cooking. They spend time growing their confidence and sharing recipes, before graduating with their first pop-up.

Jack Fletcher, a SOOP founder, previously worked in mediation and dispute resolution, where, he noticed later, food played a part. There was often suspicion around people coming in for casework home visits and he said food did something to relax the formality of things and build trust. 'It could simply be tea and cake or sandwiches.' He noticed how 'in every household they were doing it a bit differently – different customs depending on the culture.' When he left the sector he realised the role food played in 'softening the approach with each other. It was a nice way to make it all feel a bit more human.'

Niki Psarias, a specialist in what she terms 'food for good', shared similar sentiments. Niki works with the peace-building organisation International Alert, running Conflict Café, a pop-up restaurant creating awareness about countries that have experienced conflict, by using their traditional foods.

Over a three-course meal, experts help diners unpack the topic – the history of the conflict, what's happening now, what work is being done to build peace, and what guests might do to bring people together in their own communities. In an informal way, guests develop an understanding of complicated situations in a space where they're meeting new people, sharing dishes, and by the end of the

evening, sharing phone numbers and email addresses too.

Crossing borders

Niki recently launched Border Kitchen, which began with a meal in Nicosia in Cyprus, the only divided capital in Europe. It brought chefs from the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities together, along with diners from both sides of the border, showcasing the power of food to build understanding. Niki believes good food not only relaxes us and makes us more open to conversation, but is also 'a way to show our identity, identify with a certain culture, and share identity.'

On the border of Armenia and Turkey, where a long-standing conflict exists, International Alert brought together women from both countries to cook together. 'The kitchen was a space to connect,' Niki explained, 'despite all the pain of the past, and sometimes of the present; to realise "oh, you might add one different ingredient but our dishes are actually very similar because we share a border."'

It's easy to forget the value of reaching out to our neighbours. In the UK, The Great Get Together was established in 2017 as a way to bring people together. Also inspired by Jo Cox, this countrywide weekend event of community get-togethers has now taken place for a second year. We spoke to Iona Lawrence, director of the Jo Cox Foundation, as well as her friend and camping companion, about last year's event. It was an extraordinary success that she credits to 'the participation and support of organisations like the Scouts, being some of the UK's most powerful and emblematic institutions of Britain and British values.'


An impressive nine million people took part, from Scouts and Guides

coming together for an event in Wales, to RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) volunteers joining refugees on the banks of the Thames to celebrate all they have in common. At Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan brought thousands together, and, as Iona said, 'In streets up and down the country, handfuls of people knocked on neighbours' doors suggesting they share a picnic.'

At an Iftar event in Yorkshire, where the Great Get Together coincided with the daily breaking of the Ramadan fast at sunset, Jo's sister Kim struck up a conversation with an Imam and within 24 hours they'd decided to go to a rugby match together, a first for both of them. And the friendship has lasted.

Of the people who attended the Great Get Together, 70% met someone new, and a similar number of people came away from the weekend feeling more positive about the future of the country. 'There's a connection shared by the simple act of sharing food,' Iona explained, 'but that really comes from the conversations that are had while you're eating.'

Feeling inspired?

- Why not encourage your young people to host a community event, like a picnic, bake sale or pop-up dinner in your meeting place?
- Find out if any budding cooks in your section would like to bring in a dish that celebrates their heritage.
- Create a section recipe book featuring dishes young people can share from home. They could include a story about where the recipe came from and how they came to love it.
- Support young people working towards their International Activity Badges, by exploring the food and heritage from around the world. 

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver My Skills Challenge Award



Cub Team Leader Challenge Award



Scout Team Leader Challenge Award

The activity could also help towards:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Cub Entertainer Activity Badge



Cub Our Skills Challenge Award



Scout Skills Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

Share skills

Encourage young people to think about what makes them unique and share their talents

Time: 60 minutes. Could be spread over two sessions

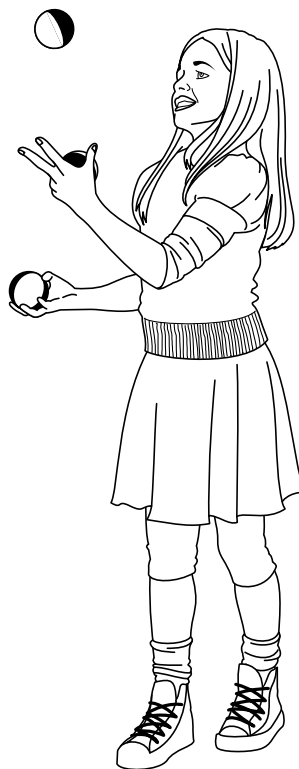
Equipment

■ dependent on skills

Instructions

1 Ask the young people to think about what makes them unique. Is there anything they're especially good at? Do they have any interests or skills they could share with the section? These could be things like circus skills, speaking a language they have learned, or doing tricks with a yo-yo, but the more unusual the better. You or your Explorer Scout Young Leader could even show them a skill of your own to get the ball rolling!

2 Next (or the following week if young people need to bring in specific equipment), give everyone a few minutes to practise their



skills on their own. At the same time, ask them to think about how they would explain the skill or teach it to their peers, so that they might be able to do it as well.

3 Divide the young people into pairs. One young person in each pair will show the other their skill and then try teaching it to them.

4 After 10 minutes, tell each pair to swap over so the other young person has a chance to share their skill. Every 10 minutes, mix up the pairs and the process begins again.

5 Discuss with your group the concept of uniqueness, identity and individuality – what makes each person special? How did they feel learning something new from a fellow young person? What were the benefits or challenges? How did it make them feel to share their skill – did they experience pride, self-respect, etc? Explain that it may have been hard to learn someone else's skill but that's okay because they have their own skills and everyone is different.

Take it further

Scouts could teach skills to parents or carers, especially if they are Scouting skills. This could be part of the Group AGM or similar.



This activity contributes to the following badges:



Scouts World Challenge Award



Scouts Teamwork Challenge Award



Explorers Global Issues Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Community Impact Staged Badge



Scouts Global Issues Activity Badge

Thought about peer leadership? Encourage Patrol Leaders to take responsibility for their Patrol in this activity.

Scouts | Explorers | Network

Use your vote

UK Parliament Week 12–18 November Talk to young people about debating and voting on important global issues

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment

- paper and pens
- ballot cards, found on the page opposite – one for each young person

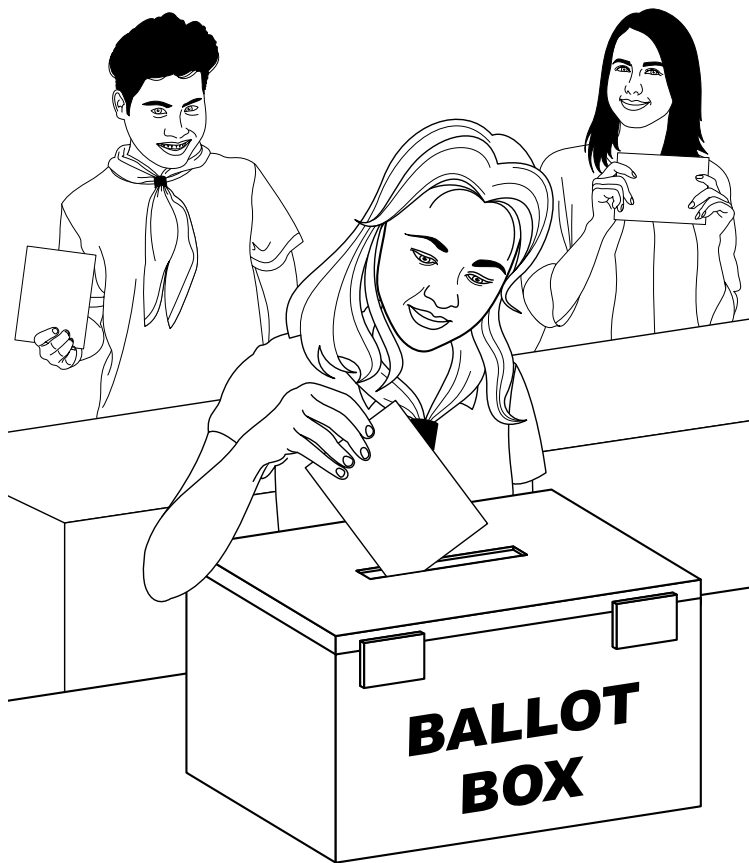
Instructions

1 Explain to the group that UK Parliament Week is an annual festival that engages people with Parliament and empowers them to get involved. Organisations across the UK run events and activities that explore what the UK Parliament means to them and their community.

2 Next, split your young people up into small groups. Tell them there is £1m available that needs to be spent on a global issue. They are the ones with power to decide which one.

3 Give each group the '17 Global Goals' (find them here: scouts.org.uk/sustainabledevelopmentgoals). The UK has committed to delivering these goals, along with 193 other countries. They should discuss what they think the goals mean and how different goals could affect countries/people differently.

4 Each group should pick the goal that they think should be given the £1m of funding. Run a short debate, allowing each group to explain



why their chosen goal should receive the money.

5 Explain what a secret ballot is and why it is used in elections, before handing out the ballot cards.

6 Allow each young person to have one vote using their ballot card. They should do this away from other people and they should not put anything on the card that might identify them, such as

their name, so that they remain anonymous.


















7 Count the ballots and share the results. Discuss as a group that we have the right to vote in the UK if we are over 18 and that in some countries this isn't the case.

Take it further

Now you have the results to the democratic vote, think about what your group can do to take action on that issue.

VOTE NOW!

Tick the box next to the global goal that you think should receive £1m of funding

<input type="checkbox"/> 1. No poverty 	<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Zero hunger 	<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Good health and wellbeing 
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Quality education 	<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Gender equality 	<input type="checkbox"/> 6. Clean water and sanitation 
<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Affordable and clean energy 	<input type="checkbox"/> 8. Decent work and economic growth 	<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure 
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. Reduced inequalities 	<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Sustainable cities and communities 	<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Responsible consumption and production 
<input type="checkbox"/> 13. Climate action 	<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Life below water 	<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Life on land 
<input type="checkbox"/> 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions 	<input type="checkbox"/> 17. Partnerships for the goals 	



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This activity contributes to the following badges:



Navigator Staged Activity Badge



Beaver Teamwork Challenge Award

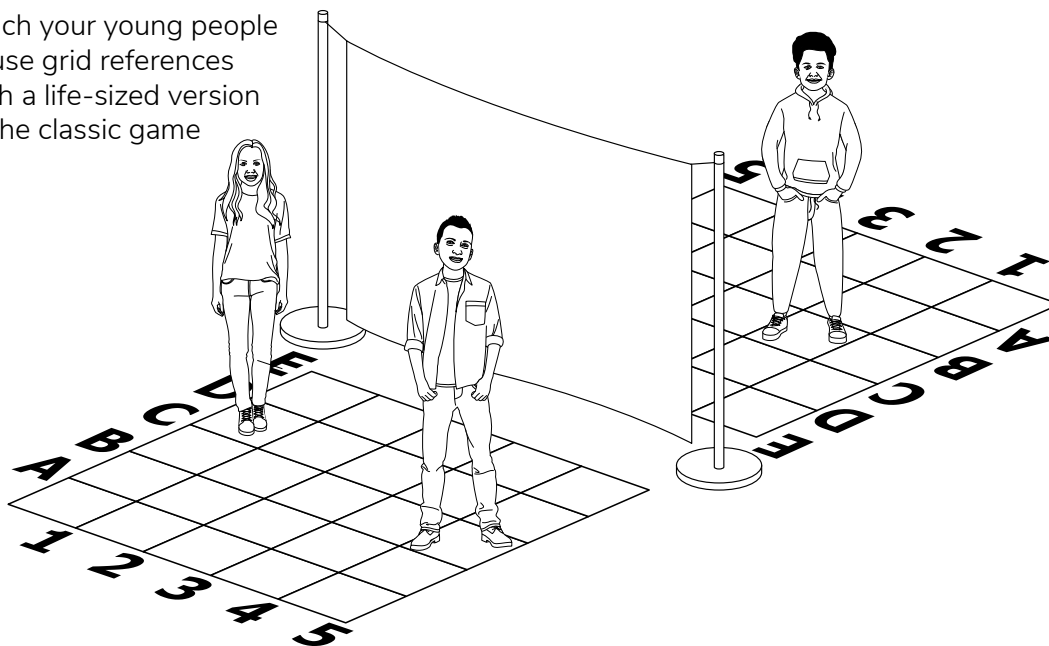


Cub Teamwork Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Play human battleships

Teach your young people to use grid references with a life-sized version of the classic game



Time: 45 minutes

Equipment

- chalk
- a sheet or screen

Instructions

1 Either inside or outside your meeting place, use the chalk to draw two large grids that mirror each other. They should be five squares by five squares, and each square needs to be big enough for a young person to stand in. Mark the grid by writing 1–5 along the bottom squares and A–E up the left-hand side.

2 Fix the sheet or screen between the two grids so that when the young people stand on them, they are not visible to the other side.

3 Explain the principles of the grid reference to your

young people. For example, if they stand on a square that is two across and three up, they will be at '2C'.

4 Split the section into two groups and instruct them to position themselves randomly on the grids, with one group on each side of the sheet or screen.

5 Next, the young people should take it in turns to call out a grid reference to the other team and if there is a young person standing on that square, they have to call back: 'You sunk my battleship!' That person is then out of the game.

6 The young people must try to remember which co-ordinates have already been called out on each side, to avoid repeating them and

wasting a turn. This continues until all the 'ships' are sunk. The winning team is the last one with players in the game.

Take it further

Alternatively, use enlarged symbols from an OS map and place randomly in the human battleships grid. Shout out two of the symbols and the Scouts have to shout back the compass direction of where the second is from the first. Or, using an OS map, ask the young people to secretly mark some 'battleships', using sticky dots or a pen. In pairs, create a barrier so their partner can't see their map. As before they need to guess grid references to 'sink' their opponents' battleship. However, this time they need to be more specific on their guessed location, by using six-figure grid references.

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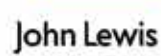












This activity contributes to the following badges:



Cub Our World Challenge Award



Scout Naturalist Activity Badge



Scout Environmental Conservation Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Beaver My World Challenge Award



Cub Environmental Conservation Activity Badge



Scout World Challenge Award

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Learn about pollution

The Great British Beach Clean, 15 September Teach your section about the devastating impact of plastics on marine life

Time: 45 minutes

Equipment

- rubber bands
- small sweets, such as Skittles/Smarties
- string

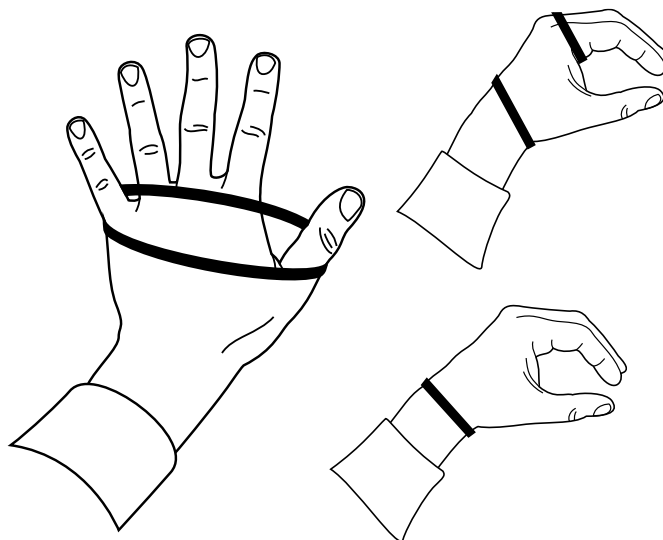
Instructions

1 Discuss with your section what kinds of plastics, such as bottles or carrier bags, might end up in our oceans, the potential damage this can cause, and what wildlife might be affected by it and how.

2 Ask a young person to volunteer so you can demonstrate. Put a rubber band across the back of their hand, using their thumb and little finger to hold it in place. Ask them to try and remove the rubber band, without using their other hand or teeth, or rubbing it against anything.

3 Hand out one rubber band to each young person so they can try it themselves. Tell them their hand and arm are a bird, with the hand being the head and the forearm being its neck.

4 Tell them to place the rubber bands either around their hands or arms and then give them 30 seconds to try and free themselves from the rubber bands without using their other hand (or anyone else's – no helping!).



5 Have a discussion about how difficult it was to get free and what plastics the rubber bands might represent for birds and other marine life, such as drinks can rings, fishing line or plastic bags. How might birds get caught in the plastics? Perhaps by swimming into them? The young people might have rubbed their hand against a desk to try and get it off. What would a bird use? Explain that for birds and other wildlife, plastics can have dire consequences, such as suffocation or starvation.

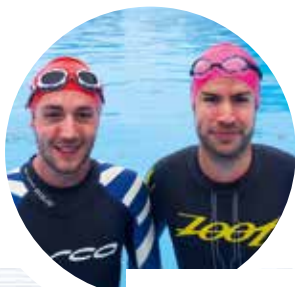
Take it further

Take your section on a beach clean – a national campaign and community-impact project, perfect for sections based near the British coastline to get involved in. For landlocked sections, you

could consider this activity while planning your camp and incorporate a beach clean, or consider another waterway such as a canal. Encourage your section to think about their daily plastic consumption and to upcycle some of the refuse they collect into a recycling bin. As a section you could even think of ways to reduce plastic at your next event or camp.

Another way of taking it further is to learn about the diets of seabirds and marine life. Find out the calories that animals need to stay alive. Using sweets to represent food, ask young people to collect enough sweets from the other side of the room. Then they do this again, but with a physical restriction, maybe using the rubber bands technique, or by having their feet tied together.

Support the ultimate challenge



Rob McArthur and Poldy van Lynden

Two men are currently on the adventure of a lifetime to support Scouting – donate at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/arch2arctic



Rob and Poldy have embarked on the Arch2Arctic challenge to raise £100,000 for Scouts, which will go towards ensuring a younger generation can learn new skills for life. They are over half-way to their target.

The two adventurers set off in June and after running from London to Dover, they are swimming the channel to France and cycling through Europe to Northern Norway, before rowing more than 700 miles to the Svalbard islands in the Arctic Ocean. For more information about the challenge visit: arch2arctic.com/

This activity could help towards the following badges:



Hikes Away Staged Activity Badge



Time on the Water Staged Activity Badge



Scout Photographer



Scout Local Knowledge Activity Badge



Scout Expedition Challenge Award

Scouts | Explorers | Network

Go on a ghost walk

Halloween, 31 October Your section can mark All Hallow's Eve with a spooky expedition

Time: 90 minutes

Equipment

- torches
- local/UK maps
- books/info about local/UK ghosts and ghouls
- cameras/phones (optional)
- video recorders (optional)
- paper
- pens
- craft props (optional)
- hi-vis reflective clothing

Instructions

1 Talk to your young people about the origins of Halloween and the way its traditions have changed over the years. What do they think about Halloween? Do they celebrate it and if so, how? Have a discussion about the concept of ghosts and spirituality, and also how different faiths perceive ghosts and what happens to

people's spirits when they are no longer living.

2 Before running the rest of the activity, make sure that all your young people are comfortable with the topic, as you don't want anyone to get too scared.

3 Tell them about a few of the most haunted places around the world. Ask them if they know any haunted places or stories. They can then plan an expedition to a local haunted place, or a ghost walk in the local area. They should plan the route themselves, thinking about hazards, and consider places of interest or stopping points to tell ghost stories.

4 More adventurous sections could plan a spooky waterborne expedition

– British Canoeing has maps of ghoulish trips where you might see a ghost ship, or a ghostly figure crossing a haunted aqueduct. For advice on how to run these activities safely, go to: scouts.org.uk/a-z.

5 After the expedition, you could encourage the young people to tell spooky stories and see whose story is the scariest.

Take it further

Scouts could dress up in costumes and share the expedition on video by making their own scary short film, or through taking photographs. Scouts could plan an exploration on this theme for their Expedition Challenge Award and Explorers as practise for their Explorer Belt.





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This activity contributes to the following badges:



Cub Scientist Activity Badge



Cub Our Skills Challenge Award

Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

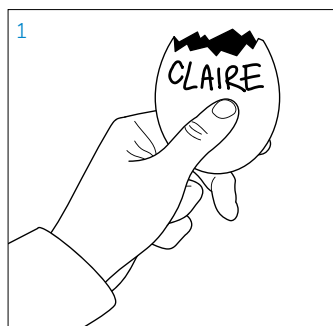
Grow geodes

Young people can learn about chemistry by making these cool eggshell crystals

Time: 60 minutes

Equipment

- eggs
- water
- a mixture of different solids including epsom salts, rock salt, sea salt, table salt, sugar, etc
- food colouring
- a number of small, heat-proof containers, like coffee cups
- egg cartons or some mini-muffin tins

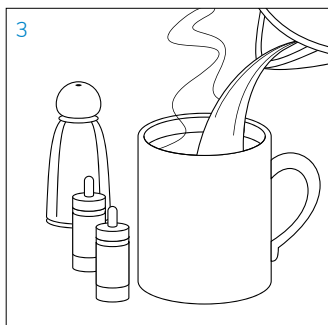


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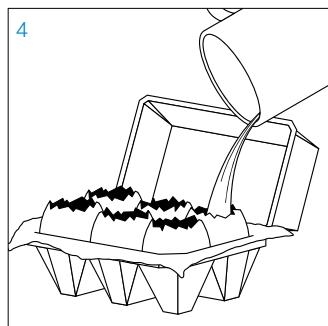
1 Give each young person an egg and ask them to write their name on it. Crack the shell as close to the narrow end as possible and discard the smaller end. Younger sections may need help doing this. Then, they need to carefully clean the eggshells out using hot tap water so that no egg or membrane remains, whilst making sure the shell stays intact. You can keep the eggs to use later, perhaps for a baking activity like making cupcakes, so that they are not wasted.

2 Next, the eggshells should be placed in an egg box lined with baking paper or a mini-muffin tin, to hold them upright.

3 Heat the water so that it is almost boiling. Instruct the young people to pour $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup of water into the heatproof containers with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the solids mixture in each, and then stir until the salts/sugar has dissolved. They should keep adding more of the solids mixture until it stops dissolving – this means the water is sufficiently saturated.

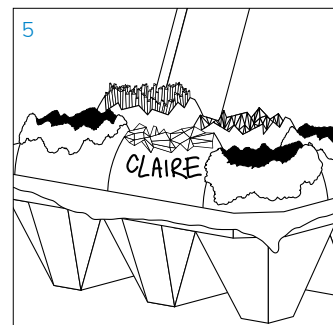


4 Then add the food colouring, adding different colours to each of the containers. Pour into the



eggshells so that they are as full as possible without spilling over the tops.

5 Once they are full, the eggshells should be stored somewhere safe where they will not be disturbed. Once the water evaporates after a day or two, crystals will form inside the shells. The longer the eggshells are left, the bigger the crystals will grow. When you give the eggshells back to your section, explain what has happened because of the water evaporating.



Take it further

Your young scientists can experiment with the cooling rate of the liquid to see how this affects the size of the crystals that grow. They could let the solution cool normally before adding it to some of the eggshells, and then speed up the cooling process of the remaining liquid before adding it to the other eggshells, by placing the container of solution in a bowl filled with ice.

Explorer Scout Young Leaders

Explorer Scout Young Leaders can help with this activity, especially some of the parts that the younger sections may find challenging.

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This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Space Activity Badge



Beaver My Adventure Challenge Award



Cub Our Adventure Challenge Award

The activity could also help towards:



Nights Away Staged Activity Badge



Cub Astronomer Activity Badge



Scout Astronomer Activity Badge



Scout Camper Activity Badge



Explorer Science and Technology Activity Badge

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Search for stars

World Space Week, 4–10 October Take your section to a Dark Sky Discovery site to look for constellations

Time: 90 minutes

Equipment

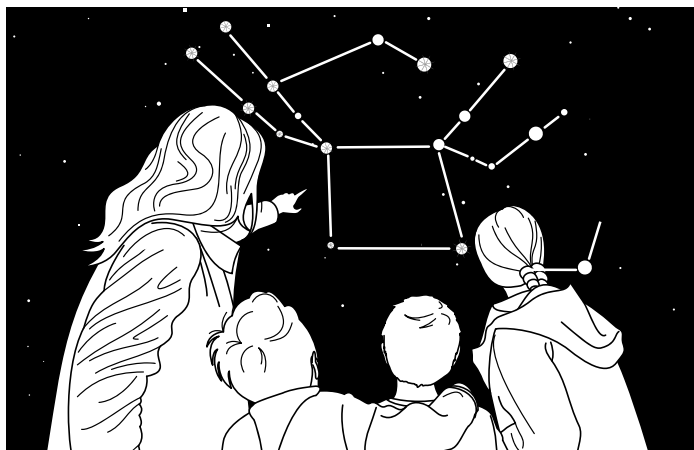
- an app or guide for identifying constellations

Instructions

1 Find your nearest Dark Sky Discovery site (darkskydiscovery.org.uk/). These are areas designated as being away from the worst of any local light pollution, with good sightlines of the sky. These sites are generally freely accessible at all times but you should check the website for any additional accessibility requirements. If you don't have one nearby, try using a public park, open space or local campsite, where light pollution is limited.

2 Plan an outing with your section to one of the nearest sites on a clear night. You don't have to be in the countryside or the middle of nowhere to find one, some parks in the centre of big cities are designated Dark Sky Discovery sites.

3 The young people can use a mobile app like Night Sky, a constellation guide or the BBC stargazing booklet to identify some of the different constellations they can see in the sky at night. Find more tips and advice about stargazing from Scouting partner Bear Nibbles at: scouts.org.uk/bearnibbles.



4 Suggest some things for the young people to look for. On autumn evenings and early summer mornings: the landmark to look for is the Great Square. Look for four stars that form a square. The top left star is part of Andromeda, and the other three are part of the constellation Pegasus (winged horse). Looking up and left from the star in Andromeda, they will find the Andromeda galaxy. Two constellations that form part of the western zodiac, Aries and Pisces, are also visible at this time. Up and to the right of Andromeda is Cassiopeia, and to its right is Cepheus.

On winter evenings and early autumn mornings: Orion is a bright constellation and works as a landmark. The constellation represents a hunter with a sword on his belt, so the stargazers should look for a pattern of four stars

forming his head, then his shoulders, arms and legs. Three stars hang off his belt for the sword, though the third star is actually the Orion nebula. To the west of Orion is Canis Minor, with Canis Major underneath it. Gemini, the zodiac constellation, is to the north-west of Orion, and Taurus is just to its north-east. Also visible are the Lepus and Auriga constellations.

Take it further

If the weather is not clear enough for stargazing, take your section to an observatory, planetarium or science centre to explore the universe. For either activity, young people could lead a discussion and show what they have learned. Why not turn your stargazing outing into a camp, with other skills like bivouac sleeping? Young people can build a shelter using this guide from Scouting partner Victorinox: scouts.org.uk/victorinox.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Cub Chef Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Beaver Cook Activity Badge



Scout Chef Activity Badge



Explorer Chef Activity Badge

Explorer Scout Young Leaders

Young Leaders can support the small groups during this outdoor activity.

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Build a cardboard oven

Cooking and craft skills are put to use for this yummy outdoor activity with a BBQ and a cardboard box

Time: 90 minutes
(including baking time)

Equipment (per oven)

- disposable BBQ
- cardboard box (and masking tape for attaching a flap)
- sharp scissors/knife
- lots of tin foil
- metal cooling rack
- empty drinks or food cans x 4
- oven gloves
- cupcake recipe, ingredients and cupcake tin
- fire bucket

Instructions

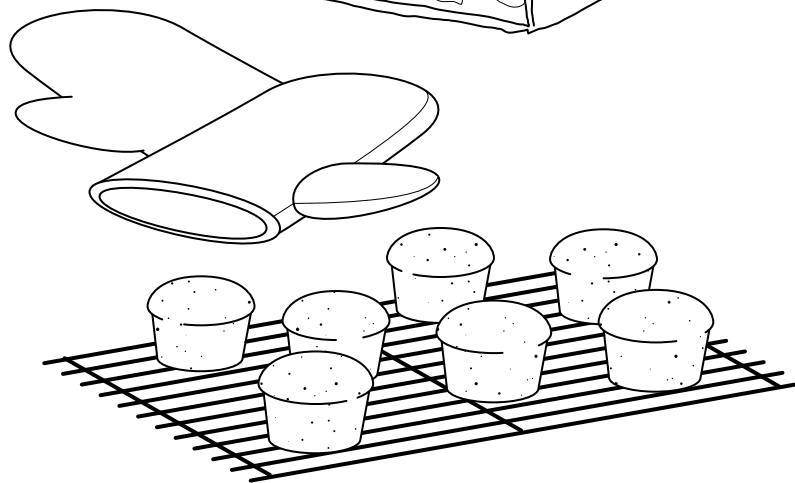
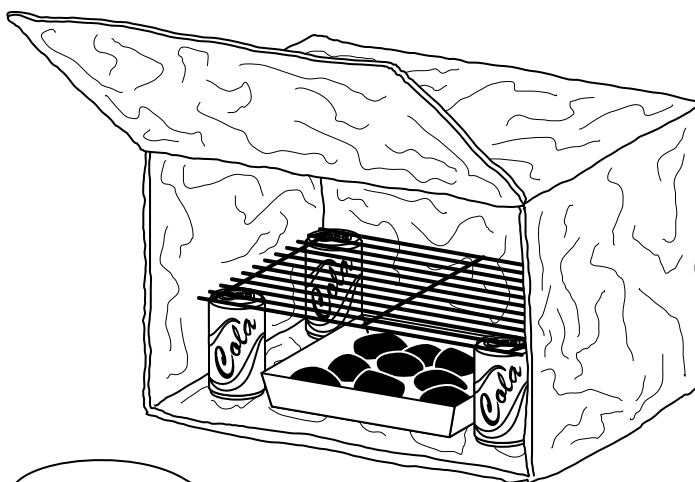
1 Split the young people into small groups and ask them to attach a flap to one side of the box using masking tape, so they have a 'door' for the oven. Then ask them to completely cover it in foil. Any exposed cardboard is a fire risk.

2 Next, they should lay the box on its side so the 'door' can be lifted up.

3 Instruct them to place one empty tin can in each corner. The cooling rack is then placed securely on the cans.

4 Now that the structure of their 'oven' is built, they need to place the BBQ inside the box and then light it.

5 While the BBQ is warming up, the young chefs can make their cupcake mix and divide it into the tins.



When the BBQ is hot, the group can cook their cupcakes by placing them onto the rack.

6 Once the cupcakes are cooked and completely cooled the young people can eat and enjoy them!

7 Make sure that the young people extinguish their BBQs and leave them to cool before moving/dismantling

and recycling the different parts of their ovens. Remember the metal will stay hot for a while after cooking.

Take it further

Challenge them to cook a whole meal and host a competition using cardboard ovens, making sure it's a balanced meal and thinking about cost, quantity and dietary requirements.



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Digital Maker Staged Activity Badge



The Digital Maker Staged Activity Badge has been updated!

Raspberry Pi has teamed up with the Scouts to support the Digital Maker badge, helping young people meet the new requirements, and we've created a whole new set of activities and ideas to help young people and leaders learn about technology and have fun with digital making.



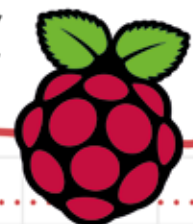
"Our Leaders aren't techie, so the Digital Maker badge was one we always avoided. However, the excellent resources provided by Raspberry Pi meant the Beavers remained focused and completely engaged throughout the session. The content was aimed at just the right level."

— Christine,
1st Heathcote Beavers

Find activities and ideas to help
towards the Digital Maker
Staged Activity Badge at
scouts.org.uk/raspberrypi

The Raspberry Pi Foundation is a charity that works to put the power of digital making into the hands of people all over the world.

Making things with technology helps young people learn how to solve problems, build resilience, support their communities, and express themselves.



This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Beaver My Skills Challenge Award



Cub Entertainer Activity Badge



Cub Our Skills Challenge Award

The activity could also help towards:



Beaver International Activity Badge



Cub International Activity Badge

Beavers | Cubs

Make a puppy puppet

The Big Draw, throughout October Your section can create simple but effective puppets out of cardboard tubes and put on a show

Time: 45 minutes

Equipment (per puppet)

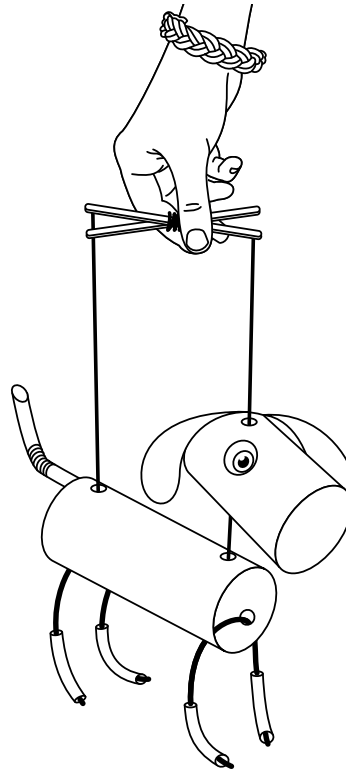
- kitchen roll tube x 1
- craft glue
- paints
- hole punch
- wooden beads
- string
- lolly sticks x 2
- rubber band
- paper drinking straw
- sticky tape
- toy eyes (optional)

Instructions

1 Carefully cut the kitchen roll tube a third of the way along, so there are two pieces of tube in different sizes. The large piece will be the puppy's body, the smaller piece will be its head.

2 Next, the crafters should cut out some ears, then paint their puppy's body, head and ears in whichever colours or patterns they choose. Alternatively, they could cover them in coloured or patterned paper using glue.

3 Once the paint or glue is dry, using a hole punch the young people should make holes in the puppet for the strings to go through. In the body, there should be four on the bottom side: two at each end for the legs. There should be two in the top: one at each end in the centre, above the legs. In the head, there should be two holes – one in the end



on the top and one in the bottom, directly below it.

4 The legs are made with two lengths of string, looped through the leg holes at the front and back. Once they are in place, a few beads should be added to each side, and a few knots tied in the ends to keep the beads on.

5 To join the head to the body and create the 'controls', several knots need to be tied in the end of a piece of string before it is threaded up through the hole in the front of the body, then through the two holes in the head.

Before threading through the second hole in the top of the head, more knots are needed inside the tube to hold the head in place. They should keep tying knots until it is big enough not to go through the hole. Another string with knots in the end should be threaded up through the hole in the other end of the body.

6 The two lolly sticks are fastened together in a cross shape using the rubber band, and the two strings attached to the puppy are tied around each end of one of the sticks. The lengths should be even so that the stick is level with the body.

7 A tail can be added by cutting a paper drinking straw in half. This is then stuck inside the top of the puppy's body using sticky tape. Bend the straw so the end sticks up.

8 Talk to your section about the use of puppets around the world, and their cultural significance in countries like China, India and Vietnam. What do they look like? What animals are represented in different cultures and why?

Take it further

A performance element can be incorporated into this activity if the young people use their puppets to put on a puppet show for parents and carers.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Cub Photographer Activity Badge



Scout Photographer Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Cub International Activity Badge



Cub My Faith Activity Badge, Cub World Faiths Activity Badge



Cub Our Adventure Challenge Award



Hikes Away Staged Activity Badge



Scout My Faith Activity Badge, Scout World Faiths Activity Badge



Scout Creative Challenge Award

Cubs | Scouts | Explorers

Try light painting

Diwali, 6–10 November Celebrate the festival of light by creating effective pictures with a smartphone and an app

Time: 45 minutes

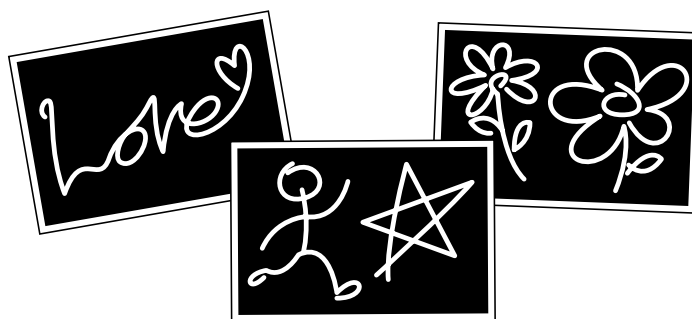
Equipment

- a smartphone with a light painting app installed (like NightCap)
- torches, glow sticks or sparklers
- remote shutter (optional)

Instructions

1 Discuss with your section the meaning of Diwali and the role that light plays in different faiths – why is it so significant? Talk to them about the metaphor of light over darkness and how it represents good over evil. How is Diwali celebrated around the world? Are there any young people in your section who would like to talk about the significance of light in their faith?

2 Lead your section in their own Diwali-themed celebration with some light painting. This is done by setting a long exposure/shutter speed on an SLR camera or on a smartphone using an app. In the NightCap app, the 'light trails' setting is needed and can be found by tapping on the star icon. The exposure should be set to ½ by sliding up on the right-hand side of the viewer. The ISO needs to be 50, and the focus should also be 50, depending on how far away the subject is – '0' is for close-ups, '100' for subjects that are further away.



3 The camera needs to be kept completely steady while taking the picture. This can be achieved with a tripod if available, or a smartphone can be safely leaned against something. If the pictures are being taken inside, the young people can use desks or chairs to prop them up. Outside, cardboard boxes weighted with books inside would work.

4 Additional light needs to be kept to a minimum so the light being photographed shows up. Turn off all unnecessary lights if the activity is taking place inside, or urge the young people to keep away from street lights if it's being done outdoors.

5 The photographers should aim the camera at the subject and make sure they are in the frame. They should press the shutter button and then ask the person in the frame to use their torch/glow stick/sparkler, etc to 'draw' something. This

should be done more slowly than they might normally do it, for example on bonfire night. The slower they move, the clearer the image. Also, it's worth reminding everyone that if they are facing the camera, anything they draw or write will appear reversed, so they may want to practise first, using a mirror.

Safety tips if using sparklers

- Wear gloves and hold sparklers at arm's length
- Don't wave sparklers at anyone or run with them
- Be careful if you're wearing a long scarf or big coat as the sparks could set it alight
- Put sparklers in a bucket of water when you're finished as they can stay very hot

Take it further

Why not combine light painting with a night hike and take some pictures on the move? This might be a particularly good way of doing it if additional external light is an issue at your meeting place.

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Creative Activity Badge



Beaver My Skills Challenge Award



Beaver Teamwork Challenge Award



Cub Global Issues Activity Badge



Cub Entertainer Activity Badge



Scout Entertainer Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:

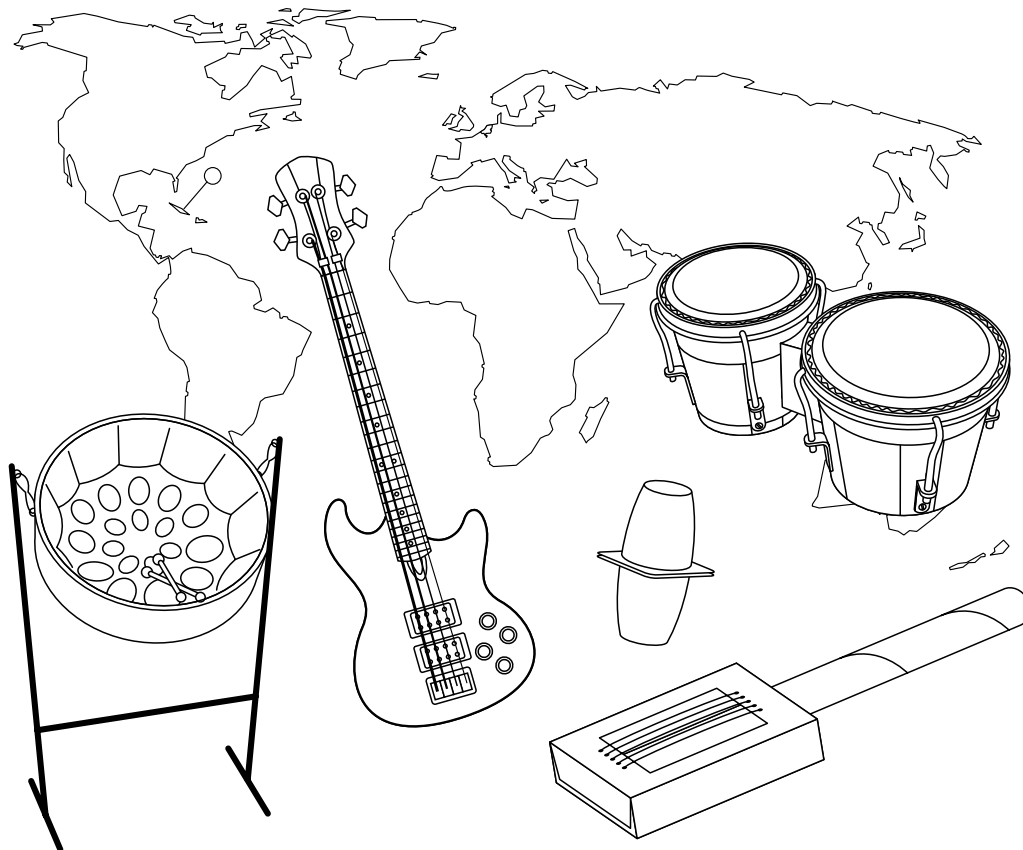


Musician Staged Activity Badge

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts | Explorers | Network

Play the blues

Black History Month, October Help your section to discover different types of music of black origin and create their own



Time: 60 minutes

Equipment

- different instruments like bongos, güiros, guitars, steel drums, keyboards, bass, etc, and/or:
- homemade instruments that the young people make out of recycled materials, such as yoghurt pot shakers or tissue box guitars

Instructions

1 Have a discussion with your young people about different types of music of

black origin, like R&B, rap, reggae, jazz and blues. Where did they come from? Why do they sound like they do? What are their cultural origins?

2 Play some examples of music from this playlist: scouts.org.uk/blackhistorymonthplaylist then ask your section what their favourites are and why. Do they sound familiar or like the music they would listen to?

3 Next, ask the young people to work in groups

to create their own pieces of music, incorporating one musical style they just heard.

Take it further

Put your young musicians' memories to the test with a quiz. Read the descriptions and play parts of the songs in the playlist to see if they can identify the types of music. Download the information here: scouts.org.uk/blackhistorymonth.

For more information about Black History Month visit blackhistorymonth.org.uk.

Directory

Whether you're looking for an exciting excursion or overnight stay, or assistance with badge creation, our Directory section will point you in the right direction

To advertise in the Directory, please contact Lewis Batchelor on **0117 314 8518** or email lewis.batchelor@immediate.co.uk

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Life drawing

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Bagheera (Trisha O'Brien) drawn by Caitlin, age 9,
of Knowle West Cubs, Bristol.



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