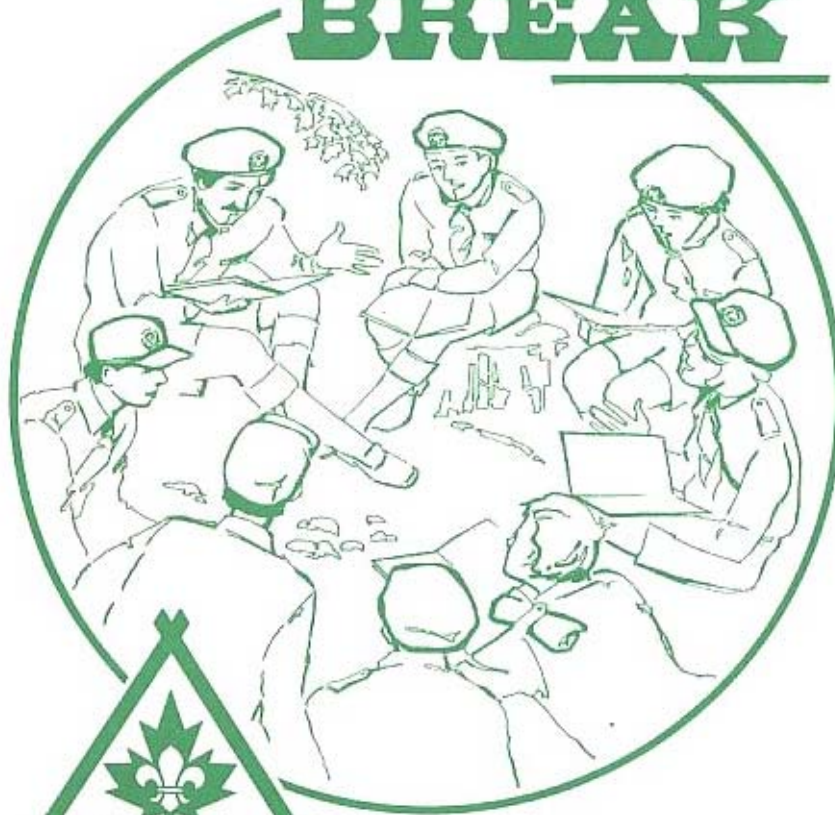


FOCUS BREAK



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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or use expressions which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

If you find them offensive, we ask you to please delete this file from your system.

This and other traditional Scouting texts may be downloaded from the Dump.

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The following material is a compilation of the materials used at the Canadian Jamborees in '81 and '85, and the World Jamboree of 1983 prepared by the Chaplaincy Corps.

The material has been moderately adjusted to meet a wider program use by leaders in Boy Scouts of Canada to help them fulfill their first loyalty in every Scout Promise “to love and serve God.”

It is our hope that this booklet will help each and every one of us to bring their God into perspective in the daily happenings of our Scout program.

While the material in this booklet is prepared primarily for use in the camp setting, it can easily be adapted for any Scout meeting or a “Scouter’s Five.”

Micmac Prayer

O Our Creator and Great Grandfather of all.
Who dwells in the Spiritland known as heaven.
We beg that you look toward us, your children
Who live here on Mother Earth, and hear our prayer.
Because, O Creator, we learn to believe
With the Highest Respect,
The law you had set forth.
We ask that you bring to us, this day,
Good spirits from the four directions:
East, South, West, North.
So that when we put our minds together for this gathering
We will be of one heart before we leave.
Bless us with understanding, strength and compassion
And may we always walk the path to Heaven
That you made for us.
Let it be, let it be, let it be.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK...

Why have Focus Breaks at all?

Because the first loyalty that every Scout promises is “to love and serve God.” **Focus Breaks** are a way of taking a few minutes each day, in an informal style, to think about how this Scouting experience is related to God’s purpose for each person. Hopefully, they will help us see where we have been, and will give a perspective on the activities of each day.

Focus Breaks help to put the blur of events into sharper focus.

When should you take a Focus Break?

Anytime. They are written for use in the morning. But the idea of **Focus Breaks** is that they should grow naturally out of any time when you are thinking and talking about your life together. If that time turns out to be just before going to bed, that’s the time for **Focus Breaks**. **Although Focus Breaks** are intended for use in groups, they can also be used by individuals.

How do Focus Breaks work?

Each day’s **Break** has five straightforward steps.

1. There’s a time for **looking back** at what has been happening. In Scout and Venturer groups, this will probably happen almost automatically. If you need prompting to get thoughts flowing, you can make use of the suggested questions that start each **Focus Break**.

2. The next step gives **perspective** to your thinking or talking. The suggested questions (which can be casually thrown into a discussion) will help to bring out a particular theme or concern.

3. The **Focus Point** is a paragraph, like a thought for the day, which summarizes that theme or concern. In groups, it can be read as it is, by a leader or a boy. Preferably, the leader should read over the day’s **Focus Break** in advance, think about the theme, and be prepared to insert the **Focus Point** into the discussion in his own words.

4. This leads to the next step, **looking ahead**. Run over the agenda for this coming day, and what you as a group or an individual staffer will be doing. Use the suggested questions to look at possible ways the **Focus Point** might affect the way you deal with the day’s activities.

5. A suggested Bible reading and prayer help to connect the discussions you have been having to the traditional bases of religious faith. The Judeo-Christian passages are set to all themes, as well as passages from the Qu’ran for many of them.

Any special suggestions for groups?

As a leader accustomed to working with youth, you already have skills in encouraging discussion. **Focus Breaks** are simply a particular kind of discussion. Their aim is to stimulate thinking about the meaning of each day’s experiences.

Focus Breaks could take only a couple of minutes. They could also continue most of the day, off and on. Encourage any discussion that takes place.

Remember that the best way to have young people take a discussion seriously is to treat each contribution as if it were serious, even the smart-alec comments.

Keep it informal, if possible.

Similarly, make discussions a sharing of views, not an argument. If you disagree with what someone says, explain what you believe without forcing them to accept your ideas. It’s important that youth **grow** towards a fuller understanding, because then the understanding will be theirs, not someone else’s.

Try to involve everyone. If one person seems to need extra attention, arrange to spend time with that person later.

Selecting each day's Focus Break

The first three **Focus Breaks** are intended to be used at the beginning of a Jamboree/camp, or adventure and the last of the series to be used on the "Last Day" (Departure.) However, with the exception of the first and last **Focus Break** in this booklet, the leader should choose the one most appropriate for the activities of each particular day.

There is a special **Focus Break** for "A Day of Worship or Rest."

What's a "Disaster Day?"

At almost every camp or Jamboree, something will go wrong. It could be an accident that happens to someone, a fire, a Scout getting lost, an illness that sweeps the camp. It may be a natural disaster, such as a windstorm that damages tents or a prolonged downpour that floods campsites and makes everyone miserable.

Whatever it is, while the "disaster" is in progress, you probably won't have time for a **Focus Break**. The special Disaster Day **Focus Break** is for use when the "disaster" is over and you're recovering. You may use it as a substitute for a regular **Focus Break**, or in addition to the regular **Focus Break**.

Suppose I need help?

At Jamborees, there are chaplains usually assigned to each sub-camp, and should be on hand at all times. They are available to assist youth or adults with personal difficulties, counselling, advice on religious programs, worship services, etc. For local activities or camporees, if your group is church-sponsored, you may contact the minister for guidance, or if you are otherwise sponsored, most clergy would be glad to offer help and suggestions. Your district should also have a district chaplain who is available.

STARTING NEW ADVENTURES

Looking back:

What kinds of things happened? How long did it take to get here? Did anyone lose a bag or pack? Did anyone get air, or car (bus) sick? What about the difficulties of setting up camp?

Getting a perspective:

Was it worth some of the troubles to be here? Does anyone think it wasn't? Is anyone worried about what this experience will be like?

Focus Point:

This is a new experience for all of us. It's natural to feel a little nervous about it. We're in a strange place, surrounded by people we've never met before. We don't know, yet, what the weather will be like, or what our activities will involve, or how well we will do what's expected of us.

None of us have ever been to this Jamboree/Camp before. Some have been to other Jamborees/Camps. But this is a new experience for everyone here.

But then, every day, anywhere, is also like that. Every day is new. We've never lived it before. Like a birthday — others may have been that age before, but they have never lived your life. Nor have you. Every year is a new experience. That's true for everyone, no matter how long they may have lived, or how much experience they may have had.

These new days can be an adventure, if we take them that way. Not just here, but every new day of our lives.

Today's agenda:

Talk about the events, activities, programs, and duties scheduled for the coming day. Pay special attention to camp responsibilities, such as cooking and cleanup.

Looking ahead:

What's familiar about today's program from other events? What's new? When you come to the end of the day, what kind of feeling would you like to have? Is there anything you can do to help that feeling come about?

Bible reading:

Psalms 23 or John 14:1-3 or Qu'ran S.I:1-7

Prayer:

Lord, as we start into this new adventure, we have hopes and dreams and concerns. Help us to get along with each other so that we can fulfill those hopes and dreams. Don't let us lose track of our goals in the newness of this place and this time. Help us to make a new start today, leaving behind yesterday's problems and troubles. Amen.

LIVING TOGETHER

Looking back:

What do you remember most about yesterday? What incidents stick in your mind? What were your feelings during the day?

Getting a perspective:

What had you expected of this camp, this place, these events, before you came? How do the things that have actually happened compare with your experience?

Focus Point:

Did you ever try to catch a firefly at night? Its light glows for a second, and then just as you're about to catch it, the light goes out, and you're left in the dark, until it glows again somewhere else.

Life's like that. There are so many things to chase after, so many dreams of what we want to do and to be. Like chasing fireflies, sometimes we chase those hopes and dreams here and there and everywhere, without quite catching any of them.

This event could turn out that way too. It could be just a bunch of people gathered together, with all of them doing their own thing, and no sense of purpose. Or it could be remembered as one of the great moments in your Scouting life.

We think of history as something that happens to other people — famous people like Napoleon or Columbus. But the fact is that history is going on all the time, and each one of us is helping to write it. Years from now, this will be history, too. People will look back, and see what kind of an event we helped to shape, by the way we all took part in it.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs, and duties.

Looking ahead:

The first step in developing a spirit of co-operation is to have a spirit of co-operation among ourselves. What can we do, today, to ensure that none of us feels left out, or feels of lesser value than others?

Bible reading:

I Corinthians 12:14-27 or Joshua 24:14-18.

Prayer:

Lord, help us to put our efforts and energies to work in this your world, to improve it for everyone's benefit. Prevent us from wasting opportunities. Keep us from being selfish about our wants and desires. As you journey with us through this adventure of life, teach us to get our directions and our sense of purpose from you. Amen.

ON BEING SCOUTS

Looking back:

What did you do that was the same as the day before? What was similar? Is there a pattern or a routine developing?

Getting a perspective:

Why are we doing these things? Just to have fun? Or because we're told to? What's the purpose of doing them?

Focus Point:

At a Jamboree/Camp like this, there are almost too many things to keep us busy. Some are new and exciting. Others are dull and boring. But in all this activity and among all these people, there's a danger that we may forget who we are, and why we're here.

Fun is important, but we have an additional purpose in being here. We're here because we are Scouts, Venturers, leaders, and staff. And we should remember the Scout promise.

“On my honour,
I promise, to do my best
To love and serve God,
my Queen, my country,
and my fellow men,
and to live by the Scout Law.”

That promise reminds us that we're here for more than a good time. The things we do, the experiences we share, should help us develop skills and attitudes that will, in time, help us to be better citizens of our country and our world.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs, and duties.

Looking ahead:

What things will you be doing today which might demonstrate loving and serving God? Loving and serving our country? Loving and serving all people? Will this day help us to learn to work cooperatively? Could “just having fun” be part of God's plan for us?

Bible reading:

Psalm 19, verses 7-4 or Romans 8:1-4 or Qu'ran S.XXIV:35-46.

Prayer:

Lord, help us to realize that in doing your will, in obeying the laws for living that you give us, some of your qualities rub off on us. Join us today in the fun, the work, the relaxing when it's done. Be a friend with whom we want to get along. Amen.

THE SCOUTING SPIRIT

Looking back:

What do you feel best about, among all the things that we have done so far? What were some successes or highlights? Are they the same for you as individuals as for the whole group?

Getting a perspective:

What is it that makes a person a Scout? If someone simply bought a Scout uniform and wore it, would that make him a Scout?

Focus Point:

Every country has a slightly different Scouting program. You can see differences in uniforms. You can't see the differences in the way they organize their troops or patrols. Unless you know their language, you can't tell if they say the same Scout promise as you do.

If we were to try to visit some of the ethnic Scout groups that are here, we might hear strange languages, see different shirts and scarves, or eat unfamiliar food. But we would still all be Scouts together, because we share the vision of the founder of Scouting, Lord Baden-Powell.

The Scouting movement is a bit like world religions. Though each religion has many different branches or denominations, most of them started with the vision of one person. So though there are many Christian churches, they all try to follow the teachings and example of one person, Jesus of Nazareth. There are many forms of Buddhism or Islam, but they all get their inspiration from Gautama, or from Muhammed. In the same way, the Scouting movement is made up of many different individuals and groups. But together, we continue the spirit of Lord Baden-Powell.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs, and duties.

Looking ahead:

Suppose that being a Scout were a crime. Would there be enough evidence to convict you? How can you act and behave today so that anyone could know you were a member of the Scouting movement, even when you're not in uniform?

Bible reading:

Luke 4:16-21 or Isaiah 61:1-3 or Qu'ran S.III:84

Prayer:

Lord, we want to be recognized as your followers. Make the things that we do, the words that we say, the thoughts that we think, acceptable in your sight. Amen.

A FRESH START

(To be used at mid-point of Jamboree/Camp)

Looking back:

At this point in the jamboree/Camp, what things stand out most in your memory? The highlights? The low points?

Getting a perspective:

Does everyone agree on which things have been best? Or worst? Was anything that was tough for you also good for someone else?

Focus Point:

This is the half-way point in the Jamboree/Camp. From here on, there's less time left than we had had. That can lead to feelings of desperation. Because you may feel you're going to miss out on something that matters to you. Or because others don't want to miss something else. Maybe you think they won't co-operate.

When there's a disagreement, it's never just one person's fault. When a relationship breaks down, there are two people involved. And if that relationship is to be repaired, both have to work at it. It's often easier to avoid someone than to explain to them how they've let you down. And if you're the one who has failed, or hurt them, it's always easier to avoid them than to admit it. Often, it's easier to hold a grudge than to forgive the other person and make a fresh start together.

Perhaps that has been happening here. One way to make sure it doesn't spoil our time here is for each one of us to take the first step. To try to work things out with the person you've offended, or who has offended you.

Another way is to look for something you can be grateful for in each person you meet. You're more likely to see good things in people if that's what you're looking for.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs, and duties.

Looking ahead:

Instead of talking, think privately about whom you may have offended during these days. Who have you been offended by? Try to get together with that person for a few minutes today, to make a start towards a better relationship. Try also to make a point of thanking people today.

Bible reading:

Psalm 32:1-7 or Luke 19:1-9 or Qu'ran S.VI:1-10.

Prayer:

Lord, help us realize that you care about us even though we let you down over and over again. In spite of our good intentions, we fail. We say we're sorry. We make promises, and break them. But you keep loving us anyway. Help us to reflect some of your caring to others around us. Amen.

A DAY OF WORSHIP AND REST

(For the appropriate day of worship for each faith)

Looking back:

What things did we do yesterday that were the same as the day before? Is there any pattern of activities developing?

Getting a perspective:

What day is today? Should it be the same as every other day?

Focus Point:

Long ago, long before there were electronic monitors that could measure people's mental or physical stress, people gradually learned from experience that there were certain rules of life. Because they believed that this was God's world, and that God was in charge of everything, they saw these rules as coming directly from God. It also encouraged them to obey the rules.

Some of those rules were pretty simple. If you go around killing others, or telling lies about them, or taking things that belong to them, or even if you spend your time wanting things that other people have, then obviously you're going to have a very unstable, unsafe, society.

They also learned that when people spend all their time working — often struggling to survive — they get short-tempered. Angry. Self-centred. That doesn't lead to a happy society either. So almost every civilization around the world has a tradition of taking a day off once a week. It's a day for a change of pace, a day when you don't do the same things you do all the rest of the week. In countries that are mainly Christian, that day is Sunday. (For Jewish people, it's Saturday; for Muslims, Friday.)

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

As well as a "Scout's Own" worship service, there are also regular activities going on all day. How can we worship God in those activities? Can we make this whole day a day of worship?

Bible reading:

Exodus 20:1-17 or Matthew 5:1-16 or Matthew 22:34-40

Prayer:

Lord, as we journey on through this Jamboree/Camp adventure, help us to find ways so that everything we do this day, each game we play or song we sing, may in some way be to your glory and not just our own. Amen.

OUR FUTURE WORLD

Looking Back:

How many different kinds of activities have we taken part in already? Are some of them things you've done before at other Scout events?

Getting a perspective:

What do you think of computers?

Focus Point:

For you, computers are new and exciting. But many people are frightened of them. They know that the world is changing because of computers. But they don't know what that new world will be like. So they're afraid.

Can you still remember your first day of school? You may have cried when your parent left you there, and you had to face a new and unfamiliar world alone.

One of the hardest things for people to face is change. Any people. Even adults. About 150 years ago, a group of people in England were so upset by the changes that new weaving machines were causing that they organized gangs and went around smashing the new machinery.

Some people feel that way about computers, though they don't go around smashing them.

Maybe there are some things about growing up that worry you. You may even be a little afraid of the changes that are going to come in your lives.

One of the important things about believing in God is that we know we aren't going into the future alone. No matter what the future holds, it's God's future too, and God will be with us.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

If God created the earth, did God create computers? How are computers part of God's world? How can God use them to help create a better world for everyone? Does the way that we use computers help or hinder God in creating a better world?

Bible reading:

Isaiah 43:18-21a or Revelations 21:1-5

Prayer:

Lord, it's comforting to know that we are not alone in this world, but that you share its pain and sorrow, its joy and energy. Protect us from thinking that you are limited to being on our side only; keep us aware that you accompany each one of us on our adventure of life. Amen.

CANADIAN UNIT & FRIENDSHIP

Looking back:

Who are the new people you've met at this Jamboree/Camp? Which provinces did they come from? Have we met some people from each of the Canadian provinces? Which provinces have we missed? Have we met any new Canadians, or Scout groups from other ethnic origins? Have we met any handicapped Scouts?

Getting a perspective:

Before coming here, did you think about meeting people from many different parts of this country, and many different backgrounds? Did you expect to like them? Now that you've met them, how do you feel about them?

Focus Point:

Friendship is a funny thing. It always comes unexpectedly. You never know when someone is going to be a friend, or how it will happen.

Some people make friends more easily than others. Part of the secret is that they are willing to take a risk. Often, we prefer clinging to old friends instead of making new ones. The risk comes in offering yourself to someone else as a friend — without knowing yet whether that person will accept you. If your friendship isn't accepted, you can be very deeply hurt.

Sometimes friends disagree. You can't always have things your way. Then you may have to give up something for the sake of your friend.

Friendships don't happen just between people. Our whole country is based on friendship. It's only when people from Atlantic to Pacific, from the U.S. border to the Arctic Islands, can work together as friends that we can overcome our differences and become a unified nation. When we make friends here at the Jamboree/Camp, we're helping in our own small way to make Canada a better country.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

Every day there are opportunities for meeting new people and making new friends. How can we turn some of the people we meet into friends? How do we get to know them better? How can we be more friendly towards others?

Bible reading:

Matthew 7:7-12 or Deuteronomy 6:1-15

Prayer:

Lord, as we go out into the world today, we may meet Scouts from many different parts of our country. We can shut them out of our lives, or we can welcome them into our lives as friends. Help us to make the right choice. Amen.

WATER ACTIVITIES

(For any day on which water sports may be a major activity)

Looking back:

How many of the things we've done have involved running? Climbing? Walking? Sitting? (Note — these are all land-based activities.)

Getting a perspective:

Are you looking forward to our water activities? What's so special about water?

Focus Point:

One of the reasons that water is special is that it's a symbol. Do you know what a symbol is? A symbol is a very ordinary thing that reminds us about a lot of other extraordinary things.

Water isn't just water. It's also what keeps us alive. Without water, we'd have no green plants, just desert. We have to drink water or we die of thirst.

Water helps us keep clean. It lets us wash away germs and dirt that could harm us.

Water is like coming home. All of us, before we were born, lived entirely in water, when we were in our mother's womb. Maybe water was also our universal home. The theory of Evolution says that all life (or which we are a part) began in the oceans, then spread to land. The first chapter of Genesis in the Bible also says God created life in the oceans first, and then created the land creatures.

Our bodies are about 80% water.

But though water gives us life, it can also take away life. Many people drown in water every year. So it reminds us of death, too. Symbols often have two sides like that.

That's why many religions use water in their rituals. Christian ministers, for example, use water when they baptize people. The water is a symbol of being made clean and new, and of making a new beginning in a new way of life.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

In what ways did we become new people when we took the Scout promise? How might we remind ourselves of our new lives as members of the Scouting movement today? (Each time we fall into the water, perhaps?)

Bible reading:

Genesis 1:1-2, 20-27

Prayer:

Lord, we have a special opportunity today. Help us, as we have fun and enjoy ourselves, also to be constantly reminded that you have the ability to transform us, to re-make us as a new creation closer to your own image. Amen.

LAND ACTIVITIES DAY

Looking back:

Are you getting used to sleeping on the ground?

Getting a perspective:

If you were God, would you have made the ground hard or soft? If the answer is “hard”: What would that be like to plant seeds in, or for worms and moles to dig in? If “soft”: What would that be like to run on, or to ride a bicycle across?

Focus Point:

We human beings have tried to be like God in dealing with the earth. And we haven't been very successful.

We've made the earth harder. We've paved it for parking lots and highways, and we've put up houses and cities on it. Then we find that we're running short of good farmland to grow our food on.

We've tried to make it soft by ploughing it, and then the rain washes a lot of our topsoil into the streams, or the wind blows the topsoil off as fine dust.

We've killed off many of God's creatures with pesticides and poisons, and we've tried to make the earth grow more by loading it with fertilizers. But we're finding that managing the earth is much more complicated than we thought. Playing God isn't easy.

We haven't realized what a wonderful gift God gave us, in the earth. But we have to remember that it wasn't given just to us. It's also for future generations. We need to pass it on to others, in good shape. That means being careful about pollution and industry. It means thinking about how each one of us is affecting the earth when we throw away candy wrappers or trample down the grass (other examples from observation may also apply). God gave us the earth to look after, not to destroy.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

What are you standing on? What will you stand/walk/run on all day? How much do we depend on the earth? How can we help to look after the earth today?

Bible reading:

Psalm 24:1-6

Prayer:

Blessed are you, Lord God, creator of the universe, who brings forth good things from the earth. We thank you for the gift you have given us, in a complex earth that we could not do without. Help us, in all we do, to care for it, and to make sure that the world we pass on to others is as good or better than the one we received. Amen.

THE CITY

Looking back:

Instead of considering the kinds of things that have been done, encourage the Scouts to think about locations. Where have they spent their time during the Jamboree/Camp? Land? Water? What parts of the Jamboree/Camp area? On fields? In woods? In crowds? Off by themselves?

Getting a perspective:

Is all Canada like this Jamboree/Camp site? How is this place typical of our country as a whole? How is it different?

Focus Point:

More than half of all Canadians live in cities. And as the cities keep growing, fewer people live in rural areas. Some people love cities. Others hate cities, because they are so unlike the natural world that God created.

Have you ever made sand castles at a beach? In a way, cities are like those sand castles. God created the beach and the water; people created the sand castles. In the same way, people created cities in God's world.

In Biblical times, the most famous city was Jerusalem. In later years, when people moved to new countries to settle, they sometimes talked about a "New Jerusalem" — their vision of creating a place that would be more like the kind of world God wanted.

You can tell a lot about what matters to people by the way they build their cities. The kind of city they built gives us clues to what they believed in.

We aren't cities. We're people. But in the same way, the kinds of things that we do, the way we treat others, give clues to what each of us believes in.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

In the various experiences we'll have today, how can we demonstrate to people that we take our Scouting promise and law seriously? How might others see that we "love and serve God, our Queen, and our country?" What kind of clues might we be giving when we think no one is watching?

Bible reading:

Psalm 19:7-14

Prayer:

Lord, help us to realize that in doing your will, in obeying the laws for living that you give us, some of your qualities rub off on us. In doing your will, we become more like you. Help us to be your representatives today, to all we meet. Amen.

TAKING RISKS

Looking back:

During this Jamboree/Camp, what other countries did you encounter? How many names of Scouts from other countries can you remember, without looking them up in your notes?

Getting a perspective:

Do you have trouble remembering names and faces? Why do you feel closer to some of the people you met than others?

Focus Point:

One of the greatest friendships of all time was between two unlikely people. David — the boy who fought the giant Goliath — was a servant in the King's court. Johnathan was a prince, the King's son. The King, Saul, had spells of madness at times, and tried to kill David.

On one of these times, it was Johnathan, the prince, who sent a secret message to David, warning him. He saved David's life. For Johnathan, that was a huge sacrifice. Because David had to escape, and stay away, Johnathan lost his friend. And because of the strange ways that history sometimes works, Johnathan also lost his throne. It was David, not Johnathan, who was chosen to be the next king. Sometimes we never know what the effects of friendship will be.

Some friendships last, some fade away. The difference seems to be how much commitment each of us is willing to put into the friendship.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

What things can we do today, and in the rest of Jamboree/Camp to strengthen friendships that have been started? How do we keep in touch with these new friends?

Bible reading:

I Samuel 20:12-16 (for the whole story, you will need to read Chapters 19 and 20) or James 3:13-17 or Qu'ran S.XXX:17-27.

Prayer:

Lord, these days at this Jamboree/Camp bring us closer together with people from all over your earth. Give us the courage to make friends among them, never knowing where that friendship may lead us, but sure that whatever comes, if you are part of it, it will be good. Amen.

MAKING HISTORY

Looking back:

What things stand out as especially enjoyable because you did them with others? Working closely with other people? A team sport or activity?

Getting a perspective:

What happens in a team or group activity if one person quits trying? How does it change the whole group?

Focus Point:

Some things in life can be done by one person, working alone. But most of our lives, we work together with others. We do things co-operatively.

That means that everyone is making a contribution. Everyone counts. Whether it's this group, or Canada as a nation, or the whole of civilization.

We sometimes think that history is what happened to other people. To Julius Caesar or Napoleon or someone who was famous and powerful. To Jesus in the Bible, or to Lord Baden-Powell in Africa. It was all long ago.

But not to us. We're not important enough to be part of history, we think.

Yet history is going on all the time, and each one of us is helping to write it, because it depends on what each one of us does. Years from now, people will look back at Scouting in the 1980s or 1990s, and will see what happened here as part of that history. They'll look at what we helped to shape, by being here, by taking part.

History is a continuing story. Each one of us is part of it.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

If someone were writing a story about you, what kind of person would you want others to read about? What qualities would you have? What can you do today to show people those qualities?

Bible reading:

Psalm 24 or Luke 12:27-31 or Qu'ran S.III:189-200

Prayer:

Lord, the oldest story in the world is the story of the world itself — your world. Thank you for trusting us to be part of that story. You took a risk, and we will try not to let you down. As part of the Scouting movement, we will try to make sure that the world we pass on to others is as good or better than the world we received. Amen.

THE FINAL KICK

Looking back:

Overall, has this been a good time? How do these last few days compare with the first days? Are you sorry there's only a little time left?

Getting a perspective:

Does the shortness of time make it seem hardly worthwhile making an effort any more? Or does it make things even more worthwhile?

Focus Point:

There isn't much time left at the Jamboree/Camp. Things are starting to wind down for us.

Many people feel that way about life. They've passed their best. They start to feel old and tired.

Other people aren't old, but they don't see much hope in the future either. Unemployment. Inflation. That's all. So they give up and quit trying. And there are some people who think the world is going to end in a nuclear disaster anyway, so why bother trying? So they don't — and things get worse, just the way they thought they would.

How about us? We could start turning off about now. We could quit trying, and go home feeling disappointed in the final days of the Jamboree/Camp.

Or, like a runner coming to the end of a race, we can come up with some extra effort. We can get a second wind, with a final kick to the finish line.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

What is needed to keep enthusiasm high? A special activity? Some kind of celebration? (Caution to leaders: be prepared for anything. Boys may want to capture a bear or climb a mountain! But if it can be done, and done safely, whether or not it's on the official program, do your best to help it happen.)

Bible reading:

Psalms 103, verses 8-17 or I Corinthians 15:50-58 or Qu'ran S.VI:95-99

Prayer:

Lord, we've only got a short time, and then this Jamboree/Camp is over. As we try to plan for these final hours, give us the courage to change those things that can be changed, the patience to accept the things that can't be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

NAMING EXPERIENCES

Looking back:

Ask each person about the one most important thing that has happened during this Jamboree/Camp so far.

Getting a perspective:

What was it, about that incident, that made it important? What did people learn from it? What difference will it make to their lives?

Focus Point:

The Law of Gravity existed before an apple dropped on Sir Isaac Newton's head, and startled him into thinking about why objects like apples fell towards the earth, instead of flying off into space. What made Isaac Newton a great scientist was that he recognized something going on, and was able to name it.

In the ancient story of Adam and Eve, Adam named the animals that appeared before him. After that, they could be identified. In the same way, we have learned to identify some birds and animals here, by giving them names. People were just faces to us, until we learned how to put a name to them, to identify them again.

It's important to do the same for our experiences. We need to identify "teamwork" as the key to success in games; or "careful caution" as the key to climbing cliffs. When we can name whatever it was that made the experience special, then it is fixed in our memory. It won't slip away from us, and be ignored or forgotten.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties.

Looking ahead:

Now and then during the day, stop for a moment's reflection, to think about what quality — like co-operation, togetherness, or individual initiative — is special about this activity? What are we learning from it?

Bible reading:

Genesis 2:15-20a or Matthew 13:13-19 or Qu'ran S.LVII:20-24

Prayer:

Creator God, you have given each one of us names, which make us individuals. Help us to follow your example of creativity by encouraging us to identify and remember our learnings in these special days. Amen.

DEPARTURE

Looking back:

Without going into detail on any one incident, try naming or listing all the different things you have done, or the people you have met, at this Jamboree/Camp.

Getting a perspective:

Are you surprised at how much has happened? With so much that has gone on, how do you feel about heading home?

Focus Point:

When we arrived, all of this was new and strange. Now it's familiar, and we're feeling sorry to leave it. Although at the beginning we were nervous and uncertain, we've gained a lot of strength from each other over this time. We've worked together, laughed together, maybe suffered a little together. When we break up and go home, it's going to seem strange to be alone again.

One thing we should have learned is that we can trust each other. In this camp, we've lived in tents that can't be locked. We've lived close to thousands of people we never met before. Yet there's been very little theft or damage or violence.

Partly that's because we are all in Scouting, and Scouts are expected to be trustworthy. But it's also because we took the risk of trusting them. If you expect to be cheated, you probably will be. But if you are willing to trust people, as we all have at this camp, the chances are you'll find many more whom you can depend on.

Today's agenda:

Activities, events, programs and duties. This may include departure schedules, travel suggestions, etc.

Looking ahead:

Think of some of the people you'll have to depend on before you reach home again — from bus drivers you can see, to airline mechanics you can't. How many of them can you check up on before you trust them? Are you yourself as dependable as you expect others to be — like all the people you will be trusting with your life?

Bible reading:

Psalm 121 or Acts 1:8-9 or Qu'ran S.XLI:30-36

Prayer:

Lord, in all the things that are going to be happening, in all the rush of last minute activities, help us not to forget about you or to doubt you. Be with us, even when our minds are on other things. Amen.

DISASTER DAY

(For optional use, when things go badly)

Looking back:

Take extra time for this. Talk about what people felt like when the lightning struck, or the tent fell down....Reliving some of the problems can make them less frightening. Often, they turn into things to laugh about.

Focus Point:

Sometimes it's only when things go wrong that we start to learn. When everything's going well, you can just coast along. Why bother learning, when you're doing all right as it is?

But when things go wrong, you realize how much more there is to know. You realize how much better things could be. You've got something to aim for.

The Scout motto is "Be Prepared." In these last few hours, we've realized that we could have been better prepared than we are.

Today's agenda:

Forget about today's agenda until the past has been talked out, and people are ready to move on into new activities.

Looking ahead:

What has this experience shown you that you need to know? About camping? About your skills? About yourself? Are there courses or programs that could teach you these things? Can you start to plan now for such a course?

Bible reading:

Psalm 46

Prayer:

Lord, it was rough while it lasted, but we thank you for this experience anyway. We have come out of it stronger and wiser than we were. We have learned that there is strength in depending on each other; we know better what we need to learn. We thank you for being with us, and supporting us in our time of need. Amen.

TABLE GRACES

Having a Grace at meals is another way, like the daily **Focus Breaks**, of making connections between ordinary events and God.

These pages suggest two kinds of graces — verbal and ritual. You may choose to use one or the other, or possibly both. Some of the suggestions for rituals may seem silly, but the important thing is to have some regular act that marks the start of every meal, and that helps define the group uniquely before God. Each verbal grace is a suggestion only. They may be adapted or changed; they can be read or put into your own words; they can be given by a boy or a leader. The main thing, with boys, is to keep them short and to the point.

Dear God, for (names of boys) who prepared this meal for us, for all whose work enabled us to receive this food today, and for the good earth that grew it, we are grateful. Amen.

Our Father, we have expended energy together today in our activities. We're glad now to be together as we renew our energy and our fellowship. Amen.

Lord, there's a time for everything — to do things, and to relax, a time to put out effort and a time to take in food, a time to challenge ourselves and a time to grow comfortable together. Let us enjoy this time while we eat. Amen.

Jesus, here's a new day, a new set of opportunities. Before we launch into the excitement of this day, let us share in peace and companionship this meal together. Amen.

Creator God, we realize that from the height of these mountains to the breadth of this valley, all creation is one, and is yours. Let us all be thankful that we are part of that creation. Amen.

Heavenly Father, our lives are filled with good things, so that our strength and spirit is renewed like the soaring of an eagle. Keep our spirits high, lifted up by the fellowship in which we share this meal. Amen.

Rituals

At the start of each meal, pass around a slice of bread or a bun. Have each boy break off a piece and eat it. Explain that this act is symbolic of Christian communion, and also of the equality of all people who need food to live.

For similar reasons, you could start every meal by having everyone simultaneously drink from their own cups. Make it a rule that no meal starts without this act which is done by everyone at once. No words are needed.

Before starting to eat, have everyone reach into the middle of the table for a mass handshake or handclasp. Remember to use your left hands!

Extend a Scout staff the length of the table, and have every boy reach out (with the left hand, of course) to clasp it for five seconds.

FLAG CEREMONIES

In the mornings:

(With Scouts and Venturers at the alert, the flag ready for raising/breaking)

A new day begins. Let's speak to God who gives us this day, and ask God's blessing and help.

Prayer: *(See the prayers below; prayers may be read by leader or boy)*

(Period of silence and meditation)

Announcements, as necessary.

In the evenings:

Day is done. Evening falls. Let us be silent, and think about what we have done today.

(Period of silence and meditation)

(Lower the flag)

Prayer: *(See the prayers below, for each day)*

Announcements, if necessary.

MORNING PRAYERS

1. At the start of this day, we come before you, Father. Help us to live as members of the Scouting Movement, thinking those thoughts and doing those things that come from our prayer and promise. Help us to dedicate to you, O God, our work. We ask you to forgive our shortcomings as we forgive the shortcomings of others. Amen.

2. God bless our brothers in Scouting, especially those gathered in this place. We live among your people as those who are willing to serve. Make us sensitive to the needs of others and give us sufficient courage and wisdom to act with love and compassion each day of our lives. Amen.

3. Father, thanks for the past night and for all the joys of the morning. Be present with us throughout this day. Help us to participate in all events well. Keep from us all that is evil. Make courage, loyalty, happiness and good comradeship flourish among us always, and help each of us to think of the others' good. Amen.

4. Almighty God, who spreads the heavens as a tent to live in, look on your sons who start a new day. Drive out of this Jamboree/Camp all things that offend, and unite us in service towards one another, that this day may be well spent in friendship and happiness. Amen.

EVENING PRAYERS

1. As the quiet splendour of the day dies away with all its joys and sorrows, we wait for the shining light that never fades. Call us from our distractions and gather us into the quiet of your love. Meet with us, O Lord for we seek your face. Amen.

2. Forgive us, heavenly Father, whatever we have done wrong today, that we who sleep beneath the stars may sleep in peace. Guard all who are at this Jamboree/Camp. Defend us from all the dangers of the night. Amen.

3. Now, O God, give us a quiet mind after a busy day, as we lie down to rest. Dwell in our thoughts until sleep overtakes us, so we may awake refreshed and ready for the tasks of a new day, in a better way than we did today. Amen.

4. O God draw near and stay with us for evening is near and the day is dying away. May we recognize your presence with us now. Amen.

FOCUS BREAK

5. Into your hands we commend ourselves, O God. Give each of us a watchful spirit that we may do your will perfectly and gladly — to the honour and glory of your name. Amen.

6. At the start of a new day with our brothers/sisters in Scouting, help us to remember our promise and prayer to love you, O God, and love our brothers as ourselves. Help us to play our part in the events that take place and enjoy all that we do. If today we hurt anyone, help us to put things right before this evening. Amen.

7. Father we thank you for all your gifts of this new morning; for your gifts of sleep, health, strength, for your vision of a new day with its fresh opportunities for work and service. Strengthen us so that in all our work we may be faithful in our fun, thoughtful of others in times of trouble, blessed with a true Scouting spirit. Amen.

8. O God, support us all day long, until the shadows lengthen, evening comes, the busy world is hushed, and our work and fun are done. Then in your love and mercy give us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace. Amen.

9. Help us, O God, to remember that each day — whether here, in passage or at home — is a gift from you. May we use each day for your glory and for the love and enjoyment of all we meet. Amen.

10. Loving Father, our eternal Guide, may we never forget or dishonour you this day; but in all places and in all occupations, may we remember your presence and cherish your love. Amen.

5. O God, by making the evening follow the day, you bestowed on us the gift of rest for our human weakness. Grant us, O God, goodness, with our brothers (and sisters) in Scouting, we may trust and thank you for these great gifts. Amen.

6. O God, in the quiet of the evening, after a busy day, come into our hearts as we lie down to rest. Help us to know we are not alone, but that you are with us. Remove all our worries and fears and help us to sleep in peace. Amen.

7. Give us O God, your peace this night and watch over us until the morning comes. Then may we be endowed with vigour of body, alertness of mind and strength of spirit to give you true obedience for your name's sake. Amen.

8. Lighten our darkness O God, and by your mercy and love keep us safe from all perils and dangers of this night. Amen.

9. Save us, O God, waking; guard us sleeping that awake we may watch with you and asleep, we may rest in peace. Amen.

10. Father, thanks for the good things of today. Guard us and all we love tonight. Preserve us from all dangers. Give us quiet and refreshing sleep and awake us tomorrow, strong to do your will and to enjoy another day of your gift of life. Amen.