



Board of Review Guidelines

The purpose of a Board of Review is to determine the quality of the Scout's experience and decide whether the requirements for the rank have been fulfilled. If so, the board not only approves the Scout's advancement but also provides encouragement to continue the quest for the next rank. Boards of Review shall become neither a retest or "examination," nor a challenge of the Scout's knowledge. In most cases it should, instead, be a celebration of accomplishment.

Scouts can sometimes lose focus or interest in weekly or monthly troop activities. Boards of Review for each rank should include information and encouragement on older youth programs such as the Order of the Arrow, Venturing, Sea Scouts, and Exploring. These programs should not be thought of as a threat to the functioning of the troop, but as other opportunities to remain involved in Scouting.

Remember, it is more about the journey. A badge recognizes what a Scout has done toward achieving the primary goal of personal growth.

Workings of a Board of Review

- The board is made up of three to six unit committee members—no more and no less. A Board of Review should take from 15 to 30 minutes, with shorter time for lower ranks.
 1. The Chairperson of the board greets the Scout and introduces him to the board members.
 2. The chairman of the board should ask the Scout to recite one or more of the following:
Scout Motto, Scout Slogan, Scout Law, Scout Oath, Outdoor Code

For Tenderfoot and Second Class ranks, typically just the Scout Oath and Law are asked. For higher ranks, more should be expected. One or two re-tries are appropriate, especially for younger Scouts.

The board members ask appropriate questions of the Scout. Open-ended questions are better, allowing the Scout to speak about his opinions, experiences, activities, and accomplishments.

If an answer is too brief, a good tool is to follow with a "Why?" or "How?" type question to prompt for more details. Questions regarding home, church, school, work, athletics, etc. are all appropriate, as well as scouting experiences.

During the review, board members may refer to the *Scouts BSA Handbook*, *Scouts BSA Requirements* book, *Troop Leader Guidebook*, *Guide to Advancement*, and other such references. Board members may ask where skills were learned by the Scout, who the Scout's teachers were, and what was gained from fulfilling selected requirements. Discussion of how the Scout has lived the Scout Oath and Scout Law at home, at school, in the unit, and in the community should be included. Remember, we do not insist on perfection. A positive attitude is most important, and that a youth accepts Scouting's ideals and sets and meets good standards in daily life.

3. When all board members have asked their questions, the Scout is asked to leave the room. The board members then decide if the Scout is ready for the next rank; the board's decision must be unanimous.
4. The Scout is asked back into the room and the Chairperson informs the Scout of the board's decision. When the Scout is approved for the next rank, there are general congratulations, and the Scout is encouraged to continue advancing.

If there are issues which prevent the Scout from advancing, the board must detail the deficiencies so the Scout can correct them. The Scout must be told specifically what must be done in order to be successful at the next Board of Review. The Chairperson sends a written follow up to both the Scout and the Scoutmaster, regarding the deficiencies and the course of action needed to correct them.

A Board of Review for Eagle is similar to other Boards of Review, except that it lasts longer with more questioning and discussion.. The Eagle Scout Rank application, Letters of Recommendation, and Eagle Project notebook are reviewed by the board. Questions can include asking about these documents as well as areas used in lower rank reviews.

Questioning

The following sections contain typical Board of Review questions for each rank. The questions for the lower ranks tend to deal with factual information about the Scout's participation in his troop, and his approach to applying the skills he has learned toward earning the next rank. The questions for the higher ranks explore how Scouting is becoming an integral part of the Scout's life. Questions like, "Where did you learn about ..." or "Why do you think it is important for a [rank] Scout to have this skill?" are valid, but don't retest skills.

Eagle Palms

Eagle Palms are awarded for continued leadership and skills development (merit badges) after the Eagle Rank has been earned. The purpose of this Board of Review is to ensure that the Eagle Scout remains active within the unit, contributes to the leadership of the unit, and assists with the growth of the other Scouts within the unit.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 15 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. As an Eagle, have the Scout Oath and Law gained new meaning for you? How?
2. Why is it important to developing and identify leadership? How do you do this?
3. Since earning your Eagle, what merit badges have you earned?
4. Since earning your Eagle (last Palm), in what service projects have you participated?
5. How do you plan to continue your involvement with Scouting?
6. What would you say to a Life Scout who is only minimally active within his unit, and who does not seem motivated to continue along the Scouting Trail?
7. If a Life Scout was having difficulty selecting an Eagle Service Project, what would you suggest to him?
8. What is the primary role of the Scoutmaster?
9. How have you begun to "... give back to Scouting more than Scouting has given to you".
10. in what year was the first World Jamboree held? [Answer: 1920]

Tenderfoot Rank

This is the Scout's first experience with a Board of Review. The process may require some explanation on the part of the Board of Review Chairperson.

The first few questions in the Board of Review should be simple. The Board of Review should try to gain a sense of how the Scout is fitting in to the Troop, and the Scout's level of enjoyment of the Troop and Patrol activities.

Encourage advancement to 2nd Class. Point out that the Scout may have already completed many of the requirements for 2nd Class.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 15-20 minutes.

Sample Tenderfoot Questions:

1. When did you join our Troop?
2. How many Troop meetings have you attended in the last two months?
3. What did you do at your last patrol meeting?
4. Tell us about your last Troop campout.
5. How would the first aid skills you must know for Tenderfoot help on a campout?
6. Where did you learn how to fold the American flag? Tell us about your first experience with this skill.
7. How would you avoid poison oak (poison ivy, sumac)?
8. Where did you go on your hike? How did you choose the location?
9. If you were on a hike and got lost, what would you do?
10. Why do we whip or fuse the ends of a rope?
11. What is the "Buddy System" that we use in Scouting? When do we use it?
12. Why do you think there are physical fitness requirements (push-ups, pull-ups, etc.), and a retest after 30 days, for the Tenderfoot rank?
13. What does it mean to a Tenderfoot Scout to "Be Prepared"?
14. Do you feel that you have done your best to complete the requirements for Tenderfoot? Why?
15. What "good turn" have you done today?
16. Please give us an example of how you obey the Scout Law at home (school, church)?
17. What do you like best about our Troop?
18. What does it mean for a Scout to be "Wind"?
19. Do you have any special plans for this summer? The Holidays?
20. When do you plan to have the requirements completed for 2nd Class?

1st Class Rank

By this point the Scout should be comfortable with the Board of Review process.

The Scout should be praised for his accomplishment in achieving 1st Class (particularly if they joined Boy Scouts less than a year ago). In achieving the rank of 1st Class, the Scout should feel an additional sense of responsibility to the troop and to his patrol.

Theist Class rank will produce additional opportunities for the Scout (Order of the Arrow, leadership, etc.).

Merit badges will begin to play a role in future advancement to the Star and Life ranks.

Encourage merit badge work if it has not already begun.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 20 minutes.

Sample 1st Class Questions:

1. On average, how many Troop meetings do you attend each month? What part of Troop meetings are most rewarding to you?
2. What is the Scout Slogan? What does it mean for a 1st Class Scout?
3. Tell us about your last campout with the Troop. Where did you go? How did you help with meal preparation? Did you have a good time? (If "No", why not?)
4. If you were in charge of planning and preparing a dinner for your next campout, what would you select? As a 1st Class Scout, what do you think the Star, Life, and Eagle Scouts will expect from you on an Outing?
5. Does your family do any camping? What have you learned in Scouts, that you have been able to share with your family to improve their camping experiences?
6. Why do you think that swimming is emphasized in Scouting?
7. Why is it important for you to know how to transport a person who has a broken leg?
8. Why is it important for you to be able to recognize local plant life?
9. What did you learn about using a compass while completing the orienteering requirement?
10. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Courteous"?
11. Why are merit badges a part of Scouting?
12. How frequently do you attend religious services? Does your whole family attend?
13. What Is your most favorite part of Scouting? Least favorite?
14. How does a Scout fulfill his "Duty to Country"?
15. How do you define "Scout Spirit"?
16. What is the Order of the Arrow? What is the primary function of OA?
17. Who was Lord Baden-Powell?
18. When do you think you might be ready for Star Scout?

2nd Class Rank

This is the Scout's second Board of Review. The process should be familiar, unless it has been some time since the Board of Review for Tenderfoot.

Questions should focus on the use of the Scout skills learned for this rank, without retesting these skills. The Board of Review should try to perceive how the Scout's patrol is functioning, and how this Scout is functioning within his patrol.

Encourage work on the remaining requirements for 1st Class; many of the easier ones may have already been completed.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 15-20 minutes.

Sample 2nd Class Questions:

1. How many patrol meetings have you attended in the last 3 months?
2. What did your patrol do at its last meeting?
3. Tell us about a service project in which you participated.
4. Where did you go on your last Troop campout? Did you have a good time? Why?
5. Why is it important to be able to identify animals found in your community?
6. Tell us about the flag ceremony in which you participated.
7. What is in your personal first aid kit?
8. What have you learned about handling wood tools (axes, saws, etc.)?
9. How are a map of the area and a compass useful on a campout?
10. Have you ever done more than one "good turn" in a day? Ask for details.
11. Have you earned any merit badges?
If Yes: Which ones? Why did you choose them? Who was your counselor?
If No: Encourage getting started, and suggest one or two of the easier ones.
12. Did you attend summer camp with our Troop last summer?
If Yes: What was your best (worst) experience at summer camp?
If No: Why not?
13. Do you plan to attend summer camp with our Troop next year?
If "Yes": What are you looking forward to doing at summer camp?
If "No": Why not?
14. What suggestions do you have for improving our Troop?
15. How do you help out at home, church, school?
16. What class in school is most challenging for you? Why?
17. One of the requirements for Second Class is to participate in a program regarding drug, alcohol, tobacco abuse. Tell us about the program in which you participated.
18. How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
19. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Trustworthy"?
20. When do you expect to complete the requirements for 1st Class?

Star Rank

With the Star rank, emphasis is placed upon service to others, merit badges, and leadership. Scout skills remain an important element for the Star Scout; however, the emphasis should be on teaching other Scouts these skills.

Explore how the Star scout can assist with leading his patrol and troop. Attempt to understand how the Scouting philosophy is becoming part of the Scout's life.

Often the Star rank is a place where Scouts "stall out". Encourage the Scout to remain active, and participate fully in his patrol and troop. If the Scout appears to be looking for additional opportunities, suggest leadership positions such as Den Chief or Troop Guide.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 20 minutes.

Sample Star Questions:

1. How many Troup outings have you attended in the last three months?
2. Tell us about the last service project in which you participated.
3. What does it mean for a Star Scout to "Be Prepared" on a daily basis?
4. How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
5. How many merit badges have you earned? What was the most difficult (fun, challenging, expensive, etc.)?
6. Which is more important Becoming a Star Scout, or learning the skills prescribed for a Star Scout?
7. Why do you think a Scoutmaster's Conference is required for advancement in rank?
8. What is the most important part of a Troop Court of Honor? Why?
9. What leadership positions have you held outside of your patrol? What challenges did they present? What are your personal leadership goals and objectives?
10. How would you get a Scout to do an unpleasant task?
11. What extracurricular activities do you participate in at school?
12. What responsibilities do you have at home?
13. What is our "Duty to God"?
14. What does it mean to say "A Scout is Loyal"?
15. How are the Scout Oath and Law part of your daily life?
16. What is the Outdoor Code? Why is it important?
17. If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow:
When did you complete your "Ordeal", "Brotherhood"?
What does membership in the OA signify?
18. Have you received any special awards or accomplishments in school, athletics, or church?
19. Baden-Powell's first Scout outing was located on an island off the coast of Great Britain; what was the name of that island? [Answer: Brownsea Island]
20. When do you plan on achieving the Life rank?

Life Rank

The Life rank is the final rank before Eagle. The Life Scout should be fully participating in the Troop, with emphasis being placed on leadership in the unit, as well as teaching skills and leadership to the younger Scouts. Merit Badge work should be a regular part of the Scout's career. Scouting values and concepts should be an integral part of the Scout's daily life. At this point, the Scout is starting to "give back to Scouting" through leadership, training of other Scouts, recruiting, keeping Scouts active in the program, etc. Explore suggestions for improving the program.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 20 - 30 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. What is the most ambitious pioneering project with which you have assisted? Where?
2. What has been your worst camping experience in Scouting?
3. How many patrol meetings has your patrol held in the last three months? How many of them have you attended?
4. Have any of the merit badges you have earned lead to hobbies or possible careers?
5. What are your hobbies?
6. Of the merit badges you have earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult? Why?
7. Why do you think that the three "Citizenship" merit badges are required for the Eagle Rank?
8. What is your current (most recent) leadership position within the Troop? How long have you held that position? What particular challenges does it present? What is Leadership?
9. Do you have any brothers or sisters who are in Scouts (any level)? What can you do to encourage them to continue with Scouts, and to move forward along the Scouting Trail?
10. How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
11. Why do you think that Star and Life Scouts are required to contribute so much time to service projects? What service projects are most rewarding to you? Why?
12. Why do you think that a Board of Review is required for rank advancement?
13. How has Scouting prepared you for the future?
14. What does it mean to say, "A Scout is Reverent"?
15. What does "Scout Spirit" mean to a Life Scout?
16. Why do you think that Scouting for Food is referred to as a "National Good Turn".
17. The Scout Oath refers to "Duty to Self"; what duty do we have to ourselves?
18. If the Scout is a member of OA:
What role does OA play in Scouting?
What honor do you hold in OA?
What is the difference between Scout "ranks" and OA "honors"?
19. In what year was Boy Scouts of America founded?
[Answer: February 8, 1910 - BSA Birthday]
20. Have you begun to think about an Eagle Service Project? What are you thinking about doing?
When?

Eagle Rank

The Board of Review for the Eagle Rank is different from the other Boards of Review in which the Scout has participated. The members of the Board of Review are not all from his Troop Committee. Introductions are essential, and a few "break in" questions may be appropriate. At this point, the goal is to understand the Scout's full Scouting experience, and how others can have similar meaningful Scouting experiences. Scouting principles and goals should be central to the Scout's life; look for evidence of this. Although this is the final rank, this is not the end of the Scouting trail; "Once an Eagle, always an Eagle". Explore how this Eagle Scout will continue with Scouting activities, and continued service to his home, church, and community.

The approximate time for this Board of Review should be 30 - 50 minutes.

Sample Questions:

1. What would you suggest adding to the Scout Law (a thirteenth point)? Why?
2. What one point could be removed from the Scout Law? Why?
3. Why is it important to learn how to tie knots, and lash together poles and logs?
4. What is the difference between a "Hollywood hero" and a real hero?
5. Can you give me an example of someone who is a hero to you? (A real person)
6. Why do you think that the Family Life MB was recently added to the list of required MBs?
7. What camping experience have you had, that you wish every Scout could have?
8. Have you been to Philmont/National Jamboree? What was your most memorable experience?
9. What is the role of the Senior Patrol Leader at a troop meeting (campout, summer camp)?
10. If you could change one thing to improve Scouting, what would you change?
11. What do you believe our society expects from an Eagle Scout?
12. The charge to the Eagle requires that you give back to Scouting more than Scouting has given to you. How do you propose to do that?
13. As an Eagle Scout, what can you personally do to improve your unit?
14. What will you be doing in your unit, after receiving your Eagle Rank?
15. Tell us how you selected your Eagle Service Project (ESP).
16. From your ESP, what did you learn about managing/leading people? What are the qualities of a good leader?
17. What part of your Eagle Service Project was the most challenging? Why?
18. If you were to manage another project similar to your Eagle Service Project, what would you do differently to make the project better or easier?
19. What are your future plans (high school, college, trade school, military, career, etc.)?
20. Tell us about your family (parents, siblings, etc.). How do you help out at home?
21. What do you think is the single biggest issue facing Scouting in the future?
22. How do your friends outside of Scouting react when they learn that you are a Boy Scout
How do you think they will react when they learn that you have become an Eagle Scout?
23. Why do you think that belief in God (a supreme being) is part of the Scouting requirements?
24. How do you know when a Scout is "active" in his unit?
25. You have been in Scouting for many years, sum up your experiences in one word. Why?
26. What one thing have you gained from your Scoutmaster's conferences over the years?
27. How does an Eagle Scout continue to show Scout Spirit?
28. If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow: What does OA membership mean to you?
How does OA help Scouting and your unit?
29. Who brought Scouting from England to the United States? [Answer. William D. Boyce]
30. Traditional last questions; Why should this Board of Review approve your request for the Eagle Rank? or Why should you be an Eagle Scout?