



Journalism

Merit Badge Workbook

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

The work space provided for each requirement should be used by the Scout to make notes for discussing the item with his counselor, not for providing the full and complete answers. Each Scout must do each requirement.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in **Boy Scout Requirements** (Pub. 33216 – SKU 34765).

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2007 • This workbook was updated in April 2012.

Scout's Name: _____ Unit: _____

Counselor's Name: _____ Counselor's Phone No.: _____

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

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about improving this workbook to: Workbooks@USScouts.org

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

Freedom of the press _____

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

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

Fact: _____

Opinion: _____

Libel: _____

Slander: _____

Defamation: _____

Fair comment and criticism: _____

Public figure: _____

Privacy: _____

Malice: _____

Discuss how these matters relate to ethics in journalism. _____

2. Do either A OR B:

a. Newspaper and magazine journalism:

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

Story _____

Local newspaper _____

How Long? _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

National newspaper _____

How Long? _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

Newsmagazine _____

How Long? _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

Online news source _____

How Long? _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

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

Management’s relations with reporters, editors, and photographers _____

What makes a “good” newspaper or magazine. _____

b. Radio and television journalism:

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

Story _____

Local newscast: _____

News items & features: _____

Elements Used: _____

Time given: _____

Compare story lists: _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

National Network Newscast _____

News items & features: _____

Elements Used: _____

Time given: _____

Compare story lists: _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

Radio Newscast _____

News items & features: _____

Elements Used: _____

Time given: _____

Compare story lists: _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

Online news source _____

News items & features: _____

Elements Used: _____

Space given: _____

Compare story lists: _____

How Fair & Accurate? _____

Difference in handling? _____

Purpose or audience? _____

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

How management and the news staff work together: _____

What makes a "good" station: _____

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

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

A hard news story _____

Important excerpts from the [‘Guide To Advancement’](#), No. 33088:

Effective January 1, 2012, the ‘Guide to Advancement’ (which replaced the publication ‘Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures’) is now the *official* Boy Scouts of America source on advancement policies and procedures.

- **[Inside front cover, and 5.0.1.4] — Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program**
No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements.
(There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with disabilities. For details see section 10, “Advancement for Members With Special Needs”.)
- **[Inside front cover, and 7.0.1.1] — The [‘Guide to Safe Scouting’](#) Applies**
Policies and procedures outlined in the ‘Guide to Safe Scouting’, No. 34416, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects. [Note: Always reference the online version, which is updated quarterly.]
- **[7.0.3.1] — The Buddy System and Certifying Completion**
Youth members must not meet one-on-one with adults. Sessions with counselors must take place where others can view the interaction, or the Scout must have a buddy: a friend, parent, guardian, brother, sister, or other relative —or better yet, another Scout working on the same badge— along with him attending the session. When the Scout meets with the counselor, he should bring any required projects. If these cannot be transported, he should present evidence, such as photographs or adult certification. His unit leader, for example, might state that a satisfactory bridge or tower has been built for the Pioneering merit badge, or that meals were prepared for Cooking. If there are questions that requirements were met, a counselor may confirm with adults involved. Once satisfied, the counselor signs the blue card using the date upon which the Scout completed the requirements, or in the case of partials, initials the individual requirements passed.
- **[7.0.3.2] — Group Instruction**
It is acceptable—and sometimes desirable—for merit badges to be taught in group settings. This often occurs at camp and merit badge midways or similar events. Interactive group discussions can support learning. The method can also be attractive to “guest experts” assisting registered and approved counselors. Slide shows, skits, demonstrations, panels, and various other techniques can also be employed, but as any teacher can attest, not everyone will learn all the material.

There must be attention to each individual’s projects and his fulfillment of *all* requirements. We must know that every Scout — actually and *personally*— completed them. If, for example, a requirement uses words like “show,” “demonstrate,” or “discuss,” then every Scout must do that. It is unacceptable to award badges on the basis of sitting in classrooms *watching* demonstrations, or remaining silent during discussions. Because of the importance of individual attention in the merit badge plan, group instruction should be limited to those scenarios where the benefits are compelling.
- **[7.0.3.3] — Partial Completions**
Scouts need not pass all requirements with one counselor. The Application for Merit Badge has a place to record what has been finished — a “partial.” In the center section on the reverse of the blue card, the counselor initials for each requirement passed. In the case of a partial completion, he or she does not retain the counselor’s portion of the card. A subsequent counselor may choose not to accept partial work, but this should be rare. A Scout, if he believes he is being treated unfairly, may work with his Scoutmaster to find another counselor. An example for the use of a signed partial would be to take it to camp as proof of prerequisites. Partials have no expiration except the 18th birthday.