

Alberta Council Meetings in a Box

Sparks & Embers

Background

Whether you are a new Guider or just changing branches, these meetings will help you with the first 3 meetings of the year so you can get the feel for how a unit meeting runs.

We have included 3 **Meetings in a Box** below – remember, these are just guidelines. Feel free to modify these meetings to your unit and ask the girls for input!

These meetings will include links to program from the Girls First platform.

Basic Information

Be sure to check out the [Girls First Platform](#). Here you will find program for all the branches and you can track the program progress for the girls in your unit. There is also a [Guider Handbook](#) available on the platform that you can download by following these steps: Sign in → All About Guiding → Download Guider Handbook.

The [Alberta Council Membership Page](#) has Pocket Pals that are designed to help new Guiders with information on Guiding, our program, and information about the specific branch you are leading. There is a Pocket Pal document designed for each branch level.

Spark meetings are typically an hour, while Ember meetings typically run for an hour and a half.

As the girls start arriving, it is a great idea to have activities to keep them busy. Some ideas of activities to have are busy boxes, skipping ropes, balls, or puzzles.

During these unprecedented times we find ourselves in, it is important to ensure we are following all local health regulations and the Covid-19 Girl Guides of Canada protocols when running our meetings. As girls gather in a circle, we need to ensure that everyone is staying 6 feet apart.

Sparks Suggested Activity Times		
Opening	5 minutes	Welcome, recite the Spark Promise or participate in the unit's unique opening ceremony.
Circle	10 minutes	Sharing time for talking and sharing experiences or feelings.
Program Activities	40 minutes	Dive into the Spark Program! Include both active and quiet activities – follow the girls' lead.
Closing	2 – 3 minutes	Reminders, Closing Song, Goodbye

Embers Suggested Activity Times

Games	10 minutes	Offer skipping ropes and balls for girls to use as everyone arrives or Alternatively, set up craft stations.
Opening	10 minutes	Gather in Circles, collect dues, gather in the Ember Ring.
Program Activities	55 minutes	Dive into the Ember Program! Include both active and quiet activities – follow the girls' lead.
Closing	5 minutes	Reminders, Closing Song, Goodbye

Created by the Alberta Council Program and Membership Committee

* **Remember – These are just guidelines, and everything is flexible. If the girls are having fun and enjoying the activity, keep going.**

* **We have included the Program Areas and Themes to help with tracking program in the meetings below.**

Meeting One

Opening (Sparks and Embers – 10 minutes) Program

Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

At your first meeting of the year, the opening section may take longer as you will need to teach the opening song to the new girls.

- **Sparks** – This link will take you to the [BC Council's Let's Sing](#) page where you can find the audio and lyrics for the Sparks Opening Song as well as other Guiding songs.
 - Girls enjoy making up actions to go with the song.
- **Embers** – This link will take you to the [BC Council's Let's Sing](#) page where you can find the audio and lyrics for the Ember Opening Song as well as other Guiding songs.
 - Girls walk or skip, holding hands, in a circle around the toadstool.

Due to Covid-19 protocols, if singing or holding hands is not allowed, an alternative is playing the song for the unit while the girls do the actions/move around the toadstool.

Ice Breaker / Get to know you game (Sparks and Embers – 15 minutes) Program

Area: Guide Together / Theme: Spirit of Guiding

To help with learning names and getting to know everyone, ice breaker games and name tags are a great activity to do at your first meeting.

Name Game

1. Sit or stand in a circle and the leader will start and finish the game.
2. Ask everyone to pick a word that starts with the same sound as their first name. The word may or may not describe the person.
3. The leader says the word she picked and then their own name. Example: Brave Brown Owl.
4. The person sitting on the leader's left goes second and says the leader's name and then adds their own. Example: Brave Brown Owl, Daring Darlene.
5. Keep going around the circle until it gets back to the leader who has to do the whole group!

Name Tags

There are many different kinds of name tags you could make, but it is a good idea to have some kind of name tag especially at the beginning of the year when you have new girls you don't know in your unit. Plus, it is a great way for the girls to personalize their name tags.



For Sparks, you may have to help them print their names or you can do something with their name already on it so all they have to do is personalize it by colouring and decorating it.

Craft (Sparks and Embers – 20 minutes)

Program Area: Into the Outdoors / Theme: Camping Skills and Adventures

Sit upons are a great craft for the girls to make at their first meeting. It will help keep everyone dry while sitting outside at meetings and at camp!

You can gather these at the end of each meeting so you know the girls will have them at each meeting, or let the girls take them home to bring back to each meeting.

Sit Upons

Supplies – Newspaper (or you can use other items like quilt batting or floor underlay), a felt backed tablecloth, duct tape, permanent markers, and stickers.

1. Before the meeting, cut the tablecloth into rectangles that are 15"x30"
 - a. Fold in half so there is a crease.
2. Have each girl place their newspaper on one half of the tablecloth piece, then fold the other half on top of the newspaper.
3. Use duct tape to seal the edges and make the sit upon waterproof.
 - a. Make sure each girl puts their name on their sit upon.
4. Let the girls decorate their sit upons with stickers and permanent markers.

Games (Embers – 15 minutes)

Program Area: Guide Together / Theme: Spirit of Guiding

Ask the girls if they have a favourite game that they would like to play. Maybe one girl wants to teach her favourite game to the rest of the unit!

OR you can try this game:

Tree, Log, Bridge

1. Split the girls into team – at least 5 per team.
2. Have teams line up with the girls one behind another.
3. The first girl will run up X number of steps (determine the number of steps with the girls before starting the game) and is the Tree. She stands there acting like a tree.
4. The second girl runs to the Tree, then runs around the Tree, and then runs X number of steps and lays down to become the Log.
5. The third girl runs around the Tree, jumps over the Log, then runs X number of steps and becomes one half of the Bridge (hands up and curved to make her half of the Bridge).
6. The fourth girl runs around the Tree, jumps over the Log, then to Girl 3 to become the other half of the Bridge (hands up and curved to make her half of the Bridge).
7. The rest of the girls, one at a time, run around the Tree, jump over the Log, go through the Bridge to the end. If you have more than 5 girls on a team, you can have them do another Tree, Log, etc.
8. Once there are no more girls in the line, the Tree runs over to and jumps the Log and goes through the Bridge, and the rest of the girls follow.
9. Repeat as many times as the girls want and try to change up who is what thing. Make it a race! Which team can (safely) get all their girls through first?!



Closing (Sparks and Embers – 5 minutes)

Program Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

- **Sparks** – This link will take you to the [BC Council's Let's Sing](#) page where you can find the audio and lyrics for the Sparks Closing Song. Girls enjoy making up actions to go with the song.
- **Embers** – This link will take you to the [BC Council's Let's Sing](#) page where you can find the audio and lyrics for the Ember Closing Song.

Due to Covid-19 protocols, if singing or holding hands is not allowed, an alternative is playing the song for the unit while the girls do the actions/move around the toadstool.

Meeting Two

Opening (Sparks and Embers – 10 minutes) Program

Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

- As decided by the unit (refer to Meeting One for links to Opening Songs).

Branch Stories (Sparks and Embers – 5 minutes)

Program Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

What little girl doesn't love a story? Introduce the girls to Sparks and Embers by reading:

- [Crystal's New Friend](#)
- [The Ember Story](#) o You can also read [What Does the Toadstool Mean to Me?](#)

Promise (Sparks and Embers – 15 minutes) Program

Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

- **Sparks** – [Your Promise Friendship Recipe](#)
- **Embers** – [Promise Hand Craft](#)

Girls First Circle Time (Sparks and Embers – 10 minutes) Program

Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

Girls First is built to put the girls in charge of their own Guiding experience. This is a good time to ask the girls what they want to do this year in Sparks/Embers. It doesn't matter if they've never been a Member before, the possibilities are endless on what we can do!

Make sure you write down what the girls want to do!

For Embers, this is a good time to introduce the [Discovery Badges](#) and [Circle Groups](#).



Games (Sparks and Embers – 10 minutes)

Program Area: Guide Together / Theme: Spirit of Guiding

Ask the girls if they have a favourite game that they would like to play. Maybe one girl wants to teach her favourite game to the rest of the unit!

Fun Activity (Sparks – 10 minutes / Embers – 40 minutes)

Program Area: Into the Outdoors / Theme: Nature Discoveries

- **Both** – [Sound Mapping](#)
- **Embers** – [Seed Socks](#)

Closing (Sparks and Embers – 5 minutes)

Program Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

- As decided by the unit (refer to Meeting One for links to Closing Songs).

Meeting Three

Opening (Sparks and Embers – 10 minutes) Program

Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

- As decided by the unit (refer to Meeting One for links to Opening Songs).

Circle Time (Sparks and Embers – 10 minutes)

You can use this time to ask the girls how their week was or if they have anything they want to share with everyone, or you can do whatever the girls want to do with this time.

Program Activities – Sparks

Activity 1 (15 – 30 minutes)

Program Area: Into the Outdoors / Theme: Camping Skills and Adventures

When you are camping, or even just out on a hike, you might get separated from your group or get lost. Before you head out, it is a good idea to know what to do if you get lost.

Try the [Hug a Tree activity](#). Why not try a hike around your meeting area after you've learned what to do?

Activity 2 (up to 15 minutes)

Program Area: Into the Outdoors / Theme: Our Shared Planet

Create your own Earth with the [Earth is Home activity](#).

Program Activities – Embers

Activity 1 (15 – 30 minutes)

Program Area: Into the Outdoors / Theme: Nature Discoveries



Let's get outside and enjoy nature! Try the [Nature Snapshots activity](#) to save images of our beautiful environment!

Note: Be sure to check out the Tips, Tricks & More section of the activity.

Activity 2 (30 – 45 minutes)

Program Area: Into the Outdoors / Theme: Our Shared Planet

Design and build your own reusable party game for a plastic-free event with the [Plastic-Free Fun and Games](#) activity.

Closing (Sparks and Embers – 5 minutes)

Program Area: Guide Together / Theme: Our Story

- As decided by the unit (refer to Meeting One for links to Closing Songs).

We hope you have enjoyed the Alberta Council Meeting in a Box. As always, remember these meetings are flexible and make sure you ask your girls what they want to do with their Guiding experience. Enjoy your year and have fun!

