

## Girl Scouts of the Golden Plains Council

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### Frontier Fun Try-It

The 1870-80's were an important time for Kansas and the cities and towns of South Central Kansas. Immigrants were moving west to start farms; cowboys herded cattle and the women brought civilizations to the plains.

You have six activities to choose from. When you have finished four activities, you have done enough to complete it.

### HEADING WEST

Many times girls moving west with their family only had one or two dresses to wear. Find out what girls wore in the 1870's then visit a cloth store and pick out your favorite color and style of cloth that would have been appropriate - seersucker, gingham, 100% cotton calico or a poly/cotton blend. Which cloth would be better to wear on a hot Kansas day?

It was hard to decide what to take and what to leave behind when moving west. Find out what you would need to pack in your wagon if your family was going "out west".

**MORE TO TRY:** Talk with the education director at a local historical museum for more information about traveling by wagon or check out the "Oregon Trail" computer DC to learn more about moving west.

### CHILDREN AT WORK

Girls had many chores (jobs) to do to help the family. Try one or more of the following chores:

*Make butter:* Have the troop buy some heavy cream. Fill a pint size mason jar about one-third full of the cream. Screw the lid firmly in place. Each girl in the troop will take turns shaking the jar. When each girl takes the jar to shake, carefully remove the lid to allow the gas to escape, then screw the lid down again and resume shaking until the cream has turned solid. Carefully pour the liquid off the solid butter, then add a half jar of very cold water. Screw the lid back on and shake the jar five times, pour off the wash water and wash again until the rinse water is clear. Place the lumps of butter into a bowl and work out the last of the water. Finally, get out a butter knife and spread the butter onto a piece of bread and EAT!

*Sweep or mop an uncarpeted floor:* Use a broom (not a modern vacuum) to sweep your kitchen floor or porch at least three times in one week or help an older person to mop the kitchen floor. When sweeping, don't forget to use a dust pan to pick up the debris and place it into the trash can.

*Wash dishes:* Use cold water from the tap to heat the water in a teakettle. Fill the sink half full of water and one squirt of dish soap. Then add the hot water. **WARNING: have an adult pour the heated water into the sink or washbasin for you.** Wash, rinse and air dry the dishes at least three times in one week using this method.

## CHILDREN AT PLAY

It was not all work and no play. Children of the 1870's enjoyed many games. Try one of the following:

**Pick Up Sticks:** To begin the game, the first player drops the sticks in a pile. The first player then begins to "pick up" the sticks one at a time without disturbing any other sticks. When one of the surrounding sticks is disturbed, the play passes to the next player, and so on until the play returns to the starting player.

**Cup And Ball:** This game uses a small stick with a cup on the end and a string with a ball tied to the stick. The object was to swing the ball so that it would land in the cup. You can find cup and ball sticks at the store or you can make your own. To make your own, you will need a plastic or paper cup, pencil, tape, string and a ping-pong ball. Punch a small hole into the bottom of the cup and stick the pencil part way into the hold. Use the tape to hold the cup to the pencil. Next, cut a piece of string 12 – 14" long. Tape one end of the string to the ping-pong ball. Tie the other end to the pencil immediately below the cup.

**Blind Man's Bluff:** A blindfolded player stands within the moving circle of players. When she claps her hands three times, the circle must stop. She then points to one member of the circle. The player pointed to must come into the middle of the circle to be chased until caught. When caught, the blindfolded player feels the player's face and tries to guess who she is. If the blindfolded player fails to recognize the other player, she must try again. If successful, the player caught becomes the new blindfolded player; if not, then the game is repeated.

## WORKING WITH YOUR HANDS

Needlework was very important for even the youngest girls to learn. Learn how to thread a needle and knot the end. Then learn how to sew on a button. Take a large cotton handkerchief or piece of cloth and sew a button onto it to practice. Decorate a shirt or the cuffs on a pair of your socks with buttons.

## MAKING MUSIC

Music parties were a special time in the old west. There were not many musical instruments so people often made their own. It could be as simple as hitting a metal pot with a spoon, blowing across the mouth of an empty bottle or jug, hitting two spoons together, or twanging a mouth harp. Learn the songs Home on the Range and Skip to My Lou then try making some musical instruments. Play the instruments when your group sings these two songs.

Musical Instrument Suggestions:

Bottle Harp:

You'll need: an empty bottle with a small mouth

1. Blow across the mouth of the bottle to create a sound; keep to the beat of the music.
2. Try putting water in the bottle at different levels to create different sounds.

Spoons:

You'll need: two spoons the same size

1. In one hand, hold the two spoons so that the bowls are touching one another. You can tape the handles together to help you hold them steady.
2. Sit in a chair and hold the spoons in one hand with the other hand upped above the spoons.
3. Lightly hit your leg with the spoons then on the upswing, hit the palm of your hand. Try to get a rhythm.

Tambourine:

You'll need: aluminum pie plate, wire or string, bottle caps, hammer and nail

1. Have an adult punch holes around the rim of the pie plate with the hammer and nail.
2. Punch holes in the bottle caps.
3. Loop the wire or string through the bottle caps and attach them to the pie plates: knot the string.
4. Tap it on your leg or on the palm of your hand.

Bottle Chimes:

You'll need: 8 glass bottles the same size, water and a fork

1. Put a different amount of water into each bottle.
2. Use the fork to lightly strike the bottles. Each one will make a different sound.
3. You can change the amount of water in each bottle to play the notes of the scale.

**VISIT THE PAST**

Visit Old Cowtown Museum, or a local historical museum that hosts special children's programs, or an 1870-80's special historical event with your family or troop. Check your local paper or the state tourism office for announcements about upcoming historical events.