



Black (African-American) History Month

PURPOSE

Girl Scouts uncover Black (African-American) culture by learning about its history, traditions, people, and culture with a goal to promote cultural diversity in our community.



GIRL SCOUT LEVELS / REQUIREMENTS

To earn the Black (African-American) History Month Culture patch, Girl Scouts need to complete a Take Action activity along with the following requirements. Girl Scouts are encouraged to complete at least one activity from each section: Discover and Connect.

- Daisy Girl Scouts: any 4 activities
- Brownie Girl Scouts: any 6 activities
- Junior Girl Scouts: any 8 activities
- Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador Girl Scouts: any 10 activities

Please review the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge for All Girl Scouts](#).

BACKGROUND

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history. Today, Black History Month is a time to honor the contributions and legacy of African Americans across U.S. history and society—from activists and civil rights pioneers such as [Harriet Tubman](#), [Sojourner Truth](#), [Marcus Garvey](#), [Martin Luther King Jr.](#), [Malcolm X](#) and [Rosa Parks](#) to leaders in industry, politics, science, culture and more. Since 1928, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History has provided a theme for Black History Month. In 2022, the theme was Black Health and Wellness. While Black History Month is celebrated in February, this patch can be earned year-round!

ACTIVITIES

DISCOVER

- ACTIVITY #1: Read the book, *The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson and discuss it with your friends.
- ACTIVITY #2: Who is Carter Woodson? And why is he known as The Father of Black History?
- ACTIVITY #3: February Was Chosen for a Reason. Negro History Week was the second week of February. Why? To coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Who were these influential men? What were their contributions to Black History?
- ACTIVITY #4: The United Kingdom and Canada also celebrate Black History Month. However, it is observed in October rather than February, as we do in the US. Share some of the ways that Black History Month is celebrated in those regions.
- ACTIVITY #5: African diaspora populations include but are not limited to: African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, Afro-Latin Americans, Black Canadians – descendants of enslaved West Africans brought to the United States, the Caribbean, and South America during the Atlantic slave trade. Identify on a map the countries with the highest concentration of Black/Africans during the Atlantic slave trade. Why is it sometimes known as the triangular trade? Where were most slaves taken?
- ACTIVITY #6: Learn about the continent of Africa. Share what you learned about the cultures, food, language, religion and people of the region.
- ACTIVITY #7: The civil rights movement of the 1960s helped elevate Negro History Week to national prominence... and turn it into a month-long celebration. As a result, in 1976, President Gerald Ford made things official, proclaiming February to be Black History Month. What was the civil rights moment? What are some of the changes that happened for Black people as a result of the civil rights movement?
- ACTIVITY #8: Watch Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I have a Dream* speech and then write a similar speech of your own detailing your Dream for your future.



- **ACTIVITY #9:** Research an influential Black woman such as Kamala Harris, the current Vice President of the United States, and share what you learned about her contributions to the world.

CONNECT

- **ACTIVITY #10:** Many Black people have made valuable contributions to the world throughout history. Write a persuasive essay convincing the U.S. Postal Service to create a new stamp honoring an influential and historical Black person. Explain your choice and the impact the person has had on the world.
- **ACTIVITY #11: Cut-and-Paste Timeline:** As the civil rights movement progressed over several decades, many key events helped to shape the outcome. *Civil rights* are written and unwritten rights provided to anyone who is a U.S. citizen or who belongs to a civil society. *A movement* includes activities undertaken by a group of people to achieve change. Fill-in details about nine key events of the civil rights movement based on outside research.
- **ACTIVITY #12:** Learn about the historical significance of music developed for and by African Americans over the years including blues, jazz, gospel, spirituals/work songs, 1950s rock and roll, 1960s Motown, disco, soul and hip hop. Create a playlist of your favorite songs, ask your parents/guardians to share their favorites as well.
- **ACTIVITY #13:** Pick a decade in history and in addition to the music of that time period, research its significance to politics and culture, the social justice context of the music and the genre's influence on dance and clothing styles.
- **ACTIVITY #14:** James Baldwin (1924–1987) wrote novels, essays, plays, and short stories that forced readers to confront racism in America. His 1953 novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* is considered an American classic. Write a short story or essay arguing for ways to improve your least favorite or favorite subject. Be sure to explain how the change will help improve your motivation and thinking.
- **ACTIVITY #15:** Learn about the contributions of Black men and women in the U.S. military throughout history. Some of the more well-known groups include 54th Massachusetts, the Buffalo Soldiers and the Tuskegee Airmen. Interview someone you know who is in the military as well. Share what you learned with others.

- **ACTIVITY #16:** Learn to make a “soul food” dish. Soul food is an ethnic cuisine traditionally prepared and eaten by African Americans, originating in the Southern United States. Select a dish and make it for your family and friends. Some traditional soul food dishes include mac & cheese, greens, rice & beans, green beans, banana pudding, peach cobbler and hot water cornbread.
- **ACTIVITY #17:** Start a book buddy program to discuss Black literature by exploring different genres including: fiction, non-fiction, speeches, poetry, plays, spoken word and short stories. Be sure to include the classics as well as contemporary books that include African American, Afro Caribbean and African voices.
- **ACTIVITY #18:** Learn about the life of the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama. The White House site offers a good introduction to President Barack Obama. President Obama has also authored several books that older students may enjoy, including *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, *The Audacity of Hope*, and *A Promised Land*.
- **ACTIVITY #19:** Think of someone at school or the playground who is of a different race or speaks a different language, who often plays alone (or a neighbor who lives alone). Next time you are there, ask that person to play or ask them to share something about their culture with you. Make a plan now for what you will say and do to include him or her in your play activity.
- **ACTIVITY #20:** Learn about the art of stepping. Stepping is a form of dancing in which the body itself is used to create unique rhythms and sounds. The website Step Afrika! www.stepafrika.org has videos and information about the history of stepping. Learn or create a step routine and teach it to someone.

TAKE ACTION

Share what you’ve discovered while doing this program and/or engage with the Black/African-American community by completing a Take Action activity. Some suggestions are listed below:

- Participate or volunteer in a Black History Month event in your area and share your experience with your troop.

- Host a poetry night or talent show and highlight Black poets, artists and entertainers.
- Think of something you (and your friends) can do to make the world a better place. Think of a civil rights or social justice issue make a plan for a small thing you can do to improve the problem.
- Host a program for your Girl Scout troop, or with your troop for younger Girl Scouts, where you help fellow Girl Scouts earn this patch.
- Create an informational video based on one or more of the activities you completed above and share it with fellow Girl Scouts.

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