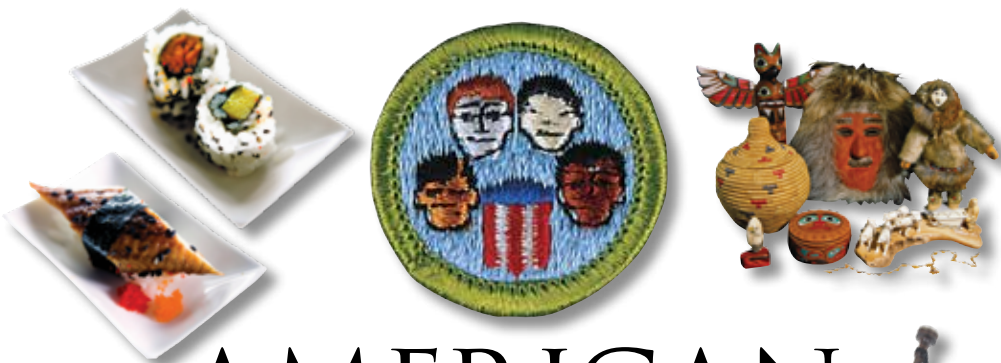


# MERIT BADGE SERIES



# AMERICAN CULTURES



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

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*“Enhancing our youths’ competitive edge through merit badges”*



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# Requirements

Choose THREE groups that have different racial, cultural, national, or ethnic backgrounds, one of which comes from your own background. Use these groups to meet requirements 1, 2, and 3.

1. Do TWO of the following, choosing a different group for each:
  - a. Go to a festival, celebration, or other event identified with one of the groups. Report on what you see and learn.
  - b. Go to a place of worship, school, or other institution identified with one of the groups. Report on what you see and learn.
  - c. Talk with a person from one of the groups about the heritage and traditions of the group. Report on what you learn.
  - d. Learn a song, dance, poem, or story that is traditional to one group, and teach it to a group of your friends.
  - e. Go to a library or museum to see a program or exhibit featuring one group's traditions. Report on what you see and learn.
2. Imagine that one of the groups had always lived alone in a city or country to which no other groups ever came. Tell what you think the city or country might be like today. Now tell what you think it might be like if the three groups you chose lived there at the same time.

3. Tell about some differences between the religious and social customs of the three groups. Tell about some ideas or ways of doing things that are similar in the three groups.
4. Tell about a contribution made to our country by three different people, each from a different racial, ethnic, or religious background.
5. Give a talk to your Scout unit or class at school on how people from different groups have gotten along together. Lead a discussion on what can be done to help various groups understand one another better.

# Resources

## Scouting Literature

*American Heritage, American Labor, Archaeology, Architecture, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communication, Family Life, Genealogy, Indian Lore, Law, Music and Bugling, Reading, Scouting Heritage, and Stamp Collecting* merit badge pamphlets

Visit the Boy Scouts of America's official retail website at <http://www.scoutstuff.org> for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

## Books

- Bial, Raymond. *Lifeways Series*. Benchmark Books. A 25-book series on the original lifeways of North American Indians.
- Bode, Janet. *The Colors of Freedom: Immigrant Stories*. Franklin Watts, 2000.
- . *New Kids in Town: Oral Histories of Immigrant Teens*. Scholastic, 1995.
- Budhos, Marina Tamar. *Remix: Conversations With Immigrant Teenagers*. Henry Holt, 1999.
- Chelsea House Publishers. *The Immigrant Experience*. Separate books on American Indians, Puerto Ricans, and Czech, Greek, Jewish, Mexican, Polish, and other Americans.
- . *Immigrants in America*. A six-book series telling the stories of the Chinese, German, Irish, Italian, Japanese, and Swedish Americans through immigrants' own words and contemporary photographs and illustrations.
- . *Junior Library of American Indians*. A series of 23 books covering American Indian tribes.
- Freedman, Russell. *Immigrant Kids*. Puffin, 1995.
- Hall, Loretta, Anan Ameri, and Dawn Ramey, eds. *Arab American Encyclopedia*. Gale, 1999.
- Haskins, Jim. *Against All Opposition: Black Explorers in America*. Walker, 2003.
- . *One More River to Cross: The Stories of Twelve Black Americans*. Scholastic, 1994.
- Hirschfelder, Arlene B. *Native Americans: A History in Pictures*. DK Publishing, 2000.
- Lawlor, Veronica. *I Was Dreaming to Come to America: Memories From the Ellis Island Oral History Project*. Puffin, 1997.
- Lucent Books. *Immigrants in America*. Sixteen titles on cultures including Russian Americans and Vietnamese Americans.
- Mareno, Barry, ed. *Coming to America*. Barron's. Separate titles on African, Irish, Italian, and Jewish Americans.
- . *We Came to America*. Mason Crest. Sixteen books depicting the unique challenges facing various ethnic groups as they came to the New World.

Mason Crest Publishers. *North American Indians Today*. Fifteen books on modern-day American Indians, from Apache and Cherokee to Seminole and Sioux.

Meltzer, Milton. *Bound for America: The Story of the European Immigrants*. Benchmark Books, 2001.

Moore, John Allphin, and Jerry Pubantz. *Encyclopedia of the United Nations*. Facts on File, 2002.

Nava, Julian. *Julian Nava: My Mexican-American Journey*. Arte Publico, 2002.

Renick, Barbara. *Genealogy 101: How to Trace Your Family's History and Heritage*. Rutledge Hill Press, 2003.

Sandler, Martin W. *Immigrants*. HarperCollins, 2000.

Strom, Yale. *Quilted Landscapes: Conversations With Young Immigrants*. Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Takaki, Ronald T. *Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. Little, Brown, 1989.

Telushkin, Joseph. *The Golden Land: The Story of Jewish Immigration to America*. Harmony, 2002.

Thomas, David Hurst. *The Native Americans: An Illustrated History*. Turner, 1993.

Warren, Paula Stuart. *Your Guide to the Family History Library*. Betterway Books, 2001.

## Organizations and Websites

Use the websites listed here as starting points for your research, or find information on particular cultures by searching for “\_\_\_\_\_ Americans” (replacing the blank with the ancestry group of interest, such as Cambodian, Pakistani, Welsh, etc.). Be sure to get your parent’s permission before you begin to surf.

### American Indian Studies

Website: <http://www.csulb.edu/colleges/cla/departments/ais>

### America’s Story From America’s Library

The Library of Congress

Website: <http://www.americaslibrary.gov>

### Arab American Institute

1600 K St. NW, Suite 601

Washington, DC 20006

Telephone: 202-429-9210

Website: <http://aaiusa.org>

### Asian-Nation

Website: <http://www.asian-nation.org>

### Digital History

Website: <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>

### Immigration: The Living Mosaic of People, Culture, and Hope

Website: <http://library.thinkquest.org/20619>

### Immigration: Stories of Yesterday and Today

Website: <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/>

### Jewish-American History Foundation

P.O. Box 760325

Lathrup Village, MI 48076

Website: <http://www.jewish-history.com>

### The Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation Inc.

Attention: History Center

17 Battery Place, Suite 210

New York, NY 10004-3507

Telephone: 212-561-4588

Website: <http://www.ellisland.org>

### Test of Courage

Public Broadcasting Service

Website: <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/testofcourage/diversity4.html>

### U.S. Census Bureau

4700 Silver Hill Road

Washington, DC 20233

Website: <http://www.census.gov>