

American Heritage

Merit Badge Workbook

Merit badges are earned by doing: reading the pamphlet, practicing the skills, and showing your counselor what you have learned.
This workbook gives you a place to organize your notes and track your progress along the way.
Merit badge counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbook.
You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information.
Use the space under each requirement to note what you have done and what you want to talk about, not to write out full answers.
When a requirement says discuss, show, tell, explain, or demonstrate, that is what you must do.
No one may add to or subtract from the official requirements found on scouting.org (Guide to Advancement 7.0.4.8).

Scouting America last updated this badge's requirements page on September 19, 2025.
Requirements change from time to time. Double-check scouting.org before you start.

Scout's name: _____ Unit: _____ Date started: _____

Counselor's name: _____ Phone no.: _____ Email: _____

Links marked "Scouting America resources" are the ones Scouting America shares on its official badge page.
This workbook is unofficial and not endorsed by Scouting America.

---

1. Read the Declaration of Independence. Pay close attention to the section that begins with "We hold these truths to be self-evident" and ends with "to provide new Guards for their future security." Rewrite that section in your own words, making it as easy to understand as possible. Then, share your writing with your counselor and discuss the importance of the Declaration to all Americans.

Scouting America resources: Declaration of Independence—Full Transcript (website)
The Declaration of Independence | Journey to American Democracy (video)

That section of the Declaration of Independence, in my own words

Why the Declaration is important to all Americans

Requirement 1 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

2. Do TWO of the following:

☐ **(a)** Select two individuals from American history, one a political leader (a president, senator, etc.) and the other a private citizen (a writer, religious leader, etc.). Find out about each person's accomplishments and compare the contributions each has made to America's heritage.

Two people from American history

Type	Name	Their accomplishments
Political leader		
Private citizen		

How their contributions to America's heritage compare

☐ **(b)** With your counselor's approval, choose an organization that has promoted some type of positive change in American society. Find out why the organization believed this change was necessary and how it helped to accomplish the change. Discuss how this organization is related to events or situations from America's past.

Scouting America resources: How Volunteering Can Help Change the World (video) · The Power of Volunteering (video)

Organization _____ Counselor approved (date) _____

Why the organization believed this change was necessary

How it helped accomplish the change

How it is related to events or situations from America's past

☐ **(c)** With your counselor's approval, interview two veterans of the U.S. military. Find out what their experiences were like. Ask the veterans what they believe they accomplished.

Scouting America resources: Interviewing a Veteran Resource Guide (PDF)

Counselor approved (date) _____

Veteran 1: name _____ Branch and when they served _____

What their experiences were like

What they believe they accomplished

Veteran 2: name | Branch and when they served

What their experiences were like

What they believe they accomplished

☐ **(d)** With your counselor's approval, interview three people in your community of different ages and occupations. Ask these people what America means to them, what they think is special about this country, and what American traditions they feel are important to preserve.

Counselor approved (date)

Person 1

	Their answer
Age and occupation	
What America means to them	
What they think is special about this country	
American traditions they feel are important to preserve	

Person 2

	Their answer
Age and occupation	
What America means to them	
What they think is special about this country	
American traditions they feel are important to preserve	

Person 3

	Their answer
Age and occupation	
What America means to them	
What they think is special about this country	
American traditions they feel are important to preserve	

Requirement 2 completed on | counselor initials

3. Do the following:

(a) Select a topic related to the United States that is currently in the news. Describe to your counselor what is happening. Explain how today's events are related to or affected by the events and values of America's past.

Topic in the news | Where I read or heard it

What is happening

How today's events are related to or affected by the events and values of America's past

(b) For the following, describe its adoption, tell about any changes since its adoption, and explain how each one continues to influence Americans today: the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, the Great Seal of the United States, the motto, and the national anthem.

Scouting America resources: The Pledge of Allegiance History (video)
Why America Chose the Bald Eagle | The Story Behind the Great Seal (1782) (video) · US National Motto (video)
How "The Star-Spangled Banner" Became the National Anthem (video)

The flag

	My notes
Its adoption	
Changes since its adoption	
How it influences Americans today	

The Pledge of Allegiance

	My notes
Its adoption	
Changes since its adoption	
How it influences Americans today	

The Great Seal of the United States

	My notes
Its adoption	
Changes since its adoption	
How it influences Americans today	

The motto

	My notes
Its adoption	
Changes since its adoption	
How it influences Americans today	

The national anthem

	My notes
Its adoption	
Changes since its adoption	
How it influences Americans today	

(c) Research your family's history. Find out how various events and situations in American history affected your family. If your family immigrated to America, tell the reasons why. Share what you find with your counselor.

Scouting America resources: Genealogy Merit Badge (website) · How To Start Your Geneaology (video)

How events and situations in American history affected my family

If my family immigrated to America, the reasons why

Requirement 3 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

4. Do TWO of the following:

☐ **(a)** Explain the National Register of Historic Places and how a property becomes eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Make a map of your local area, marking the points of historical interest. Tell about any National Register properties in your area. Share the map with your counselor, and describe the historical points you have indicated.

Scouting America resources: National Register Guide Episode 1: Basics (video)
National Register Guide Episode 2: The Function of the National Register of Historic Places (video)
National Register Database (website)

The National Register of Historic Places, and how a property becomes eligible for listing

My map of the local area with points of historical interest (draw here or attach)

National Register properties in my area

Property	What I learned about it

☐ **(b)** Research an event of historical importance that took place in or near your area. If possible, visit the place. Tell your counselor about the event and how it affected local history. Describe how the area looked then and what it now looks like.

Event _____ Place _____ Date visited _____

How the event affected local history

The area then and now

When	How the area looks
Then	
Now	

☐ **(c)** Find out when, why, and how your town or neighborhood started, and what ethnic, national, or racial groups played a part. Find out how the area has changed over the past 50 years and try to explain why.

When, why, and how my town or neighborhood started

Ethnic, national, or racial groups that played a part

How the area has changed over the past 50 years, and why

☐ **(d)** Take an active part in a program about an event or person in American history. Report to your counselor about the program, the part you took, and the subject.

Program _____ Date _____ The part I took _____

The subject, and my report on the program

☐ **(e)** Visit a historic trail or walk in your area. After your visit, share with your counselor what you have learned. Discuss the importance of this location and explain why you think it might qualify for National Register listing.

Scouting America resources: National Historic Trails (website)

Historic trail or walk _____ Date visited _____

What I learned

Why this location is important, and why it might qualify for National Register listing

Requirement 4 completed on _____ counselor initials _____

5. Do ONE of the following:

☐ **(a)** Watch two motion pictures (with the approval and permission of your counselor and parent or guardian) that are set in some period of American history. Describe to your counselor how accurate each film is with regard to the historical events depicted and also with regard to the way the characters are portrayed.

Scouting America resources: Gettysburg (1993) Official Trailer (video) · Remember the Titans Official Trailer (video) Tora! Tora! Tora! Theatrical Movie Trailer (video) · Hidden Figures | Official Trailer (video) · The Miracle Worker | Official Trailer (video)

Counselor and parent or guardian approved (date) _____

Film 1: title _____ Period of American history _____

How accurate the historical events are

How accurate the characters are

Film 2: title | Period of American history

How accurate the historical events are

How accurate the characters are

☐ **(b)** Read a biography (with your counselor's approval) of someone who has made a contribution to America's heritage. Tell some things you admire about this individual and some things you do not admire. Explain why you think this person has made a positive or a negative contribution to America's heritage.

Scouting America resources: America250 Reading List: A Journey Through Stories That Shaped a Nation (video)

Biography (title and author) | Counselor approved (date)

Things I admire about this person

Things I do not admire

Positive or negative contribution to America's heritage, and why I think so

☐ **(c)** Listen to recordings of popular songs from various periods of American history. Share five of these songs with your counselor, and describe how each song reflects the way people felt about the period in which it was popular. If a recording is not available, have a copy of the lyrics available.

Scouting America resources: The Library of Congress Celebrates the Songs of America (website)
A Brief History of American Music Genres (video)

Five songs from American history

Song and artist	Period	How it reflects the way people felt then

Requirement 5 completed on | counselor initials

6. Discuss with your counselor the career opportunities in American heritage. Pick one that interests you and explain how to prepare for this career. Discuss what education and training are required for this career.

Scouting America resources: Top 10 Highest Paying Jobs for History Major (video)
What Can You Do With That History Degree? (website)

Career opportunities in American heritage

Career	What it involves

The one that interests me

How to prepare for this career

Education and training required

Requirement 6 completed on counselor initials

Counselor sign-off

Your counselor signs your blue card or approves the badge in Scoutbook, and your unit records it. This line is for your own records.

Counselor's signature Date completed

Official Scouting America resources

Scouting America resources: American Heritage merit badge page (requirements and resources)
American Heritage merit badge pamphlet (free PDF) · All merit badges

Made by Cole at ScoutSmarts.com, an Eagle Scout who loves helping Scouts.
Spot an error or a requirement change? Tell me at scoutsmarts.com/contact.
Requirement text © Scouting America. Workbook layout © 2026 ScoutSmarts.com, free to copy for Scouting use.