

HOUSTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

SCOUTS@HMNS

Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge Prerequisite Workbook

Scout's Name: _____ Unit: _____

REQUIREMENT 2

ACTIVITY: Class visit to a historic landmark or other historic place.

Visit a place that is listed as a National Historic Landmark or is on the National Register of Historic Places. List some things that you learned about the landmark or site.

DISCUSSION: What did you find interesting about the landmark or site?

HOMEWORK: Choose a national monument that interests you and learn more about it. In class, discuss what you learned, and explain why you think that this monument is important to this country's citizens.

3. Do the following:
 - a. Attend a meeting of your city, town, or county council or school board; **or** a municipal; county, or state court session.
 - b. Choose one of the issues discussed at the meeting where a difference of opinions was expressed, and explain to your counselor why you agree with one opinion more than you do another one.

REQUIREMENT 3

Watch the national evening news five days in a row **or** read the front page of a major daily newspaper five days in a row.

Date:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Date:

Discuss the national issues you learned about with your counselor. Choose one of the issues and explain how it affects you and your family

DISCUSSION: With your class, discuss what you have learned.

REQUIREMENT 8:

Name your two senators and the member of Congress from your congressional district.

United States Senators (Texas)	
Member of Congress	

Write a letter about a national issue and send it to one of these elected officials, sharing your view with him or her. Show your letter to your counselor. A sample letter is included as **Attachment 3**.

Guidance for Writing a Letter to Congress

1. Keep it simple. Your letter should address a single topic or issue. Typed, one-page letters are best.
2. Say why you are writing and who you are (identify yourself as a constituent). Briefly why you are interested in the subject matter of your letter. (If you want a response, you must include your name and address, even when using e-mail.)
3. Provide factual details. Provide specific, rather than general, information about how the topic affects you and others. If a certain bill is involved, cite the correct title or number, whenever possible.
4. Close by requesting the action you want taken: a vote for or against a bill, or change in general policy.
5. Always be courteous, one of the twelve points of the Scout Law.
6. Thank the member for taking the time to read your letter.

Addressing Members of Congress

To Your Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
(Room #) (Name of Senate Office Building)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (last name):

To Your Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
(Room #) (Name of House Office Building)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (last name)

Note: The above addresses should be used in e-mail messages, as well as those sent through the U.S. Postal Service.

Sample Letter

January 1, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Brady
301 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Funding for National Parks

Dear Representative Brady:

As a constituent and someone who has visited many national parks with my family and with my Boy Scout troop, I hope that you will support increasing funding of the National Park Service. Our national parks are an integral part of our heritage, but these treasured sites are at risk due to a history of budget cuts.

Budget cuts and insufficient funds in recent years have led to crumbling facilities and too few rangers and other staff to serve visitors and protect cultural and natural resources. While recent improvements in funding will help parks recover from years of underfunding, more is needed for rangers and other staff, maintenance, and projects to enhance the visiting experience.

During the current appropriation process, please support for the following items in the National Park Service budget:

- Increase the national park operations account to support enhanced staffing for routine and small maintenance projects and resources to accommodate record visitation.
- Restore \$59 million to the construction account, which would help address the deferred maintenance backlog of over \$11 billion.
- Provide a \$20 million increase for the Centennial Challenge (National Park Partnerships), a public-private partnership model that leverages non-federal donations to support projects in parks across the country.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope that you will support these efforts to preserve our national parks for generations to come.

Sincerely,

John Smith
5555 Hermann Park Drive
Houston, Texas 77030