# **BSA TROOP 19**

# BOARD OF REVIEW GUIDELINES





#### **Boards of Review Introduction**

Summarizing the Boy Scouts of America charter, the purposes of Boy Scouting are to develop in young men the ability to do things for themselves and others, to train them in outdoor skills, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues. The techniques we use to accomplish these lofty purposes – the methods of Scouting – include, among other things, advancements, the outdoors, and adult association.

The Board of Review is how the troop committee, or Eagle Scout Board of Review, tracks the progress of a Scout to determine his understanding of the ideals of Scouting and how he applies them in daily life in the troop. If the Board of Review is for rank advancement, the board will satisfy itself that the Scout has done what he was supposed to do for that rank and will review with the Scout the requirements for the next rank. The Board of Review is also a way of reviewing the troop's progress.

This review **is not and should not be** an examination or retest of skills learned. Rather, it is an attempt to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals, both in the troop and outside of it. The board should get a sense of the importance that the Scout attributes to Scouting in his home life, at school, and in the troop. It also shows how the Scout perceives the troop and its adult leaders.

#### Who Conducts the Board of Review?

In almost every case, the Board of Review is conducted by at least three members of the troop committee. The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmasters are not members of the Board of Review. The Scoutmaster can introduce the Scout to the board members and may sit with him to hear the board's decision, but should not be present during the actual Board of Review. Obviously, the Scout's parent should not serve on his Board of Review panel.

All boards must constitute at least three and not more than six members who are all 21 years of age or older.

# The Eagle Scout Board of Review

The Eagle Scout Board of Review is chosen by the local council based on its experience and tradition. Councils may constitute Eagle Boards of Review from among the Scout's troop committee members, but only if at least one member is a district or council Eagle advancement representative. The board can be constituted of district or council Eagle representatives only, or it can be constituted with members of the community who are not registered Scouters, but then only if they have an understanding of the importance and purpose of the Eagle board.

Because of the importance of this board, the decision to accept an Eagle candidate must be unanimous. If not unanimous, the board may be reconvened at a later date for a second determination.

#### When and Where to Hold a Board of Review

A board of review should be held where the board members and the Scout are the only ones aware of what is going on. There should be no possibility for embarrassing the Scout in front of others. The Scout should be comfortable speaking his mind to the board.

Some possibilities may include a room in the chartered organization's facility or a conference room at the office of a board member. A campout or summer camp can be an ideal place for a board of review, assuming your committee members can assemble, since the relaxed atmosphere of the outdoors can go a long way toward making a Scout feel comfortable.

An ideal troop might hold monthly Boards of Review, possibly at the same time as a troop meeting. A troop with few Scouts might conclude that monthly boards are unnecessary as too few Scouts present themselves for advancement, but that would miss one of the functions of the board. A board should be set up to review accomplishment and lack of accomplishment. The board can counsel with Scouts who are not advancing to determine reasons for lack of progress and to stimulate these Scouts to greater participation in the program. This function is of equal importance to the function of reviewing boys who present themselves for advancement.

#### Types of Boards of Review

A Board of Review focuses on a Scout's accomplishment and progress. The issues addressed can be about the Scout or the troop. The Board of Review is a chance for the troop committee or other adults in the community to get a sense of how the troop is doing and to permit them to offer support where needed. It gives three to six other sets of ears to hear how a Scout is doing, how he feels about the troop and his role in it, how he is advancing, and whether he is striving to live up to Scouting's ideals. It is a good idea, therefore, to hold boards of review regularly and often.

Some reasons to have a Board of Review may include a Scout's lack of advancement, perceived trouble in the troop, or a certain event at the last campout or troop meeting. Ideally, a Scout should sit for a Board of Review every six months, whether he is advancing or not.

The most common type of Board of Review is for advancement. By making a Board of Review a requirement of advancement, a Scout will have at least one opportunity at each rank level to review his progress in Scouting.

Each rank involves a progressively greater mastery of Scout skills, advancing leadership growth, and a growth in the way a Scout understands his world and his role in it. Therefore, the different advancement Boards of Review reflect the increasing maturity of the Scout.

Another issue to be considered at the Board of Review is the elusive concept of Scout spirit, which is part of the advancement progress.

# How to Hold a Board of Review

As has been said, the Board of Review is **not** an interrogation, not a retesting of a Scout's competence. It is not an examination; rather, it attempts to see that the examinations that went into getting the Scout signed off were up to standard. It is a checkup to see that what should have been done actually <u>was</u> done. It is a friendly growth experience. All this should be accomplished in 15 minutes, though an Eagle Scout Board of Review may take up to half an hour.

This can be accomplished by simple questions likes "What did you cook for your First Class meal?" Questions like Where and When or How will soon tell the board whether achievements were properly accomplished without actually retesting. It is sufficient to know what a Scout's "camp gadget" was in order to understand whether he had been properly tested on his lashings.

But be aware that a Scout who is poorly prepared for the board, one who clearly has not achieved what his book says that he has, is a product, as much of his own merits as of the merits of those who have brought him to the board, to those who have signed off his accomplishments without actually having them properly achieved. Thus, a Scout may not be as responsible for his lack of preparation as might be thought. This does not grant carte blanche to the ill-prepared Scout, but it does give the board a way to understand what must be done and to assist the Scout in doing it.

A board can expect a Scout to be neat in appearance and properly uniformed.

The actual meeting should be a give and take, an informal conversation between the Scout and a group of adults who are interested in his welfare and are supportive of his efforts. In all cases, open-ended questions are good to prompt comments by the Scout. You should encourage the Scout to come to conclusions on his own, not simply tell him what you think.

When the Scout has not advanced, the Board of Review may be focused on a problem, either with the Scout or with the troop. In these cases, you will be counseling the Scout, helping him form his own conclusions on the problem at hand. In a good Board of Review, you may listen more than you speak.

Listen carefully to what the Scout is saying, then listen to what he is <u>not</u> saying. Skilled counselors often respond to comments by simply smiling or giving encouraging sounds like "uh-huh" or "OK". Trick questions are not worthwhile. You are attempting to put the Scout at his ease, not interrogate him. Sometimes you can ask the Scout to repeat what he is saying in a different way to get a different take on the situation. You can summarize what the Scout is saying so that you can confirm your understanding, but try not to use this device to put the boy in a corner.

If there is a solution to the problem, try to have the Scout come up with it. Perhaps he cannot formulate a solution, but could choose from among several you can think of. In

all events, try to have the Scout make the conclusions. If a solution cannot be reached, there is nothing wrong with agreeing to meet in the future to see if circumstances have changed or whether the Scout has found an answer to his problem.

Some Scouts may freeze up at the Board of Review and become silent or monosyllabic in answers. They may forget simple items – Eagle Scout candidates have been known to forget the Scout Oath, for example. The board should encourage and support these boys in a friendly, kind, and courteous manner and help them to become more comfortable.

In the Board of Review, you will certainly be assessing the Scout's achievements and his growth in the ideals of Scouting. Those ideals include patriotism and citizenship and the values embodied in the Scout Oath and Law. Have no fear of speaking to those values. Ask a Scout how he is getting along in school. Ask him how he is serving his religious institution, if he has one, or, if not, ask him how he satisfies his duty to God.

You could ask a Scout about leadership opportunities he has taken at school or in his religious institution. It is important to see how the ideals of Scouting have affected him in his daily life.

You can and should ask a Scout how he felt about certain accomplishments, such as how he felt he handled himself on a service project. Ask a Scout about his leadership position, - whether he believes he was successful or whether he had problems. You can discuss those problems, hopefully with an eye toward solving them.

You should always end a Board of Review by praising the Scout for the positive aspects of his character, his skill level, and his accomplishments.

Once you have interviewed the Scout, the board will ask him to leave the room so that the members may deliberate. As this is often the most stressful part of the process for the Scout, this deliberation should not be long. However, it should be long enough to have a discussion that leads to a unanimous decision. When the meeting is finished, the Scout should be invited back in to hear the board's decision, which, of course, should be delivered in a friendly and courteous manner, regardless of what the decision is.

If the Scout is not advancing, the board should certainly give the Scout the opportunity to learn what he needs to do to advance. He should be given a definite time for a subsequent Board of Review. Finally, he should be given information about appeal procedures. In a good troop, having a Scout deferred for advancement by the Board of Review is unusual. If there is a problem with a Scout, normally he will not be presented to the Board of Review.

The Scout holds his new rank as of the date of the Board of Review. For ranks where a period of tenure is required, that period begins with the date of passing of the Board of Review for the previous rank.

#### Appeal Procedures

In the ordinary course, appeals of Board of Review decisions will not be made, principally because the Scout believes in the justice of the decision. Generally, appeals are sought only when a Scout sees his opportunity to achieve the Eagle rank diminishing.

When can appeals occur?

First, if the troop leader or troop committee does not recommend a Scout for a Board of Review or fails to sign an Eagle rank application, the Scout (or other interested party) may appeal that decision to the next highest level.

Second, if a board of review does not find favorably for the candidate, the Scout may also appeal to the next highest level. This appeal can be taken by the Scout, his leader, or the Scout's parents. An appeal from a local Board of Review would be taken to the district advancement committee, and from there to the council advancement committee, and finally to the National Boy Scout Committee.

When an appeal is made, the committee to whom the appeal is addressed will promptly review the facts. All parties must be interviewed by the committee, hopefully without confrontation. A written report with all details will be prepared by the reviewing committee and forwarded to the National Boy Scout Committee.

Appeals to the National Boy Scout Committee are made only through the local council. There is no direct appeal. In Eagle matters, a copy of the Scout's Eagle Scout Rank Application must accompany the national appeal.

#### *The Board of Review and the Healthy Troop*

Thinking about the process we have been reviewing should given you an appreciation for how the Board of Review can contribute to maintaining a healthy troop. It is the ideal place to encourage leadership, to check on problems the Scoutmaster sees arising, to head off future problems, and to make sure the Scout is on track to accomplish the goals and methods of Scouting.

There should never be a heavy-handed approach to a Board of Review; this is no attempt at disciplining a wayward Scout. Rather, it should be thought of as a way to make it easier for a Scout to do the things that contribute to the health of the troop. Perhaps a Scout can be encouraged to work with younger Scouts, or to let Scouts perform their roles in the troop without badgering – this may be especially necessary for a first-time patrol leader or even senior patrol leader.

#### The Board of Review and the Healthy Scout

Most importantly, the Board of Review should be a way of encouraging the individual Scout. The Board of Review is the most personal method in Scouting to assess the needs and desires of a Scout, to encourage and support him, to learn of his fears and hopes, to help him see himself in the greater context of Scout, and to encourage his personal growth, both in skills and in living up to the ideals of Scouting.

#### The Board of Review Process

The Scout who is ready to advance in rank must first have a Scoutmaster Conference. When this is complete, the Scout will be advised to contact the designated advancement person and request a Board of Review. At that time, the advancement person must advise the Scout of the following:

- Ensure that the Scout has successfully completed a Scoutmaster Conference and that his Boy Scout Handbook is signed off for all the rank requirements for which he is requesting the Board of Review.
- Remind the Scout to bring his Boy Scout Handbook with all signatures in tact to his Board of Review.
- Advise the Scout that he must be in full Dress Class A uniform, including troop scarf and Order of the Arrow sash, as outlined in the Troop 19 handbook.

The advancement person will then set a date, time, and location for the Board of Review. Confirm with the Scout the details for the Board of Review appointment.

#### Beginning the Board of Review

- Welcome the Scout with a handshake and introduce the adults who will be conducting the Board of Review. There must be at least **three adults** presiding over the Board of Review.
- Check the Scout's uniform for proper attire, ensuring that he is in compliance with the uniform policy as stipulated in the Troop 19 Handbook.
- Review the Scout's Boy Scout Handbook for the correct signatures and requirements for his requested rank advancement.
- Ask the Scout to come to attention and recite the Pledge of Allegiance, the Scout Oath and Law, the Scout Motto, and the Scout Slogan.
- Once the Scout has completed the above steps, ask him to please be seated and remind him that the purpose of the Board of Review is to see if he is ready to advance, to ask him questions about his Scouting experience and to prepare him for other Boards of Review. Remind him that no skill demonstration questions will be asked and that he should make eye contact and answer questions as best as he can.
- Board of Review members may then ask questions of the Scout. The questions should be open-ended, offering an opportunity for the Scout to speak about his opinions, experiences, activities, and accomplishments. The questions should not

be restricted to Scouting but should cover many aspects of the Scout's life, such as school, church, work, or athletics.

• The time for a Board of Review range from 10 to 30 minutes, with shorter time for lower ranks and a longer period of time for the Eagle Scout Rank. When all Board of Review members have had an opportunity to ask questions, the Scout is excused from the room. The board members then consider whether the Scout is ready for the next rank and the board's decision must be unanimous. Once the decision is made, the Scout is invited back into the room and the Board of Review Chairman informs the Scout of the Board's decision. If the Scout is approved for the next rank, extend congratulations and encourage the Scout to continue advancing. All members of the Board of Review must sign the Scout's Boy Scout Handbook to document the board's unanimous decision. If there are issues which prevent the Scout from advancing to the next rank, the Board must detail the precise nature of the deficiencies. The Scout must be told specifically what must be done in order to be successful at the next Board of Review. The Scoutmaster must be advised of the Scout's inability to advance and the reasons why.

Use this book as a guideline. We have included some background information as well as basic questions regarding Scouting and the Scout's involvement in his community. There are also some sample questions for each rank.

#### WHAT EVERY SCOUT SHOULD KNOW

#### Scout Oath

On my honor, I will do my best To do my duty to God and my country And to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times To keep myself physically strong, Mentally awake, and morally straight.

# Scout Law

A Scout is: Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

# Scout Motto

Be Prepared

#### Scout Slogan

Do a Good Turn Daily

#### Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to – Be clean in my outdoor manners, Be careful with fire, Be considerate in the outdoors, and Be conservation-minded.

Note: The Scout should be familiar with the principles and tenants of the Outdoor Code but he is not required to have the code memorized.

# THE MEANING OF THE SCOUT LAW

**A Scout is Trustworthy**. A Scout tells the truth. He is honest, and he keeps his promises. People can depend on him.

A Scout is Loyal. A Scout is true to his family, friends, Scout leaders, school, and nation.

**A Scout is Helpful**. A Scout cares about other people. He willingly volunteers to help others without expecting payment or reward.

**A Scout is Friendly**. A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He offers his friendship to people of all races and nations, and respects them even if their beliefs and customs are different from his own.

**A Scout is Courteous**. A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows that using good manners makes it easier for people to get along.

**A Scout is Kind.** A Scout knows there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated. Without good reason, he does not harm or kill any living thing.

A Scout is Obedient. A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobeying them.

**A Scout is Cheerful**. A Scout looks for the bright side of life. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy.

**A Scout is Thrifty**. A Scout works to pay his own way and to help others. He saves for the future. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property.

**A Scout is Brave**. A Scout can face danger although he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at him or threaten him.

**A Scout is Clean.** A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He chooses the company of those who live by high standards. He helps keep his home and community clean.

**A Scout is Reverent**. A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.

Note: Questions for rank advancement can be based on the Scout Law, such as:

- What does it mean to be trustworthy?
- How is a Scout courteous?
- What does it mean for a Scout to be obedient?

To help break the ice and ease the Scout's nervousness, some basic questions to ask may include the following:

- How old are you?
- What grade are you in?
- What school do you attend?
- What is your favorite subject in school and why?
- What is your least favorite subject in school and why?
- Do you have any brothers and/or sisters? Tell us about them.
- How long have you been in Scouting?
- What do you like best about Scouting and Troop 19?
- What suggestions do you have to help improve our troop?
- Tell us about your last troop campout or activity.



# SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR SECOND CLASS RANK

- How many patrol meetings have you attended in the last three months?
- Who is your patrol leader and how do you think he is doing as patrol leader?
- Tell us about a service project in which you participated.
- Tell us about your last troop campout or activity. What did you like best and why? What did you like least and why?
- How are you doing in your first aid skills? Tell us what is in your personal first aid kit.
- Why is it important to be able to identify animals found in the community?
- Tell us about the flag ceremony in which you participated.
- What have you learned about handling an axe, a saw, and a hatchet?
- How are a map and compass useful on a campout or hike?
- Have you ever done more than one good turn in a day? Tell us about it.
- Have you earned any merit badges? (If Yes, tell us which ones and why you chose them. What did you learn? If No, encourage getting started and suggest one or two of the less challenging merit badges.)
- Did you attend summer camp this year? (If Yes, tell us about the best experience at camp. If No, tell us why you did not attend camp this year.)
- How do you help out at home, church, and school?
- What are you goals for the next few months? When do you expect the complete the requirements for First Class?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- How do you fulfill you duty to God and country?
- What does it mean to say "A Scout is Trustworthy?"

Approximate time frame for a Second Class Board of Review is 10 to 15 minutes.



# SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR FIRST CLASS RANK

- How many troop meetings do you attend each month?
- Who is your patrol leader and how do you think he is doing as patrol leader?
- What part of the troop meeting is most rewarding to you and why?
- Tell us about your last troop campout or activity. What did you like best and why? What did you like least and why? If you were in charge of planning and preparing a dinner for the next campout, what would you select?
- How are you doing in your first aid skills? Why is it important for you to know how to transport a person who has a broken leg?
- Why is it important for you to be able to recognize local plant life?
- As a First Class Scout, what do you think the Star, Life, and Eagle Scouts will expect from you on an outing?
- What have you learned in Scouting that you can share with your family?
- What did you learn about using a compass while completing the orienteering requirement?
- Why do you think that swimming is emphasized in Scouting?
- Why are merit badges part of Scouting?
- What is your most favorite part of Scouting and why? What is your least favorite part of Scouting and why?
- How do you help out at home, church, and school?
- What are you goals for the next few months? When do you expect the complete the requirements for Star?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- How do you fulfill you duty to God and country?
- How do you define Scout Spirit?
- What is the Order of the Arrow? What is the primary function of the Order of the Arrow?
- Who was Lord Baden-Powell?

Approximate time frame for a First Class Board of Review is 15 to 20 minutes.



# SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR STAR RANK

- How many troop outings have you attended in the last three months?
- Tell us about the last service project in which you participated.
- What does it mean for a Star Scout to Be Prepared on a daily basis?
- How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
- Which is more important and why becoming a Star Scout or learning the skills prescribed for a Star Scout?
- Why do you think a Scoutmaster's Conference is required for rank advancement?
- Tell us what you think the most important part of a troop Court of Honor is, and why it is important.
- How would you get a Scout to do an unpleasant task?
- What extracurricular activities do you participate in at school?
- How many merit badges have you earned? What was the most difficult (or fun, challenging, expensive, etc.) and why?
- What leadership positions have you held outside of your patrol? What challenges did they present?
- How did you feel about your performance in that leadership position? What would you do differently, if anything? Do you feel you accomplished anything as a leader? What were your frustrations?
- How do you help out at home, church, and school?
- What are you goals for the next few months? When do you expect the complete the requirements for Life?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- How do you fulfill your duty to God and country?
- What does it mean to say "A Scout is Loyal?"
- Have you thought about achieving Eagle? Have you thought about a service project for Eagle?
- What is the Outdoor Code and why is it important?
- Tell us about any special awards or accomplishments you received in school, church, etc.
- What was the name of the island that Baden-Powell used for the first Scout camp?
- If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow ask what membership in the Order of the Arrow signifies. When did the Scout complete his Ordeal and/or Brotherhood.

Approximate time frame for a Star Board of Review is 15 to 20 minutes.



### SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR LIFE RANK

- Tell us about the most ambitious pioneering project with which you have assisted.
- Tell us about your worst camping experience in Scouting and what you learned about yourself and your fellow Scouts.
- How many patrol meetings has your patrol held in the last three months and how many of them have you attended?
- How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
- Why do you think that the three Citizenship merit badges are required for the Eagle rank?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters who are in Scouting? If so, what can you do to encourage them to continue with Scouts and to move forward along the Scouting Trail?
- How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
- Why do you think that Star and Life Scouts are required to contribute so much time to service projects? What service projects are most rewarding to you and why? Why do you think that Scouting for Food is referred to as a National Good Turn?
- Why do you think that a Board of Review is required for rank advancement?
- What are your hobbies? Have any of the merit badges you have earned lead to hobbies or possible careers?
- Of the merit badges you've earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult and why?
- What is your current leadership position? What particular challenges does it present? How do you define leadership?
- How do you feel about your performance in that leadership position? What would you do differently, if anything? Do you feel you accomplished anything as a leader? What are your frustrations?
- How do you help out at home, church, and school?
- What are you goals for the next few months? When do you expect the complete the requirements for Eagle? Have you thought about a service project for Eagle? What are you thinking about doing?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- How do you fulfill your duty to God and country?
- What does it mean to say "A Scout is Reverent?"

- Have you thought about achieving Eagle? Have you thought about a service project for Eagle?
- How has Scouting prepared you for the future?
- What does Scout Spirit mean to a Life Scout?
- The Scout Oath refers to Duty to Self what duty do we have to ourselves?
- In what year was the Boy Scouts of America founded? (February 8, 1910)
- If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow ask what role the Order of the Arrow plays in Scouting. What honor (level of membership) do you hold in the Order of the Arrow? What is the difference between Scout ranks and OA honors (levels of membership)?

Approximate time frame for a Life Board of Review is 15 to 25 minutes.



#### SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR EAGLE SCOUT RANK

- How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
- Why do you think that the three Citizenship merit badges are required for the Eagle rank?
- How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
- How do you feel your Eagle project went?
- Did you run into any rough spots?
- Did you plan enough to get you over the rough spots?
- How did you work with the agency for which you did the project?
- Were they clear in their goals?
- Would you do the project differently now?
- Why do you think that a Board of Review is required for rank advancement?
- Of the merit badges you've earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult and why?
- How do you think the troop is doing?
- How do you intend to help the troop now?
- Do you have any goals for the troop?
- What are your goals for yourself?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- How do you fulfill your duty to God and country?
- What does it mean to say "A Scout is Reverent?"
- How has Scouting prepared you for the future?
- What does Scout Spirit mean to an Eagle Scout?
- The Scout Oath refers to Duty to Self what duty do we have to ourselves?

Approximate time frame for an Eagle Scout Board of Review is 20 to 30 minutes.



# **SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR EAGLE PALM**

- How have the Scout skills that you have learned helped you in a non-Scouting activity?
- How do you choose between a school activity, a Scout activity, and a family activity?
- How do you plan on contributing to the troop now?
- What are your goals for the troop?
- What are your personal plans?
- Why do you think that a Board of Review is required for Eagle Palms?
- Of the merit badges you've earned, which one do you think will be of greatest value to you as an adult and why?
- How is it possible to live the Scout Oath and Law in your daily life?
- How do you fulfill your duty to God and country?
- What does it mean to say "A Scout is Reverent?"
- How has Scouting prepared you for the future?
- How do you inspire younger Scouts?
- How are you giving back to the troop?

Approximate time frame for an Eagle Palm Board of Review is 10 to 15 minutes.