

Explorer Belt

Project Suggestions

Factsheet 4 of 6 in the Explorer Belt Series



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Introduction

This factsheet will be of particular value to individuals who are looking to understand what is meant by major and minor projects.

It will also be of use to District Explorer Scout Commissioners and County/Area Scout Network Commissioners, as they seek to ensure that the projects chosen are suitable and relevant to the Explorer Scouts or Scout Network members that will be doing them.

Why have projects?

Projects, both major and minor, are not supposed to be academic exercises that will be formally examined at the end. The projects are simply a method designed to bring teams in to close contact with the people and the communities that they meet and pass through on their travels.

Although teams are encouraged to keep some record of the work done on their projects and to keep a record of people that have assisted, it is not a requirement to have a written report for each project. The logbook or notebook, if used well, will be a handy resource during the debriefing and also when reflecting on the content of the assessment presentation.

Major Project

The team should choose a major project. This should be approved by the assessment team before departure. The assessment team will want to ensure that the project is appropriate and relevant and may benefit from discussing with contacts in the destination country. A good major project will be relevant to the particular destination country and will provide ample opportunities for contact with local people. However, it should be

flexible enough to not be focussed on a given place, day or thing. Through the major project, team members should develop a better understanding of the country, its people and way of life.

The major project should take between ten and fifteen hours to complete

Example Major Projects

- Compare sports facilities between the country you are visiting and home, what types of sport are played, what are the most popular sports and who are the most famous local sports personalities.
- Study the provision of facilities for young people in urban, sub-urban and rural areas in the country you are visiting.
- Investigate the structure, authority and scope of local government and whether people feel more connected to local or national political issues.

Minor Projects

In addition to the self-selected major project, each team should complete ten smaller projects. Five of these could be surprise projects set by other members of the Explorer Scout Unit or Scout Network. These projects should take about an hour or so to complete. It can also be useful for the team to choose a handful of projects from a longer list in order to provide flexibility and choice based on local circumstances.

A good small project is one that requires input from local people. If it prompts the team to try or do something that they might have otherwise have missed this can also be helpful.

Although it can be helpful if the minor projects are given to the team several hours before departure, it can be helpful with a large group expedition if the distribution of minor projects is done by giving a sealed envelope to teams as they are dropped off. In a group environment, if all participants on an expedition know minor projects in advance, it means that all teams can discuss approaches to tackling the projects before they have even started. Some teams may have the same projects.

If you have been tasked with setting the minor projects, in confidence, and are unsure where to start, the example projects detailed in this factsheet should be of assistance. You can research the history, geography and traditions of the area that the team is planning to visit and develop minor projects based on that. Ensure that they adhere to the basic standards set out for minor projects. These can be found in The Unit Programme, the Explorer Scout Membership Pack and Network Essentials.

Example Minor Projects

- Visit a police or fire station and explain how the service differs from that in the United Kingdom
- Complete a service project that will assist and individual, family or group
- Use produce from a local farmers market and cook a traditional local dish. Get some verdicts from locals
- Make contact with local Scouting and report back on their activities and programme
- Visit local crafts people and find out more about their skills and trade
- Visit a farm and offer your help with some farm chores. Perhaps assist with the harvest
- Sleep somewhere strange or unusual for one night. Be able to explain why the place you chose is strange or unusual
- Select a small town and try to meet a local dignitary or official and report on

their job and the organisation of local government in the community

- Give an English lesson to people of your own age
- Find out from local people their views on the effectiveness of the public transport system
- Describe how local family life differs from your own. If possible, try to be invited to spend an evening with a family in their house
- Appear on television, radio or in a newspaper and explain what you are doing
- Choose a specific type of building e.g. church, farmhouse, etc. and compare and contrast the architecture and design of at least three examples using sketches to illustrate your findings
- Find out what the national pastime, costume, dish and drinks are and try them out
- What image do locals have of a typical Briton
- Milk a cow and find out what uses the milk is put to

Factsheets

The factsheets in the Explorer Belt series are:

1. Explorer Belt – Introduction
2. Explorer Belt – Going your own way
3. Explorer Belt – Organising a group expedition
4. Explorer Belt – Project suggestions
5. Explorer Belt – Useful contacts
6. Explorer Belt – The end game