

Playing the Past

Junior *aMUSE* badge

Dream up a character: a girl or woman who lived in another time period. Maybe a poodle-skirt-wearing Girl Scout from the 1950s, a Wild West cowgirl, a medieval duchess, or a Japanese princess from long ago? You can be someone who really existed or an historical woman from your imagination. Give yourself a new name and get ready to live history!

Steps

1. Decide who you are
2. Create a costume
3. Experience daily life
4. Have some old-fashioned fun
5. Become your character

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how girls of the past lived, worked, and played.

Step 1 Decide who you are

Pick your time period and do a little research. What did girls do? What did they like? Then use one of the choices to come up with the details of your character's life.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Write her diary. Pretend to be your character and write a week's diary about your daily life.

OR

Write a speech for your character. If she could have gotten up and spoken her mind, what would she have said - and to whom would she have said it? Pick a scenario and write her words. FOR MORE FUN: Perform it for an audience!

OR

Play a game of 20 questions. If your character actually existed, have a partner try to guess who she is or what time period she is from by asking your questions. Then tell her all about the character.

Step 2 Create a costume

Now it's time to work on your look. Create a costume that matches your character's lifestyle and time period. If a specific part of the outfit (such as an extra-long skirt) serves a particular purpose or function, find out what it is.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Do it yourself. Stitch your own outfit, or make one from a pattern (ask an adult for help if you need it). Or visit a thrift shop to find clothing to decorate.

For More Fun: Add a hairdo! Style your hair for your time period, too.

OR

Make two or three accessories. What kinds of decorations did girls wear in your time period? Pick something to re-create. This could be a hat, necklace of fake jewels, or a lady knight's shield.

OR

Draw it out. Sketch and label a typical outfit as if you were a fashion designer from the era. For More Fun: Make a simple doll from paper (or use a doll you have) and make the outfit for her to wear.

More to Explore

Pretend you're a Girl Scout from the past. If your character is from the past 100 years, find out how her Girl Scout uniform would have looked – and make your best copy.

Step 3 Experience daily life

Immerse yourself in your character's time period. Think about what her lifestyle would have been like, and live it out. This is your chance to spend a day seeing the world through your character's eyes.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

What are our chores/duties? Take one on. You might hand-dip candles, churn butter in a jar, embroider a sampler, or make a doll.

OR

Food and meals. Research a recipe and make a typical dish a girl from that time period might have prepared for her family.

OR

Home Sweet Home. Where would you have lived? Create a model of your character's home – you might make a teepee or Mongolian yurt (a kind of tent) or draw and label the parts of a castle.

More to Explore

Find out how your character would have lived if she had had a disability. Share what you learn with your Girl Scout group. How would things be different for her today?

Step 4 Have some old-fashioned fun

Every girl has a favorite game. Find out what kinds of things girls in your chosen time period did for fun, then try out an activity yourself.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Make music! Find out what sounds were popular in your day and share them with others. You could look up sheet music and sing or play a song, make an instrument, or even compose something.

OR

Play a game – or two. What kinds of parlor or party games existed? Make a board game or play cards in a style popular for the times. What sorts of outside games were played? Gather your friends and try one.

OR

Create art. What types of art were popular? Sculpt something from clay, do a painting or drawing in a period-appropriate style, or try out a dance from your era.

Step 5 Become your character

Now, act as your character. Wear your costume and plan to share one thing about your life. You could teach some friends a game you learned, share the food you made with your family, or tell anything else you can dream up to other Girl Scout Juniors or classmates at school.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Make your own event. Maybe each girl is a character from *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott, and you celebrate Amy's wedding. Or perhaps you can set up a medieval feast, pioneer day at the park, or a big dance typical of the time period. If you're from different eras, make it a living-history jamboree - could you each have a booth to represent your era?

OR

Have a living-history party. Get together with your group and have everyone share their characters. Or be the star yourself, and bring the era to life for friends or family.

OR

Attend a history-oriented event in your town. Local historical museums and libraries sometimes host events that celebrate the past. Many cities have yearly Renaissance fairs, and some places stage reenactments of historical events. See if you can find one in your era, and make this badge a way to get yourself ready to attend.

Add the badge to your Journey

For step 1, when you create a biography for the girl you will play, include a stereotype that she might have faced - and her ideas for busting it.

Not that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Visiting a Brownie group or a classroom at my school in character to teach them about girls and women of the past
- Holding a performance at a community center to share what I've learned about how girls throughout history lived
- Writing and illustrating a story that tells friends what life was like for girls in the past

I'm inspired to.

