Assembled Den Meeting Plan – BEAR (3rd Grade)

This ***Assembled* Den Meeting Plan** combines ideas from Bear Den Meeting Resources found at Scouting.Org or from the requirements themselves, into the parts of a quality Den Meeting, which are **Preparation** (plan + collect materials needed), **Gathering** (something for early arrivals to do), **Opening** (a ceremony to start), then **Activities** (an Activities Intro chat, followed by a series of activities, ideally alternating quiet and energetic fun), **Closing + Recognition** (ceremony), and **After the Meeting** (follow up) …

Bear – 3rd Grade

Bears Afloat



A "Boating" Adventure

ELECTIVE (2 "electives" are needed to earn the Rank of Bear)

Snapshot of Adventure. Grip, shaft, throat, shoulder, blade, and tip are all parts of a paddle. In this Adventure, you'll discover the world of paddle crafts. Canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards all rely on you as the source of power. There are places that you can get to only by paddle craft. You will also learn how to be safe when using a paddle craft, from learning about your equipment to proper ways to paddle your craft.

The QR Code above takes you to scouting.org/cub-scout-adventures/bears-afloat/ ↑

This Den Meeting Plan adapts Activity ideas from that Scouting link with other fun, simple, easy ideas. For more, see the Adventure Resources at the end of this Plan for a list of the suggested Activities at that link.

Requirements from the Bear Handbook

1. **Before attempting requirements 6 and 7 for this Adventure, you must pass the Scouting swimmer test.**
2. **Pick a paddle craft you'll use to complete all requirements: canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard.**
3. **With your den or an adult, discuss the role of qualified adult supervision at a paddle craft activity.**
4. **Explain the safety rules to follow when safely using a paddle craft.**
5. **Discover how to tell if a life jacket is the correct size and approved for your paddle craft activity. Demonstrate how to wear it.**
6. **Explore how your paddle craft responds as you move your paddle through the water from different places.**
7. **Have 30 minutes, or more, of canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard paddle time.**

Meeting Plan

Does this take one Meeting to complete – or more? It's up to the Parents / Leaders! As written, you can do this in a single session, but you can get out on the lake more than once, right?

PREPARATION (and materials needed): Read the Bears Afloat adventure in the Bear Handbook.

- Determine when and where you will do this Adventure, and share information with your Den families.
  - You may have an opportunity to do this at a Scout Camp, but other outfitters can provide canoe, kayak, and paddleboard rentals. Good outfitters can assist in instruction (reach out in advance).
  - Prepare by having one or more adults complete the Scouting America Safety Afloat training (30 minutes) at my.scouting.
  - Determine if you want to have a paddle sports instructor help instruct (share this plan with them).
- Other items you will need beyond paddlecraft and paddles:
  - Life jackets. Whistles for lifeguards and lookouts. Buddy tags and a buddy board system.
  - Scouting Annual Health and Medical Record (the "All Scouting Events" version) for all participants.

GATHERING: A "gathering" activity is to keep Scouts occupied as the rest of the den arrives. *What you do will depend on your location and leadership resources*.

- Use gathering time to connect with adults and "share the leader load": everyone can help with something! A good approach is for different parents (or teams) to share the "lead" of parts of the Adventure below.

OPENING: (Parent leader: _____) An Opening ceremony says, "we've begun" and helps set the tone.

- Maybe: a simple ceremony you like that includes the Pledge of Allegiance and the Scout Oath and/or Law.

ACTIVITIES (See also other Activities linked at Adventure Resources – use those if you like them):

◆**Activity Intro:** (Parent leader: _____) As you move into Activities, have some "talk time" where you (1) discuss today's Adventure activities (what you'll do, how you'll do it – share in a way to get the Scouts excited) and (2) let each of the Scouts share "what's new" with them and get to know each other better.

◆**Activity 1: Swimmer Test (Requirement 1: "***Before attempting requirements 6 and 7 for this Adventure, you must pass the Scouting swimmer test.***")** (Parent leader: _____)

- **Swimmer Test:** Jump feet first into water over the head in depth.
  - Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl.
  - Then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke.
  - The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn.
  - After completing the swim, rest by floating.

◆**Activity 2: Pick Your Paddle Craft (Requirement 2: "***Pick a paddle craft you'll use to complete all requirements: canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard.***")** (Parent leader: _____)

Choose one that you can paddle for this Adventure from what is available at your waterfront.





◆**Activity 3: Qualified Adult Supervision (Requirement 3: "***With your den or an adult, discuss the role of qualified adult supervision at a paddle craft activity.***")** (Parent leader: _____)

- The first rule of Safe Swim Defense is to make sure there is an adult who is properly trained oversee the swimming activity. This is called **Qualified Supervision**.
  - All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult aged 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in their care, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of Scouting Safe Swim Defense.
- Related to that is **Response Personnel or Lifeguards**. Every swimming activity must be closely and continuously monitored by a trained rescue team on the alert for and ready to respond during emergencies.
- Also: have a **Lookout**. The lookout continuously monitors the conduct of the swim, identifies any departures from Safe Swim Defense guidelines, alerts rescue personnel as needed, and monitors the weather and environment.

- Ask Scouts questions to ensure they understand the meaning of "Qualified Supervision." Examples:
  - What type of job or training would a person have to meet the guidelines? *Aquatics Instructor, Scouting America; Scouting America Lifeguard; Scouting America Swimming & Water Rescue; or other lifeguard, swimming instructor*
  - What are the responsibilities of the person performing qualified supervision? *Watching swimmers and boaters.*
  - How old must one be to be eligible as the lead qualified supervisor? *21*
  - How many Cub Scouts are assigned for each qualified supervisor? *5 for paddlecraft*
  - Where would you find someone to supervise your swimming Adventure? *Scouting America trained adult, lifeguard at a local swimming pool or Scout camp.*



◆Activity 4: Paddle Craft Safety Rules (Requirement 4: *"Explain the safety rules to follow when safely using a paddle craft."*) (Parent leader: _____)

Review with Scouts the safety rules when using a paddle craft:

1) **Qualified Supervision** — See previous activity/Requirement 3.
2) **Personal Health Review** — Completing the Scouting Annual Health and Medical Record (the "All Scouting Events" version) will be needed. *Are there any restrictions on the part of the participant?*
3) **Swimming Ability** — Complete an annual swim test. *Check the status of all participants.*
4) **Life Jackets** — Properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jackets are worn by everyone engaged in boating activities. *Try on life jackets in the next activity.*
5) **Buddy System** — Make sure each member is accounted for, especially when in the water. *Outline the system to be used today, whether buddy board or lists kept by Adult Supervision.*
6) **Skill Proficiency** — Everyone in an activity afloat must have sufficient knowledge and skill to participate safely. *Thanks for coming to our clinic!*
7) **Planning** — Check for weather and contingencies as needed prior to your activity. *Check now.*
8) **Equipment** — All craft must be suitable for the activity, be seaworthy, and be capable of floating if capsized. *Before we get on the water, we'll inspect.*
9) **Discipline** — Remember that rules are only effective when they are followed. *A Scout is Obedient.*

◆Activity 5: Life Jacket Size and Safety (Requirement 5: *"Discover how to tell if a life jacket is the correct size and approved for your paddle craft activity. Demonstrate how to wear it."*) (Parent leader: _____)

Tell Scouts that they must wear a properly fitted life jacket for all boating activities.

- **Check the Label!** Explain that the only life jackets Scouts should use are the ones that have been approved by the United States Coast Guard. Show Scouts that a life jacket that has been approved by the Coast Guard has the approval information printed on the inside of the jacket.
- **Buoyancy Level.** Share with Scouts the performance list of Coast Guard-approved life jackets. It is required that everyone, Scouts and adults, wear a **level 70 life jacket or above** during paddlecraft activities.
  - Level 50 Buoyancy Aid: Not recommended for weak or nonswimmers. No self-turning ability.
  - Level 70 Buoyancy Aid: Equivalent to the Type III life jackets. They are the most common life jackets worn by recreational boaters. No self-turning ability.
  - Level 100 Life Jacket: High flotation life jacket. Some self-turning ability.
  - Level 150 Life Jacket: High flotation life jacket. Offshore waters, self-turning ability.

- **How to Wear Your Life Jacket.** Demonstrate with Scouts how to wear a life jacket.
  - Check the label to see if it's designed for your size and weight.
  - Put the jacket on, buckle it, and tighten the straps.
  - Hold your arms over your head. Have a friend pull up on the tops of the arm openings. If the jacket rides up over your chin or face, it's too loose.
- **Try One On.** Ask Scouts to find a buddy. Have Scouts try on the life jackets. Tell them to take turns pulling up on the tops of the arm openings to see if their jacket fits properly.



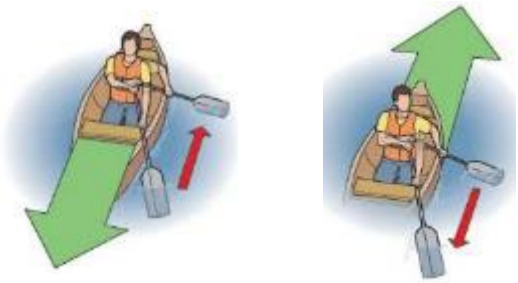
◆Activity 6: Paddle Power (Requirement 6: *"Explore how your paddle craft responds as you move your paddle through the water from different places."*) (Parent leader: _____)

Explain to Scouts that they will be learning and practicing how to paddle. Assemble Scouts onshore and distribute paddles.

Practice the following strokes on land:

Forward Stroke **Back Stroke**

- **Forward paddle stroke:**
  - Catch Lower the paddle blade edgewise into the water in front of you, not too deep.
  - Power Pull backward.
  - Recover Position the paddle forward, ready to begin another stroke.
- **Backstroke:** Push on the paddle instead of pulling.



- **Sweep Strokes**
  - Use sweeps to turn.
  - Reach out with the paddle and move it in a quarter circle, either forward or backward.
  - Or use **draw and pry strokes**, pulling or pushing the paddle straight toward or away from the canoe.

Sweep **Draw** **Pry**



- Practice again before getting into the paddle craft by standing in knee-high water.
  - Once on the water, demonstrate each stroke.

◆Activity 7: Paddle On! (Requirement 7: *"Have 30 minutes, or more, of canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard paddle time."*) (Parent leader: _____)

To enter a canoe:

- When entering, exiting or moving a canoe, always keep three points of contact by keeping both hands on the gunwales (sides of the canoe) and moving one foot at a time.
- Put the canoe in the water with the stern (back of the boat) first.
  - Put the canoe fully in the water to avoid "bridging" where part of the boat is still on land and the other part in the water.
- Stay low by hunching your back and bending your knees; this will make it easier to keep your balance.



    - Standing outside the canoe in the water, the bow (front) paddler steadies the bow with their knees while holding on to the bow deck plate.
    - Next, the stern (back) paddler steps into the boat on the center line, facing the bow (front), then backs up to the stern and sits or kneels into their position, keeping three points of contact.
- Once in position, the stern paddler places their paddle in the water with the blade parallel to the canoe, up to the throat and holds the paddle shaft against the side of the canoe, locking their thumb of the shaft hand over the gunwale.
    - This will reduce the side-to-side motion of the canoe as the bow (front) paddler gets in.
- The bow paddler places their paddle in the canoe and enters the canoe in the same way the stern (back) paddler did going to the center of the canoe.
    - The stern (back) paddler is in their position, and the bow (front) paddler is in the center of the boat.
    - The bow of the boat will float free of the shoreline.
- The stern (back) paddler back paddles away from the shoreline, and the bow (front) paddler moves forward to their paddling position.

To enter a kayak:



- Start with the kayak on a shallow shoreline. To keep your kayak stable, bring it parallel to the shore.
- Use your paddle for balance by placing one end on the shore bank and the other end just behind the cockpit rim of the kayak. Try to keep three points of contact with the boat, such as both hands and a foot, or both feet and your seat.
- Slide your legs in and out of the cockpit. Move slowly and keep your body low.

To enter a stand-up paddle board:





- Start with the stand-up paddle board on a shallow shoreline.
- Grab each side of the paddle board with your hands. Staying low, get on the board using your knees.
- Place the paddle in front of you parallel to your knees. Stay centered on the stand-up paddle board.
- Holding on to the paddle shaft with both hands, slowly stand up while keeping hands on the paddle.
- Stay centered on the paddle board with your feet square to your shoulders and start to paddle.
- Be Prepared, Be Safe, Have Fun!

CLOSING: A Closing ceremony ends the meeting and highlights the achievements. A Den leader can reflect on the meeting + praise Scouts for specific good actions today. Thank every Parent who helped.

- If you have them, award Loops to all who completed the requirements. Maybe end with a "Living Circle".

AFTER THE MEETING: Clean up as needed. Share refreshments if that's what you like.

Upon completion of this Adventure, your Bears will have earned the Adventure Loop for it. Make sure they are recognized for their completion by presenting the Adventure Loops, to be worn on their belts, as soon as possible according to your pack's tradition. Text or email all Den parents to share these resources for future reference and so parents of Scouts who could not attend may complete this Adventure from home.

ADVENTURE RESOURCES: Den Meeting Resources and "Activity Card" options for this Adventure are found at https://www.scouting.org/cub-scout-adventures/bears-afloat/. Those resources include the Snapshot of Adventure (included above), a "Safety Moment" of tips and links about doing this safely, and, for each Requirement, one or more "Activity Cards" you can click on for an activity to complete the Requirement.

Those "Activity Card" pages are linked below – along with the "Key" scoring of (a) whether the Activity must be done Outdoors, may be done Indoors, or involves Travel; (b) how much Energy Scouts will generate; (c) How "Supply Intensive"; and (d) Prep Time – those last 3 categories are scored on a 1 to 5 scale, with 5 being "most". Note that while that website page says "Choose one of the following" before the "Activity Cards", what that means is "Choose one of the following – *or do some other activity that will meet the Requirement*", because the Requirements are required, not the Activity Cards. In the Assembled Den Meeting Plan above we have adapted some of what's below or other ways to complete the requirement in easier ways.

1. **Before attempting requirements 6 and 7 for this Adventure, you must pass the Scouting swimmer test.**
   - Swimmers Test (Travel; **5** of 5 Energy; **4** of 5 Supplies; **3** of 5 Prep Time)
2. **Pick a paddle craft you'll use to complete all requirements: canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard.**
   - Picking Paddle Craft (Indoor; **1** of 5 Energy; **5** of 5 Supplies; **4** of 5 Prep Time)
3. **With your den or an adult, discuss the role of qualified adult supervision at a paddle craft activity.**
   - Qualified Supervision (Indoor; **1** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
4. **Explain the safety rules to follow when safely using a paddle craft.**
   - Paddling Safely Rule Game (Indoor; **1** of 5 Energy; **1** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
5. **Discover how to tell if a life jacket is the correct size and approved for your paddle craft activity. Demonstrate how to wear it.**
   - Life Jacket Education (Indoor; **2** of 5 Energy; **5** of 5 Supplies; **2** of 5 Prep Time)
6. **Explore how your paddle craft responds as you move your paddle through the water from different places.**
   - Paddle Practice (Travel; **5** of 5 Energy; **5** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)
7. **Have 30 minutes, or more, of canoe, kayak, or stand-up paddleboard paddle time.**
   - Paddling Around for Fun (Travel; **5** of 5 Energy; **5** of 5 Supplies; **5** of 5 Prep Time)