





## Language of Scouting

This reference is the Boy Scouts of America's definitive resource on terms and style specific to Scouting and this organization. The Language of Scouting encompasses style, usage, grammar, and spelling norms observed by the Boy Scouts of America and used by the Marketing Group and Communication Services Department at the national office. These standards have been developed so that the BSA can disseminate resources and other information in the most professional, consistent, coherent, and uniform manner for all forms of communication—printed, electronic, and so forth.

Scouting terms are based in part on the Charter and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America. Grammar, spelling, style, and usage decisions are based on the latest editions of the following references, in order of preference: Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, The Associated Press Stylebook, and The Chicago Manual of Style. Turn to these references (in the given order) for further reference. However, the Language of Scouting always takes precedence.

For questions about style, usage, grammar, and spelling, feel free to call the Grammar and Writing Style Hot Line at 972.580.2334.

### Resources

- ◆ [Alphabetical Listing of Terms and Style](#)
- ◆ [National and Local Council Professional \(and Some Paraprofessional\) Positions](#)
- ◆ [Abbreviations and Acronyms Commonly Used in Scouting](#)

## Language of Scouting Quick Quiz

Aims of Scouting	aims of Scouting
assistant Cubmaster	Assistant Cubmaster
Blue and Gold Banquet	blue and gold banquet
Boy Scout Troop	Boy Scout troop
Boy's Life Magazine	Boys' Life magazine
BSA Centennial	BSA centennial
camp-o-ree	camporee
charter partner	charter organization
council office	council service center
District	district
Executive	executive
First Class Scout	First Class rank
fund-raising	fund raising
grubmaster	Grubmaster
homepage	home page
local council	local Council
methods of Scouting	Methods of Scouting
OK, OK'd, OK'ing, OKs	okay
on-line	online
Pinewood Derby	pinewood derby
Roundtable	roundtable
Roundup	Round-up
Scouting magazine	Scouting Magazine
Scouting program	Scouting Program
Scout Sign	Scout sign

## Talent Release Form

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Troop #: \_\_\_\_\_ Troop City: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_  
(if under the age of 18)

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Session Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This talent release form  
is part of the new medical form.*

## Use of Visual Aids

Flipcharts and posters are used to:

- Attract and hold attention
- Develop an idea
- Present information to small groups
- Highlight key points
- Review and preview key points or messages
- Add variety to discussions
- Speed up learning
- Increase retention

### How to Make a Flipchart

Although excellent flipchart pads are available commercially, you can make your own with a tablet of newsprint, an artist's pad, or even sheets of construction paper, newsprint, or brown wrapping paper.

If paper is not in pad form, reinforce the top of the sheet with a double fold of paper or cardboard. Staple sheets together or fasten with lightweight bolts and thumbscrews.

If the flipchart is not self-supporting, tie it to the top of a stand, or easel, or movable chalkboard. You can improvise a stand by using the back of a chair or an upended table.

It's a good idea to write out the flipchart in miniature while you are planning it. Changes or corrections can be easily made before you make the actual chart. Here are some organization tips:

- The first page should be the title page.
- The second page should define the subject.
- The following pages should explain the subject.
- Then offer proof that your explanation is sound.
- Summarize and ask for action on the last page.



These tips may help in the production phase:

- Use large lettering that can be easily seen.
- Use wide-line marking pens.
- Use plastic stick-on letters.
- Use lettering patterns or stencils to trace letters.
- Use words or phrases cut from computer printouts.
- Emphasize or underline key words.
- Use colored marking pens or watercolors to emphasize key points.
- Don't try to crowd too much on one page. Limit yourself to only one idea per page.
- Do provide the presenter with a cue sheet, duplicate in miniature on the back of the proceeding page what the audience is seeing. Then you can stand slightly behind the flipchart, face the audience, and explain what they see.
- Use masking tape tabs to locate information quickly. They allow you to jump ahead in the presentation.

## How to Make a Poster

You don't have to be a sign painter or artist. Just follow these simple rules and your poster will carry a terrific punch:

- Select the main idea. Jot down a few simple words that explain it.
- Decide on the effect that you want to create: funny, dramatic, serious, or factual.
- Try out different ideas. Put them all down on scratch paper.

## Lettering

- Block out the chart using light penciled guidelines.
- If you aren't an artist, use plastic stick-on letters, pressure-sensitive letters, trace lettering patterns, or use letter stencils. This saves a lot of time.
- Use plain block letters. Make them a little taller than they are wide.
- Don't squeeze the letters together or place them too far apart.
- Avoid fancy or difficult-to-read lettering.



LETTERING

### Follow this guide for determining letter size:

- 10–15 people (10 feet away) Use letters 1/2" high, 1/8" thick.
- 15–30 people (25 feet away) Use letters 1" high, 1/8" thick.
- 30–60 people (45 feet away) Use letters 1 1/2" high, 1/4" thick.
- 60–100 people (75 feet away) Use letters 3" high, 1/2" thick.

### Color and Illustrations

- Color adds interest to posters. Use colored ink or poster paint to fill in letters.
- Select colors that contrast sharply to the background color.
- Cut out pictures from *Boys' Life* or *Scouting* magazine.
- Trace pictures from magazines.
- Using an opaque projector, you can enlarge pictures or diagrams.
- Make the main idea the largest and brightest. Use lots of white space. It makes the main idea stand out.

### Other Types of Charts

**Pinboard Chart.** Word strips or sentence strips rest on pins stuck in pin-up board.

**Sentence Holder Chart.** Word strips rest in a shallow pocket made from cardboard and fastened to board.

**Folded Word Chart.** Word strips are folded in center, then opened during the presentation.

**Strip Chart.** Strips of paper are used to hide the points until time to show them.

Chalkboard or whiteboard work should be simple and brief. Copying lengthy outlines or lists of subjects is a waste of time to the commissioner and the participants. If it is important for the participants to have a copy of the material, it should be duplicated and distributed.

The board is similar to a store window. Everyone knows that an overcrowded, dirty, or untidy window has little appeal, compared to one that is clean, neat, and displays a few well-chosen items.

**Note:** The same principles apply to chalkboards and whiteboards—a whiteboard is a compressed fiber board coated with a baked white finish; you use dry erase markers for writing instead of chalk.

Use chalkboards or whiteboards often! They are the workhorses of training aids.  
Use them

- When the group is recording ideas
- When a permanent record is not needed
- To secure learner participation
- To attract and hold attention
- To add interest to a presentation
- To increase retention
- To speed up learning

### Advantages of Boards

- Minimal cost
- Are usually available
- May be used in a variety of ways
- Are simple to use
- Attract and hold attention
- Deepen interest
- Increase retention
- Speed up learning
- May be used to secure participation from audience

### Limitations of Boards

- Do not provide a permanent record
- Can become commonplace
- Are usually stationary
- Cannot be used with large groups



## Tips for Using Boards

A few rules for using the board will increase its effectiveness as a visual aid:

- Words should be printed instead of written. Draw a pair of light guidelines to make the top and bottom row of letters. Form the letters in clear, simple Gothic style. Avoid fancy scripts or print that is difficult to read.
- Use chalk sharpened with a knife or sandpaper pad. It is easier to control the printing with pointed chalk.
- To keep chalk from breaking, grip the chalk so that your forefinger extends over the tip of the chalk.
- Put the board where it can be seen by everyone, or use a section of a permanently located board that is similarly easy to see.
- Don't crowd the board. A few important points make vivid impressions.
- Make the material simple. Brief, concise statements are more effective than lengthy ones.
- Plan board layouts in advance. Keep the layouts in your training manual.
- Before the group meets, get everything together you need for the board: chalk, dry erase markers, ruler, eraser, and any other items.
- Use color for emphasis. Yellow and pale green chalks are more effective than white chalk. Blue or black dry erase markers work best on whiteboards.
- Print all captions and make drawings on a large scale. The material must be clearly visible to all participants.
- Erase all unrelated material. Extraneous material on the board distracts attention. Use an eraser or cloth, not your fingers.
- Keep the board clean. A dirty board has the same effect as a dirty window.
- Prepare complicated board layouts before the group meets. Work can be covered with poster board until you are ready to show it.
- Check for glare and eliminate it by tilting the board or removing/blocking the offending light.
- Keep the erasers clean. Practice erasing using straight up and down strokes rather than erasing in a circular motion.
- Templates can be used to reproduce objects.
- Strips of paper can be fastened with masking tape (only) over printed material on a board so that information can be revealed one step at a time.
- Stick figures and designs can be traced on a board by using an opaque projector.
- Boards are readily available, and they are one of the easiest training aids to use.

# Tips on Effective Visual Aids

## Flip Charts

- Ensure the chart is positioned so it is visible to all.
- Write neatly with letters about 2 inches high using lower case lettering.
- Prepare charts in advance whenever possible.
- Leave a blank sheet in between charts to avoid show through.
- Use dark colors (black, brown, purple, blue); avoid red, green, and yellow.
- When taking participant inputs, write down comments verbatim if at all possible (ask the participant to summarize if the comment is too long).

## Flipbooks

- Make a color copy of computer slides of the presentation for participants to view. Make a second gray scale copy of computer slides for the commissioner to view.
- Load the flipbook so that the learner and trainer are viewing the same page. Check to see if all slides are right side up.
- Write personalized speaker notes on the trainer side.

## Slides—Flipbooks/Computer Projections

- Use materials and media that enhance the learning process.
- Limit text to 6 by 6 (six words per line, six lines per chart) and no less than 16 point type.
- Make the main point the focus of the graphic.
- Target content to the learner rather than as a trainer outline.
- Avoid distracting decorations.
- Aim for a high correlation between graphic and text.
- Use pictures to clarify complex subject matter.
- Avoid frequent changing of slides.
- Review the slides before the presentation to ensure they are easy to read.
- Leave instructions for any exercises visible throughout the exercise so all can refer to them.
- If slides are not relevant to the current discussion, turn off the projection unit.

## Fonts and Type

A large number of point sizes should be used. Some examples:

**Titles 50 point**

**Main thoughts 32 point**

**Secondary points 28 point**

**Third-level points 24 point**

**Fourth-level; smallest recommended 20 point**

### Serif and Sans-Serif Type

**Serif** typefaces are commonly found in books. They are easy to read and information may be somewhat more readily remembered when presented in serif typefaces.

In a computer presentation, serif typefaces are very acceptable if the presentation is to be viewed on a monitor.

This is serif text. The strokes in each letter are capped with serifs that help the eye recognize the letters more easily.

**Sans serif** is the best choice for projected transparencies because it produces a more readable character when projected.

If the presentation is to be projected from a computer or from transparencies printed from the presentation, then sans serif typefaces are preferred.

This is sans serif text. The letters are not capped, and the look is smoother.

