



Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois Council's Own **Building Bridges Badge Requirements**

Adapted from the Building Bridges Try-It by Christine and Caroline Stewart

The Mississippi River region is a showcase of bridges. The construction of bridges has played a vital role in the economy and development of the area, as well as in westward expansion. Girls will learn about the different types of bridges and their uses, civil engineering, construction, and design. Girls will also explore the actual construction of a bridge.

To earn the Building Bridges badge, Girl Scout Juniors must complete at least six of the following activities.

- 1.) List 5-10 bridges in the area. What type of bridge are they? Learn about their advantages and disadvantages.
- 2.) From your list of bridges, find a bridge in the area that was built in one of the four basic styles. What is the name of the bridge? Where is it located? When was it built? Have there been any major issues with that bridge?
- 3.) Watch the PBS Nova documentary "Super Bridge." (Available in the Service Center Library or by contacting the Program Department) This documents the construction of the Clark Bridge in Alton, IL. Take a field trip and visit the Clark Bridge. Share with the troop what you found most interesting about the documentary and the bridge itself.
- 4.) Take a walk or bike ride across the Chain of Rocks Bridge and enjoy a picnic. Discuss the features of the bridge, what you like and dislike.
- 5.) Find out how people crossed the Mississippi River before these bridges were built. Take a field trip and use the Brussels Ferry. Which do you prefer, a bridge or a ferry?
- 6.) Find out what a civil engineer does as a part of his or her job. Contact a civil engineer as an individual or as a troop and have him/her come to a meeting and talk about civil engineering.
- 7.) What effect have bridges had on the environment? What steps/measures need to be taken to ensure that when building a new bridge it has as little of impact on the environment and surrounding natural habitats as possible?
- 8.) Dig into what materials are used to build a bridge. How many workers does it take to do the construction? How much does building a bridge cost? How many different types of careers are connected to bridges, what are they and how are they trained?
- 9.) Having learned all about bridges, construct your favorite type of bridge out of tooth picks, popsicle sticks, etc. A fun suggestion is to work with girls 11-17, and have a bridge building contest.