It’s Your Story—Tell It!: MEdia

Audience: This series is for Cadette Girl Scouts and is suitable for in-school and after-school troops.

Purpose: Girls will complete the MEdia journey and earn the three awards at the completion of the series: Monitor, Influence and Cultivate (MIC). This series focuses on the influence of media in the girls’ everyday lives, and would work well with a group of girls interested in popular culture, marketing or advertising.

Duration: This series is comprised of 14 sessions which are each about 1 hour long.

Required Materials: For the success of the journey, the facilitator(s) will need a copy of the adult guide for the journey, one copy per girl of the MEdia journey book and one pencil or pen per girl. Additional materials for each session are listed just below the session title. It would be helpful to prepare these materials well in advance of facilitating that session.

Prior to the Series: It would be helpful for the facilitator to read the MEdia journey and each session’s activities in advance to understand the “big picture” of what will be covered. All sessions (excluding the movie break) included need to be completed in order for the girls to earn the awards, but all can be expanded to add to the girls’ experience. The series is designed to be appropriate for use in school and after school with either troops or groups, so no external trips or guest visitors are required, but these options may be added whenever possible.
Session 1: Media Intro
Additional Materials Required: White or colored paper (2 sheets per girl) and markers

Warm Up: What Is Media? (15 minutes)
If the group is new, have the girls get in a circle and introduce themselves. Then ask the girls, “What is media?” After a few responses, read page 10 in the girl journey book to them. Then ask them to each say their favorite book, TV show or movie and why.

Activity: Media Pie (15 minutes)
Have the girls open to page 11 in the girl journey book, and ask for a volunteer to read the top of the page. Then pass out paper and markers and allow girls to make their own media pie, labeling each “slice” of their media pie. When the girls are done, ask for some or all of the girls to share their media pies.

Activity: Too Much Media? Quiz (10 minutes)
Let the girls have some fun and take the “How much is too much?” media quiz on pages 13-14 in the girl journey book. When the group is done, allow them to turn the page and see into what category they fall. Then call each category, and ask the girls to raise their hands if they fall into that category. Briefly talk about the downsides to being too “plugged-in.” If time allows, girls can read “Ms. Multi-Media” on page 15 individually.

Discussion and Activity: Changing Media (20 minutes)
Choose a volunteer to read page 16 of the girl journey book out loud to the group. Then ask the girls to name some ways that media has entertained, educated or inspired them. After a few answers, pass out paper and markers again and have them draw what they think will be “the next big thing" for the next generation.
Session 2: Media’s Mixed Messages

Additional Materials Required: Lined or white paper (1 sheet per girl with extras), Magazines, and 5 different household objects

Warm Up: Telephone (10 minutes)
This classic game will help open a discussion about mixed messages in media. Have the girls sit in a circle. One girl begins by coming up with a phrase or sentence. She then whispers the phrase or sentence to the person next to her, who then continues to whisper the message to the next person. The phrase or sentence can only be said once, so girls must take their best guess at what they heard. The last person should say the phrase or sentence out loud, and see if it is the same or different than the original. If they are different, as they almost always are, then discuss how this could have happened.

Discussion (15 minutes)
Choose a few volunteers to read pages 24-26 from the girl journey book out loud to the group. Ask the girls to reflect: What ads are memorable to them? Have they ever seen an ad that has made them feel poorly about their bodies or life choices?

Activity: Message Overload List (10 minutes)
Using page 27 from the girl journey book, have the girls create a list of the ad messages they remember from the last few days. They probably have watched TV, gone online, or been in a car that has passed by some billboards, so tell them to use these messages for their list. If the girls are still stumped, pass out some magazines and have them use these as inspiration. Then discuss as a group what these messages are trying to sell or say, how they make girls feel, and how they could be changed to be more realistic or accurate.

Discussion: Getting Hooked (10 to 15 minutes)
Have a few girls read page 28 in the girl journey book out loud to the group. Can they name any examples?

Activity: I’ll Sell You Anything! (15 minutes)
The girls will have some fun with this activity, which has them reflect the inaccuracies of advertising by creating bogus 60 second commercials. Divide the group into 5 teams and have them each come up with a minute-long commercial that sells the item’s million uses. These uses do not need to be accurate or realistic—they should be silly and fun, yet presented as real uses in the commercial. For example, a bucket could be used to wash the dog, serve as a beautiful stepping stool or be a serving-size measurer for a giant’s bowl of spaghetti! When 5 minutes remain, have the girls present their bogus commercial to the entire group!
Session 3: Media: What’s Real?
Additional Materials Required: poster or copies of Girl Scout Law, magazines to be cut up, scissors, glue sticks and colored paper (1 per girl)

Warm Up: Toeing the Line (10 minutes)
Have the girls turn to page 38 in their journey books, read the information and label the media listed at the bottom of the page. Once the girls have this completed, discuss what types of media are often slanted and which are objective.

Discussion: When Reality Isn’t Real (15 minutes)
Choose a few girls to read pages 40-41 from the girl journey book out loud to the group. Then discuss what reality TV shows the girls watch, why they watch them, and things they have noticed that seem scripted or too ridiculous to be true.

Group Activity: Messages in the Girl Scout Law (10 minutes)
Using page 34 in the girl journey book as a guide, identify some ads that reflect a line from the Girl Scout law. Have some magazines handy in case the girls cannot think of any TV commercials or other media messages they have seen lately.

Activity: Trash to Treasure (20 minutes)
Read to the girls page 35 in the girl journey book. Then have them try the activity “Trash to Treasure” detailed at the bottom of the page.
Session 4: Stereotypes

Additional Materials Required: Deck of cards and masking tape

Circle Discussion (10 minutes)
Have the girls sit in a circle with their books. Ask them, “What is a stereotype?” After a few answers, have them turn to page 43 and discuss together the stereotypes listed, along with any the girls bring up in discussion.

Activity: Deck of Cards (20 minutes)
Pull out one suit and divide the group in half. One half will sit down, and tape a playing card to the back of each girl facing out, making sure to not let them see their card. Tell them they must move around the room and mingle with as many players as they can. As they move they should respond to other girls based on the value of the playing card on their back without talking; their interactions should be nonverbal by using facial expressions and body language and should convey respect or disinterest based on the girl’s card value. The Ace is the highest card and the two is the lowest card. Let them walk around the room for a few minutes. Then ask them to order themselves from highest to lowest and see how close they can come to the correct order. Finally, mix up the cards and repeat with the other half of the group. Debrief with the girls’ feelings about being judged and discriminated and ask them what they learned from this activity.

Activity: Cross The Room If… (15 minutes)
Tell the girls that despite what others may say about one another, people are not so different. Make two tape lines on the floor about 10 feet apart and have them stand on one line together. Then tell them to “cross the room if…” and something that relates to many of them. Some examples are below, but feel free to make up your own. It is usually a good idea with groups to build up to more emotional, sensitive topics, but always end on a positive topic.

General Topics
• you have enjoyed the sessions the last few weeks
• you play a sport
• you like hanging out with friends
• you love your parents, but don’t always like them
• you want to be successful in your future

More Sensitive Topics
• you have felt left out before
• you are worried about how you look more often than you’d like
• you have a friend who has said something mean about you
• your family is not as supportive as you would like
• you feel lonely sometimes
• you have had someone close to you betray your trust
• you have had your heart broken by someone
• you have woken up some days and not wanted to get out of bed

Discussion (15 minutes)
Choose a few girls to read pages 44 and 45 in the girl journey book out loud to the group. Then ask the girls if they have ever been stereotyped and how they’ve handled the situation, or if they have ever helped a friend who has been stereotyped by others. Discuss how the girls can stop stereotyping within their own circle of friends.
Session 5: Media in the Community

**Preparation Required:** Facilitator should read pages 42-46 in the adult guide

**Additional Materials Required:** Paper cut into small slips and white chart paper or other large piece of paper

**Activity: Celebrity Charades** (20 minutes)

Follow the directions on page 55 of the adult guide to play “What's Fame? What's in a Name?” which is a version of charades. After one or two rounds of the game, ask some of the discussion questions in the green box on that page.

**Group Activity: Media Survey** (40 minutes)

For the girls to earn their Monitor award, they must create a survey to give to their peers about their media habits. Follow pages 42-46 in the adult guide to facilitate the girls through creating this survey. You may want to write ideas on a large piece of paper so the girls can see their ideas as they develop the survey. You should also type this up and bring copies to the next session so the girls can survey their peers between the 6th and 7th sessions.

Session 6: Self Esteem

**Preparation Required:** Facilitator should bring typed copies of the media survey created last session (5 per girl)

**Additional Materials Required:** Hand mirror, post-it notes and media survey copies

**Circle Discussion** (5 to 10 minutes)

Have the girls sit in a circle and do a “check in”—have them each say how they are feeling physically, emotionally and physically today.

**Circle Activity: Your Body, Your Friend** (15 minutes)

Tell the girls to close their eyes. Then read to them page 48 in the girl journey book. Have the girls open their eyes and pass around a mirror. The first girl with the mirror should say something positive about herself, something positive about the girl to her right, and then pass the mirror to that girl, who will continue this until every girl has gotten a turn with the mirror.

**Discussion: Time to Talk Back!** (10 minutes)

Choose a few girls to read pages 50-51 from the girl journey book out loud to the group. Brainstorm some ideas with the group of beauty words for each letter of “BEAUTY.” Then discuss what makes the girls feel confident and beautiful in their own lives.

**Activity: Diversifying Beauty** (20 minutes)

Follow the directions on page 48 of the adult guide to get the girls to diversify their idea of beauty! This activity will have them write words that describe beauty on sticky notes and label items with these notes.

**Discussion** (5 minutes)

Distribute the copies of the survey to each girl, and ask them to have 5 different people take the survey between now and the next session. Girls should ask their peers first, but may ask their parents, relatives or teachers to answer it as well. Answer any questions the girls may have before ending the session.
Session 7: Strike a Pose

Additional Materials Required: Many newspapers, 4 or 5 rolls of masking tape and recycled color paper or magazines

Discussion (15 minutes)
Ask the girls to discuss their survey results and see what trends they can find with the results. This will earn them the Monitor award, and prepare them to choose a project for the Influence award.

Reading: Picture Perfect (10 minutes)
Choose a few girls to read pages 52 and 53 from the girl journey book out loud to the group. Talk with the girls about how photo retouching may make girls feel and the media’s contribution to negative body image in girls.

Activity: Recycled Fashion (35 minutes)
Break the group into 4 or 5 teams and give each some newspapers, colored paper or magazines, and a roll of masking tape. Give the teams 20 minutes to choose a model and create a dress for their model out of the materials provided. Once the teams have their dresses completed, they may create other accessories if time allows. While the teams are busy with their dresses, designate an area as the catwalk with chairs. Then have a fashion show with the dresses and have all of the girls take a walk down the catwalk!

Session 8: Movie Break

Additional Materials Required: TV with DVD player or computer and DVD of movie chosen. If materials are not available, skip this session.

Enjoy a movie break! Choose a movie that shows what it’s like to be in the movie, TV, publishing, or other media industry. You may only watch part of the movie, or add an additional session if the girls are invested in the movie and want to see the end. If watching a PG-13 movie, send home a simple permission slip for the parents to sign.

Some ideas for films are:
• “The Pixar Story” (2007, Rated G)
• “Selena” (1997, Rated PG)
• “Julie and Julia” (2009, Rated PG-13)
• “The September Issue” (2009, Rated PG-13)
Session 9: Healthy MEdia
No additional materials required

Discussion: My Favorites (15 minutes)
Have the girls sit in a circle and, using page 65 in the girl journey book as a guide, ask the girls some of the favorites, including their favorite movie, favorite way to express themselves, and favorite outdoor activity.

Activity and Discussion: What I Like Best (15 minutes)
Have the girls turn to page 64 and give them 5-10 minutes to write down what they like to do. Then have them open to page 66 in the girl journey book and ask for a volunteer to read the page out loud to the group.

Discussion: When Flops Don’t Really Fail (5 minutes)
Turn to page 81 in the girl journey book and have a volunteer read the page to the group. Ask the group when they think failure is OK and how to take failure fuel for the future!

Activity: Power Down (20 minutes)
Let the girls choose to go on a walk together or do some guided relaxation and yoga. If they choose the latter, follow the example below for guided relaxation and see the PDF “Sun Salutation” for a series of yoga poses.

Relaxation Script:
Get ready to relax. You can sit in a chair or lie down on the floor.
Close your eyes, and take a deep breath in.... now breathe out.
Breathe in.... and breathe out.
Keep breathing slowly like this. Feel how it relaxes you to breathe deeply.
Now squeeze your hands closed into fists. Pretend that you are squeezing a ball in each hand... gripping tighter.... squeeze even tighter.... Right now, your muscles are tense. And now relax. Let your hands go limp. Now your hands feel relaxed. See how relaxed your hands feel. See how tense feels different from relaxed. Relaxation is a way to make your whole body feel relaxed like your hands are now.
One way to relax your body is by breathing deeply. Imagine that your body is like a balloon. When you breathe in, feel your chest and sides expanding, like a balloon filling with air. When you breathe out, imagine your body is like a balloon shrinking with the air being let out.
Breathe in like a balloon being blown up. Now breathe out, like the air is being let out of a balloon. Let the air out by blowing the air through your mouth.
Breathe in through your nose, imagining your body expanding like a balloon.... and now imagine letting the end of the balloon go, and the air rushing out as you breathe out through your mouth.
As you breathe in this time, raise your arms above your head. When you breathe out, lower your arms.
Breathe in. Reach your hands above your head, stretching high up... stretching.... and now lower your arms to your sides and relax. Breathe out.
Raise your arms and breathe in.... lower your arms and breathe out....
Raise your arms and breathe in.... lower your arms and breathe out....
Now relax and keep your arms at your sides, while you continue breathing slowly and deeply.
Remember the difference between tense and relaxed. Tighten your leg muscles to make both of your legs tense. Squeeze tighter.... tighter... and now relax.
Let your legs become very relaxed. Each leg is as floppy as a piece of string.
Your legs feel heavy. The muscles are loose.
Now tense your arms. Make the muscles very tight and tense. Tighter.... and now relax.
Your arms are relaxed, limp and loose as pieces of string.
See how it feels to be relaxed. Your legs and arms are relaxed.
Now let your whole body become relaxed. See how relaxed you can make your body.... loosening every muscle.... no tension at all.....
Your body feels heavy and relaxed.
Relax even more by noticing your breathing again. See how calm your breathing is. In.... and out..... in.... and out...
Keep breathing and simply relax. There is nothing you need to do right now except relax quietly.
(pause)
See how calm and relaxed you feel. It feels good to relax.
Your relaxation time is finished now, and it is time to return to your usual activities. Keep your eyes closed for a little longer while you wake up your body and your mind by wiggling your fingers and toes..... moving your arms and legs.....
Sit still now for a moment, and open your eyes to look around the room.
When you are ready, get up and return to your usual activities, feeling awake, but still feeling relaxed and calm.
**Session 10: Media Remake**

Preparation Required: Facilitator should read pages 62-75 and 82-87 in the adult guide to understand the Influence award

No additional materials required

**Warm Up: Top Stories (15 minutes)**
Follow the instructions on page 53 of the adult guide for this wacky warm up! Girls will create dramatic headlines and have fun pretending to be a newscaster with the top story.

**Discussion: Your Media Remake (10 minutes)**
Choose a few girls to read pages 74, 75 and 80 from the girl journey book out loud to the group. To make completing the Influence award easier, tell the girls that they will be breaking into small groups and each group will make a skit about the media topic they decide to tackle.

**Group Activity (20 minutes)**
Break the girls into small groups that will work well together. Let each team decide on a topic for the Influence award and a back-up topic in case another group picks the same topic. The girls can use pages 76 and 77 in the girl journey book to spark conversation, and the facilitator may use pages 64 and 65 in the adult guide for any groups struggling to choose a topic.

**Discussion (10 minutes)**
Check with the groups and help mediate which group will get to use their topic if multiple groups have the same ideas. Then answer any questions the girls may have about the project. They will only have 30 minutes of the next session to create their skits before they perform them, so have the groups brainstorm any props they will need and bring them to the next session. Also have the girls invite some peers, parents, or teachers to attend the performance of the skits for next session.

**Session 11: Media Remake Skits**

Additional Materials Required: Any props necessary for the skits

**Activity (30 minutes)**
Have the girls create and practice their skits in their groups. The facilitator should provide support when necessary, but leave the groups space to resolve minor disputes on their own.

**Presentation and Discussion (30 minutes)**
It's show time! Have the girls present their skits to the group and any audience members. Allow for a Question and Answer session once all of the groups have presented. This completes the girls' Influence award. Then tell the girls that there will be a Talent Show at the last session, which is three sessions away and they should prepare something to present!
Session 12: Challenge Yourself

Additional Materials Required: small memo pads (1 per girl) and colored pencils

Circle Discussion (10 minutes)
Have the girls sit in a circle and each name a song they think is the theme song to their life, and explain why to the group.

Activity: Y is for You (10 minutes)
Have the girls turn to page 84 in their journey books and create her encyclopedia entry. When most of the girls are done, ask if any would like to share theirs to the group.

Discussion: What’s Your Challenge? (15 minutes)
Ask for a volunteer to read page 86 in the girl journey book out loud to the group. Invite the girls to share their own challenge and how they could overcome it. Then have another volunteer to read page 87 to the group, “10 Great Ways to Challenge Yourself.”

Activity: Moving Pictures (20 minutes)
Give each girl a small memo pad and some colored pencils, and have them follow page 21 in the girl journey book to create a flipbook of them overcoming their challenge! Encourage them that stick figures and simple drawings are more than fine!

Session 13: ME in MEdia

Additional Materials Required: white and colored paper and markers

Group Discussion (5 minutes)
Have the girls sit in a circle and create a super hero name for each girl! Allow each girl to create her own name or ask for help from the group to create one!

Discussion (15 minutes)
Use pages 95-96 in the adult guide to help the girls identify their Cultivate award commitment. Have the girls turn to page 90 and brainstorm some ideas and then decide on a commitment for page 91.

Activity (30 minutes)
Have them begin their commitment using the supplies provided. They may want to stick to something simple for this session, like creating a flyer, poster, script or mock-magazine article, and complete their commitment at home.

Share (10 minutes)
Allow each girl an opportunity to share her project with the group and share how she will continue the commitment at home. Remind the girls that the Talent Show is next session, and every girl should prepare something to present.
Session 14: A Better MEdia
Additional Materials Required: MIC award badges

Discussion (10 minutes)
Ask the girls about their experience with the MEdia journey. What did they enjoy the most? What have they learned that will stick with them in the future?

Talent Show (30 to 40 minutes)
Allow each girl a turn to express her talent! You may invite others to this show if the space allows.

Awards (10 minutes)
Present each girl with their MIC awards and congratulate them on a job well done!