It’s Your Story—Tell It!: aMUSE

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

Purpose: Girls will complete the aMUSE journey and earn the three awards at the completion of the series: Reach Out, Speak Out and Try Out. This series has a heavy focus on storytelling and theater and would work great with girls who are outgoing and energetic, and have an interest in theater or acting.

Duration: This series is comprised of 15 sessions which are each 45 minutes in length.

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 aMUSE journey book and one pencil 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 aMUSE journey and each session’s activities in advance to understand the “big picture” of what will be covered. All sessions 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: All About Roles
Additional Materials Required: Colored Pencils

Warm Up: Instant Replay Name Game (15 minutes)
Have the girls get in a circle, and one at a time, say their name and do an action of something they like to do. For example, one girl may say “Mary” and then twirl like a ballerina. Then all of the girls will repeat her name and action, and any previous names and actions in reverse order (the most recent names first). Then ask the girls about their experience in Girl Scouting and their experience in theater or performing in front of people.

Discussion (10 minutes)
Read pages 10 and 11 in the girl journey book together. Then ask the girls to name their favorite female character from a book, movie or TV show and why she is their favorite.

Activity (20 minutes)
Have the girls fill out page 12 in their journey book, which has them list their five favorite characters and the roles they play. Then have the girls fill out page 13 where they make up their own character. Save a few minutes for the girls to share their characters at the end.

Session 2: Casting Call
No additional materials required

Warm Up: Charades (15 minutes)
Let the girls play charades with a TV or movie theme.

Discussion and Activity (10 minutes)
Choose a few volunteers to read pages 14 and 15 in the girl journey book out loud to the group. Try the deep breathing acting tip on page 15 at the end.

Discussion and Activity (20 minutes)
Choose a few different volunteers to read the top of pages 16 and 17 to the group. Then have the girls complete the casting call log individually.
Session 3: aMUSE: Cast Yourself
No additional materials required

Warm Up: Under the Sea (10 minutes)
Tell the girls to spread out and find their own space. Tell the girls that they will be acting along with the story, and as they develop their character, they should show what they are through their movements and actions, not tell the group what they are. Read the script slowly and dramatically, giving pauses between sections for the girls to develop their characters. It is helpful to move throughout the room while reading, acting as the element of danger when it arrives!

UNDER THE SEA
Imagine you are at the bottom of the ocean. It’s quiet, sort of dark. What’s it like? What’s there?
What are you? You can be anything that lives in the ocean—a fish, a crab, a clam, seaweed, a shark—be as creative as you can. Imagine yourself as that animal or plant. Remember, don’t say it, be it and do it.
It’s just before dawn. You can’t see the sun yet at the top of the water. What would you be doing? If you’re a fish, you’re just floating there, sleeping. If you’re a crab, you’re asleep in your shell. Stay where you are and be your chosen sea life. Remember, show me, don’t tell me.
Okay, your day is beginning. You can see the first glimmer of the sun at the top of the water. What do you usually do now? What’s your morning ritual? Do you clean yourself off? Do you wake up your children? As you begin to wake up and move around, do as good a job as you can of showing what you are through the noises you make, the way you move, and what you do.
(Make observations: “I see fish starting to move around.” Reinforce the positive.)
Now you need your first meal. You can’t eat any person in the room, so you need to make it up, pretend, and be creative. You go off to find your food.
Now you’ve found your meal, and you start to eat. How do you sound as you eat? Do you help to feed anyone else?
As you’re eating, you hear something. You don’t like the sound. You know it’s something dangerous, and it sounds like it’s coming toward you. Wait! You recognize the sound—it’s a fishing boat coming overhead, and it’s trawling for fish to put in aquariums. You don’t want to be caught in its nets. You can’t attack the thing attacking you, so how do you protect yourself? Do you swim away? Do you hide? Do you disguise yourself? (Remember as you do this to act like the boat and start to move around the room, letting students figure out how to avoid getting caught in your nets.)
Aah, the danger has moved away, and you’re safe again. How do you feel? Show me.
Finally, the sun is moving across the sky. It’s starting to get dark again. The danger and the food are making you tired. It’s time for you to get home. Where’s home for you? Start to head home.
(As you read this last part, speak quietly and slowly and model calming down the body by moving slowly, closing your eyes.)
Now that you’re home, how do you settle in? How do you end your day? It’s time to start getting ready for sleep. It’s time to relax, lay yourself down, and go to sleep.
Discussion and Activity (10 minutes)
Have one girl read pages 18-19 in the girl journey book out loud to the group. Then try the activity together on page 19, “Go Loosey-Goosey!”

Activity: Open Your Hand (10 minutes)
This activity and the next are fun theater games for your girls to try.
Have the girls walk around the room leisurely. Then on your command, have them stop, put their hands into their pockets, and take something imaginary out. It can be absolutely anything, but encourage them to have it be the first thing that enters their head. Have them name it and feel the weight, size, and texture of it for a moment, showing it with their hands (a bowling ball would be held very different than a feather). Then they may set it aside and continue to walk. Repeat this a few times and remind any struggling girls that there are no right or wrong answers!

Activity: Greetings (15 minutes)
Like the previous two games, have the girls start by leisurely walking around the room. After a few seconds, ask them to greet each other as they pass with a quick handshake, and then continue to walk around and greet someone else. After a minute or two of this, ask them to greet each other in a more specific way. Use some of the ideas below or feel free to make your own!

- Greet each other like long lost friends
- Greet your parent after crashing the family computer
- Greet someone who clearly has not taken a shower in a long time
- Greet someone who accidently rear-ended your car
- Greet your future boss at your dream job
- Greet someone you really hate
- Greet a handsome cowboy
- Greet a purple, bald martian

It is useful to let them try each new greeting a few times before moving on to the next one so they can build the greeting with experience.
Session 4: Breaking the Mold
Additional Materials Required: 3-5 household objects

Readings (10 minutes)
Choose three to five girls to read pages 24-26 in the girl journey book out loud to the group about “Breaking the Mold.” These pages discuss stereotypes and women who have beaten them in their professions.

Discussion (15 minutes)
Using page 35 in the adult journey guide as a reference, talk to the girls about how they have been stereotyped in the past and how girls are treated differently than boys. Be clear about the difference between good expectations, like doing well in school and being respectful, and unrealistic and sometimes harmful expectations, like getting perfect grades in school or being captain of the cheerleading squad when she would rather play on the basketball team.

Activity: Props (10 to 15 minutes)
This is a popular theater game that will get girls thinking about common objects in new, interesting ways. Have the girls stand in a row and let each girl take a turn at coming up with an original or funny use for the “prop.” For example, a lampshade could be used as a megaphone, a trendy purse, or a lapdog. The only rule is that they cannot use the prop in the conventional way, like a lampshade being on top of a lamp to direct the light. Pass each item, one at a time, down the line and have girls come up with a unique use on the spot. Make sure to praise extra-creative attempts, and reinforce that there are no right or wrong answers as long as it’s not the original use of the object!

Discussion (5 to 10 minutes)
Encourage the girls to choose one woman from their casting call log and ask them some of the questions from page 29 in the girl journey book. This activity goes towards their “Reach Out” award. They should also try to complete page 30 with the adult, which asks them about the qualities she finds most essential to success. This will need to be completed at home and should only take 15-20 minutes to complete.
**Session 5: Roles in Society**

Additional Materials Required: Colored pencils

**Activity: Quick Draw** (20 minutes)
Complete Part One of page 38 in the adult guide. This activity has the girls drawing how they picture various roles. Give one minute for each drawing, and give at least ten roles to be drawn. Then ask the questions listed in the guide on the same page.

**Discussion** (10 minutes)
Find out what girls learned from the Callback questions from last session (pages 29 and 30 in girl journey book). What stereotypes have these women faced? What qualities did these women value the most?

**Activity** (15 minutes)
Have the girls complete page 31 about the woman she interviewed. If time allows, have her draw a picture of that woman.

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**Session 6: Breaking Stereotypes**

Additional Materials Required: a deck of cards

**Activity: Deck of Cards Stereotyping** (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.

**Discussion** (5 minutes)
Debrief with the girls’ feelings about being judged and discriminated and ask them what they learned from this activity. You may also want to use the middle of page 40 in the adult guide for some discussion ideas with the group about stereotyping.

**Activity: Stereotype Tracker** (15 minutes)
Have the girls complete page 27 in the girl journey book on their own or in small groups. They should use examples from their own lives or what they have noticed in their community.

**Reading: New Roles, New Records** (5 minutes)
Choose a few girls to read pages 34-35 out loud to the group. This is the story of Lynne Cox and her experience in swimming.
Session 7: Advertising
Additional Materials Required: Advertisements from magazines, white paper, markers

Discussion (5 minutes)
Talk with the girls about how advertising targets their customers, and how sometimes the images they choose are not always realistic. For example, the models may look different than “normal” girls. Ask the girls if they have realized this before, and if so, have them name some examples.

Activity (15 minutes)
Pass out the advertisements you have collected from magazines. Ask the girls some of the questions on page 51 in the adult guide, focusing on how the image “makes” you want to have that product and the stereotypes it uses to catch your attention.

Activity (20 minutes)
Then have the girls create their own advertisements that are realistic! Have them break into small groups and either create a visual advertisement or have them make a short commercial for the product. Have them choose one of the advertisements given as their inspiration so the group will have something to use as a basis for their ideas.

Share (5 minutes)
Have the girls share their advertisements to the group. Encourage creativity!

Session 8: Stringing Together
Additional Materials Required: A ball of yarn or string, 3-5 additional balls of yarn, 2 pipe cleaners per girl, one button per girl, glue, felt (see page 20 in girl journey)

Warm Up: A Good Yarn Story (20 minutes)
Follow the directions on page 57 of the adult guide to create a story, one line at a time, with your group. You may use the talking points at the bottom of the same page to introduce the next session, when the girls will begin their Speak Out! Award, or you may just do the activity on the page.

Activity: Role Model Doll Craft (25 minutes)
The girls will make a doll representing a positive role model in their lives out of the materials listed above. Instructions are included on pages 20-21 of the girl journey book.
Session 9: Storytelling Basics

Preparation Required: Leader should read pages 58-61 in the adult guide.
Additional Materials Required: Markers and a large white board or white chart paper

Readings (10 minutes)
This session will set the girls up so they can complete their Speak Out! award. Ask for a few volunteers to each read a section of pages 38-39 in the girl journey book. Let them know that they will be creating a short play in the next two sessions that busts stereotypes. The group will need to work together to choose the problem the characters will face, what the characters are like, what the story will be and what stereotypes will be busted! Girls will also act out the play for an audience (if possible). Before planning anything, read page 42 in the girl journey book to the girls. Suggest using the characters from Daisy’s play, “The Crystal Heart” as the characters for the girls’ play. This will give a good “jumping off” point for conversation.

Discussion (15 minutes)
Using pages 58-61 in the adult guide as a reference, lead the girls in choosing a problem the characters will face and how they will solve it by the end of the play. Use the markers and white board or chart paper to list the girls’ ideas for the group.

Discussion (15 minutes)
The next major decision for the group is what the characters will be like and what stereotypes they will bust. Again, use the white board or paper so the girls can not only hear, but see, the other ideas presented.

Discussion (5 minutes)
Then have the group decide where they will perform their play and who to invite. You may do it during your normally scheduled time, but try to set it up so that you have an audience of the girls’ peers and parents.

Session 10: Creating the Story

Additional Materials Required: Markers and a large white board or white chart paper

Discussion (30 minutes)
As a group, write the story! You may want to use the Storyboard Template on page 70 of the adult guide for organization. Not everything needs to be written down, but write enough of the lines so that the girls can fill in the minor details during the performance. You may want to type these before Session 11 and give them to the girls for the performance if they think they will not remember them.

Discussion (5 minutes)
Assign roles for the play. Try to break the parts up so that every girl plays some acting role, but it is OK if some girls just want to help and not act in front of an audience.

Discussion (10 minutes)
Decide with the group what they will wear as costumes and if any other props are needed. If any girls are not acting in the performance, they should be the ones to create or find the props at home so they feel like an integral part of the experience.
Session 11: aMUSE Your Audience
Additional Materials Required: Costume, prop or set pieces for performance

**Warm Up for Performance** (10 minutes)
Put on costumes, practice lines, prepare the set, and complete any other tasks necessary for the performance.

**Warm Up: The Blob** (5 minutes)
Have the girls huddle together, shoulder to shoulder, facing any direction they like. They will become one creature known as the Blob. Ask the girls to stand quietly, without speaking, and sense how the Blob wants to move. Then invite everyone to move together, going with the movement with no one actually leading. This helps the girls to focus their energies together to move the Blob! This game can be found on page 67 of the adult guide.

**Performance** (10 to 20 minutes, or as long as necessary)
Have the girls perform their play! It would be helpful to introduce the play to the audience and let them know the process the girls went through to develop every aspect of their story!

**Discussion** (10 minutes)
Ask the girls how they felt about the performance. Congratulate them for a job well done!

Session 12: My Muse
Additional Materials Required: White paper, colored pencils and scissors

**Discussion** (10 minutes)
Have the girls sit in a circle and share 3 things they are proud of in their lives and 3 things they want to try that they have been hesitant or afraid to do before. Talk about how we all are critical of ourselves—both of things we have done before and things we have talked ourselves out of doing.

**Activity** (10 minutes)
Then have the girls give themselves some praise! Have each girl draw or write three things she is good at and has fun doing.

**Activity: My Roles Paper Dolls** (25 minutes)
Using pages 22-23 in the girl journey book as a guide, let each girl create her own paper dolls that represent her roles!
Session 13: My Role

Additional Materials Required: white paper and markers or colored pencils

Warm Up: What are you Doing? (10 minutes)
Have the girls form a line, and have the first girl step out in front of the line. She will start to mime an activity that we can clearly understand, like brushing her hair or tying a shoe. Then the next person from the line should approach that girl and ask, "What are you doing?" The first player should then answer with something that has nothing to do with her activity, such as putting out a fire or skydiving. The first player should then join the end of the line, and the second player starts miming the activity that the first girl said she was doing. Then the third player should approach the second player and repeat until everyone has had at least one turn.

Activity: My “Role Call” Log (20 minutes)
Read page 58 in the girl’s journey book to them and have them complete page 59. Answer any questions the girls may have about the activity before they begin, and once they have finished discuss the answers as a group if time allows.

Activity: Favorite Costume (15 minutes)
Each girl should draw their favorite costume! It can be a costume they own, or something they imagine. At the end, have each girl show her costume to the group and explain why it is her favorite!

Session 14: Actress and Director

Preparation Required: Find 8-10 portraits of famous women and bring in for session
Additional Materials Required: Hand mirror and portraits of women

Warm Up: Mirror, Mirror (10 minutes)
Invite the girls to sit in a circle and pass around the mirror. Let each girl take a turn and look at herself in the mirror, describing to the group: what she sees when she looks in the mirror, what she doesn’t see that she wants others to see, and what role she wants to play in her future. Use page 82 in the adult guide as a reference for discussion ideas, and make sure the girls are supporting each other!

Activity: Picture This! (25 minutes)
Spread out the pictures between the girls. Ask the girls how they would describe the women in the pictures and if they know who they are. Then have the girls work individually or in small groups to create a story snapshot of this heroine using page 52 in the girl journey book. The story can be historical based on the woman’s real life, or can be completely fictional and imaginary.

Discussion (10 minutes)
Each girl should share her heroine’s story and why she made those character choices. Were her choices based on historical fact, or were they fictional? How is this story reflective of how the woman looks in her portrait?

Tell each girl to bring an accessory with her for the next session that means a lot to her and expresses her personality.
Session 15: Take a Bow!
Additional Materials Required: Journey Award Badges (1 set per girl)

Warm Up: Sharing our Accessories (10 minutes)
Have the girls sit in a circle and share why they chose their accessory, what it means to them, and how it makes them feel when they wear it.

Discussion (10 minutes)
Talk to the girls about how their interests could help them choose a career later in life with pages 44-45 in the girl journey book.

Activity: Acceptance Speech (15 minutes)
Let the girls take a few minutes to think of an acceptance speech to receive their awards. Have them think of major award shows like the Oscars or Grammys, and think about the things they have learned through this journey and the people who have helped them complete the journey! Then present each girl with her awards and have her give her speech to the group!

Closing Discussion (10 minutes)
Sit in a circle and have the girls share their experience! You may also want to close with the discussion questions on page 80 of the girl journey book.