



Reading

Scouts BSA · Hobbies

Name

Started

Completed

Reading opens doors to new worlds, ideas, and skills. You'll explore your library, read different kinds of books, and share your love of reading with others. It's a badge that can turn any reader into a better one.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/reading/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

1 Using a library

Tips for this section: Ask a librarian to show you how to search the catalog and find books on any topic.

- ☐ **1a** Tour a library, then discuss with your counselor how it is organized and what resources and services it offers

- ☐ **1b** Learn to search a library's card or computer catalog by author, title, and subject

- ☐ **1c** In a library catalog, find six books of four different kinds, such as poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and biography

- ☐ **1d** With help from your counselor or a librarian, try to find the six books you picked on the shelves

- ☐ **1e** Explain what a library card is, why you need one, and how to get one

2 Finding books to read

Tips for this section: Think of a book you loved and ask a librarian for similar ones. Check out a best books list for ideas.

Example for this section: Start with a book you loved, like a survival story, and ask a librarian or use the catalog's "similar titles" feature to find three more. Then look at an award list, like Newbery winners, and pick one that interests you.

- ☐ **2a** Name a book you enjoyed and find out what other books its author has written

- ☐ **2b** Look at one or more "best books" lists (by year, subject, or all time) and pick at least one book you'd like to read

- ☐ **3** Read four different kinds of books, for example fiction, poetry, biography, or nonfiction. For each book, respond in one of the ways in 3a-3c (choose 1 of 3 below)

Tip: Try a mix, like a mystery, a biography, a science book, and poetry. Jot down your thoughts after each.

Example: Four types could be a mystery, a biography of an explorer, a book of poems, and a science book about the deep sea. After each, write a short response: what it made you think about, a favorite line, and who you'd recommend it to.

- ☐ **3a** Write a review saying what you liked or didn't like, whether you'd recommend the book, and who might enjoy it

- ☐ **3b** Watch a movie made from the book and discuss with your counselor what was alike and different and which you liked better

- ☐ **3c** Give a book talk to your patrol, troop, or class

- ☐ **4** Read a nonfiction book or magazine that teaches a skill (like cooking, woodworking, game design, science experiments, or knots). With your counselor's and parent's OK, do a project from it and share how it went. A merit badge pamphlet doesn't count

Tip: Pick a how-to book on something you want to learn, like cooking or knots, and try it out.

Example: Read a beginner's cookbook, choose a recipe, and make it for your family with an adult. Or use a woodworking book to build a birdhouse. Bring the result and explain what the book taught you that you couldn't guess.

- ☐ **5** Read about the world around you in any two sources, like books, magazines, newspapers, field manuals, or the internet (with a parent's OK), on topics such as Scouting, sports, nature, or current events, and discuss what you learned with your counselor

Tip: Compare how two news sources cover the same story.

Example: Read the same news story in two places, like a newspaper and a news website. Compare the headlines, which facts each includes, and who they quote, then explain why the coverage might differ.

6 Reading service: Choose 1 of 5

Tips for this section: Read to younger kids, help at a library event, or collect books for a donation drive.

Example for this section: Four hours of service could be reading picture books to kids at a library story time, helping shelve books, or running a book drive with your patrol for a shelter or school that needs them.

- ☐ **6a** With your counselor's and parent's OK, spend at least four hours reading aloud to someone who is sick, blind, or homebound in a hospital or extended-care facility, then discuss it with your counselor

- ☐ **6b** With your counselor's and parent's OK, spend at least four hours volunteering at a public library or your school's library, then discuss it with your counselor

- ☐ **6c** With your counselor's and parent's OK, spend at least four hours reading stories to younger kids, one-on-one or in a group, then discuss it with your counselor

- ☐ **6d** With your counselor's and parent's OK, spend at least four hours organizing a book swap for your troop, school, or place of worship, then discuss it with your counselor

- ☐ **6e** With your counselor's and parent's OK, spend at least four hours organizing a book drive and donating the books to an organization in need, then discuss it with your counselor

- ☐ **7** Name three careers that use reading skills. Pick one and research its training, education, certification, experience, costs, job outlook, starting pay, and advancement, then discuss it and your interest with your counselor

Tip: Ask a librarian, teacher, or editor about their work.