



Talking Stick Leader Resource Sheet

What is a talking stick?

A talking stick is something that shows a group who is talking so that one person talks and everyone else is quiet. In Cub Scouts, a talking stick is brilliant because:

- Cub Scouts are concrete thinkers and having a visual helps them focus.
- Cub Scouts are courteous, and this is a good way to teach courtesy. If someone talks out of turn, instead of saying "be quiet" just ask "who has the talking stick?" which is effective teaching.
- Some Cubs are shy talking in a group. Having something to fiddle with is helpful in letting them get the words out that they need to say.
- Passing a talking stick around makes sure everyone gets an opportunity to talk, even if they decide to pass.



Talking Sticks and COVID

Your Cubs should be washing their hands anyway, so before Talk time, have them wash hands or use hand sanitizer. A talking stick is really helpful now for these reasons:

- If you are inside and the Scouts have masks, it is VERY hard to know who is talking. Use the talking stick to help with the visual cue since you can't see mouths moving.
- If you are outside and distanced, the volume of conversation is probably less. Also, Cub Scouts do better when the center of attention is closer, and you will need to space them out. Once again, the Talking Stick will help keep the focus on the speaker.

How to Make a Talking Stick

This is a summary of the learning take-away and the requirements for each rank. The learning is the same, and the requirements vary only slightly by requiring more complex tricks for WEBELOS and AOL Scouts.

Materials:

- 1 12" stick or dowel rod
- yarn, twine, string
- 1 Leather string the length of the stick plus 6 inches for either end.
- Fur, leather, other fun covering
- Assorted beads

Directions:

Part of the allure of the talking stick is texture. Use materials which will allow tactile associations. Make it FUN to play with while talking. Talking sticks will be as individual as the maker!

1. Run a line of glue the length of the stick. (Hot glue preferred for this step.)
2. Lay leather string piece along the stick so that six inches dangle at either end.
3. Preferable to use one long, unbroken piece.
4. Anchor the end of a yarn (or rope, twine, etc) to one end of stick. Put some white glue on a small section, and wrap the yarn tightly to cover the stick. Having two people, one to spin the stick and the other to handle the yarn and glue, is helpful.
5. To change materials, clip ends leaving excess to be layered under the next material. Continue to wrap tightly with bands touching all the way to the end of the stick.
6. Hot glue a piece of fur or leather 2 to 3 inches long to one end of the stick wrapping tightly. It's ok to go beyond the stick and wrap around the dangle.
7. Put a dot of white glue inside the first bead and slide beads along the dangle into place. To secure end bead, loop dangle around and through it. Attach feathers by dipping the end into glue and inserting into the last bead.
8. Creativity Note: You can do it YOUR way. Use two strands so that you have extra dangles. Put leather, fur, etc. wherever you want and have more than one of this type of thing. Make it fun, make it interesting.
9. Make or improvise a cover to wrap the Talking Stick in when done. This helps teach REVERENCE and responsibility.

KEY POINTS

- Have something that “dangles” off the ends
- Have interesting textures
- Use generous amounts of glue to make it sturdy

