

Introducing GA Journey

The all-new individual achievement plan for Girls in Action

This conference outline is designed to guide Girls in Action leaders to a greater understanding of GA Journey and how they can involve their GAs in this individual achievement plan. This conference is designed to be approximately 90 minutes long.

Supplies Needed

Pens/pencils

Crayons

Colored markers

Index cards

Copy of the "Going on a Journey" handout for each participant

Copy of the sample *GA Journey 3* book for each participant

Copy of the sample *GA Journey Leader Guide* booklet for each participant

GA Journey training PowerPoint presentation

Projector

Screen

Copy of the GA Journey vests and badges handout for each participant

Copy of the "New GA Awards" handout for each participant

Flip chart

Poster board

If possible, order one of the new GA vests (available from www.lifewaystores.com/specialtyimprints) and all eight of the GA Journey badges (available August 2011 from www.wmustore.com). You may also want to order at least one pack of iron-on stars (available August 2011 from www.wmustore.com), as well as some of the other GA badges that are currently available. Or print out the badge and star designs from the "New Day for Children's Missions" CD.

Supplies for GA Journey Activities

Be sure you have enough supplies for each participant/group so that everyone may complete each activity.

Activity One

Copy of activity one (below) for each participant

Dry-erase board or flip chart

Dry-erase marker

Paper sacks—one for each participant

Crayons and colored markers

Card stock

Old issues of *GA World* magazine

Individually wrapped candy

Bibles

Activity Two

Copy of activity two (below) for each participant

Pennies—about 50

Bible

Items for an obstacle course

Craft sticks

Masking tape
Plastic foam cups

Activity Three

Copy of activity three (below) for each participant
Bibles
Bible dictionaries
Blank index cards
Scissors
Envelopes
Fine-tip markers
Pens
Poster board or large sheet of paper

Preparation Before the Conference

If possible, set up the conference room to look like a classroom. Give participants the opportunity to sit at tables so they can easily take notes. If space allows, set up the three GA Journey activities at the back of the classroom or in any extra space available. You might also use additional rooms and set up each activity in a different room. Make sure all of the supplies for each activity are readily available.

This conference is accompanied by a GA Journey training PowerPoint presentation. Be sure to have a computer, projector, and a screen available in the classroom. Use the GA Journey Training PowerPoint presentation as a guide during this time. Share the information below with participants. Provide time for participants to ask questions if needed.

If possible, prepare a sample GA vest, using sample badges and stars or printouts of badges from the “New Day for Children’s Missions” CD. You can refer to the “New GA Awards” handout or www.wmu.com/children for more information about badge placement.

Welcome

Greet participants as they enter the room. Make sure everyone has a seat.

Introductions

Take a few moments to introduce yourself as the conference leader. Be sure participants know who you are, what you do, and why you are leading this conference. Also, allow time for each participant to introduce herself or himself. Ask participants to introduce themselves by sharing their name and answering the following questions:

1. Where are you from?
2. What do you do?
3. What brings you to this conference?
4. What do you love about leading girls in missions education?

Be sure to open this time of learning in prayer.

Introductory Activity

Use this activity to introduce GA Journey and the concept of leading girls in their spiritual journey. Give each participant a copy of the “Going on a Journey” handout. You will notice the word *JOURNEY* is written down the side of the page. First, ask participants the following questions:

1. Have you ever been on a journey?
2. How would you describe your journey? (Some participants may share about a literal, physical journey while others share about a spiritual or emotional journey. Both of these types of journeys are significant. It's fine for participants to share about both.)
3. What did you learn on your journey?

Invite participants to follow the instructions on their "Going on a Journey" handout. Give participants approximately five minutes to complete this activity.

Overview of GA Journey and this Conference

GA Journey can have a powerful impact on the lives of girls and help them have a greater understanding of how God might use them in His work in the world.

Explain to participants that this conference about GA Journey is designed to accomplish five significant things:

1. GA leaders will gain a greater understanding of the overall GA Journey program.
2. GA leaders will review samples of the new GA Journey resources.
3. GA leaders will learn what each GA is responsible for accomplishing in her graded "journeys."
4. GA leaders will learn what they must do to guide their GAs in the GA Journey program.
5. GA leaders will learn about the new GA Journey award system, vests, badges, and stars.

GA Journey is the all-new individual achievement plan for Girls in Action. Individual GAs can complete GA Journey activities on their own, in small groups, in large groups, in a classroom setting, and more. GA Journey is designed to enhance the overall experience of every GA. As first through sixth grade girls travel on their GA Journey, they will gain a greater understanding of what missions is all about, take a personal interest in missions involvement, and strengthen their personal relationship with God.

GA Journey Resources

GA Journey includes multiple resources. Highlight each of these, and be sure participants have samples of these resources.

1. *GA Journey Leader Guide*—This comprehensive guide includes the activities and forms a GA leader needs for leading one GA or an entire group of GAs in GA Journey. Be sure every GA leader in your group has her own copy of this important resource.
2. GA Journey activity books—There are six GA Journey activity books. Each book is labeled with a number that corresponds to the grade in which a GA should complete that level. Every GA needs an activity book for her individual grade level.

GA Journey—The Program

What Is the Plan?

GA Journey is divided into eight growth areas. Ask: *Does anyone know what these eight areas might be?* Give participants a few minutes to guess what areas of focus GA Journey might highlight. Participants may say things like pray, give, or go. Make a list of the things participants share on a flip chart or dry-erase board so everyone can see.

Once participants have had a couple of minutes to share, review the list of eight growth areas:

I Am a GA
I Do Missions
I Give
I Help Missionaries
I Learn the Bible
I Pray
I Serve My Church
I Tell About Jesus

Explain that each growth area includes 18 activities with age-specific and broadly-graded options for girls to choose from. In order for a GA to complete a level of GA Journey, she must complete one activity from each of the eight growth areas.

Girls can complete one journey during each year they are a member of Girls in Action. For example, if a girl begins GA Journey in first grade, she will work on *GA Journey 1*. If a girl begins GA Journey in fourth grade, she will work on *GA Journey 4*.

The basic format of each GA Journey activity is divided into three sections:

- What You Need—this section provides a list of supplies needed for each session. The GA leader is responsible for gathering these supplies.
- What You Do—this section provides instructions for how to prepare for an activity. The GA leader should make all of these necessary preparations and have the room ready before the GAs arrive.
- What GAs Do—this section specifically tells GAs what they must do to complete an activity.

When to Use the Plan

GA Journey is an optional plan that can be used to enhance the overall GA program. GA Journey can stand alone and may be used in many different ways. Below is a list of suggestions for using GA Journey with the GAs in your group.

1. Once a month—use the last meeting of the month for all of your GAs to work on their GA Journey projects. Girls can select a project to complete as a group or they may complete projects as individuals.
2. At-home projects—GAs can decide what projects they want to complete, and then use time at home to complete the projects by themselves. Leaders can help girls be prepared by providing each GA with the “What GAs Do” section for the activity they have chosen.
3. Help from a parent (or other adult)—GA Journey can be done in the presence of a parent or other adult when the church does not provide another opportunity for GAs to do GA Journey.
4. Parents—GA Journey activities may be used to increase missions learning and involvement for children who are homeschooled.
5. Events—GA Journey can be the focus of a special event for GAs. Provide time for GAs to complete their GA Journey activities.

The Awards

GA Journey awards and badges are all new! GA Journey awards are now iron-on badges and stars. Each of the eight GA Journey badges represents one of the GA Journey growth areas. Every GA can earn all of the GA Journey badges in her first year of completing any of the GA Journey levels. A GA can also earn a star for each growth

area for every year of GA Journey she completes. The stars are color-coded and represent grade levels.

1. First grade—pink star
2. Second grade—green star
3. Third grade—yellow star
4. Fourth grade—blue star
5. Fifth grade—orange star
6. Sixth grade—purple star

In addition to the new GA Journey badges and stars, children can also earn many other badges related to their involvement in Girls in Action.

If possible, display the sample GA vest that you prepared. Distribute the “New GA Awards” handout. Use this time to help participants understand how to use the GA Journey badges. Be sure they understand the suggested placement of the badges on the vest.

Encourage participants to use the *GA Journey Leader Guide* to learn more about recording the progress of their GAs in GA Journey.

Putting GA Journey into Action

During this time, conference participants will have the opportunity to experience one or more activities from GA Journey. Divide the group into three smaller groups. If you have a small number of participants, use only one or two of the activities below. If you have a very large number of participants, set up multiple stations of the same activity. As time permits, allow participants to rotate and experience other activities.

Use the supply list at the beginning of this outline to gather the necessary supplies for each activity. The three GA Journey activities are at the end of this outline. Each one is on a separate page. Notice the layout of each activity. Each one follows the plan mentioned above and is divided into three sections—“What You Need,” “What You Do,” and “What GAs Do.” Be sure you have completed the first two steps so the participants can complete “What GAs Do.” Print each activity separately and cut the instructions apart. To begin, only give participants “What GAs Do.” Once the activity is over, share the other two parts of the activity—“What You Need” and “What You Do.” This will help leaders understand more about their role in GA Journey.

Wrap Up

Draw the participants back together and provide a few minutes for them to share about the activity(ies) they completed and reflect upon their experience with the larger group.

Take time to share about the changeover from WorldVentures to GA Journey. Also, be sure participants know the new GA Journey materials will be available in May 2011.

Invite participants to use the next few minutes to ask any questions they may have about GA Journey. Encourage all participants to visit www.wmu.com/children for additional resources related to children’s missions. In addition, be sure participants know who they can contact if they have questions after they leave this conference.

Closing Prayer

Use this time to pray for the GA leaders in attendance and for Girls in Action all across North America who will participate in GA Journey for years to come. Give each participant an index card and a pen. Ask participants to write the following four things on their index card:

1. Name
2. One prayer request you have as a GA leader
3. First name of a GA in your group you would like to pray for
4. One prayer request that relates to involving your GA group in GA Journey.

Once participants have had a few moments to write, invite them to find a partner. Encourage partners to share with each other the prayer requests on their cards. Ask each person to pray for her partner.

Offer a closing prayer for all of the participants and their Girls in Action groups. Remind leaders that you will continue to pray for them as they lead girls in missions education. Be sure to make yourself available after the conference to respond to any additional questions or concerns.

Activity One—Welcome New Friends

Designed for 1st–3rd graders

What You Need:

Dry-erase board or flip chart
Dry-erase marker
Paper sacks—one for each participant
Crayons and colored markers
Paper—cardstock
Outdated copies of *GA World* magazines
Individually wrapped candy
Bibles

What You Do:

- Discuss what it feels like to meet a new group of people for the first time. Challenge GAs to think back to the first day of school, first sports practice, or the first time they met someone new.
- Write the GA Motto, GA Pledge, and GA Scripture Verse on a dry-erase board or flip chart for GAs to copy.

What GAs Do:

Create a welcome gift for visitors or new GAs

1. Gather these items: a paper sack, crayons and markers, and out-dated *GA World* magazine, two sheets of cardstock, and several pieces of candy.
2. Decorate the front of the paper sack. Draw pictures and write words that describe GAs.
3. Place an out-dated copy of *GA World* and the candy in the sack.
4. On a sheet of cardstock, write the GA Motto, GA Pledge, and GA Scripture Verse. Use a different color marker or crayon for each one.
5. Think of someone you can invite to a GA meeting or event. Put two pieces of candy in your pocket or purse. After you invite someone to GA, share a piece of candy with that person and eat the other one.
6. Complete pages 00-00 in your GA Journey activity book. (These pages will correspond with the activity that has just been completed.)

Activity Two—Penny Challenge

Designed for 3rd–4th graders

What You Need:

Pennies—about 50

Bibles

Items for an obstacle course

Craft sticks

Masking tape

Plastic foam cups

What You Do:

- Set up an obstacle course, placing a Bible at the finish line.
- Tape a tic-tac-toe gameboard on the floor
- If more than one GA (or leader in this case) is completing this project, consider setting up stations.
- Talk about numerous examples of how your church uses offering money.

What GAs Do:

Complete four penny challenges while learning about how you can give to missions and what the Bible says about giving.

1. Build a penny tower by stacking pennies, one on top of the other, until the tower falls. After it falls, read Psalm 96:8 and name three ways your church uses offering money to help people.
2. Walk through an obstacle course while balancing a penny on a craft stick. If the penny falls, start over. At the end of the obstacle course, pick up a Bible. Find and read 1 Chronicles 16:29. Name something you can do without to save money for missions.
3. Play Tic-Tac-Toss. Toss the pennies onto a tic-tac-toe game board. When you get three pennies in a row, pick up a Bible and read Deuteronomy 16:17. Pray for people in your church to be generous givers.
4. Play Penny Side. Place a plastic foam cup near the end of a table. Slide pennies across the table until you knock the cup off the table. When the cup falls, pick up a Bible and read 1 Timothy 6:18. Name something you can share with people in need.
5. Complete pages 00-00 in your GA Journey activity book. (These pages will correspond with the activity that has just been completed.)

Activity Three—Concentrate!

Designed for 5th–6th graders

What You Need:

Bibles
Bible dictionaries
Blank index cards
Scissors
Envelopes
Fine-tip markers
Pens
Poster board or large sheet of paper

What You Do:

- Print the names of the Old Testament history books, Joshua through Esther, on a sheet of poster board.
- Demonstrate how to use a Bible dictionary to find a definition or description of a Bible book

What GAs Do:

Make and play a concentration game after exploring some Old Testament Bible books.

1. Locate the Old Testament history books, Joshua through Esther. Read the chapter and section headings to discover the stories and people found in each book.
2. Get 12 index cards and a pair of scissors. Cut each card in half. On one half of each card, print the name of the book of history. On the other half, write a definition or description of the Bible book. Use a Bible dictionary to complete this step.
3. Scramble your cards. Place them face down on a table or the floor.
4. Play a concentration game, turning over two cards at a time to match the Bible book name to its definition or description.
5. Place your cards in an envelope to take home and use again.
6. Complete pages 00-00 in your GA Journey activity book. (These pages will correspond with the activity that has just been completed.)

Going on a Journey

Describe a journey you have taken by listing words that begin with the letters on the left. List only one word for each letter.

J
O
U
R
N
E
Y

Going on a Journey

Describe a journey you have taken by listing words that begin with the letters on the left. List only one word for each letter.

J
O
U
R
N
E
Y