

Virtual [Closed Group] Girl Scout Book Club

1. Pick a Theme for your Book Club

If you want girls to feel an attachment to their book club, consider building it around a theme that resonates with them. For theme ideas, look for a common interest among the girls, a specific genre of books they love, or an author or series they enjoy.

2. Name Your Book Club

Naming your book club can help participants feel engaged. Pick a catchy name the girls can relate to. Let them participate in the naming process: Come up with a few possibilities, and have the girls vote for their favorite at your first book club meeting.

3. Number of Participants

You will need to decide how many girls you can accommodate in the book club. There are pitfalls to having too many, as well as too few. If your book club is too large, the more reserved girls in the group will have a hard time being heard. If you have too few participants, you may have trouble keeping the conversation flowing – especially when attendance is low. Aim for somewhere in between eight and fifteen participants.

4. Choose a Meeting Location - Make it Virtual Using Videoconferencing!

Host your meetings in your homes of participants, on a rotational basis. If you are having virtual meetings, make sure that everyone has internet access and access to videoconferencing tools such as Google Hangout, Zoom, Skype, etc. Kids under the age of 13 are required to have a parent/guardian present during the meetings.

5. Ask Other Parents to Volunteer

The host of the book club meeting will have an important role to play in keeping the girls engaged. However, depending on the size of the group, you may want to enlist the help of at least one other parent volunteer to facilitate the conversation and keep things moving smoothly.

6. Establish Channels of Communication

There will be occasions when you will want to communicate with the girls in your book club. You may want to re-schedule meetings, send out book suggestions, or share photos taken at meetings. As a group, agree on the best way to communicate with everyone – whether that is email, text, telephone or social media – and circulate a sign-up sheet to collect everyone's contact information. Research online for specific book club apps or website designed to keep you organized.

<http://bookmovement.com/bookclubapp/>

IOS app only - Android users may use the web version

<https://bookclubz.com/>

An online platform to organize your book club

<https://www.virtualbookclubforkids.com/category/book-unit-study/>

7. Decide on the Frequency and Timing of Book Club Meetings

You will have to decide how often to hold your book club meetings. Girls may have demanding schedules filled with extra-curricular activities. Aim for meetings every four to six weeks, and plan them with ample notice to avoid a scheduling nightmare.

8. Figure out Timing

Decide on what days and times are best suited for your book club meetings. Weekends and evenings work best, depending on the availability of participants. Schedule each meeting for 60 to 90 minutes, depending on whether you are planning to compliment your book discussion with another fun activity.

9. Themed Snacks for Your Book Club Meeting

Think up imaginative snacks that are related to your book theme. Plan and share ideas for fun snacks to accompany your book discussion. It will be BYOS (Bring Your Own Snacks!) Get creative, as this is part of the fun!

10. Choose Your Books

You knew we had to get to the actual book at some point, right? Create a list of great book possibilities that the girls in your book club can choose from. Research online or ask all participants to send you some books they are interested in reading, and then have everyone vote on their next pick from the consolidated list.

11. Keep the Conversation Flowing

You may find that your girls need a little help to keep the conversation flowing. You can facilitate the discussion by having a bank of questions that you can draw from when conversation lags.

Check the back of the book you are reading for a book club guide. You may also find relevant questions from a Google search, or at your local library. Alternatively, ask several parents to read the book and note questions along the way.

In addition to questions specific to the book you are reading, keep a list nearby of generic questions that are not specific to any one book.

12. Establish Ground Rules

Girls are full of enthusiasm, which can be very conducive to a lively girl's book club meeting. Unchecked, it can also lead to chaos. Consider establishing clear ground rules. Here are a few examples:

- No interrupting.
- Be respectful.
- There are no wrong answers.
- Everyone gets a chance to talk.

13. Organize Complimentary Activities

Make sure the girls in your book club always leave the meeting with a smile on their faces. One way to do that is to tag onto the book discussion a fun activity that is related to the book you are reading. For example:

- Have girls create a collage or bookmark related to the theme of the book.
- Have the girls dress up as their favorite character and act out a scene.
- Draw an alternate book cover.
- Create a comic strip based on the storyline.
- Invite a local speaker to join.