

Venture Units: First Six Weeks

The first programme cycle is very important for a Venture Scout Unit as it sets the tone for the year ahead. The first six weeks allow you, the Venture Scouts, to set the standard by which your programme will live up to.

Embedding the Crew System, the Venture Executive and the Code of Conduct should be the focus for the first six weeks and if done properly, the rest of the year will follow this structure.

Week 1: Introductions, icebreakers and establishment of Code of Conduct for the Venture Unit

Depending on the size of the Venture Unit and how well each member knows each other, appropriate icebreakers, which aid introductions, should be carried out. This can be carried out in a number of different ways depending on how well the Unit know each other.

One suggestion might be to split the Venture Scouts up into groups of around three/four and pit them against each other in different Minute To Win It games. The following YouTube link has loads of possibilities for these and most of them only require very basic materials: <https://youtu.be/5-zlBMJitp4>

At this meeting, it is also recommended that the Venture Unit would put together a Code of Conduct. It is really important that the things that go into the Code comes from the Ventures with the support of their Scouters and that all buy into it.



Week 2: Establishing Venture Scout Crews and Venture Scout Executive

Venture Units can vary greatly in size from anything from 1 up to 30+ however it should be noted that a critical mass is generally needed for an effective Venture Unit. We recommend Units have between 12-20 Venture Scouts that allows a breakdown of between 3-5 Venture Crews.

Crews in Venture Scouts are much more flexible than in the younger sections and crews can be put together for different reasons, for example, the stage a Venture Scout is with the Venture Programme (Suas and Transa) or for specific projects. It is also possible to have 'base crews' that would stay the same throughout the year in a similar way to the Scout section.

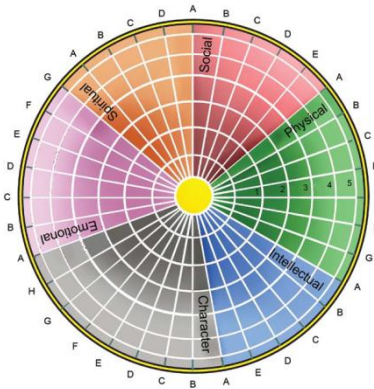
The Venture Scout Executive should also be elected at this point. There can be any number of roles but it is recommended that there is a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Quartermaster at the minimum. These can be drawn from the Crew Leaders or can be elected in their own right.

Once the Ventures are split into crews, a crew challenge is a really worthwhile thing to encourage team building. *Ready, Steady, Cook* is great programme to do in this instance. The Scouters supply each crew with an assortment of food items and the Ventures must work in their crews to prepare a dish in a set time frame. This will take a bit of organising beforehand in terms of locating the equipment and buying the food but is a very worthwhile activity.



Week 3: SPICES Wheel and Venture Scout Expedition

As early as week three, Venture Scouts should complete their SPICES wheel as this will aid in programme planning for the next programme cycle. For more information on the SPICES wheel revert to the Venture Scouts Programme book.



Also at this stage, the Unit as a whole should start exploring what they would like to do for the Venture Scout Expedition in the summer (assuming of course that it will be a Summer Expedition!). It's important that Venture Scouts get involved in the planning stages and also in the research phase as having an end goal will give the Venture Unit something to work towards. Maybe you will go to a Jamboree, inter-railing, hiking in the Alps or a moving camp along the Wild Atlantic Way. Remember that service should form a large part of the expedition. Plant the seed with the venture scouts this week and ask each crew to come back in two weeks with an draft outline of a possible expedition.

Tonight is also a good place to start considering the Investiture and what type of ceremony there will be. Of course, the meeting should not just be a talking shop! Games and other challenges should be spread out throughout the meeting.

Week 4: Get out!

While meetings in the scout den are important, it is also important that the Venture Unit gets out and about to do activities. Activities can form any type but should be loosely linked to one or more of the SPICES. An activity must have a purpose. Yes, a cinema trip might be an easy option but what is the benefit of it to the development of each Venture Scout. This is the role of the Scouters and Venture Executive – ensuring and facilitating the development of each Venture Scout.

Get out to the local forest and work on some scout skills. Can you boil water in a brown paper bag? Can you cook pizzas in dutch ovens? How about cooking up a nice chicken curry on a Latvian log fire? Do something different, something interesting and something memorable.

Week 5: Decision time...

Tonight is a night to make decisions. Listen to the feedback and presentations from the crews on Venture Expedition possibilities and agree on one or two options. Agree to do up budgets and look at transport options in more detail and revert back in two weeks to make a final decision.

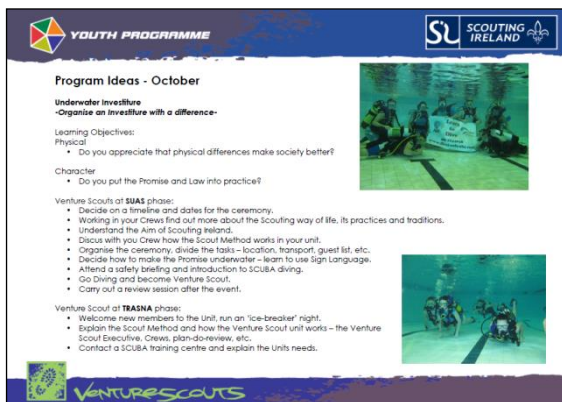
Also tonight, plan the next programme cycle. Why not have a theme for the programme cycle? You could choose a specific skill and design a programme around that skill. You should also aim to have an overnight activity in your next programme cycle. Once again – make it different, interesting and memorable.



Week 6: Investiture

An investiture is an important part of Scouting. It is the way we formally join the Venture Scout Unit and the scout movement. It involves each person making a scout promise in front of others. Each person should make their promise individually in the company of the other Ventures. We have three versions of the Scout Promise, each Venture Scout should choose the one which best suits their beliefs. Afterwards, you should have a celebration to mark the new members having fully joined the Unit.

Try to make investitures memorable. Think about a special place or activity. Why not do a sunrise investiture hike? Meet at 2am and start walking with a view to being on top of the mountain for sunrise. Everyone could then renew their Scout Promise as the sun rises which formally marks the new start of the Venture Scout journey for the new year.



Program Ideas - October

Underwater Investiture
Organise an investiture with a difference

Learning Objectives:
Physical:

- Do you appreciate that physical differences make society better?

Character:

- Do you put the Promise and Law into practice?

Venture Scouts at SJAS phase:

- Decide on a timeline and dates for the ceremony.
- Working in your Crews find out more about the Scouting way of life, its practices and traditions.
- Understand the Aim of Scouting Ireland.
- Discuss with you Crew how the Scout Method works in your unit.
- Organise the ceremony, divide the tasks – location, transport, guest list, etc.
- Decide how to make the Promise underwater – learn to use Sign Language.
- Attend a safety briefing and introduction to SCUBA diving.
- Go Diving and become Venture Scout.
- Carry out a review session after the event.

Venture Scout at TRASHA phase:

- Welcome new members to the Unit, run an 'ice-breaker' night.
- Explain the Scout Method and how the Venture Scout unit works – the Venture Scout Executive, Crews, plan-do-review, etc.
- Contact a SCUBA training centre and explain the Unit's needs.

Why not have an underwater investiture? This will obviously take a bit more planning but there is a resource for this available here to help you out: <http://goo.gl/orVNqD>