



BSA American Cultures Merit Badge

Information for Scouts & Their Families

We are looking forward to working with you on this merit badge. The information below will help you prepare for a productive class.

This is a four-hour class. Scouts should attend the entire session to complete the in-class work. We will meet in the Education Center at Colvin Run Mill Historic Site.

Scouts should bring:

- **water and a snack**
- **a pen or pencil**
- **any completed prework**
- **a blue card signed by the troop leader** **Note: Colvin Run Mill does NOT have blue cards.

Parents, to comply with BSA guidelines, this program requires that 2 adults be in attendance. Please consider attending with your Scout. You may learn more about your community and your presence helps the Scouts stay focused while the merit badge counselor teaches and works with Scouts individually.

Scouts, while not required, we recommend you use an *American Cultures Merit Badge Worksheet* to organize your work for this class. Worksheets can be found at [Merit Badge Requirements and Worksheets \(boyscoutstrail.com\)](https://www.boyscoutstrail.com) or [Merit Badge Worksheets \(usscouts.org\)](https://usscouts.org).

Read through the badge requirements carefully, so you know which requirements we will cover in class and which requirements you will need to complete outside of class.

Badge Requirements

Merit Badges are not designed to be done in one 4-hour session, so Scouts will need to complete some requirements outside of this class. Below is a list of requirements covered in and out of class.

** Choose THREE groups that have different racial, cultural, national, or ethnic backgrounds, one of which comes from your own background. Use these groups to meet requirements 1, 2, and 3.

Requirements that will be covered during the class:

2. Imagine that one of the groups from above had always lived alone in a city or country to which no other groups ever came. Tell what you think the city or country might be like today. Now tell what you think it might be like if the three groups you chose lived there at the same time.

3. Tell about some differences between the religious and social customs of the three groups. Tell about some ideas or ways of doing things that are similar in the three groups.

4. Tell about a contribution made to our country by three different people, each from a different racial, ethnic, or religious background.

Requirements that should be completed prior to the class. Bring this work to class so you can discuss it with the merit badge counselor during the session. Our comments on completing this prework are in italics. * If all pre-work is not done, Scouts may attend the class to complete the in-class work, and we will sign the completed requirements. Once additional work is completed, Scouts can make an appointment to meet with Colvin Run Mill merit badge counselor staff to review completed work and sign their completed blue cards.

1. Do TWO of the following, choosing a different group for each:

a. Go to a festival, celebration, or other event identified with one of the groups. Report on what you see and learn.

b. Go to a place of worship, school, or other institution identified with one of the groups. Report on what you see and learn.

c. Talk with a person from one of the groups about the heritage and traditions of the group. Report on what you learn.

d. Learn a song, dance, poem, or story that is traditional to one group, and teach it to a group of your friends.

e. Go to a library or museum to see a program or exhibit featuring one group's traditions. Report on what you see and learn.

5. Give a talk to your Scout unit or class at school on how people from different groups have gotten along together. Lead a discussion on what can be done to help various groups understand one another better.

If you have questions, contact Dawn Bova at (703-759-2771) or dawn.bova@fairfaxcounty.gov.