

ARROW OF LIGHT AND GRADUATION CEREMONY

Note: Ideally, this ceremony can be performed by an Order of the Arrow (OA) ceremonial team in an outdoor campfire setting; for example, at a Pack picnic. This allows for a more natural feel as well as for the use of torches, firepots, and other "special effects." If an indoor setting is preferred by the Pack, candles should be used in place of smudge pots. Either the OA team or the Pack can provide the tokens called for in the ceremony. The team should have something prepared in case the Pack doesn't (an arrow with a felt banner, leather thong bolo, etc.). The team needs to make sure (via the Webelos leader) that the Cubs participating in the ceremony know and can recite the Scout Oath and Law as they are called upon to say both in the ceremony. When performing the speaking parts, memorization is important, but also become familiar enough with the part so the words come out naturally.

Arrow of Light Ceremony

(The three principles -- Chief, Medicine Man, and Guide -- enter from the rear and take their positions: Chief at the North, Medicine Man at the West and Guide at the east.)

Chief: *(pausing for a moment to look out among the pack)* Cub Scouts, leaders, parents and guests; my brothers, Weuchsowagam, the Medicine Man, Witschindin, the Guide, and I, Takachsin, the Chieftain, bring you greetings and salutations. We have come before you tonight to fulfill a prophecy spoken in the legends of our tribe.

Medicine Man: The words of the prophecy say that in the springtime of each year, young braves will be found who have met the challenges of Akela and are ready to become warriors. My brothers and I have watched your pack and have found such braves among you. We have come to present them with the highest honor: the Arrow of light. But before this can happen, they must take a journey through their memories.

Guide: Many moons ago, you entered the Cub Pack. The first challenges you encountered were from the Bobcat clan. As you met them, you learned what it means to be a Cub, the Law of the Pack, and the three words that would inspire you to meet all other challenges: Do Your Best. *(Light firepot or candle)* Having started on the trail, you next sought to join the Wolf clan. Here you were met with twelve challenges, harder than the Bobcat tests, But with the cleverness of the wolf itself, you met them and continued on your journey. *(Light firepot or candle)*

Med: Now the trail became darker and fainter as you came to the Bear clan. Again twelve challenges were presented before you. As you met them, your knowledge grew and your spirit strengthened. It was this strength of spirit, like the bear, that prompted you to move onward. *(Light firepot or candle)*

Chief: As you neared the summit, you joined the Webelos clan. The time of your testing had begun. In the Webelos clan you began to learn about Scouting. Just as you learned the ways of the brave as a Bobcat, Wolf, and Bear, as a member of the Webelos clan you would learn the ways of the warrior. *(Light firepot or candle)*

Chief: In time, you earned the Webelos badge, blazing the rest of the trail on your own. Now at last you have reached the summit and the end of this journey.

(To other principles) Let the Arrow of Light be conferred upon them.

Guide: *(to Chief)* Wait, Brother Takachsin! Before receiving this most high honor, they must hear its legend so they may understand and appreciate what they are to receive.

Chief: *(to Medicine Man)* Brother Weuchsowagam, let the legend of the Arrow of Light be known to all present.

Medicine Man: *(Moves forward)* In the ages past, when the Nations of the red man spread across the land, there was a young member of one tribe called Akela. Akela wished to be a warrior as the older men of his tribe were, but no one would consider him so. "Little Akela, he is too young to join the hunt," they would say. "Too slow to run with the Bobcat clan. Not clever enough to hunt with the Wolf clan. Such a young one is not strong enough to join the Bear clan." No matter how hard Akela worked, all ways were barred to him. But the Aged Chieftain of the tribe saw Akela differently than the rest. "The spirit of this young one burns brighter than the largest fire. Akela has served his brethren well for one of his age. The time will come when the tribe will need only that which Akela can give."

One night in the fall during the harvest, a party of warriors was canoeing back to their village after a hunt. On this night, the fog rolled thick across the river. The fog was so heavy, the river path back to the village was hidden from view. A nearby river path to the right led to a roaring chasm. The warriors did not know the safe path to take and were trapped.

Akela had been practicing his hunting skills in the hills above the river and had seen the danger to the canoe. He wrapped an arrow in a skin, set it aflame, and shot it into the sky toward the safe river path. The warriors in the canoe saw the flaming arrow through the fog and followed it toward the safe river path and the village.

The warriors went to the Chieftain saying, "We were trapped on the river and the Highfather sent an Arrow of Light through the sky to guide us." The Chieftain smiled and said, "The sign which led you to safety came not from the heavens but from one who you thought was too young to do anything." He brought Akela forward to the surprise of the warriors.

"Akela has proved himself worthy to wear the name of warrior. He has aided his brothers in their time of greatest need. Hereafter, all young members of our tribe shall become warriors only after meeting the challenges of the Arrow of Light. Let them each be filled with the spirit of Akela and follow his example of unselfish service to our brethren." And it was made so and carried through to the present day as you Webelos stand before us now, ready to receive the Arrow of Light.

Guide: Will the following Webelos and their parents please stand before us as your names are called. *(As Guide recites or reads names, the Medicine Man should direct Webelos to make a line across the southern end of the circle. Parents should stand behind their son(s).)*

Chief: Before this honor is conferred upon you, I must see your devotion to the high ideals of Scouting. Therefore, I ask you all now to raise your right hand to the Scout sign and repeat with me, the Scout

Oath and Law. *(Raises hand in the sign of the Boy Scout -- followed by other principles and Webelos -- and leads them in the Scout Oath and Law, which they say together.)*

Guide: Having met all of its challenges, it is our duty and privilege to award you with the highest Cub Scout honor -- the Arrow of Light.

(To parents) Because of the support and guidance you have given these braves, I give the Arrow of Light to you to present to them. (moves to the front and gives the Arrow of Light card and/or patch to the parents who then present it to their sons.)

Medicine Man: My brothers and I also present you with this token from your pack. *(or say our tribe if your team supplied the tokens)* Keep this in remembrance of this occasion. *(Moves forward and presents each Webelos with a token. As he does so, the Chief and Guide congratulate each Webelos with the Scout Handshake. NOTE: If the Webelos are to be inducted into the troop at this time, continue, otherwise, jump to the closing below.)*

Graduation Ceremony

Guide: *(After all principles have returned to their places)* Parents, you may be seated.

Chief: As we have said before, this ceremony marks an end of a journey. But even as this journey ends, another is just beginning. Here at the summit of Cub Scouting you have found the start of a new trail. This trail is a pathway that leads to the realm of our brothers in the sky, the Eagles.

Med: But the trail will also be long and difficult. As you journey, you must keep the spirit of Akela strong within each of you. It will give you strength and guidance as you move onward.

Guide: *(Medicine Man moves between the members of the Scout troop and the Webelos)* The time has come for you to begin on the new trail. To join the clan of the warriors: The Scout Troop. Each of you shall now cross the bridge and be welcomed by the Troop members.

Medicine Man: As the night is a bridge between each day, let this be a bridge for each of you to the fellowship of Scouting. *(Medicine Man moves aside to let the Cub Scouts pass and cross the bridge. Webelos cross and are welcomed by a Troop member, after all have crossed and are greeted, Guide continues.)*

Closing Ceremony

Guide: *(To all still standing)* You may now be seated.

Chief: Once again, I congratulate you on your achievements. Having finished the work for which we were called to do, we now depart this gathering of your pack. Before we go, I would remind you to keep Akela's spirit alive. Let it ignite a spark within each of you that will fan into a fire as you grow.

(Pause)

We challenge all the younger braves present to continue on your trails and strive to reach the summit and the Arrow of Light. May the great master of all Scouts be with you until we meet again. *(Principles silently depart)*

