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Order of the Arrow
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The Customs and Traditions of the Order of the Arrow
Study Guide

1) Who is Kichkinet? Nutiket? Meteu? Allowat Sakima?

Kichkinet is your guide in the ceremonies. He symbolizes helpfulness and friendliness. Nutiket is the guard of the circle. He upholds the tradition of cheerfulness. Meteu is the medicine man and representative of brotherhood. He reminds us of our need to love one another. Allowat Sakima, the mighty chief, symbolizes service. From him you accepted the obligation of the Order.

2) What tokens did the four ceremonial characters reveal to you in the pre-Ordeal, and what did they represent?

Nutiket gave the bow Allowat Sakima as a token of liveliness and flexibility under stress, the principle of cheerfulness. Meteu gave the bowstring to Allowat Sakima as a token of the ties of Brotherhood also symbolized by the rope in the Ordeal ceremony. Allowat Sakima strung the bow uniting brotherhood and cheerfulness for service, and drew an arrow from a quiver as a token that your election separated you from your fellows for something higher. Allowat Sakima asked you to test the bow as a sign of willingness to test the dedication to Scout ideals which led you to your election. Lastly, Kichkinet shot the arrow upward symbolizing the pathway you will follow if your dedication is unwavering.

3) What are the tests of the Ordeal, and what do they illustrate?

The night alone focuses attention on your need for courage and self-reliance on the trail ahead. You must be willing to accept individual responsibility for your thoughts and actions. You will find that your course will set you apart from your friends to the extent of isolation, but you must act according to your resolution regardless of what others do or fail to do.

Your pledge of silence emphasizes the continuing need for you to spend time in thoughtful silence. Difficult decisions will face you now and in the future, and you will need to search your heart and spirit deeply to find the resolution that will guide you onward successfully.

The scant food test illustrates self-denial. Often you will find it necessary to abandon mere personal comfort or desires if you are to fulfill your obligation.

The day of work indicates your willingness to give service, even when this service involves hardship and toil. In the Ordeal, you worked with the help and cooperation of other candidates and members but now you must be ready to service without the help and cooperation of others.

4) What are the three symbolic preparations for the obligation?

Before you entered the circle, you placed your hand on the shoulder of the candidate ahead of your to indicate your intention to continue in service to your own Scout unit. Kichkinet, seeing that you all have the same purpose, symbolized this bond of brotherhood by binding you all together with the rope. Finally, upon Allowat Sakima's direction, Kichkinet asked you to advance before the fire of cheerfulness.

5) What is the tradition given us by Uncas as describe in the legend?

The legend tells how the peaceful lives of the Lenni Lenape Indians were threatened by neighboring tribes and distant enemies. Chief Chingachgook's call for volunteers to go and alert other villages of the tribe was met with apathy and indifference from tribal members. Uncas cheerfully offered his help despite the negative attitudes of everyone around him. He cared enough for others that he was willing to face hardship and danger to protect them from harm. Uncas clearly saw a high vision, and his desire for his brothers was that they could see it to. The self-sacrificing service given by Uncas and Chingachgook is said to have saved the tribe from annihilation.

6) What is the significance of Allowat Sakima's description of the arrow in the Ordeal ceremony?

Allowat Sakima stated that the various qualities attributed to the arrow are ingredients of leadership. This is a continuation of his comments about the arrow in the pre-Ordeal. The Ordeal asks individuals to act according to their highest sense of right, regardless of the attitudes or actions of others. The four tests and the obligation point the way, and Allowat Sakima reveals this way as one of real leadership. Any member who understands his or her obligation and is striving to fulfill it becomes a center of strength in his or her troop. His or her example sets the pace in cheerful service and his or her dedication has a rich effort on those who know him or her. Although wearing the sash identifies a Scout or Scouter as a member of the Oder it is his or her efforts to fulfill his or her obligation that truly distinguishes him or her and provides other with glimpse of the arrow.

7) What is Ordeal membership?

Like the Ordeal, it is a time of trail, during which your understanding of the traditions of the arrow will be put to the test. In the Ordeal ceremony, each advancement you made into the circle was challenged, but your resolution and faithfulness in time of testing enabled you to go forward. You will find this to be true also in the experiences ahead. By striving to fulfill your obligation you will provide the high vision of Brotherhood, Cheerfulness, and Service to your fellow Scouts, even as Uncas did for his tribe.

8) When are you ready to accept Brotherhood membership in the Order?

Successfully meeting the demands of the Obligation is usually rather hard for the first several months. Gradually, however, your dedication to it will bring about changes that will make it easier for you. Eventually, the spirit of cheerful service will become almost second nature to you, and you will be fulfilling the obligation and hardly even thinking about it. As this experience - develops you are beginning to see the arrow and you are ready for the Brotherhood.