



**Royal Rangers**  
NATIONAL BOYS MINISTRIES

**L. Alton Garrison**  
Division of Church Ministries, Chairman

**Doug Marsh**  
National Commander

October 2007

Dear Royal Rangers Leaders:

The National Royal Rangers Ministries office is listening to you!

One of the concerns you addressed in the Royal Rangers–Question, Learn, and Change (RR-QLC) survey conducted on the national website is that many of the merits require entirely too much writing. And you were right! (Yes, the pun was intentional.)

As a result, we are announcing some tips to reduce the pencil time, making the merits more fun, hands-on, and experiential. I invite you to carefully read the article, “Making Merits Interactive,” by John Hicks the national communications and administrative coordinator.

Thank you for speaking; we are listening. The entire National Royal Rangers Ministry team is dedicated to equipping you to influence more boys and young men for Christ than ever, more effectively than ever!

Honored to be serving with you,

Doug Marsh  
National Commander

PS – If you have yet to complete the RR-QLC survey, there is still time.  
Visit the national website at [www.RoyalRangers.ag.org/qlc](http://www.RoyalRangers.ag.org/qlc).

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# Making Merits Interactive

by John HICKS, National Communications & Administrative Coordinator

Since its inception in 1962, Royal Rangers has been at its core an outdoor, action-oriented program. Our aim, as stated in the 1998 edition of the *Leaders Manual*, is “to instruct, challenge, and inspire our boys in the areas of Bible doctrine, Christian service, moral conduct, and basic beliefs of our church through interesting activities the boys enjoy.” [Emphasis added.]

In keeping with this tradition, page 4 of the Leaders Guides for both the Discovery and Adventure Rangers programs begin by describing Royal Rangers as “an action-packed, life-changing ministry to boys of all ages.” These resources go on to describe the program as having weekly meetings “filled with the activities, camaraderie, and spiritual challenge that boys need.”

It has long been understood that boys need activity and learn best in an environment rich with hands-on activities and student participation. It is, therefore, essential that the weekly Royal Rangers meeting be a place where boys are given the opportunity to learn by interactive means and to be directly involved in a variety of physical activities. *Lecture sessions with PowerPoint presentations where the boys’ primary means of participation is limited to listening and writing should be avoided.* In order to maximize our effectiveness, it is essential that we utilize methods of instruction that are most effective for teaching boys.

With these thoughts in mind, consider the following as tips and alternatives when teaching your next weekly meeting:

- Whenever possible, complete merit requirements orally as a group rather than in written format. Requirements beginning with words like *explain*, *list*, or *tell* do not need to be completed in written format but may be completed as a group discussion. Every boy present may then receive credit for having completed that requirement.
- Allow essay requirements to be satisfied orally by short individual presentations to the group. This will satisfy the purpose of the requirement (i.e., knowledge of the subject) while avoiding a written format that could

be a major obstacle to younger boys. For those who aren’t comfortable with oral presentations or when the size of the group makes this option unsuitable, the boys may create illustrated reports by researching and assembling collages of photos or images with captions describing the subjects.



■ Look for ways to get the boys physically involved in the learning process. Requirements that begin with *demonstrate* should always involve physical activity not merely explaining or writing a response. “Sit and listen” times should be limited to approximately 1 minute per age. For example, a 7-year-old Ranger Kid can “sit and listen” for approximately 7 minutes; a 12-year-old Adventure Ranger for about 12 minutes. Look for ways to utilize the “hear, see, do” principle of instruction. Let the boys *hear* you explain how to do something, *see* you demonstrate the skill, and then *do* or practice

the skill themselves.

- Provide opportunities for the boys to complete requirements as a group or patrol. Interaction with friends makes any task more fun and enhances learning for everyone.

It should be noted that the requirements for the merits cannot be changed and should be completed as written. The handbooks and workbooks are still necessary resources to direct and track each boy’s progress through the advancement system. However, the methods used to satisfy requirements should be flexible, allowing for differing abilities and maturity levels of boys.

As Royal Ranger leaders, we enjoy a tremendous privilege to serve our Master Ranger, Jesus Christ, through the ministry of Royal Rangers. Along with any privilege comes responsibility. It is our responsibility to provide our boys with an “action-packed, life-changing ministry” that will “instruct, challenge, and inspire” them in their personal growth and achievement as they daily grow into the image of Christ. ☺

NATIONAL ROYAL RANGERS MINISTRIES - October 2007