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1. Discuss with your counselor the importance of signs, signals, and codes, and why people need these different methods of communication.

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Briefly discuss the history and development of signs, signals, and codes.

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2. Explain the importance of signaling in emergency communications.

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Discuss with your counselor the types of emergency or distress signals one might use to attract airborne search-and-rescue personnel if lost in the outdoors or trying to summon assistance during a disaster.

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⬜ Illustrate these signaling examples by the use of photos or drawings.

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3. Do the following:

a. Describe what Morse code is and the various means by which it can be sent.

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⬜ Spell your first name using Morse code.

⬜ Send or receive a message of six to 10 words using Morse code.

b. Describe what American Sign Language (ASL) is and how it is used today.

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⬜ Spell your first name using American Sign Language.

⬜ Send or receive a message of six to 10 words using ASL.

4. Give your counselor a brief explanation about semaphore, why it is used, how it is used, and where it is used. Explain the difference between semaphore flags and nautical flags.

Explanation:

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Why is it used?

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How is it used?

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Where is it used?

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Explain the difference between semaphore flags and nautical flags.

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Then do the following:

⬜ a. Spell your first name using semaphore.

⬜ Send or receive a message of six to 10 words using semaphore.

⬜ b. Using illustrations or photographs, identify 10 examples of nautical flags and discuss their importance.

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|  | Type | Importance |
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***(Note: Remember to provide illustrations or photographs of the flags!)***

5. Explain the braille reading technique and how it helps individuals with sight impairment to communicate.

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Then do the following:

⬜ a. Either by sight or by touch, identify the letters of the braille alphabet that spell your name.

⬜ By sight or touch, decode a braille message at least six words long.

⬜ b. Create a message in braille at least six words long, and share this with your counselor.  
***NOTE: To satisfy this requirement, you do not need to emboss braille dots in thick paper. Rather, you may use a pencil or pen to draw the dots on ordinary paper, copying the characters of the braille alphabet to spell out your message letter by letter.***

6. Do the following:

a. Describe to your counselor six sound-only signals that are in use today.

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Discuss the pros and cons of using sound signals versus other types of signals.

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b. Demonstrate to your counselor six different silent Scout signals.

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| ⬜ | 1. |  |
| ⬜ | 2. |  |
| ⬜ | 3. |  |
| ⬜ | 4. |  |
| ⬜ | 5. |  |
| ⬜ | 6. |  |

⬜ Use these Scout signals to direct the movements and actions of your patrol or troop.

⬜ 7. On a Scout outing, lay out a trail for your patrol or troop to follow. Cover at least one mile in distance and use at least six different trail signs and markers.

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| 4. |  |
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⬜ After the Scouts have completed the trail, follow no-trace principles by replacing or returning trail markers to their original locations.

⬜ 8. For THREE of the following activities, demonstrate five signals each. Tell what the signals mean and why they are used:

a. Sports official’s hand signs/signals

b. Heavy-equipment operator’s hand signals

c. Aircraft carrier catapult crew signals

d. Cyclist’s hand signals

e. An activity selected by you and your counselor

Activity 1:

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|  | Signal | Meaning | Purpose |
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Activity 2:

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|  | Signal | Meaning | Purpose |
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Activity 3:

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|  | Signal | Meaning | Purpose |
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| 2. |  |  |  |
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⬜ 9. Share with your counselor 10 examples of symbols used in everyday life.

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***(Note: Remember to provide illustrations or photographs of the symbols so you can show them to your counselor!)***

Design your own symbol. Share it with your counselor and explain what it means.

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Then do the following:

a. Show examples of 10 traffic signs and explain their meaning.

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|  | Sign | Meaning |
| 1. |  |  |
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| 3. |  |  |
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***(Note: Remember to provide illustrations or photographs of the signs so you can show them to your counselor!)***

b. Using a topographical map, explain what a map legend is and discuss its importance. Point out 10 map symbols and explain the meaning of each.

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Point out 10 map symbols and explain the meaning of each.

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|  | Symbol | Meaning |
| 1. |  |  |
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c. Discuss text-message symbols and why they are commonly used.

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Give examples of your favorite 10 text symbols or emoticons.

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| 1. |  | 3. |  | 5. |  | 7. |  | 9. |  |
| 2. |  | 4. |  | 6. |  | 8. |  | 10. |  |

⬜ Then see if your counselor or parent can identify the meaning or usage of each symbol.

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| 1. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 3. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 5. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 7. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 9. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No |
| 2. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 4. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 6. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 8. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No | 10. | ⬜ Yes ⬜ No |

⬜ 10. Briefly discuss the history of secret code writing (cryptography).

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Make up your own secret code and write a message of up to 25 words using this code.

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⬜ Share the message with a friend or fellow Scout.

⬜ Then share the message and code key with your counselor and discuss the effectiveness of your code.

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**When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088).Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from** [**http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf**](http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf)**.**

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