



## Draw the Lines



# girl scouts in the heart of pennsylvania

## Dear Troop Leaders,

How do we elect our political leaders in the United States? What factors determine which candidates we are able to vote for? Why are so many people unaware, confused, or downright frustrated about voting?

We invite your Girl Scouts to earn a Draw The Lines Fun Patch from a project called Draw the Lines PA, a nonpartisan civic initiative designed to help Pennsylvania's youth understand and have their voices heard in our democracy. This set of activities invites Girl Scouts to understand how voting works in the United States, and for older Girl Scouts, why one particular part of our system, gerrymandering, is so frustrating that many Pennsylvanians want to change it. (Gerrymandering is a result of politicians getting to choose their voters, instead of voters choosing their politicians.)

This project is nonpartisan, and offers a fun and interactive way to be an informed voter and an engaged citizen.

So how can Girl Scouts earn a Draw the Lines Fun Patch? For younger Girl Scouts, we've designed activities that get them thinking about how decisions get made by groups, where they live, issues they care about, solutions to public policy challenges, and communicating in writing to appropriate public officials. Older Girl Scouts will be given activities to help them understand voting and legislative redistricting, and also how to raise their voices and constructively express their opinions.

Draw The Lines PA is a project of the Committee of Seventy, one of the oldest good government nonprofits in Pennsylvania. Funding for DTL comes from Pennsylvania foundations like the William Penn Foundation, Heinz Endowments, Hillman Family Foundations, Benedum Foundation, Pittsburgh Foundation, and Independence Foundation.

If you need help, don't hesitate to reach out to us at [aworden@drawthelinespa.org](mailto:aworden@drawthelinespa.org). You can learn more at [drawthelinespa.org](http://drawthelinespa.org). We would love to help connect your troop to your state lawmakers (since they determine how our districts are redrawn) and can arrange a meeting in your hometown or in Harrisburg if you are interested. Letting our elected representatives know what we think is one of the ultimate exercises in democracy, right up there with voting.

## Enjoy!

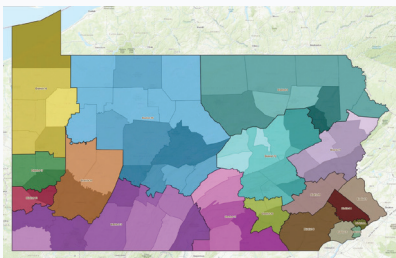


# Draw the Lines

In addition to the Draw The Lines Fun Patch, Girl Scouts age 13 and older can also enter the Draw The Lines PA map drawing competition. Using our free online mapping platform, they can draw their own districts. They will learn about Pennsylvania's many different geographical and cultural traits. There are cash prizes up to \$5,000 for our competition winners! Consider doing a map as a Troop. Past statewide winners have included high school sophomores!

For more information on the contest, visit:

[drawthelinespa.org/contests](http://drawthelinespa.org/contests)



## Ambassadors (Grades 11 and 12) and Seniors (Grades 9 and 10)

### WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

#### Activity 1:

#### Let's Talk About It: Redistricting in the United States

Watch the Citizen Genius video titled Congressional Redistricting [youtube.com/watch?v=RYL28mO8INI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYL28mO8INI)

Answer the following questions individually in writing.

1. What process does the United States use to determine how many people will represent voters in a specific district in the U.S. Congress and state legislatures?
  - a. Annual elections
  - b. Passing a law through Congress
  - c. Census and reapportionment
  - d. A Supreme Court case
2. Regardless of how state populations change, there are always \_\_\_ seats in the United States House of Representatives.
3. Every voter belongs to a \_\_\_\_, which is a defined territory with boundaries that determines who people vote for in local, state, and federal elections.
  - a. district
  - b. precinct
  - c. house
  - d. map
4. Why is redistricting necessary every 10 years? (choose all that apply)
  - a. Population changes in different states mean that the country has to rebalance how many representatives a state receives.
  - b. Because term limits require new leaders to be elected
  - c. Within a state, population movement may make the old districts unbalanced
  - d. A new president requires new elected officials
5. Who is in charge of redistricting? (choose all that apply)
  - a. The President of the United States
  - b. State legislatures, some with approval from the governor
  - c. The school boards
  - d. Politician or independent commissions

Share your answers with the Troop and discuss.

For more information:

[drawthelinespa.org/uploads/attachments/cjmatmkt005hezr3c0oughtm-1-redistrictingus-lesson.pdf](http://drawthelinespa.org/uploads/attachments/cjmatmkt005hezr3c0oughtm-1-redistrictingus-lesson.pdf)



# Draw the Lines

## Activity 2:

### Gerrymandering 101 game

- Print out copies of the Gerrymandering 101 worksheet (on the next page) to distribute to the Girl Scouts.
- Pretend you work for a political party and get to gerrymander legislative districts.

## Activity 3:

### Flashes of Insight: Conversations about priorities in redistricting

This simple but absorbing exercise highlights this truth: Redistricting isn't just about statistics and lines on a map. An election map is a statement of values and priorities. Maps embody values that speak to how you want democracy to work, how you want to be represented, and how you define community. There is no such thing as "one perfect map". Even an algorithm is shaped by value choices from the person writing it. The map you like best might be sound and constitutional, yet the person next to you might prefer a very different but also constitutional map. The two of you are just prioritizing different, legitimate values.

- Print out the cards in advance (they are front-and-back) or pull them up on a laptop or screen.

#### Print/View the cards here:

[drawthelinespa.org/uploads/attachments/cjsnbk5d500zu5qr3w8391p0k-flashes-of-insight-full-activity-for-website.pdf](https://drawthelinespa.org/uploads/attachments/cjsnbk5d500zu5qr3w8391p0k-flashes-of-insight-full-activity-for-website.pdf)

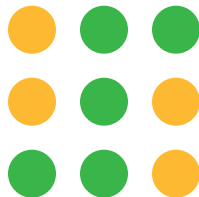
- Take 5 minutes to sort out your own individual priorities and values of redistricting. Every Girl Scout gets a Wild Card that allows her to include a value of her own that is not represented in the cards.
- Share the order of your values and explain to your Troop why you chose the way you did.
- When all the Girl Scouts have discussed their redistricting values, discuss similarities and differences among the Troop members.
- Discuss any surprises.
- Has anyone changed her mind as a result of the conversation?



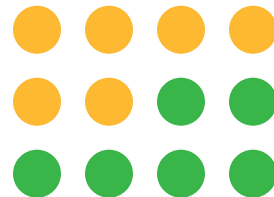
### Gerrymandering 101

Let's pretend you work as a paid operative for the Yellow Dot Party. Your party controls your state's redistricting process. That's good for your side, but you have a problem. Your foe, the Green Dot Party, is growing. It actually has more voters now. Your assignment is to draw election boundaries that make sure the Yellow Dot Party can still win more seats in the next election. You'll do this by "packing" green dots into as few districts as you can, while spreading the rest of the Greens out over districts where yellow dots keep a majority (i.e. "cracking"). For each puzzle, draw lines around dots to create your districts. Two rules: 1) Each district must have the same number of dots. 2) Each dot in a district must be next to at least one other dot in that district.

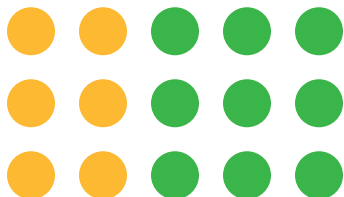
1. Create **3 districts** (each with 3 dots) but make sure the Yellow Party wins 2 out of 3 districts - even though Green has more voters. (**Hint:** First draw one district with ALL green dots.)



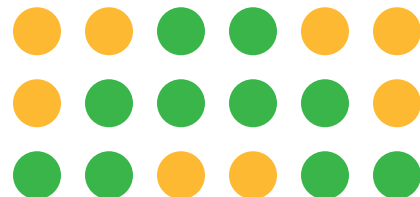
2. The state grows to **4 districts** (each with 3 dots) Draw a map where the Yellow Party wins 3 of the 4 districts, even though Green has the same number of voters.



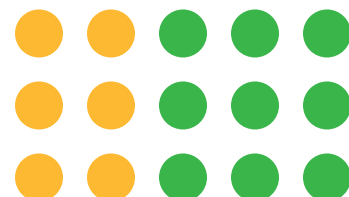
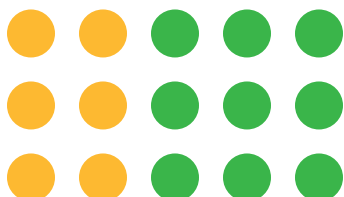
3. In a growing state, the Green Party now leads the Yellows, 9 voters to 6. Draw **5 districts** (each with 3 dots) in a way that gives Yellows a 3-2 seat majority.



4. Here's an area where the Yellow Party is in the minority (10-8) and its voters are scattered around the region. See if you can create **3 districts** (each with 6 dots) so the Yellows can still win 2 out of the 3 seats.



**BONUS:** Draw boundaries for five districts (each with 3 dots) in two different ways. First, draw them to cut the best deal possible for the Yellows. Then, pretend that the Green Dot Party made you a better offer and you switch teams. Try drawing the best 5-district map possible for the Greens.





# Draw the Lines

## Cadettes (Grades 6, 7 and 8)

### Activity 1:

#### Draw Your Own Personal PA

- Print out copies of the Personal PA map (on the next page) to distribute to the Girl Scouts.
- Unleash your inner cartographer and artist and show us what PA means to you!

Pennsylvania is filled with diverse culture and geography. And each person has a different view of what the rest of the commonwealth looks like culturally and geographically. Here is your chance to map Pennsylvania the way you think it looks. Where is Philadelphia? Where is Pittsburgh? What about Hershey Park? Where is Amish Country? How about the famous battlefields – Gettysburg and Brandywine? Where was oil first discovered?

### Activity 2:

#### In Gov We Trust

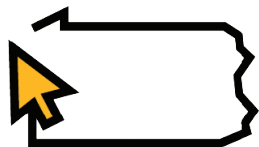
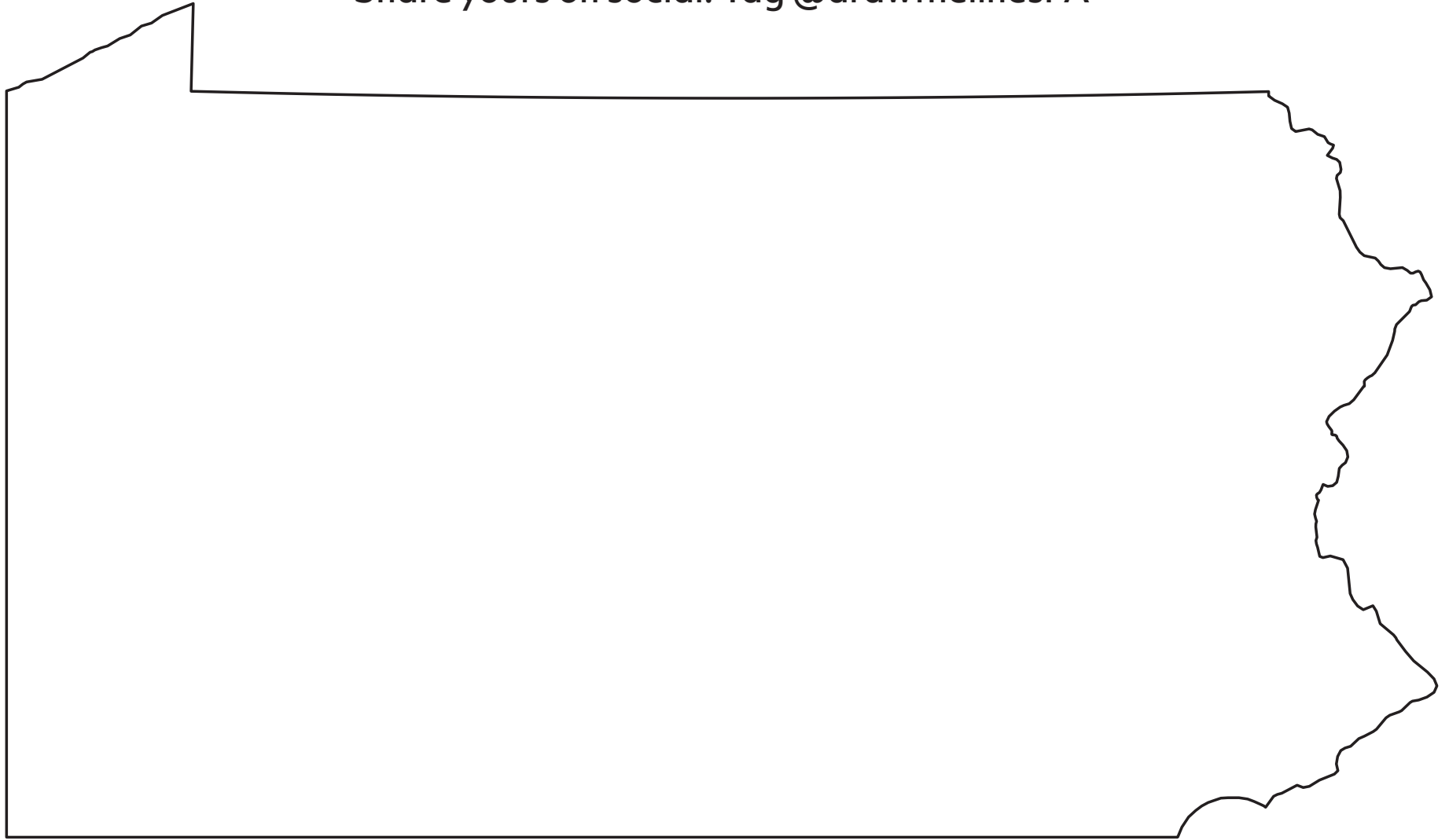
- List at least three things about you that make you make sense to other people, to your fellow Girl Scouts? (You do not need to share your answers).
- Pick ONE response and write an explanation of how this trait or experience explains you.
- Ask if any Girl Scouts would like to share aloud.
- On your own, answer the question: What should the American government do for citizens of the United States.
- Share your list with two neighbors and highlight anything that appears on more than one of your sheets.
- Together with one or two other Girl Scouts, answer the question: What would the government need to know in order to do the things you've listed in response to the first question.
- Discuss as a Troop what information you'd be comfortable sharing with the government.

For more details:

[drawthelinespa.org/uploads/attachments/cjm5gc44n01kru7r3bnlpqkrj-2-in-gov-we-trust.pdf](https://drawthelinespa.org/uploads/attachments/cjm5gc44n01kru7r3bnlpqkrj-2-in-gov-we-trust.pdf)

# Draw Your Personal PA

Share yours on social. Tag @drawthelinesPA



**Draw the Lines** ACTIVITY 1



# Draw the Lines

## Juniors (Grades 4 and 5)

### LETTER WRITING

#### Activity 1:

- Ask the Girl Scouts to list three issues that matter to them (e.g., lowering the age to run for president, changing the voting age, starting school at a later time, etc.) They can discuss their ideas with the other Girl Scouts.
- Have them choose the one that matters the most to them.
- Have them explain to the Troop why they care about it.

#### Activity 2:

- Then have the Girl Scouts think about what solutions or changes they'd like to see for those issues.
- Ideally, they should use the internet to research support for their position.
- They can discuss it with a partner or with the entire Troop.
- This is what they will be writing their elected official about.

#### Activity 3:

- Have the Girl Scouts draft a letter to the public officials who have the ability to fix the problem, improve or preserve the situation, or otherwise impact the issue that most matters to them.
- Girl Scouts can look up who their elected officials are and their addresses at:** [ballotpedia.org/Who\\_represents\\_me](https://ballotpedia.org/Who_represents_me). Officials could include the school principal, the mayor, the state representative or senator, a Congressman or US Senator, the President of the United States)
- They should draft an outline of the letter, including a description of the issue they care about and why they care about it, a proposed solution or recommendation, and the appropriate salutations (e.g., "Dear Representative Smith," etc.) and valediction or complimentary close (e.g., "Sincerely yours," etc.)
- They can discuss and share their letters with a partners or with the entire troop.
- They must fill out an envelope, using the correct honorific for the official and a return address.
- The Girl Scouts must mail the letter at a nearby mailbox or with an adult outside of the meeting.



## Draw the Lines

### Daisies (Kindergarten and Grade 1) and Brownies (Grades 2 and 3)

#### MY HOMETOWN AND MY PREFERENCES

##### Activity 1:

- As a group, make a ballot box from an old shoebox. Decorate it with a red, white, and blue theme. Have an adult cut a slit in the top of the box; this will be where Girl Scouts drop in their choices.
- Cut out 3"x3" squares of yellow and green construction paper. Yellow stands for one side, green stands for the other. The troop leader then shows troops how to vote for their preference.
- Vote on the following preferences. Before the last activity, allow the Girl Scouts to "campaign" for one or the other activity to convince the other Scouts to join their side:
  - Goldfish versus pretzels
  - One book versus another book
  - Playing tag versus arts and crafts
- For each issue, the Girl will count the votes.
- Have the Girl Scouts discuss why they voted for one option over the other.
- Talk as a Troop about why the results were surprising or made sense. Did anyone change their mind as a result of the discussion?

##### Activity 2:

- Draw a picture of your hometown
- Draw a map of your neighborhood
- Include on both your drawing and your map the places and things you love the most
- Show your drawing and map to your Troop and talk about where you live and what you love about it.

##### Activity 3:

- What issues are very important to you? What problem do you most want to see solved? What would you change if you could?
- Talk about your idea with your Troop. Give details on why your issue matters to you or what you would change if you could.
- As a Troop, can you identify one or two ways to solve the problems raised?