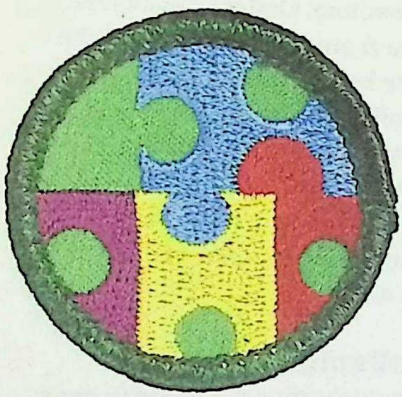
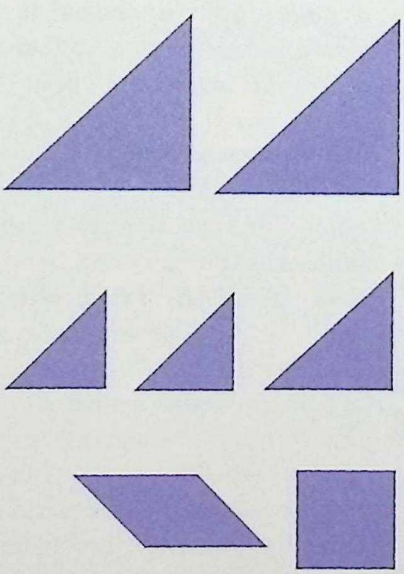
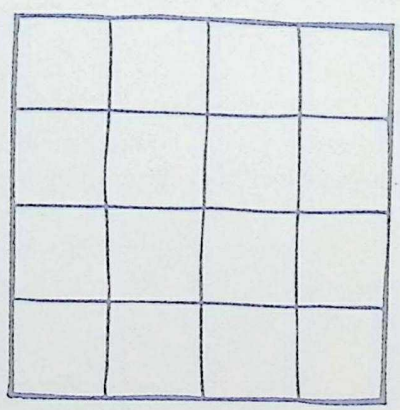
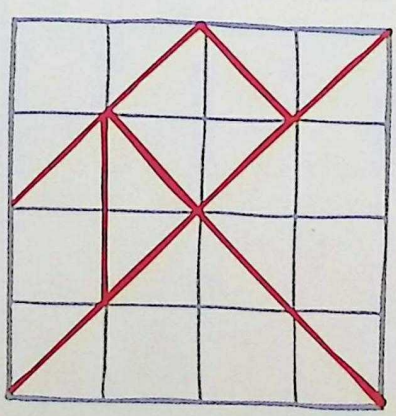
Creative Solutions



You know more than you think. And this badge will prove it. Stretch your mind in many directions—find creative solutions to everyday problems.







1. The Chinese Tangram

The tangram is a puzzle made of seven geometric pieces: five triangles, one square, and one rhomboid (parallelogram). The seven pieces can be arranged to create over 300 forms of people, animals, flowers, boats, etc. Make your own tangram puzzle out of paper, cardboard, poster board or wood (see illustration). Then use it to create at least five different things. There are only two rules: 1) Use all seven puzzle pieces on a flat surface. 2) Pieces should touch but not overlap. Make copies of the seven geometric pieces, and work with other girls to see what they can create with the tangram.

2. Change Directions

Change your routine for a week. Breaking your routine can help you see things in a new way. Pick one or two things you do the same way or at the same time every day—where or when you do your homework, the way you get dressed, the first thing you do in the morning, the last thing you do at night. Think of a different way, a different time, or a different order of doing each thing. Then make the changes and see if you feel any different.

3. Ordinary Items, Extraordinary Uses

Here are ordinary items people use every day: paper clip, rubber band, toothbrush, flashlight, safety pin, bandage, socks, plain white unlined paper. Select three of the items and think of seven unusual ways they can each be used. Have a contest with friends. Set a timer for 45 seconds. Who can come up with the most uses for any one item in that time? Pick another item and reset the timer. Who wins this round?

4. Historical Insight

Find out about one of the women listed below who helped solve a problem in her society. Find a way to share her achievements with others.

Clara Barton
Ida B. Wells
Sarah Winnemucca
Rachel Carson
Dolores Huerta
The Trung Sisters
Fannie Farmer
Juliette Gordon Low
Jane Addams
Bessie Coleman
Susan B. Anthony

5. Alternative Solutions

With a group of friends, select two stories, fairy tales, films, TV shows, or plays that you have all seen or read. Discuss the story line and the major character and her conflict in each. Come up with three or four other solutions to each situation.

6. How Others Solve Problems

People are often hired for their problem-solving ability. Speak to at least one person who frequently has problems to solve on the job. The person you talk to could be, for example, an engineer, manager, plumber, computer software designer, teacher, or carpenter. Ask that person to identify one problem she has had to solve and how she solved it.

7. Local, National, and Global Problem Solving

With your friends, family, or Girl Scout troop, come up with a list of ten local, national, or global problems. You might list things like environmental pollution, crime, or overcrowded schools. A local problem could be your community center's need for a basketball court. Then, select *one* item from your list and come up with three ways to help your community (or the larger society) deal with that problem.

8. Shipwrecked on an Island

You are shipwrecked on a tropical island and have no idea when you will be rescued. The island is uninhabited but there is a stream of fresh water. If you could have one person and five items (but no boat) with you, who and what would you choose? Why? What choices would your friends or family make? Are they similar to yours?

9. Coded Language

With a friend or two, invent your own coded language. Create an alphabet using signs, symbols, pictures, or even letters from the English alphabet. You could add some foreign words to represent other words or phrases. Write a message using your secret code. Be sure to make a dictionary that explains your coded alphabet.

10. Create a World

The year is 2040. You are mayor of the first international town on the newly colonized planet, Zepton. The people who have come there from different places, races, and religions, want to create a society of peace and harmony. Describe the laws you would create and what else you would do to achieve such a society.

