

WEBELOS

Webelos Graduation Arrows

Circle Ten Council

Start or continue a tradition, as each Webelos is crossing over from Cub Scouting to Boy Scouting – give each Webelos an arrow that marks his journey through Cub Scouts. Making the arrows is done “secretly” by the parents. It is also a great tradition to have the parents get together to make the arrows. It is great fellowship and friendship. These instructions are general in nature and you will want to adapt them to your own pack and pack traditions.

How to Make the Arrow

A. Materials needed:

- A. Material needs to be as straight (as possible) 30 to 36 inch long by $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch diameter shaft. A dowel can be bought, but natural sticks seem even more appropriate. **A. Arrowhead** – These are imitation real arrowheads. To use real ones is illegal in some areas. You can contact a Native American Organization and see if they can help you with arrows and materials.
- B. Fletching materials** – Duck or Goose feathers work well or fletchings can be bought from sporting goods departments and stores. While one den tried to use real bird feathers, another den had a lot better success with turkey feathers dyed yellow and blue.
- C. Pseudo-Sinew** – This can be bought from Native American craft suppliers and craft stores such as Tandy Leather. A large spool lasts a long time.
- D. PVC tape** of various colors (red, blue, orange, yellow, white, green). If you can't find orange, you can use white instead.
- E. Hot glue** – this is to reinforce our knots on the arrowhead and to attach the fletchings which we know aren't going to hold by themselves.
- F. Sharp knife and scissors** – These supplies are needed to trim and cut stuff and to threaten whoever comes by and say, “You're not done that yet?”
- G. Extras** of all of the above – If we were perfect we would be God and we aren't so we aren't.

B. What to do:

If you are using epoxy glue that you need to mix ahead of time instead of hot glue, don't mix it; it's not time yet. It would be a good idea to plug in the glue gun now, though.

Clean up shaft as much as possible if it needs it. For arrow-wood, that means skinning it. For bamboo, it probably isn't needed. While it's not a listed supply, a vegetable peeler can be very effective for cleaning up and debarking, if desired. Work on the shaft until it's close to neat and clean and straight as you are going to get it.

Notch the arrow-end of the shaft. You need to relieve the end of the wood as much as possible so the shaft doesn't split when you stuff the arrowhead into the slot. Dry fit the arrowhead in the slot to make sure it fits. If it doesn't, enlarge the slot as much as possible or cut a flat surface $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch along the end of the shaft, instead of having a slot.

Flatten shaft surfaces for fletchings. Fletchings are the feathers on the notch-end of the arrow. Typical arrows have three feathers at the end opposite the arrowhead. It's a good idea because that's the way it has always been done. Using the sharp knife, “skin” the three surfaces on the shaft where the feathers will be glued. These should start about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the end of the shaft and should be about 3 inches long, spaced equidistant around the shaft.

Cut your fletchings. If pairs of people are doing this project, each pair should only need three feathers. One feather provides two fletchings; two feathers, four; and three feathers, six. And, if everyone did as they were told back in step 5, each person only needs three fletchings. Using new math: $3 \text{ fletchings/person} \times 1 \text{ feather/2 fletchings} \times 2 \text{ persons/team} = 3 \text{ feathers/team}$

Anyway, using the sharp knife or scissors, split the feather in two by slicing/cutting it down the quill. Cut off the bare part of the feather quill. About two inches down from there, cut the feather at a 45-degree angle as shown.

If you are using epoxy that you need to mix ahead of time, mix it now because it's needed for the next step.

Apply a liberal amount – but not too much – glue to the slot where the arrowhead goes. Insert the arrowhead and tie/wrap the sinew around the shaft and arrowhead. Leave the loose end of the sinew loose until the glue dries; then cut it off. The Native American Indians did not have store-bought glue to help them make arrows so you may want to limit the amount of it around the sinew and arrowhead to make it look as authentic as possible.

If you are using epoxy that you need to mix ahead of time, and you haven't mixed it yet, you cheated or forgot to do the step before this one. Go do that step and then skip this one!

Smear some of the glue on one of the flat surfaces you carved for the fletchings. Gently but firmly put one of the fletchings in place where you smeared the glue. Try not to get your hand stuck to the shaft with the glue because the boys don't like adults sticking to their arrows.

Repeat the last step for the other two fletchings.

If you want to, you can wrap some sinew around the shaft in front of and behind the three fletchings. This makes it look like the sinew is holding the fletchings in place.

How to Decorate the Arrow

Materials needed:

Colored tape or paints – Depending on how much patience you have, you can use either paints or pieces of colored tape to make the rings around the shaft to denote award levels for your Cub Scout. The colors are:

Metal silver and copper gold tapes for Arrow points are available from hardware and/or plumbing stores.

Feather for each award level. See color list below. Using feathers for the arrow points could be done too, if desired.

Tiger – orange Bobcat – yellow Wolf – red

Bear – green Webelos – blue

Arrow of Light – white

Glue – This is to stick the feathers to the arrow's shaft or sinew. This is to tie and dangle the feathers from the shaft. If you use the sinew, you can also use beads and danglers to decorate the sting and feathers.

Sharp knife and scissors – These are needed to trim stuff and cut stuff.

Extras of all the above – if we were perfect . . . well you get the point.

What to do:

Make a list of the ranks your Webelos has attained and will attain by the graduation ceremony. This list should not include Eagle. For the Wolf and Bear ranks, note the gold and how many silver arrow points are earned for each.

For each rank, select the appropriate tape. For each rank and arrow point, you will apply a ring of that color around the shaft between the arrowhead and the fletching. The colors should be placed in order of rank – Tiger – Bobcat – Wolf – Bear – Webelos – Arrow of Light – with appropriate gold and silver rings for the number of Wolf and Bear arrow points.

Try to evenly space the rings along the shaft. Also, select a width for the rings that looks best to you.

At each ring that gets a feather, put a drop of glue on the ring and place the bare end of the feather quill across the tape at a 45-degree angle so that the feather “hangs down.” Using some more sinew, cross-lash the feather to the shaft. You can leave the ends hanging for these. It looks neat! Other people have used other methods of attaching feathers. Some include tying the feathers with sinew/string and letting them hang down completely from the shaft, using the tape to hold the feathers.

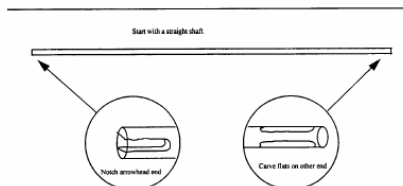
If you haven't already, you should stop mixing the epoxy at this time. You won't need it any more. "The arrow is finished!"

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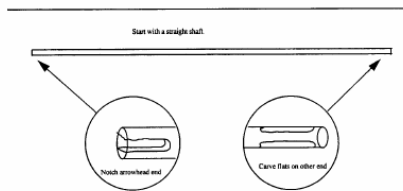
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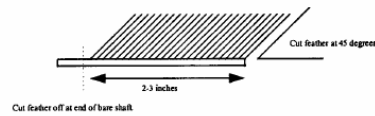
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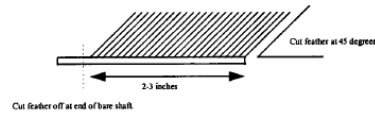


Apply epoxy and wrap sinew around arrowhead and shaft



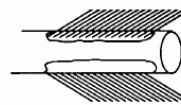
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Epoxy feathers to flats on shaft.



Repeat the last step for the other two fletchings.