

# Cub Scout Memory Box and “Arrow of Light” Ceremonial Arrow

Each year, our Pack gifts \$50 per child to the Webelos II Den Leader to be used for a graduation project. Historically, Den Leaders chose to create individual memory boxes with an Arrow of Light ceremonial arrow inside.

*Note: This tradition started because Webelos II only stay with the Pack for two-thirds of the year, but had to pay the same registration fee. It's a way to be financially fair and help our graduating scouts. The \$50 is NOT a refund. If a Den or scout chooses NOT to do a graduation project, the family does NOT receive a \$50 reimbursement. The Den Leader can only bill the Pack for up to \$50 per registered scout. Anything over that should be covered by the Den.*

## The Arrow of Light Ceremonial Arrow:

The Arrow of Light Ceremonial Arrow captures the number of years and major activities the Cub Scout participated in. There are many places to buy them; my Den used [AwardTraders.com](http://AwardTraders.com). Their Ceremonial Arrows are beautifully crafted with real feathers and stone arrowheads.

For the most authentic look, scouts can bind their arrows with color embroidery strings. However, that takes a lot of time and patience.

To save time, scouts can purchase the self-adhesive achievement strips.

To save money, large Dens can purchase colored half-inch electrical tape from home improvement stores instead. I pre-cut the electrical tape into 1.5” strips (long enough to go around the arrow) and placed them on sticker backings for easy distribution.

There are no BSA rules about rank colors. Different vendors use different colors, though there are similarities (e.g., tiger is orange). I considered what my Den has achieved over the years and created the following instructions. You should customize it to your Den's history.

*Decorate your arrow with the following colors to show your accomplishments since you began Cub scouting.*

- *Bobcat – brown*
- *Tiger – orange*
- *Wolf – yellow*
- *Bear – blue*
- *Nova, Out of This World - silver*
- *Webelos – green*
- *Nova, Swing – white*
- *Nova, Wild – red*
- *Arrow of Light – purple*

## The Shadow Box

Even though our scouts ranged from 1.5 to 4.5 years of scouting, we all agreed to use a 23" x 19" shadow box that's deep enough to display a Pinewood Derby Car, and wide enough to fit our ceremonial arrow horizontally.

I purchased all the shadow boxes during the Thanksgiving Black Friday sale and took advantage of the 50% discount at Michaels. With the discount, I was able to stay within the budget and have a decent sized box plus a nice ceremonial arrow.

## The Project

Because Blue and Gold happens around February, I scheduled the project during a December Den meeting. That way scouts and parents have plenty of time to finish the shadowbox.

For the meeting, scouts should bring everything they saved from Cub Scouting. The box should represent their fondest and proudest scouting experience.

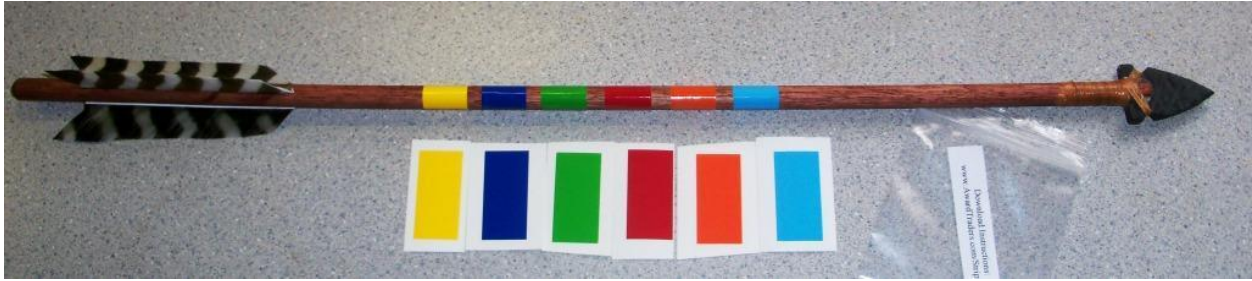
- Patches, Belt Loops, Pins
- Trophies, medals, ribbons and certificates
- Pictures: portraits, outings, events, Den group shots, scout with parent photos, etc.
- Crafts: derby car, space derby, rain gutter regatta boat, NOVA project, summer camp crafts, etc.
- Memorabilia: small flag from the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade, pin from the Mayor visit, etc.

I have seen scouts preserve their uniform in the shadowbox. Personally, I don't recommend it. In addition to needing it for the Blue and Gold ceremony (therefore you can't finish your shadowbox and display it at the B&G), it takes up a lot of space. Instead, I recommend taking pictures of your scout in his uniform (much more personal) and donating the uniform after he graduates. Keep the patches if you wish.

### Striping Your "Arrow of Light" Ceremonial Arrow

The strips are only meaningful if scouts stay true to the ranks and awards they earned. Do be careful with the arrow; the feathers are delicate. Here are the steps to striping the arrow:

- Determine the ranks and awards earned.
- Layout the strips in the proper order
- Peel off the backing and lay the middle of the strip across the arrow shaft. **DO NOT FIRMLY ATTACH YET!**
- Once all the strips are loosely attached, make any positioning adjustments as needed.
- Once satisfied with the placement, firmly attach all the strips by pressing down and around the shaft.



## Transforming the Shadowbox to a Cub Scout Memory Box

### Here are some useful supplies:

- 1) To anchor the ceremonial arrow, scouts can use two cup hooks.
- 2) We tried a lot of different glue. Glue guns are the most versatile and easy to use. The others either took too long to dry, were not strong enough, glued scouts' fingers together, or left a stain.
- 3) Foam board is great for making raisers and giving items more visual interest.
- 4) If the shadowbox has a cushy backing, sewing pins can be very useful too.
- 5) Cutting knife and scissors



### Working on the Memory Box

The first, second, third, and even twentieth step is trying different layouts and editing the content. Scouts usually start by cramming in everything, but then hating it. Remind scouts that the box represents his “best of scouting”, not everything he has ever done. For example, maybe he only puts in his best and favorite derby cars, not all five cars, medals and patches.

It's great to start the project together as a Den so scouts can look at each other's initial work. However, do not expect to finish the

shadowbox in one meeting. Instead, take pictures of the different great ideas, then shuffle the content again to find other great solutions. Keep taking pictures so scouts can compare the different ideas. Only glue down the items when the scout is completely satisfied with the layout.

The due date for the memory box is the Blue and Gold ceremony. Scouts bring their boxes and display them for all to see.

Have fun!

Here are some sample work from my Den:





