

Akela's Test

Many moons ago, a small child sat outside a tent watching the stars in the sky and listening to the rustle of the trees in the night. Somewhere in the distance he could hear the call of the Bobcat, the Tiger, the Wolf, and the Bear. The child listened closely and with great courage, set out to answer their call. He came to a campfire with a great gathering where he was welcomed and invited to hear the tale of Akela.

The rank of Lion indicates a Cub Scout has answered the call of the Bobcat, the Tiger, the Wolf, and the Bear and begun their journey in scouting.

Akela was a brave young man and dreamed of becoming chief. First, he had to pass a test to prove himself worthy of leading. Anyone desiring to be chief was given four arrows and sent out to survive alone in the wilderness. These were special arrows: once used, they shattered. To become chief, they could eat only food they caught themselves and the one who stayed out the longest would become the leader of the Pack. This is Akela's story.

Akela took his four arrows and walked far from camp where he stopped at the side of a clearing. He waited quietly all night for a deer to come by. When one appeared, he took careful aim and shot. His arrow hit its mark and the meat of the deer provided him with food for many days. Its hide provided him with clothing.

This showed that Akela had learned the basic skills to survive. It also showed the virtue of patience. The rank of Bobcat indicates the Cub Scout has learned the basics of scouting, the Scout Oath and the Scout Law.

Akela walked along the trail near the stream. There, he came upon a friend laying by the side of the trail. Akela's friend had used up all his arrows and was starving. Akela saw a squirrel in a nearby tree. He wanted to save his arrows for bigger game, but his friend was starving. So, Akela shot the squirrel to provide food for his friend.

This showed that Akela learned the value of friendship and that he was unselfish. The Tiger badge indicates the Cub Scout has learned these values on the trail of Scouting.

As Akela followed the trail by the stream, he came face to face with a huge wolf. It growled and snarled and started running toward him. Akela strung his bow, took careful aim, and when the wolf was near, Akela shot and killed it. The

wolf provided Akela with food. The wolf's warm coat provided Akela with shelter from the cold nights.

This showed that Akela was brave. This is also why we honor the Cubs with the next level of accomplishment, the Wolf badge.

The meat from the wolf lasted for many days, but soon Akela had to continue on in search of more food. He came upon a bear that had just killed a deer. The bear saw Akela and ran off. Akela was hungry, but he had promised to eat only food that he had killed himself, so Akela left the deer and walked on.

This showed that Akela was honest. To earn the Bear badge, the Cub Scout must learn and follow the Scout law which includes honesty.

Akela was now many days from camp. He needed food to give him strength, so he tracked the bear he had seen before. Akela strung his last arrow, took careful aim, but missed. He was scared because he had no food or arrows. As he started back to camp, he prayed for help. Suddenly, Akela saw the arrow he had shot from his bow; it was still whole! Akela followed the bear's trail again. He took aim, pulled back the arrow, and let it fly. This time the arrow found its mark! Akela now had enough food to return home.

Akela learned that sometimes you have to ask for help. To earn the Webelos badge, the Cub Scout must learn to ask for help. Their den leaders and parents provide that help.

From here, Akela continued his journey home. With him, he took the lessons he had learned and the support of his friends and went on to become a great chief.

Just like Akela, a Cub Scout faces many challenges to overcome and lessons to learn. The Pack exists to help each Cub Scout learn and watch them grow as they continue their journey in scouting.