



# Trefoil Guild

TOPAZ  
Lesotho 2024

## Lesotho Challenge

Thank you for supporting TOPAZ Lesotho 2024

By downloading this challenge sheet you are supporting Jane, Wendy, Dot, Caroline and Dawn on their trip to Lesotho in November 2024.

We will be working alongside the Lesotho Girl Guides Association as they extend Girl Guiding beyond schools, where most units currently meet, into local communities.



TOPAZ (Trefoil Overseas Partnerships: Adventure with Zest) is a national Trefoil Guild project giving members the chance to engage in international opportunities in partnership with other national Guiding organisations.

In 2023, teams of Trefoil Guild members joined projects in Lesotho and Thailand. In 2024, TOPAZ will be returning to Lesotho and Thailand, while a new project is starting in Sri Lanka.

If you are a Trefoil Guild member, look out for news of TRIO (Trefoil International Opportunities) weekends and reports from the TOPAZ teams in future editions of "The Trefoil" and trefoil website.

If you take part in our Lesotho Challenge, we hope that you enjoy the activities. Our aim is that you have fun, and learn a little about the country that we will be visiting.

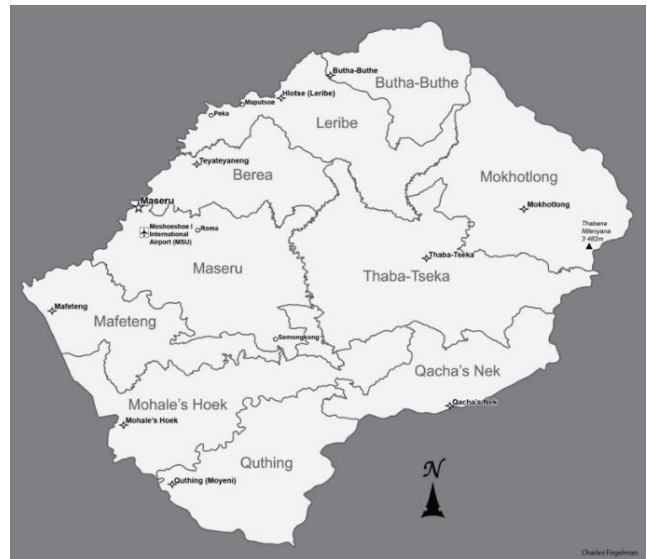
There are no set requirements to gain the badge, and you are welcome to support us by buying a badge without doing any of the challenges.

Please feel free to adapt any of the activities for your own units or groups. Many of them tie in nicely with Girlguiding's Skills Builders and Unit Meeting Activities.

If you use the internet to look up material for any of the challenges, please follow Girlguiding's web safe code for young members.

## All about Lesotho

Lesotho (le-soo-too), officially the Kingdom of Lesotho, is a landlocked country surrounded by South Africa. It is situated in the Maloti Mountains, and contains the highest mountain in Southern Africa. Nicknamed “the Kingdom in the Sky”, Lesotho has the highest low-point (over 1,000 metres) of any country.



The people of Lesotho are known as Basotho and the official languages are Sesotho and English. The name Lesotho roughly translates to "land of the Sotho".

Lesotho has an area of just over 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> (11,600 sq miles) and a population of about 2 million. Its capital city is Maseru.

Lesotho used to be the British Crown Colony of Basutoland. It declared independence from the UK in 1966, and is now a fully sovereign country. The present King is Letsie III.

The currency is the Lesotho Loti. Each Loti is worth about 4p.

## The Flag of Lesotho



The flag of Lesotho has blue, white and green horizontal stripes and a Mokorotlo (a traditional Basotho straw hat). This design was introduced in 2006 on the 40th anniversary of Lesotho's independence and was intended to represent the country's peaceful nature.

## **Girl Guiding in Lesotho**

The Lesotho Girl Guides Association (LGGA) was founded as the Basutoland Wayfarer in 1925. LGGA became a full member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 1978. It serves 6,869 members (as of 2018). Most of the members are from schools.

- Sunbeams (ages 6 to 9) focus on foundational skills and character building.
- Brownies (ages 7 to 10) engage in more advanced activities.
- Guides (ages 10 to 14) continue their growth, emphasizing leadership and community service.

They build upon skills and experiences, fostering continuity and achievement through tailored experiences.

Each group has age-specific programmes and activities. Sunbeams enjoy storytelling and crafts, while Brownies explore more complex projects that promote learning, friendship, and personal growth. Guides delve into leadership and outdoor adventures. Guiding provides a supportive sisterhood where girls grow into confident, compassionate leaders.

## Activities

1. More than half of the population of Lesotho is very poor, with many still living in thatched huts made from bricks and mud. These huts are called rondavels or mokhoro.

- **Draw a rondavel or mokhoro, or make one from craft materials. Imagine what it would be like to live in.**

2. The people of Lesotho are known as Basotho, and their traditional clothing is a blanket. These are beautifully patterned woollen garments, which Basotho people wear proudly!

- **Use the internet to see traditional Lesotho blanket designs, and design your own.**
- **Have an evening sewing badges on your camp blanket, and show it to others in your unit.**
- **Ask a Guider or Young Leader to bring her campfire blanket to a unit meeting, and tell you the stories behind some of the badges.**

3. Sesotho and English are the official languages in Lesotho, but some people also speak Xhosa or Zulu.

- **Try to say a few words in Sesotho:**

**dumela - hello (to one person)**

**dumelang - hello (to two or more people)**

**khotso - peace (said as a greeting to one person)**

**khotsong - peace (a greeting to two or more people)**

**Try looking up more words.**

4. A Mokorotlo is a type of traditional straw hat. It is the national symbol both of the country of Lesotho and of its people. An image of the Mokorotlo appears on the Lesotho flag, and on Lesotho vehicle licence plates. The design is believed to have been inspired by the conical mountain Mount Qiloane. It is manufactured from an indigenous grass known as “mosea” or “leholi”. The hat is an important part of Sotho cultural attire, and is worn to reflect national identity and pride.

- **Make a hat inspired by something in your life or culture.**
- **Design a flag. What symbol might you use to represent you or your unit?**

5. Corn, wheat, sorghum and root vegetables are the main agricultural products in Lesotho. They are used in Basotho main dishes, which may sometimes also contain meat such as lamb, goat, beef or chicken.

Here are some typical Basotho food and dishes:

- Bohobe: homemade bread, either steamed or baked in the oven.
  - Papa: cornmeal porridge or thick maize mash.
  - Motoho: a thick drink made with fermented sorghum, or a soft porridge made with crushed sorghum.
- **Make some bread or porridge.**
  - **Grow something to eat. It could be quick to grow like cress, or take longer such as tomatoes or carrots.**

6. A diamond mine in Lesotho, called Letšeng mine, is known for its large top-quality diamonds. These diamonds are said to be the most valuable diamonds in the world. Letšeng is the highest diamond mine in the world, located at 3,100 m/10,170 ft above sea level.

- **Make or design some jewellery.**
- **Try a diamond painting kit.**

7. Several dinosaur footprints can be seen at the Subeng Stream in Tsehlanyane Nature Reserve. These dinosaur footprints are more than 180 million years old and preserved in sandstone.

- **Find out how dinosaur footprints are formed and see if there are any in your local area.**
- **Create your own “dinosaur footprints” using quick drying clay or plaster of paris.**
- **Visit a museum with friends or family to find out about dinosaurs.**

8. Rock art was left in rocky ravines by the ancient civilisations of the San people, who lived in the country's heights more than 3,000 years ago.

- **Have a go at rock painting or cave painting on parchment or paper.**
- **Find a stone or pebble, and decorate it. Is there a community garden near you that would like to put it on show?**



9. In Lesotho, you can go skiing and snowboarding. Situated in the Maluti mountains, is a popular mountain resort located at over 3,222 m/10,570 ft. The ski slopes of the resort operate in winter from June to August but the mountain resort is open all year round.

- **Try skiing or snowboarding.**
- **Have an evening of indoor winter sports (e.g. a snowball fight, indoor skis).**

10. Independence Day, which falls on 4 October, celebrates the country's emergence as a free state. The day is a national holiday, celebrated all over the country with traditional events, costumes, songs, dance, and musical performances. The city streets and villages come alive with revellers, while the Lesotho Royal Family greets foreign diplomats and important visitors from other African countries.

- **Use the internet to look up traditional Lesotho dance and music.**  
<https://youtu.be/HgeaSI-aOCk>  
<https://youtu.be/m5wlqobF8Wo>
- **Try dancing such as Country Dancing, Morris Dancing or Line Dancing. Contact local groups to come and teach you, or use the internet.**

11. Maletsunyane Waterfall: The waterfall is 192 m/ 630 ft high. Here you will also find the world's highest abseiling cliff.

- **Try abseiling.**
- **Get out and enjoy the outdoors. Go for a walk and try and find a waterfall.**