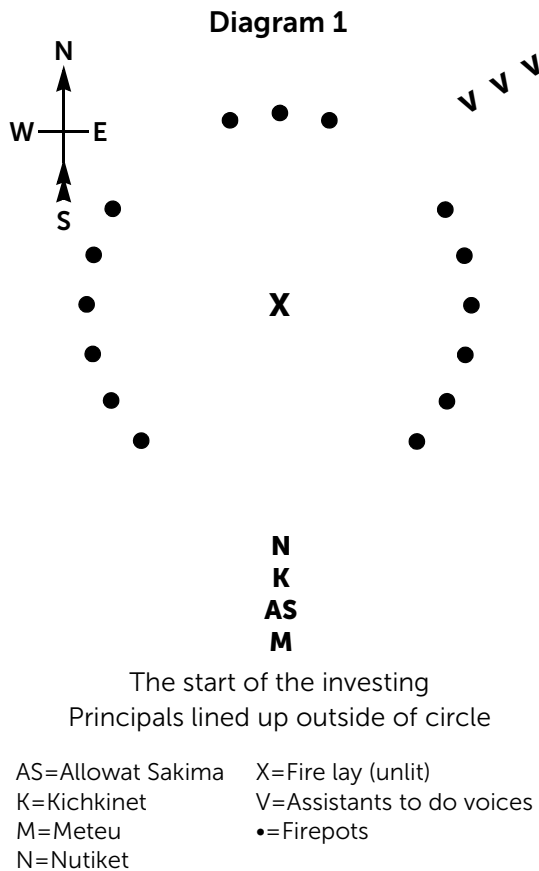




The Pre-Ordeal Ceremony



Materials and props. Fifteen firepots, matches or lighters to light the firepots, a small unlit fire, a bow for every thirty candidates, an arrow and a bowstring. Sometimes a bow or bowstring will break, so bring spares.

The principals, four assistants, and the members. The four principals are lined up in single file (Allowat Sakima, Meteu, Kichkinet, and Nutiket) south of the ring, outside of the circle of firepots. Four assistants are standing outside of the circle of firepots at increasing distances from the ring in one direction. The members are assembled at the south, east, and/or west sides of the circle, leaving room at the south for the candidates and elangomats.

The candidates and elangomats. The candidates are divided into six- to eight-member clans with their elangomats when they arrive at camp. After completing registration, a medical check, and a health and safety talk, when the time for the pre-Ordeal ceremony arrives the candidates are lined up by their elangomats in clans with their sleeping bags and ground cloths. The elangomats lead the candidates in a single file to the pre-Ordeal ceremony site, stopping them on the trail outside of the circle.

The site. The pre-Ordeal ceremony is conducted at a site at the north end of camp. Place fifteen unlit firepots in a circle with a diameter of approximately 25 feet. (See diagram 1.)

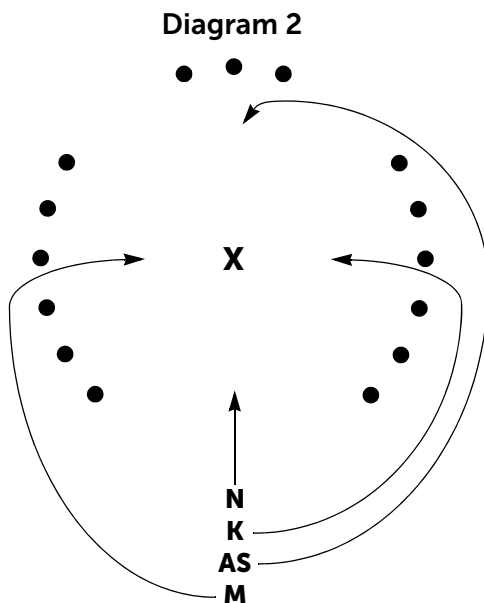
Lay a small fire in the center of the circle, but do not light it. The four principals are dressed in complete costumes except for one item each, such as a headdress. Place the four items on the fire lay.

Investing

At the start of the investing the principals walk in line (Allowat Sakima, Meteu, Kichkinet, and Nutiket) from the south up to the circle of firepots.

At the entrance to the ring Allowat Sakima walks around the outside of the circle of firepots to the right and stops at the north point of the circle, facing the center.

Meteu walks around the outside of the circle of firepots to the left and stops at the west point, facing the center. (See diagram 2.)



Principals move into circle

Kichkinet walks around the outside of the circle of firepots to the right and stops at the east point, facing the center.

Nutiket stops at the south point of the circle of firepots, facing the center.

The Scout who is to be Kichkinet says their own first or last name. (Example: "John" or "Jane")

Nutiket, Meteu, and Allowat Sakima then repeat the Scout's name one at a time. (Example: "Jane," "Jane," "Jane")

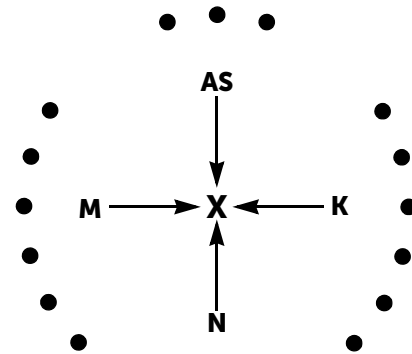
The nearest assistant outside of the circle calls the name to the second assistant, who calls it to the third assistant, who calls it to the fourth

assistant, who calls it also. (Example: "Jane," "Jane," "Jane," "Jane")

This procedure is repeated for Nutiket, Meteu, and Allowat Sakima. (In this way the principals are symbolically casting off their own personalities.)

The principals then walk to the center of the ring, cross arms, and link hands over the fire lay. (See diagram 3.)

Diagram 3



Principals move to fire lay facing inward

The principals stand silently with their heads bowed for *at least* one minute. (Allowat Sakima should count slowly and after not less than 60-seconds look up. The other three principals should look up when they see Allowat Sakima move.)

When all four are looking up they all whisper the Admonition at the same time.

The principals put on the items left on the fire lay. From this moment on their individual personalities have been cast off and they become Kichkinet, Nutiket, Meteu, and Allowat Sakima.

Allowat Sakima wears a quiver of arrows over the left shoulder, Meteu carries a bowstring, and Nutiket carries the bow.

The principals face each other around the fire lay.

Assistants quietly light the fifteen firepots during the following. It is not necessary to time the lighting to the words.

Meteu: Brothers, some have been found who are willing to spend themselves in serving others. Yet they have not felt the fire, they have not heard the Admonition, they have not seen the Arrow. They must be willing to go upon a journey, and it is only right for us to stand by them through their ordeals until they enter into the bond of Brotherhood.

Nutiket: Each one who comes to us must find us ever Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, and Clean. I will remind us of our duty to keep ourselves “physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.” I will guard the entrance, and open the way to those who are ready.

Kichkinet: Each one who comes to us must find us ever Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, and Kind. I will remind us of our duty “to help other people at all times.” I will guide them, and I will answer for them.

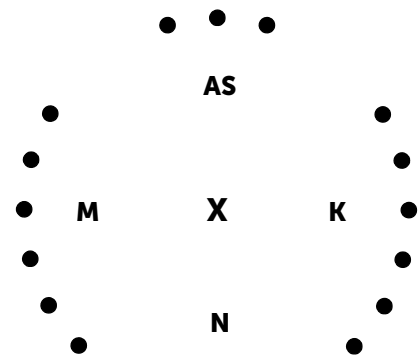
Allowat Sakima: Each one who comes to us must find us ever Trustworthy, Loyal, Obedient, and Reverent. I will remind us of our duty to God and country. If these virtues glow brightly in our hearts, the fire cannot fail to be kindled in theirs.

Brothers, we are ready.

The principals turn and stand facing outward at the fire lay as the candidates are led to the site by the elangomats.

After the candidates and elangomats are lined up across the south end of the circle outside of the firepots, the principals take three steps outward, turn, and face the candidates. (See diagram 4.)

Diagram 4



ECCCCCECCCCCECCCCC
 After the principals take three steps and turn and face the candidates and elangomats

Nutiket: Awake, my friends. You now are starting on a long and toilsome journey. But before you undertake it you must Be Prepared completely. Pause, and look you back on Scouting whose sign and motto you accepted. Long ago you gave your promise, said you firmly, “On my honor I’ll do my best”—I’ll do my duty. It is plain to all who watch you. We know this, for your companions, taking note of your devotion to the high ideals of Scouting, have proposed you to the Order. You were sent to seek a vision of yourselves, and of your purpose. We will each present a challenge to assist you in this quest, for we are here to help you on as far as man can guide his brother. Fifteen blazes led you to us, but the trail that you have followed

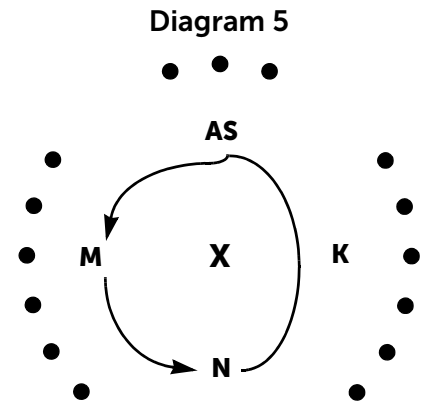
becomes rougher, steeper, fainter:
 you will need a brighter fire.
 I, Nutiket, am the guardian of the circle,
 and I urge you: Seek the fire at the center!
 Kindle cheerfulness within you!
 Gather round your hearts the tinder,
 lay the oak and pine together,
 kindle all that is within you
 with a warm and cheerful spirit.
 The spark is there, already glowing,
 fan it now, forgetting hunger,
 feed it, till it is a fire.

So tomorrow *eat you nothing*
but the scant food you'll be given.
 So tomorrow learn by fasting,
 sacrifice, and self-denial
 to subordinate desires
 to the spirit's higher purpose.
 Test yourselves, and so discover
 that a cheerful heart is lively
 as this bow-wood, under hardship.

Nutiket holds the bow overhead with both hands and flexes it.

Nutiket walks around, past Kichkinet, and gives the bow to Allowat Sakima.

Nutiket then continues around the circle to the west and stays there as Meteu moves to the south. (See diagram 5.)



After Nutiket's spoken part, the bow is presented to Allowat Sakima.

Meteu: Long ago, when bear and bison swarmed the forest and the prairie, then the great and mighty chieftain looked with love upon his children; saw them striving, fighting, battling with the evil that abounded, and he spoke and said in this wise:

"You who love the haunts of nature,
 love the moonlight on the water,
 love the sunshine on the meadow,
 love the shadow of the forest,
 love the wind among the branches
 ever murmuring, ever sighing,
 love the rushing of great rivers
 through their palisades of pine trees,
 love the thunder in the mountains
 whose innumerable echoes
 leap and bound from crag to cliffside:
 listen to these admonitions
 for your guidance on your journey!"

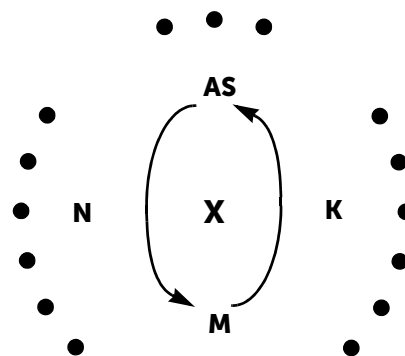
I, Meteu, heard this message
 whispered on the western mountains
 where the sun from eve to morning

never sets, while all beneath me
as I climbed and then stood listening
slept in darkness, slept in shadow.
You need seek no rocky summit:
These high places are within you.
All the natural world around you
shows you clearly your reflection.
This ordeal is but a pattern
for a journey whose directions
are the whispers, urgings, promptings
deep within your hearts and spirits.

Therefore, from this moment onward,
till you take the Obligation
strictly keep a pledge of silence.
Hours spent in thoughtful silence
help us make the right decisions
more than days and days of talking,
help us feel the cords of sunlight
tying all the world together.
Soon you will be bound as brothers
in this great and honored Order,
but only if you are determined
to fulfill its obligations
out of love for one another.
Till then, let silence, like a bowstring,
bind you each to every other,
closer when the bow is tested.

Meteu, who has displayed the bowstring during the latter part of this talk, walks around, past Kichkinet, and gives it to Allowat Sakima.
Meteu remains at the north.
Allowat Sakima moves, past Nutiket, to the south. (See diagram 6.)

Diagram 6



After Meteu's spoken part, the bowstring is presented to Allowat Sakima

Allowat Sakima: Reverently, Meteu bids you *henceforth keep the strictest silence.*
Cheerfully Nutiket bids you *not to flinch from self-denial.*
Kichkinet will tell you of the loneliness ahead, and bid you *sleep tonight apart from others.*
As the chieftain I exhort you, *spend the day in arduous labor, working gladly, not begrudging, seek to serve, and thus be faithful to the high ideals and purpose of the Order of the Arrow.*

Friends, the ones who chose you need you.
Who among you now is ready?
Who will go upon this journey?
You must choose.

If you decide to stop and go no further now, you may withdraw without discredit.
If you are resolved to master every challenge faithfully, if you accept the full ordeal, then firmly now take one step forward.

Any who do not step forward are asked quietly if they understand and wish to withdraw. Those who say they do are led away by guides.

Allowat Sakima strings the bow.

**My solemn duty now demands
that each new friend shall test the bow,
and doing so give proof in silence
of their will to make the journey.**

Kichkinet moves to the front and tests the bow first.

Then the first elangomat in line tests it.

Then Kichkinet and the elangomats pass one bow for every 30 or so candidates. Once in a while a bow or string will break. Extras should be on hand.

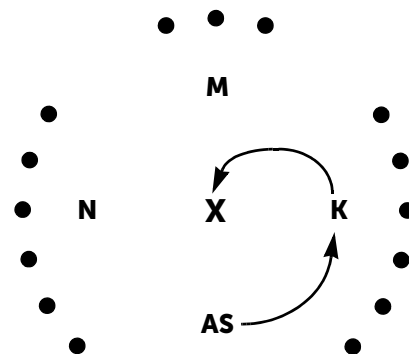
After the testing, Kichkinet returns to the east with the bow.

**As the warrior draws the arrow
most trustworthy from the quiver,
you were drawn from many others,
for the first shaft of the hunter
must be straightest, must be surest.
If through many moons unflinching
you hold fast to Scouting pledges,
straight and true you each will travel
as an arrow driven skyward,
as an eagle soaring sunward.
One who follows such a pathway
in unwavering cheerful service
will be seen by many others
and, by inspiration, lead them.**

Allowat Sakima draws an arrow from the quiver over the left shoulder during this talk, and never lowering the up-pointing arrow, then moves to the east and gives it to Kichkinet.

Kichkinet, holding up both the bow and the arrow (the tokens), walks toward the north to the north side of the fire lay. (See diagram 7.)

Diagram 7



After Allowat Sakima's spoken part, the arrow is presented to Kichkinet.

Kichkinet:

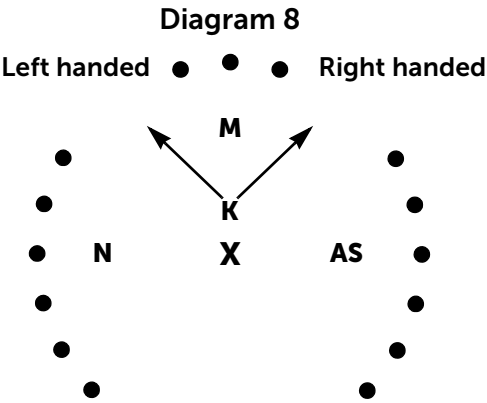
**From the darkness, from the forest
we have come with words of warning,
bringing tokens of a struggle,
an ordeal approaching swiftly
as a flock of field crows flying
black across the sun.
My friends, as Kichkinet your guide, I bid you
leave all daily cares behind you,
leave the crowd and its opinions,
lift your thoughts like sparks when
from the fire's heart they shoot like
arrows springing from the bow bent backward,
from the bowstring smoothed with beeswax,
loosed upon a lofty journey!**

Kichkinet moves to the edge of the circle to the northeast if right-handed, or the northwest if left-handed.

Kichkinet nocks, aims, and shoots the arrow: -neither toward nor over the heads of any principals or other persons. (See diagram 8.)

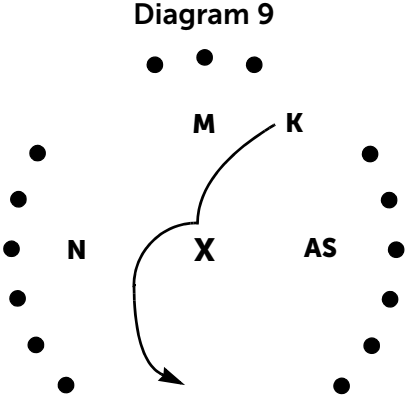
Kichkinet holds the pose of shooting the arrow and says:

Thus do you appear to others, on the path of cheerful service.



Kichkinet moves to northeast to shoot arrow if right-handed or northwest if left-handed.

Kichkinet lowers the bow, walks to the north side of the fire lay, puts the bow on the fire lay and moves to the south. (See diagram 9.)



Kichkinet puts the bow on the fire lay and moves to the south.

It is not an easy journey.
 Sometimes even friends will mock you,
 tempt you to betray your promise,
 test your resolution often,
 often try to make you faithless.
 All the world may seem against you
 and the path seem dark and lonely.
 All your strength will be required
 when you face the isolation
 which a leader often faces.

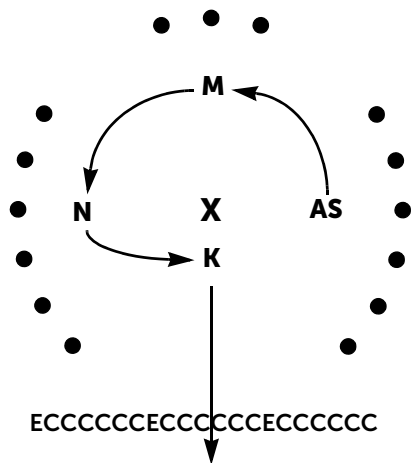
So tonight beneath the heavens
sleep alone upon your groundsheet.
 Be you steadfast as the Polestar,
 self-reliant, undiscouraged.

Then in your Ordeal tomorrow
 I will labor with you.
With you I will listen, eating little.
 We will let the spirit fill us
 with the gladness of a dawning,
 of a springtime, of beginning.
 This ordeal is but a shadow
 of the rigors of the journey,
 but its joys also are shadows
 of the brighter, greater beauty
 in a life of cheerful service.

Kichkinet walks through the line of candidates and elangomats and steps outside the circle at the south.

Nutiket moves inside the circle of firepots to the south, as Meteu moves to the west, and Allowat Sakima moves to the north. (See diagram 10.)

Diagram 10

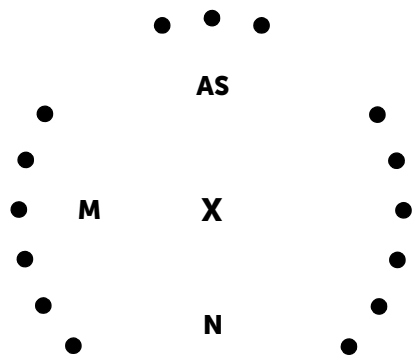


Kichkinet walks through the line of candidates and elangomats and steps outside the circle. Nutiket moves to the south as Meteu moves to the west and Allowat Sakima moves to the north.

Now with courage on this first step
follow me, and these my brothers
Let us try to find the Arrow!

Kichkinet leads the candidates and elangomats away for a short distance. (See diagram 11.) Then Kichkinet returns. The elangomats then lead their clans to the locations where they will spend the night. When female youth candidates are participating, separate male and female sleeping areas are to be chosen to meet the spirit and intent of the youth protection policy regarding separate sleeping areas.

Diagram 11



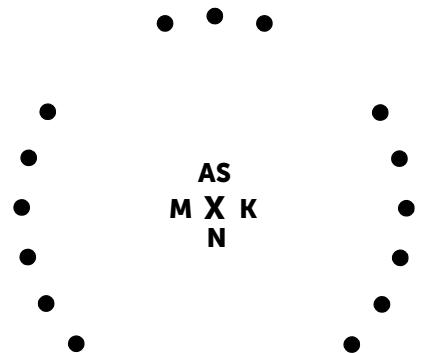
Waiting for Kichkinet to return.

After the candidates have been led away (or, if multiple ceremonies are being held, after the candidates from the final ceremony of the evening have been led away) the principals silently return to the fire lay at the center.

The principals stand at the fire lay with their heads bowed until they are ready to remove the costume item they donned at the start. (See diagram 12.)

The principals remove their items, turn, and leave the circle to the south in single file. *Silence is maintained by everyone until the principals have left the circle.*

Diagram 12



Principals returning items to fire lay.