



Dog Scouts of America
Merit Badge Check-Off Sheet

Canine Cognition

Items **bolded** below are requirements that must be demonstrated to the Evaluator. Non-bolded items are training steps that may be introduced in class and are helpful for achieving the requirements. All behaviors must have been taught or re-taught to the dog (preferably using a new cue), using only positive reward-based methods.

Prerequisite: Copy Cat Badge

- Handler can explain what cognition is; and why it is useful.
- Handler understands and can explain the concept of Fast-mapping and how it demonstrates canine cognition.
- Dog has an indication behavior (nose or paw touch)
- Dog demonstrates a non-aggressive way to say no; handler can describe at least 5 applications for this cue and can clearly state how they use the cue to honor the dog's right to say no**
- Dog performs a leave it for a duration of 1 minute when given the cue under varying conditions, i.e. handler is looking at the dog, has back turned to the dog, has eyes covered, etc.; 3 different conditions are demonstrated**
- Handler clearly explains 5 different indications where the dog is applying the "I know you know" concept using examples from the dog's daily life**
- Dog demonstrates the "do I know you know" concept, where 2 identical objects are placed about 6 feet apart and a treat is placed under one of the objects; dog responds by going to the object with the treat under it when the handler points to it (dog does not know where the treat is); concept must be repeated at least 3 times each with 2 different objects**
- Dog demonstrates 4 of the following behaviors at least 3 different times, changing the location of the items.**
 - Dog can discriminate between at least 3 different objects
 - Dog can discriminate between yellow & blue color with 3 different objects; one object must be at least 5' away from the dog
 - Dog can discriminate between 3 different shapes
 - Dog can read & respond to 3 words on cue cards; 2 of the words must be obedience words and the 3rd is of the handler's choice
 - Dog can indicate a matching object with a "same" or "match" cue when shown the other one, with at least 2 other objects used so demonstration of object discrimination is clear
 - Dog can demonstrate the ability to count up to 3
- Handler develops, sets up and runs a cognition test; handler can articulate what they are testing, what they expected to result from the test and how the actual results compare to their expectations**