

“I desire that there be as many different persons in the world as possible; I would have each one be very careful to find out and preserve his own way.” –Henry David Thoreau

Top Ten Tips for Engaging Youth in Unforgettable Natural Resource Experiences Outdoors

- 1. Plan ahead & prepare. Draft an outline of your learning time with students.** Then, take the time to walk your outdoor teaching space, looking for areas where “large group” activities could be carried out with ease, and other spaces that are more conducive for small-group or individual learning. Time yourself and see how long it takes you to walk from location to location – now lengthen that time by a considerable amount to account for flexibility when you are there with your student group. A flexible outline is a great guide!
- 2. Make sure students’ basic needs are addressed before focusing on lesson content.** This is the very important day-to-day stuff – like pointing out where the bathroom is and letting students use it. Making sure to take breaks for snacks and lunch, and encouraging good personal care through drinking water, etc. Making sure students have enough layers on, or if it is raining outside, to locate a dry break location, etc.
- 3. Get to know your students. Have a clear start to the day through an “Introductions Circle.” Address the students by name – have a name badge to make it easier for you to memorize them,** such as a “wood cookie.” Make the Introduction Circle fun, such as a “Stretch Circle” in which students introduce themselves and a special “stretch move” that the whole group repeats, or another type of game. It’s at this point, too, you can assess what the students’ hopes for the day are – *What would they like to learn? What would they like to experience?* Make mental note or write down these student goals shared and see if you can infuse special moments to acknowledge when a student goal is met to make the experience more personalized for them.
- 4. Make sure to set expectations from the start.** Establish an “Attention Getter” as a means to re-focus students. Describe how you’d like to see students behave with nature and with each other – outline in the positive, versus the negative (i.e. Leave No Trace). Describe the “flow of the day” – students like to know what’s going on and when lunch is. Assign student roles, such as who will be the leader of the group as they walk the trail, or when they should be in pairs, make sure to stop for lunch when you said you would . . . and most importantly, be consistent.
- 5. Allow “nature moments” to be infused among your structured lessons.** Engage students more deeply in that specific nature moment by using inquiry-based questioning (questions that don’t have exact answers and allow the students to think more about the process than the end result that you’re looking for as the teacher).
- 6. Pause for play throughout the day.** Use a song between lessons while walking on the trail, or a sensory assignment, such as asking students to count the shades of green they observe as they walk from Point A to Point B, to engage students in a playful way, but that yet is also a learning opportunity. Have fun with games that are quick and correlate to the topics at play (i.e. Camouflage).
- 7. Balance large group learning with partner or individual lessons.** You can cultivate a greater sense of place by strategically infusing opportunities for students to exist in nature through a “Sit Spot,” “Sound Map,” “100 Steps,” or “Guided Silent Walk” activity, to name a few activities.
- 8. Make sure to keep track of your time.** Students will be asking you what time it is a lot – set expectations early on that you’ll only be answering the time once or twice, or whatever expectation you’d like to set. *Do* give reminders a few minutes ahead of time when you’ll be transitioning to the next activity so students can know what to expect next. Having a concrete “beginning,” “middle,” and “end” makes for a cohesive experience.
- 9. Employ a variety of group behavior management techniques.** Utilize “Turn & Talk” or “Think, Pair, Share” instead of always asking a question and calling on the student who raises their hand first. Assign partners by having students count off by “1’s, 2’s” versus always letting students buddy-up with friends – this will encourage them to work with others. Let students be the teacher at times, such as through the “Each One, Teach One” activity, or by assigning student leaders/timekeepers. Students love to be helpers, so giving them the opportunity to do so will help increase positive behavior. Give thanks to those who are behaving in a way conducive to the expectations you’ve set, not giving attention to students who are acting out of turn.
- 10. Incorporate different learning styles – and be sure to have fun!** Make sure you have a mix of lessons that engage all of the senses (hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling... even tasting!). Have written components, yet also auditory components, visual, and kinesthetic components, etc. Students will know when you are having fun, and will follow in suit! They are very intuitive.



Provided by Kelsi Mottet
Marketing, Education & Outreach Coordinator
kelsi@whidbeycd.org www.whidbeycd.org
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LEARNING STYLE INVENTORY

The best way
(besides practice)
to become a great
teacher to your students,
is to know yourself
better as a teacher, first.



Office: (360) 678-4708
Toll Free: (888) 678-4922
FAX: (360) 678-2271
Email: kelsi@whidbeycd.org
www.whidbeycd.org

KELSI FRANZEN
Marketing, Education,
and Outreach Coordinator

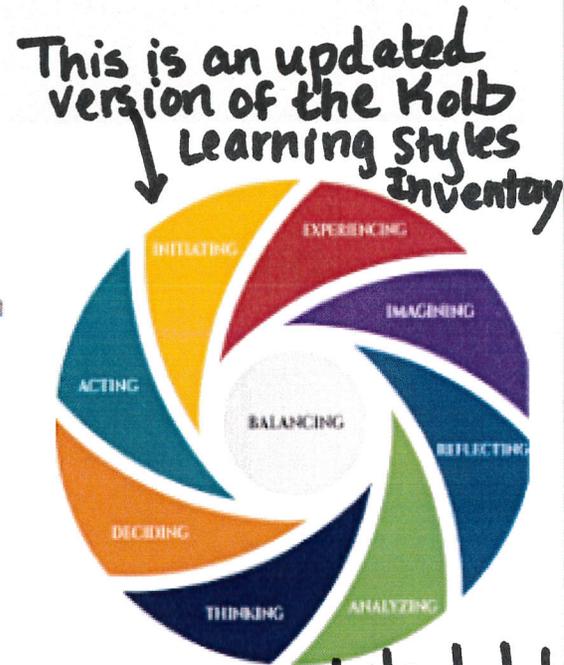
Learning styles describe your preferred approach to the Learning Cycle. They illustrate which part of the learning process you favor and which you avoid or underutilize. The purpose of Learning styles is to increase your self-awareness.

Your Learning style can be assessed by the new Kolb Learning Styles Inventory 4.0 (KLSI 4.0) (Kolb & Kolb, 2011).

We recommend that you take the KLSI 4.0 to identify your preferred Learning Style and your Learning Flexibility, that is, your ability to use back-up styles based upon the context. The KLSI 4.0 is available through the Hay Group (www.haygroup.com) and Harlan Peterson Partners (www.harlanpeterson.com).

Learning styles also provide a framework for understanding others whose approaches are different from yours. They are effective in helping to guide team learning.

The nine Learning Styles correspond to steps in the process of the Learning Cycle. The styles are:



Which style(s) are you? It's good to know, so you can help students.

Initiating

Initiates action to influence others and seek new opportunities. In Initiating Style learners network, think on their feet and take risks to commit to a new course of action.

Experiencing

Finds meaning from deep involvement in experience and relationships. In Experiencing Style one is aware of emotions, sensations and intuition and enjoys being in relationships.

Imagining

Creates meaning by observing and reflecting on experiences. In Imagining Style one is receptive to many ideas and people, engages in possibility thinking and appreciates diversity.

Acting

Takes goal-directed action that balances accomplishment with relationships.

In Acting Style one implements a plan and acts to get things done on time.

Balancing

Weighs the pros and cons of acting versus reflecting, and experiencing versus thinking. In Balancing Style one identifies blind spots and fills in the gaps by flexibly assuming any style.

Reflecting

Connects experience and ideas through sustained reflection. In Reflecting Style one observes, takes multiple perspectives and waits to act until certain of the outcome.

Deciding

Converges to choose one course of action to solve problems and achieve practical results. In Deciding Style one sets goals and evaluates progress.

Thinking

Has capacity for disciplined involvement in abstract reasoning, mathematics, and logic. In Thinking Style one uses quantitative analysis and focuses on a single objective.

Analyzing

Integrates and systematizes ideas through reflection. In Analyzing Style one makes plans, attends to details and uses theories and models to test assumptions.

The Learning Style Inventory

This is an older version of the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory

An important aspect of communication is an understanding between the Student and the Field Instructor about learning styles. Most teachers adopt a style of teaching which matches their own learning style, but which may be different than that of the Student's. Many misunderstandings can be avoided if both the Student and Field Instructor take the time to complete the Learning Style Inventory. Not only can misunderstandings be avoided, but also through awareness of your own learning style an expansion of both learning and teaching styles may take place. This is important since one of the roles of the social worker is to educate, and our clients and colleagues will have a variety of learning styles that we need to understand.

The Learning Style Inventory is derived from an experiential theory and model of learning developed by Kolb (1984)* and based on the seminal contributions of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin & Jean Piaget. It is a practical self-assessment instrument that can help us assess our unique learning styles, and has the advantage of only taking 30-45 minutes to complete. It tells us our preferred approach to learning in everyday life.

The Model

In this experiential model, learning is viewed as a continually recurring problem solving process in the four-stage cycle depicted below. *Concrete Experiences* are followed by *Reflective Observations* that lead to the formulation of *Abstract Concepts and Generalizations* that lead to *Active Experimentation* to test the hypotheses that have been developed. This is an ongoing process, and may be entered anywhere in the cycle.

Concrete Experience

Active Experimentation

Reflective Observation

Abstract Conceptualization

Our learning styles become second nature, and we are often unaware of how we approach problem solving. Our learning becomes a tacit way of knowing, largely influenced by our past experiences. The Learning Style Inventory is one tool the Student and the Field Instructor can use to make your learning styles explicit. As noted earlier, we often teach based on our preferred styles of learning.

* Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

This can be found digitally at:

http://med.fau.edu/students/md_m1_orientation/M1%20Kolb%20Learning%20Style%20Inventory.pdf

This is an order
 versions of this
 help learning styles
 inventory

The Learning Style Inventory

Instructions: It will take 30-45 minutes to complete the Learning Style Inventory and develop your Learning Style Profiles. As you complete the Learning Style Inventory remember that there are no right or wrong answers. The Inventory gives you an idea of *how* you learn; it does not evaluate your learning ability.

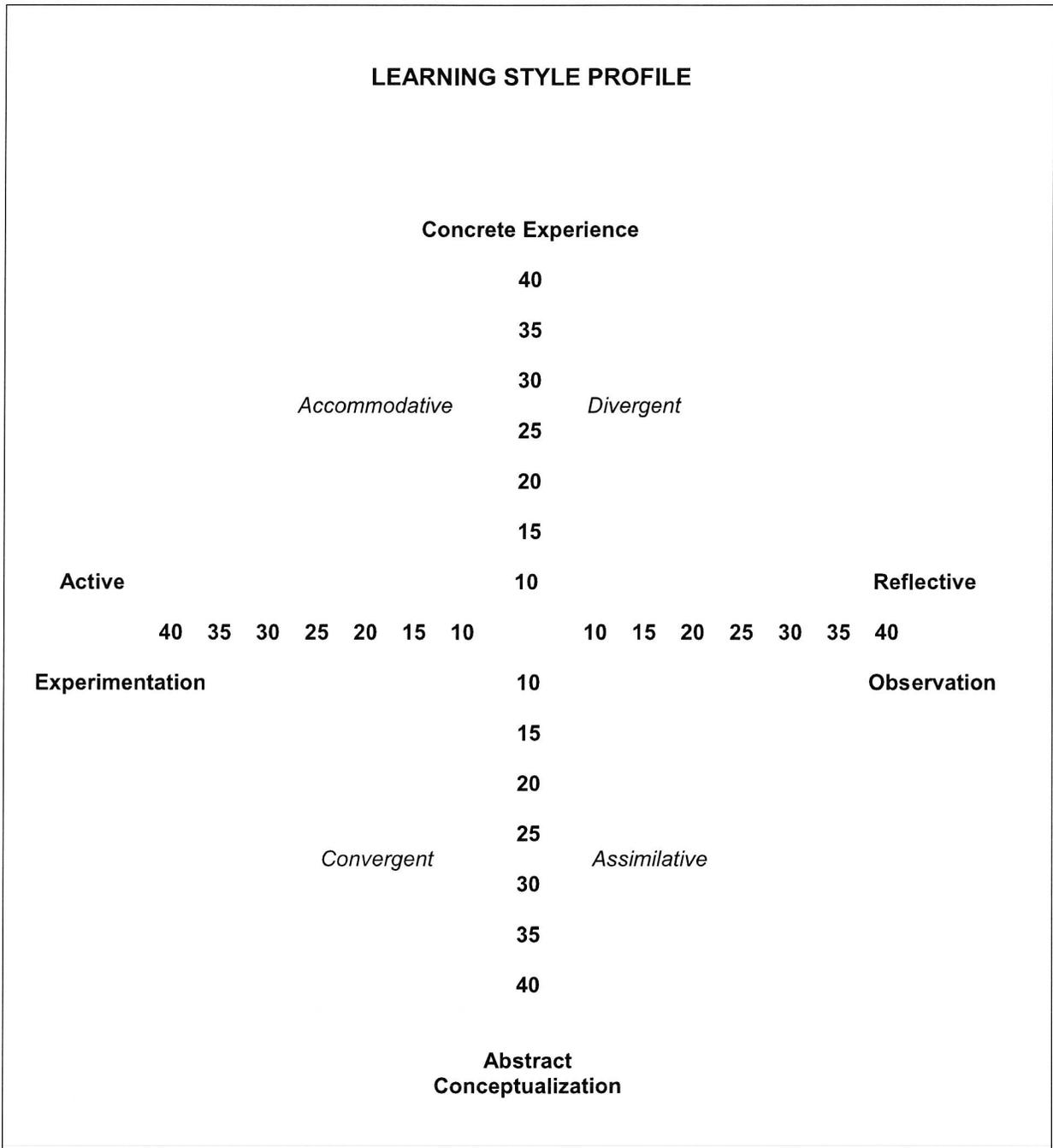
- Rank order each set of four words (going across) in the 10 items listed below. Assign a 4 to the word which *best* characterizes your learning style, a 3 to the next best, a 2 to the next, and a 1 to the *least* characteristic word. Assign a different number to each of the four words. *Do not make ties.*

1. ____ involved	____ tentative	____ discriminating	____ practical
2. ____ receptive	____ impartial	____ analytical	____ relevant
3. ____ feeling	____ watching	____ thinking	____ doing
4. ____ accepting	____ aware	____ evaluating	____ risk-taker
5. ____ intuitive	____ questioning	____ logical	____ productive
6. ____ concrete	____ observing	____ abstract	____ active
7. ____ present-oriented	____ reflecting	____ future-oriented	____ practical
8. ____ open to new experiences	____ perceptive	____ intelligent	____ competent
9. ____ experience	____ observation	____ conceptualization	____ experimentation
10. ____ intense	____ reserve	____ rational	____ responsible
(for scoring only) ____ (CE)	____ (RO)	____ (AC)	____ (AE)

- Total the rank numbers you have given to the ten words in each of the four columns (add all of your scores going down). The sum of the first column gives you your score on **CE: Concrete Experience**; the second column gives you your score on **RO: Reflective Observation**; your score on the third column is for **AC: Abstract Conceptualization**; and the fourth column is your score on **AE: Active Experimentation**.
- Transfer each of your scores to the Learning Style Profile on the next page by placing a mark by the number you scores on each of the four dimensions. Connect these four marks with straight lines.

This can be found at
 http://www.pearson.com/education/learning-styles-inventory.html
 This is an order
 versions of this
 help learning styles
 inventory

LEARNING STYLE PROFILE



Interpretation:

Your *individual scores* provide you with a measure of the relative emphasis you give to each of the four different learning modes. Kolb (1984) defines each mode as follows:

Concrete Experience (CE) -- A CE orientation focuses on being involved in experiences and dealing with immediate human situations in a personal way. It emphasizes feeling more than thinking; a concern with the uniqueness and complexity of present reality over theories and generalizations; and intuitive, "artistic" approach over a systematic, scientific approach to problems.

Reflective Observation (RO) -- An RO orientation focuses on understanding the meaning of ideas and situations by carefully observing and describing them. It emphasizes reflection and understanding over action and practical application; a concern with what is true or how things happen over what will work.

Abstract Conceptualization (AC) -- An AC orientation focuses on using logic, ideas, and concepts. It emphasizes thinking rather than feeling; a concern with building general theories rather than intuitively understanding unique, specific areas; a scientific more than an artistic approach to problems.

Active Experimentation (AE) -- An AE orientation focuses on actively influencing people and changing situations. It emphasizes practical applications as distinct from reflective understanding; a pragmatic concern with what works rather than with what is absolute truth; an emphasis on doing, more than observing.

Your ***dominant learning style***, how you resolve the tensions between conceptualizations and experience, and between action and reflection, is determined by locating the quadrant with the largest enclosed space on your Learning Style Profile. The quadrant is labeled on the Learning Style Inventory in italics.

Kolb (1984) describes the characteristics of each style based on both research and clinical observation.

Convergent -- The convergent learning style relies primarily on the dominant learning abilities of abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The greatest strength of this approach lies in problem solving, decision-making, and the practical application of ideas. The style works best in situations where there is a single correct answer or solution to a question or problem. The style suggests a preference for task accomplishment or productivity rather than for more socio-emotional experiences.

Divergent -- The divergent learning style has the opposite learning strengths from the convergent. It emphasizes concrete experience and reflective observation. Its greatest strength lies in imaginative ability and awareness of meaning and values. The primary adaptive ability of divergence is to view concrete situations from many perspectives and to organize many relationships into a meaningful "gestalt." The emphasis in this orientation is on adaptation by observation rather than action. It is called divergent because it works best in situations that call for generation of alternative ideas and implications, such as a "brainstorming" idea session. The style suggests a preference for socio-emotional experiences over task accomplishment.

Assimilative -- In assimilation, the dominant learning abilities are abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. The greatest strength of this orientation lies in inductive reasoning and the ability to create theoretical models, in assimilating disparate observations into an integrated explanation. As in convergence, this orientation is focused less on socio-emotional interactions and more on ideas and abstract concepts. Ideas are valued more for being logically sound and precise than for their practical values. It is more important that the theory be logically sound and precise.

Accommodative -- The accommodative learning style has the opposite strengths from assimilation, emphasizing concrete experience and active experimentation. The greatest strength of this orientation lies in doing things, in carrying out plans and tasks and getting involved in new experiences. The adaptive emphasis of this orientation is on opportunity seeking, risk taking and action. This style is called accommodative because it is best suited for those situations where one must adapt oneself to changing immediate circumstances. In situations where the theory or plans do not fit the facts, those with an accommodative style will most likely discard the plan or theory.

Although each of us *may* have a dominant learning style it is important to remember that a learning style describes how we learn, not how well we learn. No particular style is intrinsically better or worse than another -- only different. Understanding the commonalities and differences between your learning style and those you are working with may be useful in communicating more effectively. It can also give you an idea of your strengths and where you can grow.

ADVICE and
IDEAS FOR
WORKING OUTDOORS
WITH YOUTH



Tips and Tricks for Taking Kids Outside

How to prepare yourself and your students for that first trip outside in the spring.

by Nalani McCutcheon and Andrea Swanson

In the middle of the night, are you jolted from your bed by nightmarish images of children running hither and yon in the wilderness as you take them out to investigate water quality in the nearby stream, play a predator-prey game, or study the life cycle of monarchs? If so, you are not alone.

However, many educators have tackled these fears and made such adventures seem routine. It just takes practice, and keeping in mind a few key guidelines.

Have clear expectations

Before you walk out the door and into the wilderness — or even into the schoolyard — with your very excited and enthusiastic class, discuss behavioral expectations. This conversation can make or break your time together outside. Allowing students to help determine expectations (including the agreement to have expectations in the first place) sets up an atmosphere of mutual respect and ensures greater understanding of the rules and a greater willingness to follow them. Make a list of a few specific behaviors and state them in the positive. For example, an expectation that there will be “no yelling and screaming” may have the same intent as “use quiet voices,” but the latter is a positive statement of the specific behavior you wish to see. Plan the logistics.

- Have a clear signal for getting everyone's attention and gathering together. It helps to practice it before you go outside.
- Discuss where you will gather when you get outside. If you will be on trails, establish clear meeting places such as trail intersections and trail heads.
- Explain to students that if they get separated from the group, they should sit down and wait. Someone will come and look for them.
- Decide who will lead the group as you travel down the trail. Create opportunities for children to take turns leading.
- Use a variety of group sizes. Have students spend some time working in large groups, small groups, pairs and independently.
- To help focus attention, give specific assignments.
- Know your agenda and plans and let your students know what you are thinking while still being open to teachable moments.
- Discuss safety. If you will be near water, clearly explain the potential hazards. If you will be walking in the hot sun, make sure there is drinking water for everyone, sunscreen on exposed skin, and hats on heads. If you are using snowshoes or cross-country skis, discuss their appropriate use. Bring a first aid kit and, if

someone is allergic to bees, a bee sting kit.

- Be ready for any kind of weather and dress appropriately. Bring extra mittens, hats, and boots if necessary. Rain gear and warm coats will make an enormous difference in the outcome of your outdoor activity.
- Evaluate your time together when you return indoors. Discuss what went well and what didn't. Gather suggestions for activities and behavioral expectations for future trips outside.

Practice and model activities

Having clear assignments for students to complete when they go outdoors will help focus their attention. And whether it is a paper-and-pencil activity or an active game that illustrates an ecological concept, your expectations will be clearer to students if you practice before going outside.

Whenever possible, model what you want your students to do by becoming an active participant yourself. For example, if your students are drawing or writing in their journals along the trail, you should do it as well. This not only demonstrates that you value the activity; it is also an opportunity to show your students that you too are a student.

Be flexible

No matter how wonderful a teacher you are, natural lessons outdoors will sometimes be more compelling than the task at hand. The turkey vulture soaring overhead or the rabbit running across the trail may interrupt your lesson, but accept that it is a natural attention magnet for students. Take the broader view of learning and turn these opportunities to your advantage. They are the moments your students will likely never forget, and if you can bridge these spontaneous events to the lesson at hand, you will likely cement the learning. Your challenge is to find the bridge—and there will be one. The great thing about the natural world is that everything is connected to everything else.

Communicate strategically

In communicating with students outdoors, be prepared to face noise, atmospheric conditions, and other distractions that you cannot control. Take a lesson from the interpretive field and keep the following in mind:

- Make sure the sun is in your eyes; then you can be sure that it isn't in your students' eyes.
- Put the wind to your back. This will push the sound of your voice toward the students.
- As you talk to students, try to reduce the distance between your mouth and their ears. Unless you are working with older students, this means kneeling down when talking. This keeps your voice from being lost in the wind, and it gives you a better perspective on what the world looks like from their view.
- If you are on a narrow trail and some students are having trouble seeing or hearing, have students form a double-file line. Stop the group, step off the trail, and walk toward the middle of the group. Have the students turn to face the side of the trail you are on, and have those in the front row kneel down. That way, everyone can see and hear without tromping off the trail.

- If you see something that you want to look at as a group (and it is appropriate to walk off the trail to it), lead the students in a single or double-file line behind you, and form a circle around it. You step into the center, and everyone can see.

- If you are on a trail you use often, place flags or markers along the way. Then if you want to allow students to travel up ahead of you, you can tell them to move at their own pace, but to stop at the next flag.

Carry props

When you first get started, you may fear that moment of having unfocused students and not knowing how to redirect their attention. Many teachers use a prop bag in which are packed focusing games (nature bingo, scavenger hunts, recipe of a forest), natural artifacts (seeds, leaves, antlers, fur samples, feathers), hand lenses, binoculars, and other aids. When you need to focus students' attention, pull an appropriate item out of the bag. Students usually can't wait to see what will come out next. In fact, you may find that you want to continue to use this even after you gain proficiency in taking your students outside.

Empower yourself

Let's face it, to be a good teacher, you have to know yourself. You must have clear expectations and personal goals, and a sense of their priority so you can monitor and adjust in a heartbeat to assure that the end result is satisfactory. Just as an athlete takes time to practice on a new field before a competition, so too must teachers take time to establish a personal comfort with the new learning environment.

Prior to taking your students outside, visit the area and become familiar with it. Visualize in your mind where your students will be during different parts of the lesson and what areas you want to make sure they avoid. Structure your lessons to take advantage of the opportunities available while remembering the potential challenges. A trip to the pond is full of exciting

learning possibilities, but there are wet shoes and clothing to think about as well.

The size of your group should depend on your comfort level. Bringing additional adults to assist with your outdoor adventure can be helpful, and most schools have policies that require a certain ratio of children to adults. It helps to make sure the supporting adults are aware of your expectations, both of the children and of them.

Finally, remember that your level of comfort is not built by your classroom walls; it is built within your mind. If you set clear expectations, plan ahead, and follow a few key guidelines, you will eliminate most potential stumbling blocks. You will also find that your outdoor excursions will be more fun for everyone, including you. Now sleep well!

Nalani McCutcheon is Executive Director and Andrea Swanson is Regional Educator at the School Nature Area Project at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

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Characteristics of Children & Their Implications for Environmental & Outdoor Education

Children in the...

LOWER ELEMENTARY GRADES (K - 1)	IMPLICATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL & OUTDOOR EDUCATION
Are curious and employ all their senses in exploring their surroundings.	Activities should promote touching, hearing, seeing, and smelling as ways for gathering information about their environments.
Bring to school a wide variety of cognitive abilities.	Activities should be developed which offer children of differing cognitive abilities the opportunity to participate and succeed.
Are limited in their ability to interpret time, space, and distance.	Activities should minimize time, space, and distance aspects of the environment.
Have difficulty in realizing that objects have several properties.	Activities should emphasize objectives with a relatively small number of properties.
Have difficulty thinking logically.	Activities requiring logical development of relationships should be minimized, particularly in the early grades.
Begin reasoning simple cause and effect relationships.	Activities should promote the examination of simple cause and effect relationships in the environment.
Like immediate results and lose interest in prolonged experiences.	Activities should be varied, brief, and scaled to the attention span of the children.
Seek out identification and clarification of their individual roles as people.	Activities should include experiences aimed at answering the question "Who am I?" in relation to their environment.
Are limited in their complexity and variety of their communication skills.	Activities should assist children in expanding and strengthening their use of verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
Are capable of recognizing the mood of a speaker as factual, serious, or humorous.	This suggests the importance of the teacher's interest, sincerity, and concern while speaking with the children about the environment.
Enjoy pictures and read their own experience into them as they talk about what they see.	Careful selection of pictures by the teacher can promote interest in the environment and foster the consideration of simple relationships.
Enjoy using various art forms and media as means of expressing their ideas and feelings.	The children's use of art forms and media can provide valuable information concerning the children's knowledge of, and attitude towards, their environment.
Enjoy sharing their experiences with others in their class.	Discussion and guided questioning by the teacher may promote understanding of environmental phenomena as they relate to the children's experiences.
Enjoy listening to stories read to them.	By carefully selecting stories to be read, teachers can help children become interested in various aspects of their environment.
Enjoy collecting objects from nature and technology.	Interests revealed by the children's collections may serve as a focus for planned environmental experiences.
Have limited psychomotor coordination, dexterity, and stamina.	Activities should be selected which do not make unrealistic demands on the children's psychomotor capabilities and endurance.
Possess a rudimentary moral sense based on highly personal concepts of right and wrong.	Activities should be chosen which avoid complex value dilemmas related to externally-based moral systems.
MIDDLE ELEMENTARY GRADES (2 - 3)	IMPLICATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL & OUTDOOR EDUCATION
Have difficulty initially isolating variables and often proceed from step to step in thinking without relating each link to all others.	Early in this period, activities should involve small numbers of variables and minimal emphasis on logical relationships.
Distinguish between observations and inferences.	Activities should promote the distinction between observing and inferring and the logical basis for the process of inferring.
Distinguish between fact and opinion.	Activities should promote the distinction between fact and opinion and their relative worth as a basis for decision making.
Develop special interests and hobbies.	Activities should offer children the opportunity to pursue their individual interests.
Understand between cause and effect.	Activities should present situations in which cause-effect relationships may be examined.
Have increased and refined psychomotor skills.	Activities may be developed which require increased psychomotor coordination.
Show increasing concern for the authenticity of materials which they read.	With the teacher's assistance, children may be helped to question the authenticity of readings about the environment.
Detect subtle forms of a speaker's intent: informative, persuasive, evasive.	The degree of interest, enthusiasm, and commitment which the teacher possesses in relation to the environmental issues becomes increasingly evident to the children.
Become increasingly involved as a personal commitment is made.	Activities should stress an action orientation that will result in a stronger commitment to the improvement of the children's environment.
Become more capable and desirous of involvement in making decisions.	Activities should involve children in making decisions about themselves and their environment.
Function as part of a group and begin to understand social requirements and social responsibility.	Activities should foster group experiences and promote the idea that the actions of individuals affect groups and that the individual has a responsibility to the group.
Relate vicariously to people and places through literature.	Learning about other environments through use of carefully selected literature may help children examine their own environments more critically.
Develop moral reasoning based on viewing life from other points of view than their own.	Activities can provide opportunities for making moral decisions on a basis rather than what is right or wrong for one as an individual.
UPPER ELEMENTARY GRADES (4 - 6)	IMPLICATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL & OUTDOOR EDUCATION
Handle two or more variables with ease and comprehend logical relationships.	Activities may deal with several variables and promote the search for logical relationships.
Make predictions based on past experiences.	Activities may be developed which emphasize predicting.
Develop the capability to hypothesize and develop simple tests of hypotheses.	Activities should promote the formulation of hypotheses based on data and the development of means for testing them.
Develop the ability to discriminate, clarify, and challenge experiences.	Activities should promote the identification of significant factors in a complex environmental setting and promote the clarification of environmental issues.
See discussion as a way of working toward group decisions and resolution of issues.	Activities may be developed around more complex issues to be resolved through group processes.

Become capable of understanding decision-making processes and the resulting implications of making decisions.	Activities should provide opportunities for children to make decisions and be responsible for the resulting consequences.
Need the opportunity to assume responsibility in order to learn the relationship between choice and responsibility.	Activities should promote choice and decision-making in a context of responsible action.
Feel an emotional attachment toward their country and begin developing enduring patriotism.	Activities may be developed to encourage feelings of responsibility by the individual toward the betterment of his or her country.
Examine and question established belief systems.	Activities may be developed which raise questions about belief systems and allow the examination of the foundational beliefs on which such systems are based.
Comprehend moral reasoning based on what is best for society, the greatest number, or the social order.	Activities may be developed which promote more complex moral judgements about environmental issues.

Behavior Management Tips

Why is the Child Misbehaving?

1. Is the Child Bored? - Find a way to engage him (see "Redirection Tips" below). Most misbehavior is rooted in boredom.
2. Does she/he need attention? - Give attention only to positive behavior (see "Positive Reinforcement" below).
3. Is something else going on? - Try to figure out what is wrong so you can address root of the behavior (see "If camper is upset" below).

Body Language

- Be aware of you size and stance. Is it respectful and friendly?
- Squat down to camper-level to speak to them.
- Look into the eyes of the person you're talking or listening to.
- Nod if you understand.
- Are your hands/arms relaxed? Or are they: Crossed on chest = defensive; On hips = defiant; On face = insecure?

Spoken Language

- Praise campers when you can.
- Don't yell unless it's a safety issue.
- Remind kids of the rules: "We agreed to not call people names."

Redirection Tips

Instead of focusing on minor misbehaviors, change their focus.

Try:

- Look at this!/Can you hear ____?
- (Camper's name), I need you to help me ____.
- (Camper's name), come walk with me.
- Right now, we are _____. We'll talk about/do that later.
- Look what (other camper) found/is doing!
- Let's see if you and I can _____.
- Can you remember (activity, song, or fact)?
- Give them a moment to re-focus.



Listening - If camper is upset try:

- Listening to what is wrong.
- You look like you are feeling _____. Is it because ____?
- What do you need?

Use "I statements" like:

- I need you to stay with the group so I'm sure you're safe.
- I get frustrated when I have to keep repeating myself.
- It would really help me out if you _____.

Avoid "you messages" like:

- You keep running off.
- You're in trouble.
- You aren't listening to me!



Positive Reinforcement

Should be focused on specific behaviors and can be used to encourage those behaviors (especially useful when you can spot a child doing something right that he usually doesn't do). For example:

- You're doing such a good job of [waiting your turn].
- That was really neat how you [comforted Joe when he was sad. I think it helped.]
- You all were AMAZINGLY [fast getting ready to leave]. Way to go!
- I liked how you asked me this time before [jumping on my back].
- I was really impressed how you just [told Susie that you don't like it when she pushes you].
- You just [got tagged out, and you didn't cry]. Good for you!
- How did you ever [spot that? You are so observant!]
- Thank you for [sitting down, being quiet, etc].

Build Relationships

Have fun with the campers! Participate in games with them.

Hang out and talk with them. If campers enjoy and respect you, they will be quicker to listen to you and to share their troubles with you



Tips for Leading Games

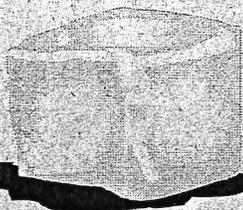
1. Be enthusiastic and energetic!
2. Be a good role model –follow the rules and participate when possible.
3. Be positive and supportive; when children get “out” reassure them, reinforce those who get out with a smile, and tell them how they will get back in.
4. Remember it is okay to make mistakes.
5. Don’t go on too long - If you or the kids aren’t having fun, see what can be done to make it fun or move on to another game.

Explaining a game:

1. Review the game rules in your head before you start.
2. Focus the group - Have them focused (sit on ground?) to hear directions –eyes on you.
3. Tell them you will explain the whole game first so they should save their questions for *after* you are done.
4. Give clear directions
 - What is the overall goal?
 - What rules are there?
 - Use kids or staff volunteers to demonstrate the rules you are explaining.
 - What should they watch out for? (safety concerns)
 - What are the boundaries?
 - How do they know when the game starts and when it ends?
5. Don’t drag out the directions – get kids moving!
6. Reinforce hand raising by calling on those who do.
7. Make sure questions get answered.
8. Play through a demonstration round (if appropriate).

EXAMPLE

- Ice Breakers
- Energizers
- Games
- Riddles
- Puzzles
- "Field Adapted"
Lesson Plans



Ice Breakers

Ice Breakers Group Juggle ~ Group passes objects through the air and says the name of person with whom you are throwing. Add objects, go faster, and/or no talking will increase the difficulty of additional rounds. Koosh balls, small stuffed animals, and bean bags work well for this activity. (Underhand throws only, please.)

TO LEAD ACTIVITY:

1. Stand in a circle with hands out to catch the object. When you catch the object, put your hands down so you can tell who still needs to receive it once. As leader, you start it and also catch it last.
2. Leader starts by calling a person's name, making eye contact, and throwing them the object. That person then catches the object and says "Thank you, _____". They then throw to someone else by calling their name and making eye contact. Again, they say "Thank you, _____". The "thank you's" help the group learn names.
3. As the leader sizes up the group, they can add more objects into the mix. This gets several objects flying at the same time. Sometimes it's easier if you stop the thank you's at this point or it gets too crazy. Other options... go backwards or send one backwards and one forward at the same time.

Human Map ~ Set perimeter according to a state/city map and have members stand where they live.

Pipe Cleaner Partners ~ Group members pair up to introduce themselves to each other. Each person forms a pipe cleaner into a shape that represents what the other person has told them. Each person introduces partner and pipe cleaner to the group.

EXTENSION:

Each member of the group gets one pipe cleaner. They form a shape which represents what they've been up to lately. The shape can be literal or abstract. As they introduce themselves to the group, they share their symbol.

Postcard Puzzle ~ Cut one or more postcards into puzzle pieces giving each person a piece to assemble. With a larger group, you can use several postcards.

Picture + Caption Matching ~ Take a picture from a magazine with a caption and cut them apart. People have to search through the group to find their match. Once the match is found, the pairs have to share something about themselves or the picture in pairs. Repeat several times.

TO LEAD ACTIVITY:

1. Each person starts with either a picture or a caption. (Note: Must have even number of people.)
2. Establish a 20-second mingle period where the group just moves around in a blob trading papers. This is a random activity that looks like a swarm of bees.
3. Lead says "Stop!" and the group finds their match.

Who Can It Bee Now? ~ Each member of the group makes a list of three things that other people in the room don't know about them. Individuals can write their names at the top and fold the paper over so that you can't see the name. Throughout a training you randomly pull a name and try to guess. This is good for starting back up after breaks. For added fun, play the song "Who Can It Be Now?" by Men At Work (1982)

What's On Your Plate? ~ Start a group training by giving everyone a plate and some permanent markers. Have them write on their plate in pictures, words, or phrases the things and responsibilities in their lives that fill up their time. Math-type people even like to make it into a pie graph. People then introduce themselves and tell what's on their plate.

ALTERNATIVE SHARING: If the group is too big for everyone to explain their plate individually, you can have them raise their plates to various categories. Like "Who has kids on their plate?", "Who has _____", etc.

Compiled by Cathy Sork



More Ice Breakers

"Hi, My Name Isn't" ~ Go around the group with each person introducing their real name, school, and position, then an introduction of themselves as, "My name isn't _____". The person must also explain why they chose that name.

People will share stories about family names, names they wished they were, names they are glad they don't have, etc., allowing the group to get to know each other a little better. This activity is also fun with a group of people who already know each other.

"I am glad my neighbor is here because..." ~ Assign each person a partner so everyone is paired with someone they are sitting next to. Give pairs 2-5 minutes together to tell a little about each other. Then, go around the group introducing the other person by saying, "I am glad _____ is here because he/she _____."

If the group already knows each other, they can share a compliment of the person with the group. This warms the group up and makes people feel good.

"If I weren't here, I would be..." ~ The leader starts by teasing "How GLAD everyone is to be here and there is no place else the group would rather be. :] BUT, if they had to be somewhere else, doing something else right now, what would they be doing?" Each person in the group shares with the rest, "I'm so glad to be here, but if I weren't here, I would be _____." This will get a group feeling more comfortable and lighten up to the fact they are stuck together for a while.

52 Card Shuffle ~ (For Large Groups) ~ This activity helps a large group of people mingle and meet new people. Each person receives a card from a normal deck of cards; include the jokers as wild cards. If the group is more than 54 people, add as many decks of cards as needed.

TO LEAD ACTIVITY:

1. Have all group members stand in an open area, holding their cards.
2. Instruct the group to move into a variety of configurations and introduce themselves to the new person or group of people. Give the group a short topic to discuss, such as favorite food, book, movie, etc.

Ideas for configurations: Cards with the Same Number, Suits, Straight, Full House

(Note that some people will be left without a match. The group leader should help these orphans to make a group of their own or join an existing group.)



Even More Ice Breakers

That's Me! ~ (Works with any size group) Have a predetermined list of 5-10 questions to ask a group. Questions can be catered to a specific group. Instruct group members that if the criteria listed fits them, they are to stand up or raise their hand and say, "That's me!" aloud.

TO LEAD ACTIVITY

1. Practice with the group as a whole to break the ice a bit. The "That's me" should have a timing that everyone can come in on.
Like Question...1...2...3... "That's Me!"
2. Sample questions: "Who has children?" "Who had pets?" "Who has pets that they treat like children?" etc.
3. End with a question that everyone will answer "yes" to.

Name Wave ~ The group stands in a circle. As the group leader, model for the group by going first. Say your name while making a motion with your body. For example, an arm swing, disco point, hop, swivel hips, etc. Freeze the motion wherever it ends up. As soon as you are finished, the person to the right repeats your name aloud, the motion you made and holds the position which starts the next person. This continues around the circle back to the first person. Everyone should be frozen in the same position. When it gets around, the next person starts from that position, makes a new motion while saying their name and holding it at the end. This repeats around the circle. It should go pretty fast and is a good way to remember everyone's name.

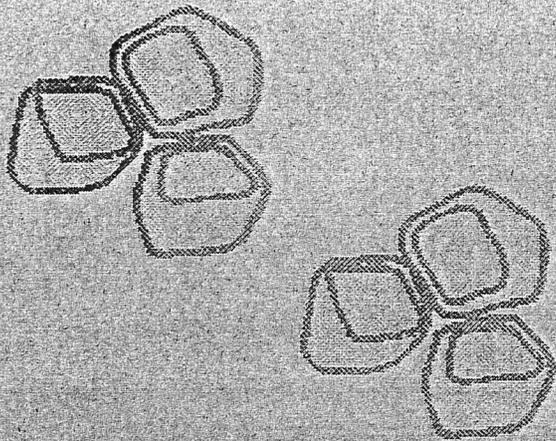
Ask Me About... ~ Each person gets a regular size post-it note. They should write a keyword response to a prompt such as, "Something that you know a lot about?" "Something about summer break?" "A teaching idea?"

After everyone has an idea, the group informally mingles around and asks each other about the topic. This is a great conversation starter. "Ask Me About..." can be part of the name tag.

Link Up ~ One person stands and talks about themselves. When someone in the group has something in common with something they've said, they get up and link arms with the person speaking person. Only one person at a time. They declare the thing that they had in common and then begin talking about themselves until someone else comes up with something in common with them. The activity continues until all group members are "Linked Up."

Two Truths and a Lie ~ Each group member shares two things about themselves that are true and one thing that is a lie. The rest of the group tries to guess which is the untrue statement.

Shape Yourself ~ Put four shapes in the four corners of a room. (On paper taped to the wall works.) Square, Circle, Triangle, and Squiggle Line. Ask the group to go to the shape that best describes them. Once there, compare reasons with the others and then give a summary to the greater group.



Still More Ice Breakers

Peek-A-Who ~ Divide a group into 2 teams. Two group leaders are needed in the middle of the groups to hold the two sides of a large blanket or sheet up. Each team should group behind the blanket so that they can not be seen. Once set up, each team sends a representative to a chair set up against the blanket. When ready, the group leaders chant "Peek...A...Who!" and drop the blanket on "Who." Only the two people facing each other in the chairs can answer. The first person to shout out the other person's name is the winner and captures that person to add to their team. The game continues until one team has all but one of the players.

Sandwich Boards ~ Have group members design a sandwich board to introduce themselves that they can wear around the room for a period of time. Sandwich boards can be made out of tag board with string that connect the two flaps so they can be worn front and back with the string as shoulder straps.

Switch-a-Roo ~ When handing out name tags or folders at the beginning of a group event, give people a name tag that is not their own. This will force them to search out the owner of the name tag, introduce themselves, and return it to the correct owner.

Spider Web of Introductions ~ Often done as a way to track group participation during discussion. Start the group members with a ball of yarn. The first person who speaks holds the loose end. They pass the ball to the next person that speaks, holding onto the end at all times. The 2nd person hooks the yarn onto their finger and then passes it to the 3rd speaker. As this pattern continues, a web of yarn will start to develop between the group members. It also brings attention to who has not introduced themselves.

Idea: Send the yarn out for basic introductions and then bring it back in with people repeating information they have heard about other group members.

Design a T-Shirt ~ Give each person a blank t-shirt sheet. Group members are to design a t-shirt that represents who they are as a person. Provide colors and other artistic supplies and appropriate. They can later be hung like a clothes line to create a fun bulletin board display.

Passing the Bug ~ This activity is based on the premise that groups of people come together when they share an inside joke. Passing the Bug creates this for a group that will be together over a period of time (days or at least overnight). A bug is drawn on a wooden clothes pin. The group is told that there is a bug going around and it is contagious. If you get the bug, it is your job to pass it around before there is a bug check. Like Old Maid, you don't want to be left in possession of the bug. People are encouraged to be sneaky and sly when passing it to another person.

At the time of the bug check, the person in possession of the bug. (Sometimes they don't even know it at the time.) The group verbally tracks it's progress of how it came to be with this person. That person then has to do some form of remedy to fight the bug, such as sing a song, tell an embarrassing story, etc. A dice can be rolled to determine their fate.



Energizers



Balloon Bop ~ Group holds hands and tries to keep a balloon off the ground with the body part that has been called. i.e. head, hands, knees, elbows, etc.

Categories ~ Begin with everyone seated in a circle. The group performs a clap slap pattern while each person contributes a verse to the chanted category that is selected by the leader. Sample categories might be . i.e. children's books, countries, colors, shapes, etc. The sharing of the category should come in the cadence of the two snaps.

PATTERN: hands on lap...clap...snap right...snap left...repeat

Snow Ball Fight ~ This can kick off an idea share activity. Group members write ideas on pieces of scrap paper and crumble them up into a ball. When it come time to share the ideas, the group has a big paper fight. When finished, people pick up the paper balls, uncrumble, and read the ideas on the paper out loud. Don't forget to recycle the paper at the end.

Words that Start With... ~ Use a Pictionary die or letters written on pieces of paper in a cup. Pull or roll a letter and have the group brainstorm positive words that start with that letter. For extra fun, throw a koosh ball around to identify whose turn it is to talk.

If... Then... ~ Give everyone an "If...Then" piece of paper. Each person writes the "if" part of a situation. It can be silly or serious. Then have the group pair up some goofy way, like by height, hair length, age, etc., and trade "if" statements. Each individual then writes a "then" statement for the one they have been given and shares it with the group.

Tell Me a Story ~ Each member of the group adds a piece to an oral story, leaving it hanging for the next person. For an energizer, small groups can later illustrate the story on white poster paper. This always makes for a good laugh. Extensions of this activity include starting with a goofy picture and asking the group what is happening.

Big Band Formations ~ Works best with large groups so that everyone can remain standing. Group forms shape formations (letters, geometric shapes, etc.) so they can be seen above from a bird's eye view. Debrief how well the group worked together. Pros of this activity is that all group members must be involved. For added challenge...no talking.

Stomp Pattern ~ Teach group a three-count stomp pattern and do it together.

PATTERN:

stomp...stomp...clap...stomp...stomp...clap...1...2...3...etc. Then teach the group a four-count stomp.

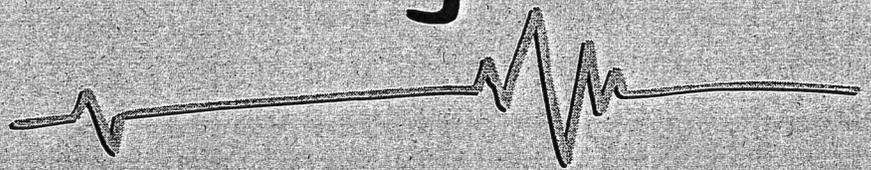
stomp...stomp...stomp...clap...stomp...stomp...stomp...clap...1...2...3...4...etc. Divide the group in half and combine the stomps. (It makes a neat sound). For extra challenge you can count the group off into every other one around the circle. Extension: Have individuals create their own stomp pattern for the group to imitate.

Pass the Sound ~ Standing in a group the leader starts by throwing an imaginary object and making a sound. The person catching the object has to imitate the tossed sound and throw it to someone new with a new sound. The sound can be anything from animal noises to goofy sounds.

Compiled by Cathy Sork



More Energizers



Bear, Salmon, Mosquito ~ This activity is a more active version of rock, paper, scissors. Two people stand back-to-back and count 1...2...3. On three, they jump to face the other person and perform one of three animals. The Bear (arms raised with claws, making a growl sound) eats the Salmon (hands above head with the palms together, wiggling the hips and body), the salmon eats the Mosquito (hands clasp together in front of body with pointer fingers out front, moving like a stinger, making a buzzing sound). Lastly, the mosquito has malaria and kills the bear.

TO LEAD ACTIVITY:

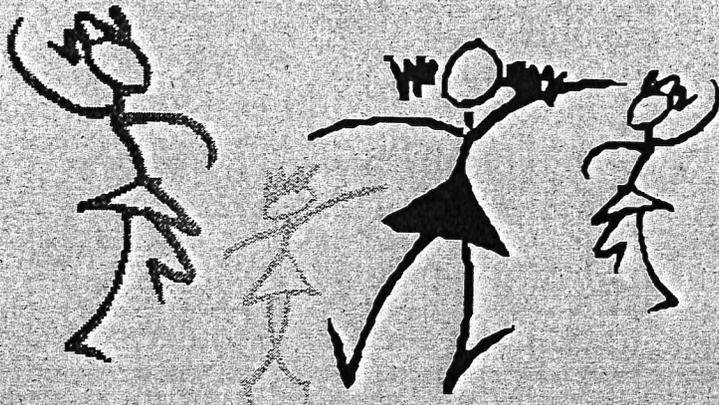
1. Start with the entire group together and practice each of the three in unison. This not only makes sure that people understand, it also makes people feel more comfortable when everyone in the room looks as silly as they do. For further clarification, have two people do one in front of the group to model.
2. Have the group get into pairs, back-to-back. If there is an odd number of people, it is okay to make a group of three.
3. The leader counts so that all groups do it in unison.
4. Have the groups trade partners and repeat the activity several times.
5. For the last round, have "Championship Bear, Salmon, Mosquito." The loser sits back in their seat. This gets everyone settled and builds a climate to see who in the room wins the Bear, Salmon, Mosquito Gold Medal!

Body English ~ In small groups (7-10 people), separate into different rooms or corners of a large room. The small group uses their bodies to spell a word. The word must be four letters and read by an audience from left to right with the group members standing, sitting, or crouching upright. All group members must be included in the word. Given 5-8 minutes to prepare, the groups come back together and spell their words for the others. The goal is to see if other people can read it. It is often good to give groups that task of making two different words. This gives them a better chance at success.

Picking Apples ~ This activity is to get people stretched and energized without taking a lot of time or leaving their seated areas. The object is to pick imaginary apples from an apple tree, gather them, and then squash them to make applesauce.

TO LEAD ACTIVITY:

1. Leader asks all group members to stand up in front of their chairs.
2. Leader has group imagine the apple tree that is right in front of them and reach up to pick an apple. The leader should do all of the activities with the group to model what to do, plus, leaders need to stretch too!
3. Instruct the group to continue picking apples, collecting them within the other arm. As the group continues, the leader says things like, "See that one way up there, if you really stretch, you can reach it!" and, "Maybe you should use your shirt or something to hold all of those apples."
4. After the group has a handful of apples, have them put them on the table and try to gather them together. Remind the group that they will try to roll away and it will take the scooping of both arms to keep them together.
5. Lastly, have the group put the apples on the floor and stomp on them with their feet to make applesauce. This will take lots of stomping around in a circle on the apple pile.



Even More Energizers

Group Scrabble ~ Use a white board, overhead, or chart paper. Start the group off with a word that ties into the location, purpose, or theme of the day. Then turn the pen over to a group member and see if they can hook each group member somewhere into the board like a Scrabble game. Can be with participant's name, school, or a word that describes them.

My Bonnie ~ Perform a group sing along to the song "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean...My Bonnie Lies Over the Sea..My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean...So Bring Back My Bonnie To Me...Bring Back...Bring Back...Oh Bring Back My Bonnie To Me To Me... etc. (This is based on the premise that no one looks stupid if everyone looks stupid. :)) Whenever the group says a word that starts with a "B," they stand or sit. (Whatever is opposite to the position they are in.) This gets the group moving up and down. Sing it more than once and get faster. Show modifications of movement. Can slightly bend knees up and down in a standing position or actually go in and out of a seated chair. It depends on the conditions of people's knees.

Other songs that groups can get into for movement depends on the group: "Hokey Pokey", "Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes,"

People Machine ~ Each person creates a simple motion with their body with an accompanied machine sound. One person starts the machine and each group member physically connects to the machine until the entire group is moving and making noise.

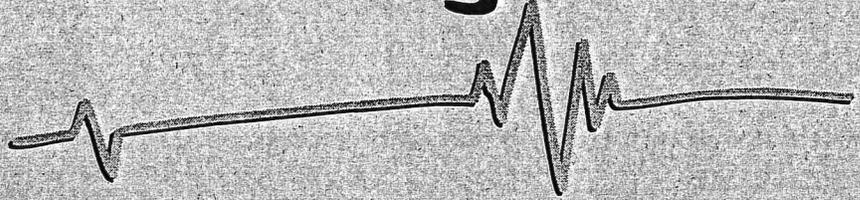
Leader of the Band ~ Provide an energetic song and have the group stand and prepare to be the "Leader of the Band." Have them take their pencil or pen and use it to conduct the music for a couple of minutes to get the blood pumping. This works best if you carefully select the music. Pick a fast-paced song that is familiar to most people so they know what is coming next to stimulate energetic directing.

Mystery Drawing ~ Have group members who know each other fairly well stand in a circle. Have everyone turn with their right arm to the outside and get fairly close. Use you finger to write a word on the back of the person in front of you. Each person tries to identify what the word is. Works with picture too!

Avoiding 21 ~ Either get into a circle or establish a path through a seated group. The group is going to count around the circle up to 21. The person who is forced to say 21 is "out". Each person can say one, two, or three numbers in a row. For example, 1st Person "1,2"; 2nd Person "4,5,6" 3rd Person "7", etc.



Still More Energizers



A-Z Relay Game ~ Divide the group into teams of 6-12 people. Each team will need a set of cards (at least 8.5" x 5.5") with the alphabet on them. Place the teams on one end of a defined area, and place letters on the other end so that they can be spread out on a table. The leader says a word and the team has to send the correct number of people to the table to spell the word. The first team to correctly find the letters and hold them up (one per person) in the correct order wins the round.

Use words that relate to leadership or another related topic. A second set of ABC letters can be added to allow different words to be spelled.

Whoomp 'um ~ This can be an energetic name game. The group gets in a standing circle. Each group member puts their right hand into the middle. (Turn sideways to fit more people.) One person starts out in the center. They say the name of one person in the circle. That person then says the name of someone else, passing them the responsibility to say someone else's name before the person in the middle has time to "Whoop 'um" by smacking their hand. This causes the person in the middle to be searching and chasing the names, waiting for someone to hesitate long enough for them to smack their hand. When this happens, they trade places. Also, if a person flinches when they get "Whooped," they are also in the middle.

Mime Basketball ~ Small groups of people can play half or full court mime basketball if they are committed to paying attention to who has the ball. This activity can be expanded with a "Globe Trotter Version" where each person does tricks with the basketball before they pass it to someone else. Note: This can work with other sports including single and group jump rope.

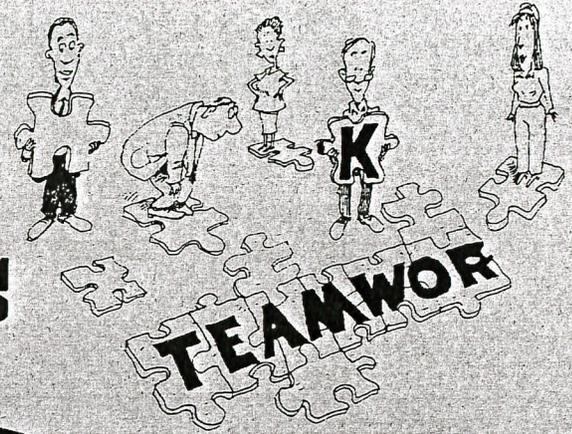
Warm-Up Exercises ~ This activity calls for a group to do group exercises from a standing position. It is a bit like mime exercises. Count them off together and ham up the physical exertion.

Start with:

- 1) 10 Push ups where people stick their arms out in front of them and bring their arms close and extended. Also add one handed push-ups and the kind where you clap in between.
- 2) 10 sit-ups where people sit in chair by leaning forward. On the count, "Sit up in the chair" and then slouch, etc.
- 3) 10 Pull ups where arms go above head with hands gripped like you are holding a bar. On the count bring arms down so that imaginary bar going under chin.
- 4) 10 Deep knee bends where you stand on one leg and bring other leg bent at the knee behind you. Can switch legs.
- 5) Be creative!

Compiled by Cathy Sork

Even More Group Builders



Sack of Similes ~ Bring a bag full of miscellaneous items. The goal of the group is to pick items and present them to the group as something that it represents. Tell the group for example, "Pick something in the sack that represents good teaching." Larger groups can select items in pairs or threes. Examples of items in a sack include: highlighter pen, battery, paper clip, penny, key, rubber band, etc. Going through a junk drawer usually turns up more than enough items for this activity.

Group Knot with Extensions ~ Each group member needs a soft rope or other appropriate material approximately 1.5–2.5 feet in length. Materials can be used again and again. This activity works for group sizes between 10–20.

TO LEAD ACTIVITY:

1. Start everyone in a circle with the rope in their right hands.
2. Have each person put their right arm into the circle with the rope ends dangling.
3. Have each person grab the end of someone else's rope with their left hand. Be sure not grab the rope of the person standing directly next to you.
4. Once all ends are claimed, it is important to not let go of the ropes. Instruct the group to get the "group knot" untied by working together as a group.

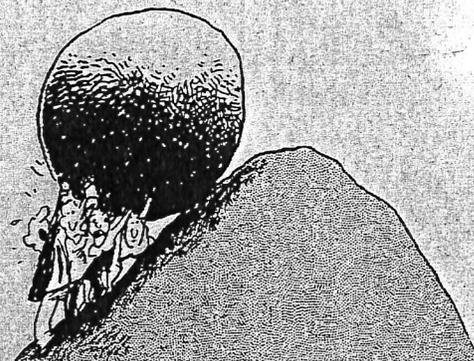
This activity is most commonly done by gripping bare hands, but the extensions make it easier on the body. Plus, it's better for groups who don't know each other that well.

Lean on Me ~ Have a group raise their arms up to their sides shoulder height. They will notice that after only a short time, their arms get sore and it is difficult to keep them up. (The group can also flap their arms like wings to illustrate working hard but in isolation or "flying solo.") After an appropriate time to prove the point, have neighbors put their arms over each others shoulders, even in a group circle. The lesson: Together we can accomplish tasks that are difficult or impossible alone. It is an object lesson of support.

Top Ten Cs ~ Have the group brainstorm words that begin with "C" which are essential for success. (Offer specific topics appropriate to the group) Most groups can come up with words easily: courage, cooperation, caring, creativity, crazy, etc.

What Shape Are You? ~ Have each group member respond to one of the shapes presented. This activity is also if good to assess where the group is on the content of a presentation. Shape (Triangle) "Share a point that sticks"; (Square) Share something that is square with your thoughts; (Circle) Share something that is still rolling around in your head.

Still More Group Builders



Hand Cuff Partners ~ Each person needs a rope that is about 1 foot long with a loop at each end that allows them to place the loops over their hands and onto their wrists like handcuffs. Once handcuffed, each group member finds a partner. In order to "link up" to start the activity. One of the people, takes off one hand, threads the loose end through the other person's inner arms and places it back on their hand. This is the last time the ropes should come off the hands.

The goal of the pair is to untangle themselves. This can lead to some interesting discussion about what the project symbolized about the group, and/or it shows how people respond differently to a difficult task.

Magic Carpet ~ (Very "Ropes Course-like" Activity) Place a heavy-duty plastic tarp on the ground and ask all group members to get on it. The rule is that no group member can get off the tarp at this point. There should not be much extra room in order for this to be effective. Explain that they are now on a magic carpet that will take them anywhere they want to go. Brainstorm a moment about the exotic places they would want to travel. Then act surprised! "Oh no, I didn't notice that the magic carpet is upside down and won't work until it is turned around." Using communication skills, team work, and focus, the group must turn the tarp right-side up without letting anyone touch the ground.

This activity can be a bit close quartered. It is better with groups who have already broken the ice.

Extension Cord Confusion ~ Place loosely tied knots in a long, heavy-duty extension cord about 2-3 feet apart. Lay the cord on the ground in front of a group. Ask each group member to pick up the cord with one hand only. Once everyone has their hand on it, their hands become superglued to the cord and they can not let go. At this time, the group is challenged to get the knots untied.

This activity adds nice variety for groups who have already done a group knot by holding hands.

3" X 5" Card Towers ~ Each group gets 1 pack of 3x5 inch index cards and a single strip of masking tape. The group's task is to building a free-standing tower that is taller than the other groups. (Groups should not be over 6 people.) A strict time limit should be enforced. The group can not use any other materials and they do not get more tape. They may bend or tear the cards as they wish. It must also be free-standing which means that it needs to be on the floor and not leaning against anything. Measure the towers to determine the winning groups.

Challenge: Don't allow the groups to talk or assign specific group members tasks that only they can do. For example, one person holds all the cards, one person controls the tape, etc. Forcing them to work together.

Compiled by Cathy Sork

Tag Games

When playing tag: These games are meant to be noncompetitive in the sense that no one person is a loser. In tag that means, more than one person should be it and/or there should be a way out if the person who is it has a hard time catching someone (ex: no one can be it for more than 2 minutes, or if you've been it twice, pick someone who hasn't been IT to take your place).

Blob Tag

In a set boundary area one person starts out as IT (The Blob). Whoever is tagged by the Blob must link hands to make a larger blob in pursuit of more people. Whenever the blob has four or more people it can split into smaller blobs. Eventually ALL are consumed by the BLOB!!!



Elbow Tag

Pairs link elbows and spread out in a playing area. One person is IT and another the Runner. If IT tags the Runner they reverse roles. The runner can link up with a pair at which point the other end becomes the new runner. If the person who is it gets tired he/she can yell "Switch" and become the runner. Make sure everyone has a chance to run. This is an important game to DEMONSTRATE.

Everybody's It (and Variations)

On the count of 3 EVERYBODY is IT. Everybody is trying to tag everybody else. Those who are tagged are frozen (and are no longer IT). The goal is to be the last person who is still IT. Play until 2 or 3 are left running and then start a countdown for the "grand champion." It goes quickly so PLAY AGAIN.

Variations:

1. **Octopus Tag:** Once you are tagged you can't move your feet but you can tag others as they pass.
2. **Hospital Tag:** When you get tagged you put a bandage where you get tagged by holding your hand there. After 2 tag you will have no hands free to tag with, on your 3rd tag you are frozen (no more bandages).

Transformer Tag

The leader throws something into the air. Before it touches the ground each participant must put a hand on either their head or their rear ("tail"). Once it touches the ground the members of each team (heads and tails) are trying to tag the members of the other team. Those tagged switch teams (and where their hand is). The game is over when only one team is left.

Herons and Eagles

(Called Hawks and Robins in the Wild Explorers Camp)

This game is a version of tag with bases. Aimed at little kids (Kindergartners). The campers are young herons and a teacher will be an eagle. Hula Hoops set out in the grass are heron nests. Every time the teacher yells switch they have to a new hula hoop. If they are tagged they must go to the bricks until someone comes and frees them by tagging them. This game works best if the adult who plays up the suspense without trying to wipe out all the herons.

Ivy In The Forest

Invasive Ivy is taking over the forest! One person is "It" as the Ivy. Everybody is in one of three types of local animals. There are safe zones for the animals either side of the playing field. The Ivy calls out one of the creature types; everybody who is that creature has to run to the other side. If the Ivy calls out "Ivy in the Forest" everybody has to run. Anybody who is tagged by the ivy has to go to their habitat to ivy and has to freeze in place; as long as they keep one foot touching the ground, they can tag others as they pass by (the ivy's tendrils reaching out). At the end, you can let the last one or two people left become "naturalists" who can go around and free people by tagging them free (those freed can free others and everybody is restored in the end!).



Snake in the Grass (A Variation on Ivy in the Forest)

A snake is slithering through the grass in search of bugs, slugs, and mice to eat. The campers are divided into Bugs, Slugs, and Mice. The person who is it is the Snake. Anybody who is tagged becomes a snake also. If a teacher yells "Eagle" all the snakes have to freeze very still. Any who are moving can be tagged by the teacher. If tagged they go back to being a Bug, Slug, or Mouse in the next round. Point out the food chain being illustrated.

Monarch Tag

Requires a soft ball of some sort

Boundaries are set and one person is the "Monarch". The Monarch can turn others into Monarchs by hitting them with the foam ball. Once somebody has been turned into a Monarch, none of the monarchs can move while the ball is in their hand: they will need to pass it among each other to get it close enough to hit others with it. Eventually all will be caught.



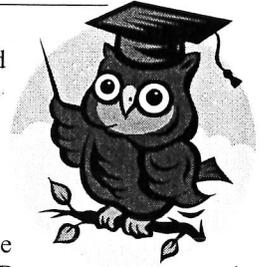
"New York City Tag"

Great for a big group in a small place. Everyone picks a partner. One of each pair is IT. The person who is it turns around 3 times (counting out loud) while their partner flees (walking only). If you touch (or bump) anybody besides your partner you have to turn around 3 times. If you run you have to turn around 3 times. When your partner tags you, turn around 3 times and then walk after them.

Owls and Crows

(from Sharing Nature with Children)

Divide the group into two smaller groups, the Owls and Crows. Have each group stand facing each other, about 3 feet apart. About 15-20 feet behind each group, mark a line as Home Base. The leader makes a statement about something the students have learned that day. If the statement is true, the Owls chase the Crows. If the statement is false, the Crows chase the Owls. Anyone who is caught before reaching Home Base to the other team.



the

changes

Run Rabbit Run

A field game. Create safe zones on each end of the field. One person starts as the coyote in the middle, while the rest start at one end of the field. When the coyote howls everybody has to run to the other safe zone. Anybody who is tagged becomes a coyote. Eventually everybody becomes a coyote.



Additional Tag Games:

Other Games

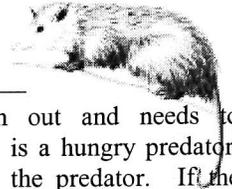
"I'm Hungry"

A good game to use with young campers while on the way somewhere.

The leader (an adult) walks at the front of the group, and everybody else tries to keep up. Each time the leader calls out "I AM HUNGRY!" all the children must freeze. Turn quickly to spot any moving ducks. Any "ducks" who are still moving become your "meal." Pretend to gobble them up, then send them to the back of the flock.

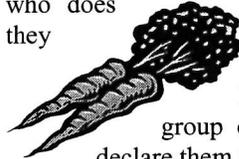
Opossum

This is a great quiet game when the group is worn out and needs to lie down. All of the campers are Opossums and the adult is a hungry predator. Opossums have to "play dead" to avoid getting eaten by the predator. If the predator catches anybody moving, then they are out and join the predator on the hunt. The predators can not touch anybody while on the prowl.



Vegetable Calling

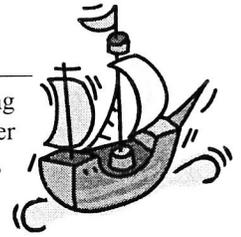
This is a quick and silly game that works best when people are in a silly mood. Everybody in the group chooses a vegetable. The person that starts says their own vegetable type twice, "calling" and somebody else's vegetable twice (e.g. Carrot, Carrot, calling Asparagus, Asparagus). Then the person called does the same to somebody else. While this is going on, NOBODY can show their teeth. Anybody who does so is out. The tricky part is in that people sound so absurd they end up laughing which shows their teeth and gets them out.



You could have the people who are out try to make others laugh (without touching them or getting into the circle). If a group of people are able to maintain focus and keep going, just declare them the winners and move on.

More Games

Ship to Shore



You are the Captain of the ship. One end of the playing field is the "poop deck", the other is the "stardeck." (Older groups could do stern(back), bow(front), port (left), starboard (right). When the captain calls one out everyone must run to the correct location of the ship, if they don't, it's off to the brig (they'er out). Intermix the following elements based on the group (adding them over time to reduce confusion). If someone does the wrong thing, or doesn't have enough people for the command, they're out. Everybody gets back in when you call "Roll Call!"

- Roll Call!** All must line up shoulder to shoulder.
Hit the deck Drop to the ground
Pirates Cover one eye until next command
Sea legs Run around wobbly
Shark attack Drop to your belly and "swim"
Lighthouse Hands over head and turn in a circle
Swab the deck (2) One person does the wheelbarrow (they're the mop), the other mops
Captain's Waltz('s (2) ... Pick a partner and waltz
Man overboard(2) One kneels and looks low, other looks high
Sea sick (2) One kneel, other heaves over board
Crow's Nest (3) Link elbows backwards and turn
Row to Shore (3) In a line sitting cross - legged and row
Chow time (4) Sit around the table and eat, yum, yum, yum
Walk the Plank (5) First in line yells "1", second "2", and so on. Complete line has 5.
Octopus (8) Get in a circle and put arms around shoulders and one leg out.
CAPTAIN'S COMING.. Everyone must stand at attention and hold this position until they are told AT EASE. No Smiling! Those who are out can try to make people laugh (without touching them).

Variations of this game can be played with Compass Directions or Water Cycle related Directions.

Puzzles

Don't let people ask you questions for these. Make them guess at the answer. If they are wrong do it again and let them try again. It's important to set a ground that they don't tell the answer when they have figured it out, it's a lot of fun to people figure these out one at a time. If you've done one of these fifty time can make it more obvious, but if it's too blatant they don't get to feel like actually succeeded in figuring it out.

Johnny, Johnny.

Ask the others if they can do what you do. Hold your hand fingers outstretched. With your other hand touch one finger at a time, starting with the pinkie. Say "Johnny" as touch each finger. When you come to the space in between the pointer and thumb say "Whoops" as you run your finger down your pointer. Then say "Johnny" as touch the tip of the thumb. Repeat on the way back to your pinkie. When subtly cross your arms (as if waiting for them to try it).



The trick is for them to figure out that they need to cross their arms when finishing. People who already know can help demonstrate. As people figure it out they also help (it can be fun having a whole row of people demonstrating all together).

I Now Present My Nametag.

Another activity where the campers have to do what you do. For this one, the trick is to sniffle before they start:

"<sniff.> I now present my nametag. This is the front of my nametag. This is the back of my nametag. This is the side of my name tag. This is the other side of my nametag. This is my name tag." Sniffle subtly first. Then hold up the nametag and show each side as you describe it. After doing it for many times, you can make your sniffle more pronounced.

Where did the lightning strike?"

The group's job is to figure out the system for who gets struck by lightning. Everybody has to be quiet. Point randomly around at a series of people, saying "Flash" as you point at each person. Intersperse a few "Booms" instead of "Flashes". When you are done, say "Where did the lightning strike?" and wait. The trick is that there is no special pattern. The first person in the group to speak after you ask who was struck is the person it struck. They can spend forever trying to figure out the pattern.

"When going to day camp, you can..."

Bring
Boots:



But Not
Shoes!



Present a bunch of statements. It is everybody else's job to figure out how to create their own. Start each statement with "When going to day camp, you can..." [Whatever is appropriate can be substituted for "day camp."]

Some examples:

"When going day camping, you can..."

"...be cool but not slick." "...bring apples but not oranges."

"...wear boots but not shoes." "...drink root beer but not coke."

"...go uphill but not down. [this ones a bummer if they think you're serious)."

If you haven't figured it out; look again at the lettering. The first noun has to have two letters next to each other that are the same; the second one can not. It's easier when you see it written down. People who figure it out or already know it can help keep your creative juices flowing. You can correct people when they are wrong: "...gloves but not a hat?" "No, no, but you can bring mittens; just not gloves or a hat."

Additional Puzzles

Car Ride Riddles

What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries? **A towel.**

You throw away the outside and cook the inside. Then you eat the outside and throw away the inside. What did you eat? **Alternate solution #1: An ear of corn. Alternate solution #2: A chicken.**

What goes up and down the stairs without moving? **A rug.**

What can you catch but not throw? **A cold.**

I can run but not walk. Wherever I go, thought follows close behind. What am I? **A nose.**

What's black and white and red all over? **A embarrassed skunk, a zebra painted red, a sunburnt penguin, or a newspaper.**

What goes around the world but stays in a corner? **A stamp.**

I have holes in my top and bottom, my left and right, and in the middle. But I still hold water. What am I? **A sponge.**

Give me food, and I will live; give me water, and I will die. What am I? **A fire.**

The man who invented it doesn't want it. The man who bought it doesn't need it. The man who needs it doesn't know it. What is it? **A coffin.**

I run over fields and woods all day. Under the bed at night I sit not alone. My tongue hangs out, up and to the rear, awaiting to be filled in the morning. What am I? **A shoe.**

Throw it off the highest building, and I'll not break. But put me in the ocean, and I will. What am I? **A tissue OR a wave.**

What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a head but never weeps, has a bed but never sleeps? **A river.**

No sooner spoken than broken. What is it? **A secret OR silence.**

A certain crime is punishable if attempted but not punishable if committed. What is it? **Suicide OR Coup d'etat.**

You use a knife to slice my head and weep beside me when I am dead. What am I? **An onion.**

I'm the part of the bird that's not in the sky. I can swim in the ocean and yet remain dry. What am I? **A shadow.**

I am mother and father, but never birth or nurse. I'm rarely still, but I never wander. What am I? **A tree.**

I went into the woods and got it. I sat down to seek it. I brought it home with me because I couldn't find it. What is it? **A splinter.**

I am weightless, but you can see me. Put me in a bucket, and I'll make it lighter. What am I? **A hole.**

EXAMPLE "FIELD ABBREVIATED" LESSON PLAN

Nature Club

Theme: *Becoming Mercer Slough Scientists*

(Great tool for
putting in your
instructor
"back pocket")

Week 1—Theme: "Through our senses, we become scientists!"

3:45-4:00 **Arrival Activity:** Nature Club Human Scavenger Hunt

4:00-4:15 **Snack**

4:15-4:30 **Welcome Circle:** Introduce names & favorite activity in nature, Discuss Group Contract and theme for session, Explain agenda for the day "Getting into the scientific mindset through all our senses!"

4:30-4:45 **Hike to Stream:** Count the # of shades of green, # of bird sounds, observe various plants and identify with students

4:45-5:15 **At Stream:** Play Alpha Dog under cedar (to engage senses), Explore "secret spot" near stream

5:15-5:30 **Hike back:** Play "I'm Hungry" to get into the senses of an animal

5:30-5:40 **Introduce & Establish Nature Spots:** Prompt—Sound Map activity

5:40-5:50 **Nature Spots**

5:50-6:00 **Closing Circle:** Share one item collected from nature and why, Sign out