

Emergency Preparedness

Month: May

Week #: 34

Day: d. Thur. Time: 40 min.

Wilderness Survival

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

The students will: become aware of the careful planning and preparation that is necessary when planning a trip into the wilderness.

Materials

none

Illustration

Jack is well prepared for his adventure out into the wilderness. How did he prepare himself so that he will be happy, safe and secure... and not sorry?

Background

“Be prepared!” as advocated by the Boy Scouts of America is an excellent motto to keep in mind when preparing to venture away from civilization into the back country. Every year there are people, including children, who become lost, suffer bodily injury and even death because they did not carefully think through what they would need when they set off on their grand hiking adventure.



I've used the information at Hiking Dude, found at: <http://www.hikingdude.com/hiking-planning.html>, to help inform this activity. It's an excellent resource with a wealth of information and practical advice. Obviously, not all of this information can be covered in the short time that is allotted for this lesson. This is why the primary purpose of this activity is to make the students aware that going off on a hike or camping trip does involve prior thought, planning and preparation.

Group Activity

1. Say, “Today we’re going to play a simulation game in which you are going to go on a really fantastic trip into the wilderness. It’s the beginning of June and you’re going on a day trip where you’ll hike high into the mountains to see and experience a really beautiful, two hundred foot high waterfall! Fed by natural hot springs, this waterfall is actually warm and plunges into a huge bathtub-like basin at the base of it. It will be a great place to go for a swim when you arrive!

Getting there will be both easy and hard. It’s a three mile hike one way with the first two miles being pretty easy and level as you follow along a sandy river bottom and the last mile being fairly difficult as you scramble over rocks and boulders and up a steep slope to get to the head of the canyon. And by the way, rattlesnakes, mountain lions and black bears have been sighted in the area.

The big questions in this game are: Will you have fun on this trip or will you be uncomfortable the whole time because you didn’t prepare properly? Will you be able to find your way without getting lost? Will you be adequately prepared in case you do become lost or injured? Will you know what

Group Activity (continued)

to do if you are confronted by a startled, angry or hungry carnivore? Ultimately, are you going to be happy, safe and secure or... sorry?"

2. Divide the students into groups of 4 or 5. Say, "I'm dividing you into groups of 4 or 5 because you never travel alone into the back country. Of course, in real life, there would be an adult accompanying you because you are all children. Before your group begins their trip, they need to make a plan as to what they need to do before they leave and what they need to bring along. Everybody in the group needs to agree on both the course of action and what you're bringing. Choose one person to write down your decisions. Try to think ahead and be prepared for any situation or circumstance. I will give you ten minutes to make your list. Don't worry about spelling or neat writing, just get your ideas down as quickly as possible. After ten minutes I won't allow any more additions or changes to your list. Whether you're happy, safe and secure or... sorry in this simulation game will depend on your list, so think thoroughly and carefully!"

3. Say, "We're now going to begin our grand adventure. We'll soon find out if your group is happy, safe and secure on their trip or... sorry. The more survival points that you earn in this game, the better chance you have of having a successful adventure. To begin with, you will earn a survival point for each piece of essential hiking equipment that you wrote on your list. Place a number one by each piece that I say (students can also earn points for items that aren't on the list but make logical sense):

Essential Hiking Equipment

1. Pack - Small, light-weight and strong.
2. Map & compass - These two items are used in conjunction with each other and a person needs to be knowledgeable in their use.
3. Water - Three liters for adults, two liters for children per day.
4. Flashlight - In case you end up spending the night.
5. Food - High energy, compact food are good choices.
6. Fire starter: matches, lighter or flint & steel. Can help you keep warm.
7. First aid kit - Should include bandages, antiseptic wipes, gauze pad, tweezers and tape.
8. Pocket knife - Know how to use it safely!
9. Sun protection: wide-brimmed hat, light colored long sleeve shirt, sunglasses, odor free sunscreen and lip balm.
10. Whistle - Can be heard over long distances if you become lost.
11. Insect protection - Best if it contains DEET.
12. Nylon cord - Can be used for repairs, tying, and hanging things up.
13. Large, heavy duty trash bag, space blanket or poncho - Will keep you dry and warm.
14. Toilet paper in zip lock bag.
15. Boots or sturdy shoes with ankle support preferred
16. Clothing - light weight, sturdy, worn in layers

Say, "Now, in turn, I will ask each group a question. If they get the question right, they will earn survival points, but they will lose points if they answer incorrectly. The other groups can either agree or disagree to earn, or lose, the same points. In addition, many of the question have more than one right answer, so additional points can be earned for extra details."

Questions:

1. Here's a riddle. This is one piece of essential equipment that you can't see or touch, but it's the most important thing that you need on your hike. It's worth a whole lot more than a common cent.

A: Common sense. Good judgment can prevent many an accident or disaster. Poor judgment can cost you your life. So stop and think before you act.

Questions: (continued)

2. What should you do before you go on a trip?

A: Plan, get in shape, check the terrain, check weather forecasts, tell another person where you are going.

3. You're hiking in an area where bears may be found. What should you do?

A: Make lots of noise, walk with the wind at your back, carry bear repellent, etc.

4. Your friend thinks it would be a great adventure to go off the trail and make your own path. Is this a good or bad idea and why?

A: Bad idea. You could get lost, walk through poison ivy, fall off a cliff, etc.

5. You've made a giant mistake by straying from your group and now you are lost. What should you do?

A: Don't panic, stay in one place, blow your whistle 3 times in a row every 15 minutes, etc.

6. As you hike along your feet begin to feel hot and uncomfortable. What should you do?

A: Stop, rest and change your socks; dip your feet in a cool spring; apply moleskin to painful areas; change shoes, etc.

7. There's a sign along the trail saying there are rattlesnakes. What should you do?

A: Be careful stepping over logs and rocks. It's better to step on the rocks and logs instead of over them.

What do you do if you actually hear or see one?

A: Back away slowly and go carefully in a different direction.

Can rattlesnakes fly through the air and bite you?

A: No, they can only strike half the distance of their body length.

What do you do if you are bitten?

A: Stay calm. Move as little as possible. Keep the bite lower than the heart. Get to a hospital as soon as possible.

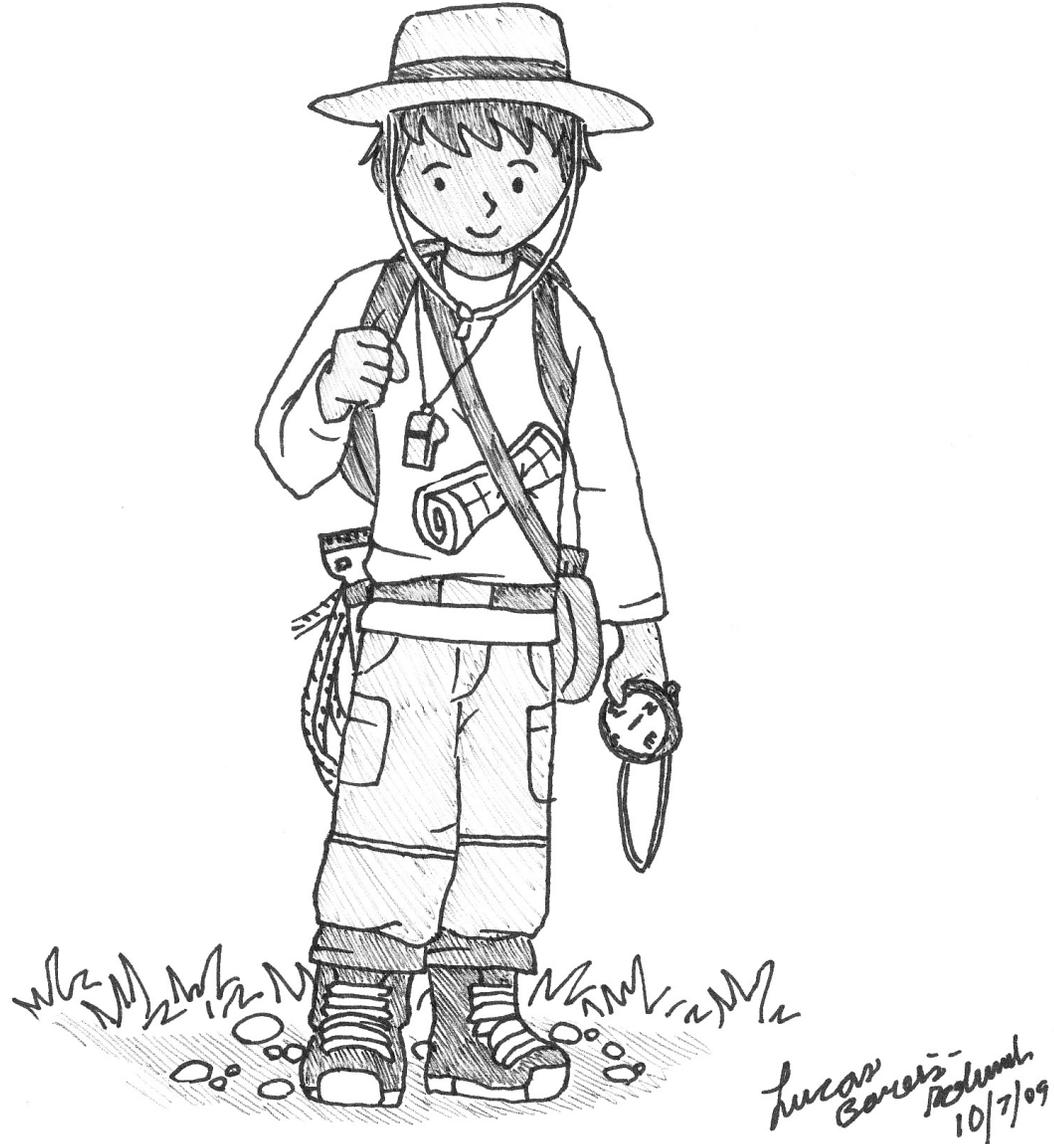
8. Ask any other questions you can think of, or invite students to ask questions.

Group Discussion Questions

Variations/Extensions

Conclusion

Say, "Being safe on a hike is a matter of being prepared and using your common sense. So plan ahead, keep a 'cool' head and have fun!"



**Jack is well prepared for his adventure out into the wilderness.
How did he prepare himself so that he will be happy, safe and secure... and not sorry?**