

Skills-Based Classes

CANOEING

Lesson Overview: Our trained educators will guide novice paddlers for this adventure as they navigate the placid canyon stream among 80-foot bluffs and cascading waterfalls. Understanding the equipment, executing basic river paddling strokes, and following safety precautions will be essential as participants paddle both upstream and back down. *Students should be prepared to get wet during this activity. Canoeing is not recommended in cold months. Please select a backup class on the contract incase canoeing cannot run to do wind, high water, etc..*

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Distance: Minimal hiking, but includes steep staircase

Activity Level: Moderate; cannot be modified for alternate abilities

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will:

1. Practice communicating and working together with other participants to achieve a shared goal
2. Demonstrate personal responsibility by making sound decisions and safe choices
3. Execute basic paddling strokes to navigate through both slow and fast-moving river waters

MEET A MAP

Lesson Overview: Never ask “where is that?” again at Camp McDowell because you will learn how to navigate our campus using teamwork and maps! Students will practice their visual spatial skills by creating and using a variety of maps to navigate both indoor and outdoor courses, scavenger hunt style to solve a mystery word.

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Distance: Minimal walking required

Activity Level: Low; can be universally accessible with prior notice but may omit outdoor portion of course

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will:

1. Familiarize themselves with using and interpreting the pieces of a map
2. Understand how to read and orient a map using the features of a map such as scale, legends, landmarks, etc
3. Navigate using a map and gather spatial information about the distribution of resources in an area

NAVIGATION

Lesson Overview: Students will gain experience with a compass and learn how compasses work through demonstrations and kinesthetic activities using a compass. Students will then apply their skills by completing an outdoor compass course scavenger hunt style to solve a mystery word.

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Hiking Distance: Minimal walking required

Activity Level: Low; Can be modified for most abilities but may not include outdoor course

Learning Goals: At the end of this session, students will be able to use a compass to:

1. Determine cardinal directions, read compass bearings and apply them properly
2. Navigate an outdoor course using a compass
3. Use a map and a compass to discern bearings properly

SURVIVAL SKILLS

Lesson Overview: This class combines learning with play in a way that is fun for all ages. Participants will learn basic skills necessary in a wilderness survival situation through shelter building and fire starting. Students will work together in teams to try to survive.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Hiking Distance: Varied; .75-1.5 miles

Activity Level: Moderate-participants will be lifting and moving sticks and logs

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will be able to use creative thinking skills to meet their basic needs in the backcountry in the following ways:

1. Identify the difference between a want and a need
2. Prioritize basic survival needs
3. Collaborate with a team to build a shelter and fires

Team Building Classes

CLIMBING WALL

Lesson Overview: Striving to climb a 40-foot wall with hand and foot holds, students experience rock climbing and feel the exhilaration of attempting a daunting feat. Encouraged by their peers and led by a trained ropes course instructor, students set and achieve personal goals, confront fears, and gain self-confidence in a unique outdoor experience. Students must be in 5th grade or older to participate in this activity.

We charge an additional \$15.00 equipment fee per field group for this activity

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Activity Level: Strenuous physically and mentally; cannot be modified for universal accessibility

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will gain experience and skills in the following ways:

1. Setting, working toward, and achieving personal goals takes confidence and support from their peers
2. Gaining personal confidence requires taking risks when an outcome is not assured, and understanding that failure is an important part of growth and success

TRUST SWING

Lesson Overview: Students work together to lift one another with a certified pulley system on a giant swing. Students place trust in their group and control the amount of risk with which they are comfortable by setting personal goals for how high they would like to be lifted. Students must be 5th grade or older to participate.

We charge an additional \$15.00 equipment fee per field group for this activity

*****We can only accommodate 8 field groups per 3-day trip on the Trust Swing*****

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Activity Level: Strenuous mentally, physically low to moderate; accommodations can be made for some physical limitations as riding the trust swing involves minimal physical exertion

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will gain experience and skills in the following ways:

1. Trust is required in teamwork, and setting and achieving personal goals can result in self-confidence gains
2. Using simple machines, like compound pulleys, changes the amount of energy required to move an object
3. Students will relate potential and kinetic energy concepts using the Trust Swing as a model

POWER POLE

Lesson Overview: Students challenge themselves to climb a 25-foot telephone pole and jump for a bell suspended nearby. This activity provides the most significant mental and emotional challenge for students. The group setting offers emotional support for each participant, who is also supported by a trained ropes course facilitator to ensure physical safety. Students must be in 7th grade or older to participate in this activity.

We charge an additional \$15.00 equipment fee per field group for this activity

Total Time: 1.5 hours

Activity Level: Very strenuous mentally, physically low to moderate; cannot be modified for universal accessibility

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will gain experience and skills in the following ways:

1. Setting, working toward, and achieving personal goals takes confidence and support from their peers
2. Gaining personal confidence requires taking (perceived) risks when success is not assured, and understanding that failure is an important part of growth
3. Trusting in yourself, others, and safety systems are important components of personal growth

TEAM CHALLENGE

Lesson Overview: Students will participate in a series of group problem solving activities that encourage cooperation, communication, and trust. Each class is tailored to the needs of the group and is a unique experience. The group is encouraged to review their experiences, link them to relevancy in their daily life, and extend these new ideas as they approach situations at home or in school. MEC facilitators will choose the activities based on the individual group's needs. Because of this, each student group will have a unique experience and different activities.

Total Time: 1.5 or 3 hours

Activity Level: Easy to strenuous; can be made universally accessible with notification

Learning Goals: By the end of this session, students will be able to use the following skills to help them solve problems:

1. Active listening and sharing of ideas are important components of success in group work
2. Working with others to solve problems highlights the variety of solutions a problem may have
3. Problem-solving skills need to be honed with practice, and are valuable in all aspects of life