

Spruce Lake Outdoor School

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Curriculum Guide

Adventure Challenge Course (ACC) • grades 5-6

This class is geared toward the social and cognitive development of grades 5-6. Students will be presented with a series of challenges to solve that teach them to trust, share, encourage, problem-solve, and team build. Emphasis is placed on applying experiences to practical Christian living and relationships.

2 activity periods (3 hours)

Adventure Program

Adventure Scavenger Hunt (ASH)

Small teams of students and adults will work together in this fun nighttime search for clues, all in the effort to gain the most points! The clues will require the team's use of nature knowledge, logic, outdoor skills, the Bible, compasses and more.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Evening

Basic Compass (BC)

The compass is an instrument that uses Earth's magnetic field to determine direction. Students become familiar with compass parts, compass handling and taking bearings. They practice their skills in fun exercises and end with the Unknown Destination Hike.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Outdoor Skills

Bouldering Wall (BW) - grades 3-5

Students will learn the basic so climbing as they climb without a rope, but with spotters behind them. This is geared more for younger grades. Obstacles like hula hoops and balls as well as games like Simon says are often a component of this class.

1 activity period (1 ½ hours)

Adventure Program

Challenge Course (CC) • grades 7-12

The Challenge Course is a series of ropes, cables, beams, walls and other devices that challenge participants to cooperate in making decisions and achieving objectives. Groups learn to trust, share, encourage, problem-solve, communicate and build community through this mental, physical, emotional and spiritual experience. Emphasis is placed on applying experiences to practical Christian living and relationships.

2 activity periods (3 hours)

Adventure Program

Challenge Initiatives (CI)

Challenge Initiatives are activities that present groups with challenging problems they must overcome by working together using problem-solving, trust, creativity, leadership and following. Applications are made to problem solving in the "real world", attitudes toward each other and biblical principles. Designed especially for groups who are too young or do not have time for the Challenge Course.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Adventure Program

Critter Scene Investigations (CSI)

An exciting class where students will test their observation and analytical skills by examining clues found at specific scenes. Was there a victim? If so, who did it? Can we determine what happened? Conclusions will have to be supported by evidence found.

1 activity period (1 ½ hours)

Animal Life

Climbing Tower (CT) • grades 6-12

Our 15'x40' tower will allow as many as three participants to climb at one time. Various sizes and types of foot/handholds, along with overhangs and "cliffs" will challenge participants to set and achieve their climbing goals. Each climber is secured by dynamic belay.

1 activity period (1½ hours) • Two instructors needed

Adventure Program

Climbing Wall (CW) grades 4-12

Participants will be introduced to the sport of rock climbing. They will be challenged to use climbing skills and balance techniques to scale a vertical wall 18' wide and 40' high. There are up to 3 climbing options which lends itself to varying ability levels. Each climber is secured by dynamic belay and is encouraged to meet personal climbing goals.

1 activity period (1½ hours) * Two Instructors needed

Adventure Program**Endangered Species Clue (ESC)**

This after-dark activity involves small teams of students with adults who attempt to locate hidden clue cards, which will provide information that will determine “who, how, where” regarding the death of the Great Plumed Heron.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Evening**Exploring Animal Habitats (EAH)**

There are many different habitats on Spruce Lake's property where animals can find a suitable home. Each habitat provides the basic necessities for a wide variety of animals. In this class, students will explore these varied areas, recording evidence left by animals.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Animal Life**Fire-building (FB) • grades 7-12**

Students become familiar with different types of fires and how you will start them. They practice their skills in fun exercises and finish with a culminating activity that will test the skills they have learned

1 activity period (1 ½ hours)

Outdoor Skills**Geo-cache Game (GG)**

Students will be learn how to use a GPS, and then they will be split into teams and go out in search of a series of small clues in different locations.

1 activity period (1 to 1½ hours)

Outdoor Skills**High Ropes (HR-i) • grades 7-12**

The *High Ropes* (aka *Jacob's Ladder* and *Wild Woozy*) is composed of cables and beams that get increasingly further apart. It puts you to the test of working with a partner to climb the 25-foot ladder, and then step out onto high twin cables. Builds communication, cooperation and trust.

2 activity periods (3 hours) • Two instructors needed

Adventure Program**High Ropes (HR-o) • grades 9-12**

High in the air, 15-30 feet above ground, you will work through a series of challenges involving poles, bridges, swings, logs and other elements — while your friends encourage you from below. Individuals get to choose the low or high course, and which combination of elements they would like to try.

• **Weight range of 70-250lb** 2 activity periods (3 hours) • Two instructors needed

Adventure Program**Incredible Insects (II)**

Within the forest community is a world of seen and unseen "creepy, crawly critters" called insects. In this class students will discover characteristics of insects and arthropods. They will have the opportunity to go out and catch insects and look at some preserved specimens. This class is only offered during months when the temperatures will be warm enough to find catch specimens.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Animal Life**Maple Sugaring (MS)**

The students will learn about the history of maple sugaring and learn about the collection and evaporation processes from sap to maple syrup.

1 activity period (1 ½ hours)

Forest Communities

Map and Compass Orienteering (MCO) • grades 7-12**Outdoor Skills**

Orienteering is finding one's way (navigating) across known and unknown terrain using a map and/or compass. Students will problem-solve situations using map and compass reading skills (including math), keen observation of the terrain, stamina for walking, and excitement for meeting the challenge. *Basic Compass* recommended. One adult is needed for every 3-5 students on a team.

- **Involves moderate hiking** 2 activity periods (3 hours)

Mini-Zipline (MZ) • grades 4-6**Adventure Program**

Harnessed participants “zip” over our Wilderness Camp pond on a 200-foot steel cable and pulley system. Stepping off a 16-foot high platform is a safe, fun, trust-builder for children.

***There is a weight and height limit – must be less than 5’6” and weigh less than 140lb.**

- Two instructors are needed 1 activity period (1½ hours)

Mountain and Stream Geology (MSG)**Hike**

Both Spruce Mountain and Spruce Mountain Run are typical of the Pocono region. Students will explore the mountain's rock outcroppings, which consist of sandstone and shale in various stages of weathering and erosion. They will also explore a stream, which cuts through this bedrock and contains much observable stream geology.

- **Involves rigorous hiking** 2 activity periods (3 hours)

Nature Games (NG)**Evening**

The nature game format of learning is a motivational technique, which involves groups in structured play, while learning about natural things and events. Students will play a variety of organized games, which focus on animals and relationships in nature.

1 activity period (45 min - 1 hr max.)

Outdoor Cooking (OC) • grades 7-12**Outdoor Skills**

Fire is something that can be used for many things. In outdoor cooking we will explore different ways to start a fire and different types of fire lays. Once the fires are going the students will be given the option to cook a few different foods.

2 activity period (3 hours)

Pond Community (PC)**Aquatic Communities**

This class introduces students to the major characteristics, inhabitants and dynamics of the pond. Students will collect a variety of pond organisms, recognize the relationships that exist among organisms, and learn how these animals meet their basic life needs within this community.

- **Bring old shoes or boots** 1 activity period (1½ hours)

Pool (POOL)**Evening**

Outdoor heated pool; we'll provide a Life Guard. This is a seasonal option. Please read our Modesty Guidelines.

1 activity period (1-1½ hours) • Two instructors needed pending group size

Indoor Power Swing (PS-i)**Adventure Program**

Each participant is harnessed and attached to a rope, then pulled by their teammates. When released, the rider swings in large arc downward, then up toward the heights again! Like a pendulum, the rider will eventually slow down, and then dismount.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Probing the Night Realm (PNR)**Evening**

Students are led into the night forest through sensory experiences, group demonstrations and discussions on nocturnal conditions. By exploring the forest at night, students can develop an awareness of the nocturnal animal world and see the forest in a different way.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Reptiles and Amphibians (RA)**Animal Life**

Students learn about the characteristics of reptiles and amphibians by observing both living and preserved specimens. Various hands-on activities stress the differences and similarities of these animals.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Signs of Animals in Winter (SAW)**Animal Life**

This is a fascinating winter activity using observation skills and the excitement of learning about the habits of animals without seeing the actual animal. So much can be told about animals' behavior and private life from designs or clues. Students learn to interpret animal signs and identify the animal as well as learn about animal walking patterns.

1 activity periods (1½ hours)

Skulls and Skins (SKS)**Animal Life**

Much can be learned about an animal's life-style by observing its skull and skin characteristics. This activity involves hands-on learning of the features of animal skulls and skins. Students will identify common mammal skulls by using a key and will observe various pelts.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Spruce Forest Hike (SFH)**Hike**

This forest hike introduces students to God's creation. Students will observe and experience the local forest community and its components while hiking along our trails. This class is designed to be a less intense hike compared to the Spruce Mountain Hike with very little change in elevation.

- **Involves moderate hiking** 2 activity periods (3 hours)

Spruce Mountain Hike (SMH)**Hike**

This rigorous mountain hike introduces students to God's creation. Students will observe and experience plants, animals, natural forces, rock outcroppings, waterfalls and a spectacular view of the Pocono region. The hike is 2-2.5 mile loop.

- **Involves rigorous hiking** 2 activity periods (3 hours)

Snowshoe Hike (SSH)**Outdoor Skills**

Participants will learn how to use snowshoes as an outdoor skill. The class will cover a brief history of snowshoes. Practice in open areas precedes snowshoeing into the forest.

- **Involves moderate hiking** 1 or 2 activity periods (1½ or 3 hours)

Survival Ecology Game (SEG)**Animal Life**

Here students have a chance to experience firsthand what it is like to survive as an animal. This game dramatically illustrates the effects of the natural community, diversity of producers and consumers, human influences, disease and physical elements on animal populations. Participants are given a role in the food chain, live out their roles in the "wild" and process their experience as an animal in a post-game discussion.

- **Running required** 2 activity periods (3 hours)
- Requires at least 21 participants

Trees: Heart of the Forest (THF)**Forest Communities**

Trees and forests are a living green blanket, covering about 1/3 of the earth's land surface. This class will bring the students into close contact with the dominant tree species, which make up the Spruce Lake forest, typical of the Pocono region. Through various activities, students will study tree structure, methods of identification, and the ecological place of trees in the forest.

1 activity period (1½ hours)

Tubing (TUB)**Day or Evening**

God provides the snow, we provide the tubes, and you have the fun! This is available as a "do-on-your-own" option.

- **No lights at locaion** 1 activity period (1½ hours)

Vertical Playpen (VP) • grades 7-12**Adventure Program**

The Vertical Playpen is an unconventional climbing experience that will allow two partners to work together while providing a variety of difficulty levels. Partners will climb and cross a series of elements involving logs, ropes, cargo nets, and tires while moving successively upward. The goal is to reach and stand on a 2 by 6 foot platform suspended by wires 34 feet in the air!

- 2 activity periods (3 hours)
- Two instructors needed

Waterfall Hike (WFH)**Hike**

This hike introduces students to God's Creation. Students will observe and experience the local forest community and its components while hiking along Spruce Mountain Run to a waterfall.

- **Involves moderate hiking** 1 activity period (1½ hours)

Wagon Ride (WR)**Evening**

Often our uncovered "covered" wagon rolls into the evening program in combination with *Nature Games*, and *Probing the Night Realm*. A fun ride for young and old! No age limit.

Woodland Swamp (WS)**Aquatic Communities**

Students are led into a wetland area characterized by moist-habitat trees, fallen tree remains, deep mucky pools, sphagnum moss, spongy root systems, rich soils, fungi and evidence of animals. Students will discover the relationships within a swamp and the importance of wetlands.

- **Bring old shoes or boots** 1 activity period (1½ hours)

Zipline 1 (ZL1) • grades 7-12**Adventure Program**

Two riders can leave the platform deck simultaneously to fly approximately 500 feet to an eventual stop at the corner of the parking lot below Spruce Lodge. At the peak height of descent, riders will be approximately 50 feet in the air.

- **70 - 240lb weight limit** 1 activity period (1½ hours) • Two instructors needed

Zipline 2 (ZL2) • grades 8-12**Adventure Program**

An exciting study of the physics of velocity and momentum on the zipline. Participants collect data from each other's descent and compute their speed during class time. This activity is a great application of the laws of motion and a fun activity.

- **70- 240lb weight limit** 2 activity periods (3 hours) • Two instructors needed