4-H 273 Project Adventure: Teaching Guide for a Camp Setting

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Project Adventure

TEACHING GUIDE
for a
CAMP SETTING

Nebraska 4-H Camps and Centers

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Leo E. Lucas, Director of Cooperative Extension Service, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The Cooperative Extension Service provides information and educational programs to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.
Challenge By Choice

*Project Adventure* is a unique program that provides challenge, self-confidence, trust, and group interaction for participants of all ages.

It is an approach to education, counseling, recreation, and life that is engaging, active, challenging, and places a high level of expectation within an atmosphere of support and caring. The impact of the approach is strongly felt within a group, where cohesion and cooperation are often achieved with surprising dispatch. Even more profound is the effect upon the individual, who develops clearer insights and a fuller appreciation of self.

Challenge by choice offers a student:

1. A chance to try potentially difficult and/or frightening challenges in an atmosphere of support and caring.
2. The opportunity to ‘back off’ when the performance pressures or self-doubt become too strong, knowing they will always be allowed to try again later.
3. A chance to try difficult tasks, recognizing that the attempt is more significant than performance results.
4. Respect for their individual ideas and choices.

This guide is intended solely for the use of qualified personnel at Nebraska 4-H Camps and Centers.
Objectives

1. To increase the participant’s sense of personal confidence.
2. To increase mutual support within a group, developing trust with all members of the group.
3. To promote a feeling of self-worth and accomplishment in each individual.
4. To develop an increased awareness of the natural world.

Philosophy

1. Project Adventure is for everyone.
2. Group encouragement is a key for each member to “Dare to Try”.
3. Stress the non-competitiveness of trying each element with or without assistance.

Low Elements

Teaching Guide

In the first 15 or 20 minutes of each session, exercises can be used to “get the blood moving” and set a tone for the somewhat less physical but more emotionally demanding requirements of the curriculum.

Preparation Activities

1. Warm-Ups and Stretcher Preparation Activities (15 to 30 minutes)
   Purpose: Coordination and cardiovascular movements
   Limberness and flexibility movements
   A. “Dog Shake” (to loosen hands, arms, torso, neck, etc)
   B. Hop or run in place (one leg, then both)
   C. Cobra (lay prone, raise head and torso with arms)
   D. Double cobra (lay prone, raise torso and legs without arms)
   E. Side saddle stretch (lay on sides, raise leg and touch with hand - Repeat both sides)
   F. Cradle (sit, grasp lower leg with both arms, pull slowly to chest)
   G. Angel (stand, touch palms to ground, or as far as possible, then rise slowly to arms extended over head and up on toes). Repeat.
   H. Row boat stretch (Pair up with partners about same height. Sit facing each other, feet spread and touching partners, grab hands and pull back and forth slowly)
   I. Duo stretch (Not for people with bad backs. Pair up people of same heights back to back, lock arms at elbows, take turns lifting each partner off their feet by bending forward.)
   J. Candle (Stand separately, feet together, hands [palms] together over your head. Raise one leg, place foot on thigh of other leg, close eyes and stand on tiptoe. A balance exercise)

Select several of these exercises as time permits, making sure participants are adequately warmed up. These activities are done before group goes to the course. It may be necessary to warm-up briefly after arriving at the course if several hours elapse after warm-ups.

II. Building Unity (one to two hours)

Purpose: To develop group into closely knit unit by a series of exercises and activities that reinforce group interaction and cooperation.

A. Jama Quack
B. Relays
C. British Bulldog
D. Implus (lighthouse)
E. Clock
F. People to People

You may use any number of activities to help the group get acquainted and feel comfortable. Time may be shortened if group has worked together before or is previously acquainted.
Ill. Trust and "Spotting" Techniques (one to two hours)

Purpose: To demonstrate different types of spotting, emphasizing the importance of safety and group trust.
To develop a close trust relationship within group.

Begin this section with a brief discussion of spotting techniques and the importance of working together as a team.

A. Balance broom*
B. A-what?
C. Yurt Circle
D. Clock
E. Pendulum*
F. Bake a Cookie
G. Levitation
H. Trust Fall*

* Excellent activities to teach spotting.
Use as appropriate for each group. Other activities may be substituted.

- Do not attempt all elements in one session.
- A. Balance Beam †
- B. Track Walk †
- C. Swinging Log †
- D. All aboard ★
- E. Wild Woosey ✔
- F. Hickory Jump ✔
- G. Wall ✔ ★
- H. Barrel ★
- I. Fidget Ladder ★
- J. Tension Traverse ✔
- K. Bosens Chairs ★
- L. Nitro Crossing ★
- M. Spider Web ✔ ★
- N. Meat Grinder ★

† Good beginning elements to build confidence
✔ Good trust activities
★ Excellent group problem solving
• Develops balance/coordination

High Adventure
Teaching Guide

Preparation Activities

I. Warm-Ups and Stretches

Same as low. (May do only about 15 minutes of warm-ups at this time if campers have completed low elements within the last day or two.)

II. Building Unity

Same as low. May add additional games if desired. If moving directly into high adventure after completing low elements in the camp this session may be eliminated or reduced considerably. The deciding factor would be based on the trust level and unity of the group.

III. Trust and Spotting Techniques

Same as low, if not already completed. If high adventure is a continuation of the low elements within the same camp, this section needs only a brief review.

IV. Introduction to high adventure (30 to 40 minutes)

A. Ropes/Safety/Knots
B. Safety Slings — Rope or Web Seat
C. Carabiners — Instruct in the use before camper gets on high element. Practice on the ground using one hand.

On the Course

- Safety of participants is the first priority.
- Spotters are necessary for each element.
- Need one instructor for each 12 to 18 participants. A maximum of three groups of 12 to 18 on the course at one time is ideal.
- Instructor observes and discusses group interaction. See "Guidelines for Problem Solving Activities."

- Do not attempt all elements in one session.
- A. Balance Beam †
- B. Track Walk †
- C. Swinging Log †
- D. All aboard ★
- E. Wild Woosey ✔
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- G. Wall ✔ ★
- H. Barrel ★
- I. Fidget Ladder ★
- J. Tension Traverse ✔
- K. Bosens Chairs ★
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- N. Meat Grinder ★

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High Adventure
Teaching Guide

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Same as low. May add additional games if desired. If moving directly into high adventure after completing low elements in the camp this session may be eliminated or reduced considerably. The deciding factor would be based on the trust level and unity of the group.

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- Instructor observes and discusses group interaction. See "Guidelines for Problem Solving Activities."
On the Course

- Do not plan to participate in all activities in one session.
- Only trained instructors are used to belay.
- Back up belayer must be used on all descents.
- All participants should be encouraged to wear tennis shoes.
- Belayers must wear jeans.
- All knots and carabiners are double checked before participants start on course.
- Rotating small groups through high adventure works well.

A. Two Line Bridge  
B. Burma Bridge  
C. Cargo Net  
D. Zip Line  
E. Cat Walk

Summarize and Evaluate

- Can be done on the course following one or more activities or later as a camp session involving larger groups.
- Optional: Have participants design additional course element/activity

General Information

- Course must be safe at all times.
- Cables and ropes need periodic tightening. Annual inspection encouraged.
- Ropes need to be replaced to maintain high quality equipment.
- Course should be posted and/or fenced so public does not wander onto it.
- Project Adventure can be used any time of the year.
- Adding one or two new elements each year keeps the interest of returning campers.
- Safety is the prime concern.
- Weather considerations. Project Adventure can be done in almost all weather conditions. Use common sense. Muddy shoes create a hazard. Remove everyone from the course if lightening is in the area.

Guidelines For Problem Solving Activities

1. Choose a problem suited to the age and physical ability of the group.
2. Make all ground rules and procedures clear.
3. Present the situation — then step back and allow group to work.
4. Observe the interaction of the groups. Interaction is more important than how well they are performing physically.
5. After a group has completed or tried to complete a problem, discuss the process observed. Discussion should be positive without put downs and interruptions.

Sample Questions:
- What decisions were made?
- Where did the leadership come from?
- Who had ideas that did not come out?
- Whose ideas were ignored?
- How did it feel to be ignored?
- Did the entire group have a role?
- Were roles of males and females different?
- Did the entire group cooperate?
- Did everyone support the leaders?
- Did you feel in the beginning that your group could solve the problem?
- How did you feel about the success (or failure) of your group?

Risk Management — Safety Considerations

- Have experienced, well-trained instructors
- Have adequate group preparation
- Be aware of group capabilities
- Provide adequate time
- Maintain proper size of groups for element
- Wear proper attire
- Observe weather precautions
- Maintain close supervision at all times
- Encourage a positive, supportive attitude
- Follow specified procedures — strict safety standards
- Safety always first
- Be prepared for mistakes
Project Adventure

Low Element Activities

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I. BALANCE ACTIVITIES

Excellent Beginning Element

TRACK WALK
Purpose: To build confidence and trust
Objective: The challenge of walking the "railroad track" and not falling off is unintimidating and fun.
Procedure: Participants may walk the track in either direction.
   At least one, but preferably two spotters should accompany each participant. Spotter's hands should be raised to be convenient for participant to touch.
   If only one spotter is used, he should take an inside position.
Safety Precautions: Only one participant at a time on a section.

Do not allow jumping except from post to post. Spotters must be alert when participants are jumping from one post to another. Muddy shoes will create slipping.

Variations: See how few steps it takes each participant to complete the track walk.
Send participants in opposite directions and pass each other while on a track. This variation should be done with lightweight youth only. Too much weight on one section may break it.

BALANCE BEAM
Purpose: To build self-confidence and trust
Objective: "Dare to Try" to step out on the beam. A good introductory to Project Adventure challenges. Each participant has "won" if they walk one foot or the entire beam.
Procedure: Participants walk one at a time the length of the beam.
   Two spotters, one on either side of participant, each hold one hand high, close to participant so it can be used for balance if necessary. Participants may use spotters' hands for balance the entire length of the beam if they wish.
   Spotters must assist the participant in jumping down at the end.
Safety Precautions: Spotters must keep the same pace as the participants.
   Spotters who are too short may not provide adequate safety to the participant.
   Two spotters are required for each participant.
   Participants sometimes become dizzy or disoriented when they reach the end and jump down. Spotters must assist until they are on the ground and properly oriented.
Variations: Negotiate the beam backward, sideways, and/or blindfolded.
Have two or more on the beam at one time.
SWINGING LOG

Purpose: To build self-confidence and trust

Objective: To walk from one end to the other without falling off.

Procedure: Participants walk the log one at a time.

Two spotters are necessary with hands available for balance, if needed. Participants may wish to begin holding on to the hands of both spotters.

Safety Precautions: Spotters must be alert to the swinging of the log. It could hit them in the leg.

Have one person on each end of the log to steady the log if it starts swinging too much.

Steady the log when participants step onto and off of the log.

Variations: Have participants form a line facing the log about two feet from it. Start the log swinging slowly and see how many can attempt to step on the log and stay there three to five seconds.

Have two participants stand on the log, one on either end holding on to spotters' hands. On command they release hands and try to shake, wiggle or bounce the other person off the log. Spotters must be standing by and must be very alert.

II. INITIATIVES/PROBLEM SOLVERS

ALL ABOARD

Purpose: To improve problem solving and trust

Objective: To see how many persons can get on the platform at one time.

Procedure: Present the problem as stated in the objective to the group.

To be counted as “on the platform,” a participant must have both feet off the ground.

Participants must be able to hold their balanced point at least five seconds.

After presenting the problem the instructor offers no other help of how to accomplish this initiative, but observes the leadership and team effort.

Refer to Guidelines for Problem Solving Activities on page 5 for specific details.

Critique the problem after completion.

Safety Precautions: Spotters are important. Designate four or five participants to act as spotters until they are included on the all aboard.

The instructor and perhaps one additional helper should always be alert for a sudden shift in the group.

Watch for individuals in the group who may be getting crushed, strained, spindled, or mutilated.

Variations: Small groups only - have everyone face out.
NITRO CROSSING

Purpose: Problem Solving/Group Interaction

Objective: To transport the entire group across the river (open area)

Procedure: Present the problem and observe. Time is important. You may use a story about the group to help spark imaginations, i.e., they are being chased by a herd of wild elephants, etc.

Do not hand them the swing rope. Obtaining it becomes their first problem.

They may not stand on or knock over the trip poles at the start and at the finish.

Serve as a spotter, yourself, on the lower end until enough participants are safely across. Then have them serve as spotters.

Critique the accomplishments of the group.

Safety Precautions: Many youth do not have adequate upper body strength to carry their body across the opening. Be alert for those who may have problems. If they should fall, be in a position to assure that they do not hit the lower trip pole.

Participants sometimes fail to release the swing rope soon enough. They will either start swinging back toward the trip pole or release high, come down hard and possibly roll on down the hill. Spotters need to be alert to the situation.

Variations: Have the group transport a container of water, etc. across the area. Mark the container so the level can be checked.

Swing back to the upper side after everyone has made it across the first time.

WALL

Purpose: To develop problem solving, group interaction and trust

Objective: To get the entire group over the wall as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Procedure: Present the problem and observe.

The rope can be used only to help participants descend the back of the wall once they have gone over the top.

Only two participants may remain on the top to assist others.

Spotters are needed to help prevent falls on both sides.

Protect the head in the case of a fall. Spotters should not be in a position to be crushed under a larger falling body.

Safety Precautions: Rotate individuals assisting on the top of the wall. Pulling individuals up is exhausting work.

Don’t let participants stand on top of wall.

Make sure spotters are alert, especially in the back. Participants may slip on the way down or loose their grip on the rope.

Send two spotters to the back of the wall until the first two individuals have climbed the wall and are safely down. Then they can assume the spotters’ role and the original spotters can join the group on the front side. Reverse the procedure as the last persons start their climb on the front side.

Be alert for awkward positions where twisting, pulling, etc. could produce injuries.

Variations: Time each group (same number in each group or some go over wall more than once)

Designate some as handicapped, i.e. only use one arm, can’t talk, etc.

SPIDER WEB

Purpose: To develop problem solving and group interaction skills

Objective: Move the entire group through the web without touching the web material.

Procedure: Present problem and observe.

One person can pass through a web space only once.
Spotters are needed to help participants through the web on both sides. As with the wall, have two or three of the group go to the back side of the web until enough people have passed through, then they can assume the spotting role and the intitial spotters can return to the front side.

Items for discussion during critique might include why the group did or did not send the lightest person through the highest web spaces — the heaviest through the lowest, etc. Also, did the group count and identify the spaces needed before starting?

Safety Precautions: Do not allow people to dive through the web or try to go over the web.

Make sure spotters are strong enough to help participants through web, especially the higher spaces. Three to four spotters should be used for most situations.

Variations: For smaller groups, limit or restrict the use of the bottom one or two rows.

MEAT GRINDER

Purpose: Problem Solving/Trust

Objective: The entire group must get over the large spool.

Procedure: Participants go over the spool from the creek side to the “Wild Woosey” side.

Some may turn the spool while others lift participant.

Look to see whether they will stop when they are on top and turn around to pull the next person up thus helping themselves down.

Like in the wall, are they thinking about who should be last and how he or she will get over?

Safety Precautions: Spotters are required on both sides.

Spotters should actually hold onto person coming down because of the curvature of the wheel.

The spool must stop turning when participant’s waist gets to the top.

Watch for those who want to jump up and grab the wheel. They will fall backward.

Watch their hand positions if they want to hold onto the wheel. (Their hands may be forced to turn over as the wheel turns.)

Watch out for those playing around the edge of the creek as their friends are on the wheel.

BARREL LIFT

Purpose: To build problem solving and group interaction

Objective: See how many times the group can raise and lower the barrel in one minute by pulling on the rope.

Procedure: Gather the group around the barrel and explain that this is a competition with other groups. They are to see how many times they can lift the barrel in one minute by pulling on the rope (stress lift the barrel.) Tell them that you will give them 30 seconds to talk about it and determine the best way to do it and then 60 seconds to do it.

Have someone else time them and a third person count the lifts. You will be too busy watching for safety.

After 60 seconds have them come back to the barrel and ask them if there is a better way to do it. (Take the rocks out!)

If they say the rocks should be removed, either let them or tell them you still want to see how well they do with the rocks left in.

Safety Precautions: Tell them not to let go of the rope because the barrel will come down too fast and break, someone could get rope burns or the last one holding on will be pulled into the side of the barrel.

If they decide to have one or two grab the barrel and lift it as the others pull the rope, have them jump back as the barrel comes down.
If they want the rocks out, lay the barrel down and roll them out. Don’t let them try to lift them out of the barrel.

Watch for someone falling down and getting trampled.

Watch for someone being so close that they are pulled off the ground as the barrel comes down.

Variations: Have them try to determine the best positioning for the group. Those too far back are working against the group as they go up the hill toward the Nitro Pit. Likewise, the rope should be in a straight line to the pulley or else they are pulling against each other. Also, if they pull with their arms as well as run back and forth they won’t have to run as far.

III. TRUST ACTIVITIES

WILD WOOSEY

Purpose: To build trust and confidence

Objective: For two persons to walk on the wire from the narrow end toward the wide end while supporting each other. (Join hands facing each other.)

Procedure: Two persons about the same size each step on one of the wire cables close to the narrow end. They face each other, clasp hands and see how far they can move toward the wide end of the element.

Three spotters are used — one behind each participant and one moving along between each participant. The spotter in the center bends over and places hands on her knees. Participants can steady themselves on spotters’ back if necessary.

Safety Precautions: Be sure to match up participants by size.

Clasp hands but not fingers. (If they fall while their fingers are interlocked, they may pull another person down or break their fingers.)

HICKORY JUMP

Purpose: To build trust, group interaction and confidence

Objective: To catch the bar jumping from the first stump then progressing back to the last stump.

Procedure: Individual jumps from closest stump and attempts to catch and hold onto bar.

Entire group serves as spotters forming the ‘trust fall’ catch line facing each other with hands together.

Individual has option to move to next stump back and repeat activity.

Spotters move back appropriately as participant moves back. (Make sure to protect participant from unused stumps.)

An instructor or other member of the group stands at the end of the spotter line to make sure the line is straight and alert.

Before jumping, participant must yell “ready” and hear a loud “ready” response from the spotters.

Safety Precautions: Instructor must determine where most of the weight will fall and insure the spotters are aligned to adequately catch participant.

Spotters must never take their eyes off participant, nor relax their position until participants feet are solidly on the ground.

It is common for participants to momentarily catch the bar, swing forward, then loose grip and fall. Spotters must be alert to this.

TENSION TRAVERSE

Purpose: To build trust and confidence

Objective: To walk the triangular cables starting in any direction with the aid of one support rope.

Procedure: Have participant start at the pole (tree) where the support rope is attached.

Proceed in any direction around the entire triangle.
Use four spotters — two on the inside and two on the outside.

Safety Precautions: Participants will continue to hang on to rope when falling — thus pulling their upper body back toward rope source. Spotters must be prepared to protect the upper body in the fall.

Do not allow participants to bounce on cables.

Do not allow participants to wrap the rope around themselves. (Belay position is okay.)

Variation: Have two people walk the traverse from opposite directions at the same time.

IV. TOTAL COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

FIDGET LADDER

Purpose: To improve balance, coordination and self-confidence

Objective: Participants, one at a time, position themselves on the ladder at the lower end. Spotters hold the ladder steady until the participant indicates they are ready to start climbing. Spotters should be located one on both sides of the ladder and one under the ladder at the upper end.

Safety Precautions: Participants must be told to hang onto the rungs of the ladder if they swing upside down. This will prevent their head and upper back from striking the ground.

Spotters must stand back far enough to avoid being hit by a ladder rung in the event the climber spins upside down.

BOSUN CHAIRS

Purpose: To improve coordination, balance and teamwork

Objective: To start at one end, stepping from chair to chair progressing through entire length of element.

Procedure: Participants, one at a time, proceed from one end of the element to the other, stepping from chair to chair.

Spotters help participants onto the first chair then step back. Participant must swing to reach each succeeding chair and make the transfer unassisted.

When the first chair is open another participant begins. Three or four individuals could be on the element at one time.

Safety Procedures: Spotters should be located at last chair to assist participants to the ground. Hold the 2 x 4 as the participant is jumping off, so it does not swing and hit someone else.

Spotters must carefully observe each person as they work through the course. Occasionally someone needs assistance in the middle of the course, as real arm strength is needed for holding onto the vertical support ropes. Letting go is often an involuntary consequence of fatigued arms.

Spotters need to stand far enough from the swinging chairs so they do not get hit in the upper body with a chair or a participant’s foot.

Variations: Divide the participants into two groups. Each group will try to complete the element before the other. The groups will start across the element at the same time, each group starting at opposite ends of the chairs. Participants will need to pass each other as they work across the element.
Resource Materials

Cowtails and Cobras, Karl Rohnke. Project Adventure, P.O. Box 100, Hamilton, MA 01936

Silver Bullets, Karl Rohnke. Project Adventure, P.O. Box 100, Hamilton, MA 01936


Play Fair, Matt Weinstein and Joel Goodman. Impact Publishers, P.O. Box 1094, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

To Risk

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.
To reach out for another is to risk involvement.
To expose feelings is to risk exposing our true selves.
To place your ideas, your dreams, before the crowd is to risk loss.
To love is to risk not being loved in return.
To live is to risk dying.
To hope is to risk despair.
To try at all is to risk failure.
But risk must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.
The person who risks nothing does nothing, has nothing, is nothing.
He may avoid suffering and sorrow, but he simply cannot learn change, feel, grow, love... live.
Chained by his attitudes, he is a slave, he has forfeited freedom.
Only a person who risks is free.

Hugh Prather