

## BROOKVILLE SKILLS/COMPETENCIES

Listed herein are skills and competencies naturalists should strive to master. The list, of course, is long and may seem overwhelming to the more recent staff members - don't panic! This is meant to be a guide for self-evaluation over time. Some skills are necessary to teach from the start and others to be added as basic skills and knowledge are mastered. In this way all of us can grow professionally according to individual goals decided upon in discussion with the site directors and fellow naturalists. Our knowledge is ever-expanding as we read, attend conferences, develop new programs, and reflect on our own experiences. So, of course, this document will evolve as well.

You will note that the Project Adventure section is rather more detailed than the others. We have incorporated standards recently developed by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT). These standards deal with the "hard" skills of challenge course facilitation - i.e., safety, the mechanics of presenting different activities. Currently, work is being done to develop standards for the "soft" skills of facilitation - i.e., processing skills and techniques. If you would like to add your input to that process, talk with Mary for more information (this is a great way to connect with the larger Adventure Education community - it's an international organization).

Please take some time to truly think through these skills as they pertain to your work with BOCES. When you meet with Bill or Mary or Carolann to set your goals for the season (or longer term), this will be used as a reference, so you might want to highlight the areas about which you need more information or experience. Especially give some thought to your experience with teaching what you consider to be difficult groups; we can discuss different techniques for reaching those students (or adults!) so that we can positively impact their lives. (It may seem overstated to say that - "their lives" - but don't underestimate the power that an outdoor experience can have on people; we don't often hear from folks once they leave us, but when we do, we hear great things).

## ELEMENTS:

### "Individual":

- Cable Bridge
- Wild Woosey
- Tension Traverse
- Heebie Jeebie
- Bucking Log
- Postman's Walk
- Multivine
- Log Cross

### Group:

- Swinging Rope  
with and w/o platforms
- Wall
- Dazed and Confused
- The Beam
- Mohawk Walk
- Islands
- Giant's Ring

## INITIATIVES (some can be done in field or element area, if appropriate):

- Blindfold Plank Walk
- Sherpa Walk
- Find A Tree
- Maze

- All Aboard
- Monster Feet
- Spider Web
- Horizontal Web

- Piranha (tarp)
- Hiker's Crossing
- Keyboard
- Knots
- Toxic Waste

- Willow in the Wind
- Paired Trust Falls
- Group Trust Falls
- Levitation

**NEW GAMES:** Facilitators should have knowledge of as many games as possible for both their individual groups and combined groups.

## OUTDOOR COOKING

- setup/cleanup
- firebuilding and maintaining
- history
- procedures (including recipes)
- safety and logistics
- storytelling or other activities while food is cooking

## WEAVING AND ROPEMAKING

- setup/cleanup
- history
- procedures
- skills: carding, spinning, loom, belt looms, cordage, rope  
machine use, whipping

## WINTER PROGRAMS

### TRACKS AND TRACES

- \_\_\_ setup/cleanup
- \_\_\_ knowledge (reading/interpreting tracks - direction, speed.;  
scat ID, chews, homes. . . )
- \_\_\_ activities (replitracks, plaster casts)

### WINTER EXPLORERS

- \_\_\_ setup/cleanup
- \_\_\_ knowledge (plant and animal adaptations, eggs, galls homes,  
food, snowflake ID, leafless tree ID, insects, etc.)
- \_\_\_ activities

## RELATED SKILLS

### RISK MANAGEMENT

- knowledge of site specific policies and procedures
- knowledge of appropriate medical information of participants
- ability to locate and complete incident reports and procedures
- ability to manage participant behavior to minimize risks
- knowledge of site specific emergency action plan/first aid procedures

### GROUP MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- ability to assess abilities, knowledge, and goals of group
- ability to adapt program to meet abilities, knowledge, goals
- ability to channel/re-direct off-task behavior in a positive manner
- knowledge of/ability to implement a variety of methods to refocus individuals and/or group to task/goals of program

### PAPERWORK/TEACHER CONTACT

#### Beginning of program:

- know schedule, prepared to teach program (knowledge of group characteristics, etc.)
- greet bus/group
- consult with teacher on: specific goals for day  
particular knowledge of individuals in group  
(e.g., medical restrictions, disabilities, etc.)

#### During program:

- communication with teacher to assess satisfaction with meeting expectations
- communication with site administrator if support/feedback is needed

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER AS A CHALLENGE COURSE FACILITATOR

1. What factors influence good facilitation?
2. What differentiates between a "good" group vs. a "bad" group?
3. What role does peer pressure play in a challenge course experience?
4. What role does resistance play in a challenge course experience?
5. Are you willing/able to scrap your plan to meet the needs of participants?
6. What would a "hostage" (a participant who hasn't really chosen to be there) look like?
7. In what ways are participants subtly coopted into "hostage-style" participation even in an environment of Challenge By Choice?
8. How do you evolve from the mechanics of facilitation (knowledge of elements, safety, etc.) to the art of facilitation (sense of group needs, ability to choose activities that build on that particular group's or individual's skills, e.g.)?
9. When should one choose NOT to facilitate?
10. Are we really meeting people where they are?
11. Am I prepared to meet people where they are?
12. When we "encourage" people to go outside their comfort zones, is it "benevolent manipulation" or coercion?
13. What is facilitation?