Principles for camp based outdoor education

Peter Baker (Ed.)
Nedlands College of Advanced Education
Edith Cowan University

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Principles For
Camp Based
Outdoor Education
PRINCIPLES OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

NÉDLANDS COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION
JUNE, 1981
The following "Principles of Outdoor Education" publication is a first attempt at relating theory to practice from the Bachelor of Education unit titled Principles of Outdoor Education: PEH4403.

The students listed below have discussed and evolved the outdoor principles and in turn put most of them into practice through a one-week wilderness camp experience.

Each section listed has stated principles that in turn are supported by facts so as to give a definite guide and understanding to you the reader.

Student contributions are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme and Staff</th>
<th>Safety, Health and Food</th>
<th>Equipment and Clothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jim Bell</td>
<td>Tim Gepp</td>
<td>Brian Chadwick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Cullen</td>
<td>Stuart Langdon</td>
<td>Graham Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline O'Mara</td>
<td>Wayne Morrow</td>
<td>Jeff Ronan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Rickers</td>
<td>Paul Schlawe</td>
<td>Fiona Smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonie Wilkinson</td>
<td>Cam Tinley</td>
<td>Linda Simms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is hoped that this will act as an initial guide for teachers and camp-based outdoor education at the secondary school level.

Editors:

Peter Baker
Lecturer
Department of Recreation Studies
Nedlands College of Advanced Education

Jenny Wealand
Lecturer
Department of Physical Education and Health Studies
Nedlands College of Advanced Education

June, 1981
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<td>Programme Principles</td>
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<td>Appendix 1</td>
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</table>
The programme should:

1. **Have definite aims and objectives.**
   - It is essential to have a clear picture of what you are trying to accomplish. This will help the teacher in his/her justification to the principal, parents and students. This will also allow for evaluation to be intrinsic within your objectives.

2. **be planned day by day.**
   - This will allow a detailed outline of the activities to be undertaken and adds continuity and purpose to the programme. This should be decided well in advance of the camp.

3. **be flexible**
   - Although activities should be pre-planned they should allow room for flexibility and alternatives such as for wet weather or hot weather need to be pre-planned so that activities are suitable at all times.

4. **be challenging and creative**
   - The students should be given the opportunity to develop ideas for themselves. Therefore, creating a learning environment and one in which students can develop leadership qualities.
The programme should:

5. involve the students in previously learned activities

Students should be given the chance to experience those activities learned at school in preparation for the camp. This means that the programme prior to the camp must cover a practical and comprehensive range of subjects such as camp cooking, striking and pitching tents, building fires, packing rucksacks and adjusting rucksacks to suit the individual, etc. etc.

6. cover emergency procedures

A basic but comprehensive knowledge of first-aid procedures must be covered prior to any camp. These should be considered well in advance and the students must be well versed in them so that they could cope with any situation that may arise.

7. allow for maximum student participation throughout

Students should be involved in the total experience both prior to the camp, during the camp and in post camp activities.

8. develop social relations and cooperation

Most camp activities such as fire building and food preparation should develop a cooperative attitude. Other activities such as camp fire antics should foster social relations.
Camp Based Principles of Outdoor Education.

The programme should:

9. Consider all aspects relevant to the camp:
   - When designing the activities for the camp, variables such as climate, age, ability (of staff and students), environment and safety should be given due consideration.

10. Be relevant to the total curriculum:
    - It should complement other aspects of the students curriculum and should reflect the overall aims and principles of the Education Department and the individual school.

11. Utilize all available resources:
    - For a maximal "experience" to occur, provision should be made to utilize other resources and agencies both within and outside the school in regard to staff, eg. YEO

12. Be designed to cater for the needs of the students
    - The programme should provide the opportunity to experience activities not readily available to the students and activities in which they show genuine interest.

13. Contain varied teaching/learning strategies:
    - Use of the media can be made in the pre and the post camp sessions on practical topics, other relevant strategies should be used to maximize the learning opportunities. Free time is a less structured strategy that can be employed as an important learning environment especially while on camp.
The programme should:

14. be of a length that is conducive to sufficient learning opportunities:

Unit length should be flexible as it is heavily dependent on the nature of the unit and how much is involved and how much detail is to be covered.

15. have a varied and comprehensive programme prepared:

Alternative wet and hot weather activities, environmental studies, night activities and other interesting activities. The programme can also include staff from other faculties, e.g. geography and science. Also other experienced members of the community such as National Park Rangers, naturalists.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There should be: -</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A safe staff-student ratio:</td>
<td>unnecessary inconvenience or time wasting. The staff can also take photos or slides of the area to show to the students before they leave for the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This should be according to Education Department regulations. ie. a maximum of 1:12. Where there is an increase in any risk factor the ratio should be 1:7 or 1:8.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Staff with adequate experience:</td>
<td>In a co-ed group of students both male and female teachers must accompany the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers should have undertaken an outdoor education course previously and should have attended at least one camp and helped in a camps administration.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. A study made previously by the staff of the intended area of camping:</td>
<td>Staff should evaluate their personal fitness level and if necessary undertake an appropriate fitness programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A detailed study of the area is essential prior to the camp to ensure the safety of the students and to avoid</td>
<td>Such as either jogging, cycling, swimming or even weights. It is suggested also that the pack should be worn and walked with to get used to it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There should be:

7. A planned emergency procedure:
   - Communication with the closest medical service and emergency contacts should be made prior to the camp.
   - A set procedure should be drawn up for all students to follow in case of emergency. Contacts should be left with parents/relations in case of an emergency at home and students need to be contacted.

8. An atmosphere created where staff can develop social relations, cooperation and empathy with students:
   - During the expedition staff should endeavour to mingle and work alongside students and share responsibilities such as cooking and fire building.

9. A well co-ordinated programme:
   - Staff must consider well in advance other school activities that may clash with their plans, other staff and school administration and try to harmonize their plans with other staff and the administration.

10. Staff who possess an adequate knowledge of first-aid:
    - Staff should consider all possible emergency situations and be prepared for any first-aid practices that may need to be administered. It may be a definite idea to conduct a short 2 hour workshop in first-aid in order to brush up techniques, etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There should be:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>11. An awareness of individual differences:</strong></td>
<td>alone. They should at least be in pairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff must be aware of individual differences which</td>
<td>14. Approval from relevant people:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would affect the running of a camp such as slow/fast</td>
<td>The Education Department, school principal, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walkers, individual &quot;phobias&quot;, and medical backgrounds</td>
<td>teachers, and parents should be informed of the camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of participants.</td>
<td>and approval given from all sources. A letter should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>be sent home to parents explaining all details and be</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>returned, signed, to the teacher involved.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12. Adequate supervision of students:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff should be aware of the implications of supervision</td>
<td>15. Opportunity for staff to obtain experience:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| on an expedition and realize the necessity for some | Experienced staff should be willing and indeed encour-
| freedom and yet see the need for some guidance. | age, inexperienced staff to accompany him/her on an |
|  | expedition and help them to develop the many skills |
| **13. An awareness of the location of students at all times:** | necessary to organize and carry out a successful camp. |
| Staff must ensure that they know where all students are |  |
| at all times and should not allow students to wander |  |
There should be:

1. A basic knowledge of first aid and resuscitation in preparation for accidents.
   - if first aid knowledge is not adequate a concise book in this area should be taken along e.g. The St John's First aid Manual.
   - A first aid kit should be light portable and contain a minimum of essential equipment. (see end of 'Safety Principles' for detailed list).

2. Precautions taken to minimize the likelihood of an individual getting lost in the wilderness.
   - authorities should be contacted such as police and park rangers to inform them of your presence in the bush environment or park.

   - the group should be kept together as much as possible.
   - inform the participants parents of exactly where you are going, how you can be contacted and when the group is coming home. (See appendix 1 for thorough detail).
   - a compass and map should be taken to eliminate the chances of getting lost.
   - always be sure of exactly where you are going and set a time to reach your destination.
   - work in pairs and when walking use existing bush trails do not make up your own.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There should be: -</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. A campsite located in the most practical position possible.</strong></td>
<td>- the group should progress at a steady pace catering for the slowest member of the group, so that no-one is lost or tires unnecessarily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The site should not flood in heavy rain. The area should be suitably covered eg. shelter from wind especially and rain. The camp fires should not be too large and should be set in practical areas e.g. away from tents and other tinder material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. No student with a fitness level such that the group's normal progress is hampered.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a basic fitness level should be attained by all students before starting on the trip.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. A thorough pre test of the area before any thought of going on a camp.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All fires must be extinguished and covered up after the site has been vacated.</td>
<td>The teacher in charge of the camp should go and thoroughly check out the entire area. He should locate water and areas for campsites. The dangerous aspects such as presence of poisonous snakes or animals should be researched.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There should be:

**FIRST AID LIST**

- Bic lighter
- tweezers, razor and needle
- film container or eyewash
- burn cream
- non stick bandage
- butterfly and normal bandaids
- Lomotol
- headache tablets
- antiseptic cream
- insect repellant (lotion)
- compression bandage
- dental floss
- laxatives
- gauze.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>HEALTH</th>
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</table>

**There should be:**

1. **Toiletries**
   - With which one's personal cleanliness is maintained:
     - toothbrush
     - cotton buds for eyes and ears
     - small shovel to bury personal excreta.

2. **Awareness of Environmental Health**
   - Don't try to burn or bury metal substances, instead, crush and carry them out.
   - Carry out any rubbish left from any previous camps.

3. **Fitness**
   - appropriate for hiking and climbing - fitness preparation should be specific to that eg. cycling, running, weights to build up shoulders and back

4. **Equipment**
   - Prior consideration given to the need for equipment which will provide protection from the elements:
     - Sun: hat, sun glasses, burn cream, insect roll-on
     - Rain: warm clothing, (woollen socks, long loose-fitting pants, beanie, jumper, wet weather gear: raincoat and pants).
There should be:

5. **Respect for Natural Environment**
   - stay on tracks, roads, switch back
   - don't break live foliage for fires.
   - pollute water with wastes.

6. **Caution With Food From The Outdoors**
   - Don't eat foods not identified
   - If unsure of the drinking water then boil it first and/or use sterilizing pills.

7. **Personal Health Practices**
   - Don't wash (body and teeth) in drinking supply (swallow toothpaste)
   - Have a change of underclothes
   - Bury excreta
   - Maintain a standard of cleanliness of self and eating

8. **Awareness of Illness or Handicaps**
   - Prior consideration called for in these cases:
   - if any allergies, then the leader is informed and appropriate tablets are taken. e.g. asthma.
### Camp Based Principles of Outdoor Education

**Category:** FOOD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There should be: -</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> A realization that the food supply of any camping situation is governed by the length of time of the said camp and the environment in which the camp is to be held. (a) Food supply may be adjusted by the ability to obtain food from the environment. This may be through methods such as strapping or fishing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> Consideration of the weather as it will play a large role in decisions about what to take on the expedition experience. (a) If cold weather is likely during the period of the camp food to provide warmth is essential ie. soups, warm meals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Lightweight and portability of foodstuffs which is most important in a backpacking expedition. (a) Dehydrated and freeze dried meals may be utilized because of their reduced volume and weight ie. Vesta Meals Alliance.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>b)</strong> Weight may be reduced by the removal of excess packaging ie. cardboard covers and plastic covers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c)</strong> High energy foods like chocolate and food bars provide an energy base upon which the body can draw.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>d)</strong> Roughage should be included in the diet in the form of nuts and dry biscuits.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b)</strong> Conversely, in warm weather food should be able to replenish water loss. This could be done by food such as tomatoes, cucumber and fruits such as oranges.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There should be:

5. A realization that the food supply be supplemented by an excess to that required for the set time period. This should not be touched and kept for emergency situations. The amount of food should be governed by area of the expedition, i.e., how far from assistance will the group be?
### Camp Based Principles of Outdoor Education

**Category**: EQUIPMENT

**There should be:**

1. For each person a rucksack to carry equipment and clothing in:
   - **(i)** Metal frame
   - **(ii)** H frame shape
   - **(iii)** Nylon (heavy duty)
   - **(iv)** Deep throated and multi-pocketed
   - **(v)** Additional day pack of lightweight nylon if hiking from base camp.

2. A map and compass per person carried in a readily accessible position.
   - **(i)** All maps should be plasticised
   - **(ii)** Maps and compass should be carried at all times
   - **(iii)** Maps should be large - scale: 2cm = 1km is

3. A tent which is constructed in accordance with the environment in which it is to be used. It should offer protection and shelter from the elements.
   - exo-skeleton does not require ground pegs and used in snow type conditions/sandy soils.
   - semi-exo-skeleton-requires ground pegs and is used in areas where ground pegs will hold.
   - "A" frame with "I" pole and external ropes. More spacious.
There should be: -

- Should include a fly made of waterproof material. Avoid tent/fly contact.
- Tent should be fire resistant.

5. Cooking utensils made of a lightweight metal and have a flexible use (for example the lid of a pot can be a frying pan).

(a) Each student group should have a set of 2 pots with handle accessories.

4. A Sleeping bag made of a down or synthetic material.

(a) Each student should carry one sleeping bag - and protect when carrying.
(b) Each group of students should have one billy with a handle.
(c) Aluminium is considered the best lightweight metal.

(b) The sleeping bag should be of a size that allows freedom of movement.

(c) Best synthetic material: fibrefill II

6. Eating utensils made of a lightweight metal that are flexible in their uses (for example spoon can be used as a spatula).

(a) Each student should have a set of 3 eating utensils those being a knife, a fork and a spoon.
### Camp Based Principles of Outdoor Education. Category: EQUIPMENT

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<th>There should be: -</th>
<th>9. Sufficient personal toiletries to extend the length of the camp only.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(b) Best if knife has a serrated edge for cutting.</td>
<td>(i) Soap, towel, brush, toothbrush, tooth paste, toilet paper and garden trowel are the basic necessities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Large spoon best.</td>
<td>(ii) Optional items may include foot powder and hammocks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. A strong and versatile pocketknife which is useful for a multitude of uses.
- Collapsible with a locking device for safety.
- Usable for eating, carving or cutting.

8. For each pair in the group, a stove suitable for cooking needs in case of inclement weather conditions:
- 1. Small container - anodized aluminium
- (ii) solid fuel (meta tabs) - 1-2 litres
- (iii) kerosene, metholated or white spirits. - suitable for hiking
There should be:

- Base camp water.
- A first aid kit which should cater for any occurrence which could be expected taking into account the environment in which it is to be used. Compactness is a key factor. Refer to safety principles.
- A trowel to be used to bury excreta. Also (if necessary) to dig shallow and hip holes for sleeping and to dig trenches to drain water from tent site.
- Construction materials carried that are compact, of light material which could be adapted to cater for emergency situations, repairs and to aid in the construction of camp craft items.

- A 1 metre length of rope - possibly Venetian blind cord.
- A length of use wire
- Dental floss, in a container
- 1 folder coat hanger
- Roll of electricians tape.

- Some type of portable light that is both compact and of a waterproof nature.
- Small torch, A type batteries
- 2 extra batteries.
There should be: -

15. Carried by each person a type of match that is waterproof and will last for some time if the need arises:

   (i) Candle: extended match for fire lighting

   (ii) Disposable lighter, either BIC or Cricket brands.
There should be:

1. **Protective, durable, comfortable and adaptable clothing:**
   - It should insulate from the cold, wet, sunburn, insects, rock and bush.
   - **1 x pair** corduroy trousers
   - **2 x** woolen jumpers with V-neck
   - **1 x pair** cotton shorts
   - **1 x** short sleeved cotton shirt
   - **1 x** long sleeved flannelette shirt
   - **2 x pairs** cotton loose socks
   - **2 x pairs** thick woolen socks
   - cotton underwear
   - balaclava
   - hat with wide brim
   - comfortable warm sleeping gear, eg tracksuit.

NOTE: For extreme wet weather carry a full length plastic spray jacket or golf umbrella.

**Fabrics:**
- **cotton** - OK
- **wool** - excellent
- **Gore-tex** - ultimate.

2. **Sturdy and flexible shoes offering support and protection for feet and ankles.** The environment in which the shoes are to be used will determine the style to be chosen:
   - o there should be no sideways flex in the shoe
   - o sole should be stiff enough to protect feet, but still allow flexibility
   - o hard, heavy duty if required for mountain climbing
   - o lightweight flexible shoes for bushwalking
   - o leather construction
   - o spare pair of light shoes for use in camp area (optional)
   - o thongs are not desirable.
EMERGENCY CONTACTS FOR WILDERNESS CAMP

SUNDAY 5.4.81 TO THURSDAY LUNCHTIME 9.4.81

Contact National Park Rangers at Walpole
(a) Lionel Gunson 098 401026
or
(b) Ron Shimmon 098 401066

THURSDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING 9.4.81 TO FRIDAY MORNING 10.4.81

Contact Youth Hostel Warden at Pemberton
(a) Martin Luscher 097 761153

FRIDAY 10.4.81 LUNCHTIME CONTACT NEDLANDS COLLEGE

(a) Reception 3865555
(b) Peter Baker 3865555 extension 285.

TEAR HERE AND KEEP

EMERGENCY

If a relative or family member becomes seriously ill then to contact you, rangers will come in to inform you. Also, if you are seriously injured then a team of us will stay with you, another team will:

(a) drive to Tinglewood Lodge, near the bus
(b) phone Rangers 401026 or 401066.

They will contact the Silver Chain Service and doctors at Denmark.