



## Backpacking and Hiking

# GEARING UP!

Activity Plan – Hiking Series

ACTpa013

### Project Skills:

- Identify and select equipment for healthy and safe hiking

### Life Skills:

- Decision making

### Academic Standards:

- Physical Education: F.8.3 Make choices based on the safety of self and others.

**Grade Levels:** 4-7

**Time:** 45-60 minutes

### Supplies Needed:

- Outdoor hiking gear (2 sets)
- Paper
- Pencils
- Backpack
- Fanny pack (day pack)
- Situation cards
  - Started to rain
  - Lost my way
  - Cut my finger
  - Separated from group
  - I'm thirsty
- “Backpack Gear Insurance Policy” handout
- Evaluation

### Do Ahead:

- Purchase or borrow the necessary equipment. Common hiking gear items are: bandana, binoculars, camera, cell phone, clothes (extra), cooking gear, duct tape, first aid kit, flashlight and batteries, food, map and compass, matches and fire starter, mirror, pocket knife, rain gear, rope, sun protection, toilet paper, trowel, water, and whistle. You might also choose items

### BACKGROUND

Proper gear is important for a successful hiking trip. The length of a trip will have a bearing on the size or type of pack you use and your choice of gear. Backpacks are used for long day or overnight hikes. Fanny packs, or day packs, are used for shorter hikes. Choosing supplies and equipment to fit your trip can save lives. Packing your gear in a logical manner can save precious time if you need to reach supplies in an emergency.

### WHAT TO DO

#### Activity: Choices of Gear

Divide the gear that you have gathered into two sets.

Break the group into smaller teams. Have each team figure out how they would sort the gear into each of the packs (backpack and fanny pack) according to what is 1) Essential, 2) Helpful, or 3) Not needed. Each team should come to a consensus on the three categories. Then each team is to report to the entire group and be ready to discuss or defend their choices.



### TALK IT OVER

#### Reflect:

- How did you decide which items to pack? What was essential, helpful, or not needed?
- Are there other items you might choose for your packs?
- How could your decisions impact the success of a day hike?

#### Apply:

- If you were going on an overnight hiking trip, how would your selection of gear change?
- Name some other situations where it is important to make the “right” choices or decisions? Explain.

#### Activity: Packing Your Gear

Discuss the two different types of packs. Show how they are worn. Demonstrate how to pack items so it is easy to reach what you need when you need it. Divide the group into two smaller teams. Have each group practice packing gear into one of the packs.

Once their packs are ready, have each team select a “Situation Card.” They should note and report back to the group how quickly and efficiently they got to the items needed to deal with their situation. Have the group discuss how they might pack items differently next time to better deal with the situation. Have the teams select other statements and deal with all the situations, if time allows.

Next, hand out and discuss the “Backpack Gear Insurance Policy.” This lists and describes the items that hikers and backpackers can use to make a handy “survival kit.” If there is time and you have the items, have the group create a survival kit.

from the handout, “Backpack Gear Insurance Policy,” which focuses on items to make a “survival kit.”

- Label the equipment.
- Sort gear into two similar piles. Practice packing equipment into the two types of packs (backpack and fanny pack) so you have an idea where things should go.
- Make the situation cards

**Sources:**

- Created by Lucinda Laporte, former 4-H Youth Development Agent, UW-Extension, Rusk County.
- Adapted from *Hiking Trails*, BU-08043, National 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System; *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Camping and Hiking* by Michael Moulard; and *101 Essential Tips for Hiking* by Hugh McManners.
- “Backpack Gear Insurance Policy” developed by James Winkler, 4-H Youth Development Agent, UW-Extension, Oneida County.

Finally, discuss the “Rules of Three,” which describe how long a person can survive without an essential element:

- Three minutes without air
- Three hours without shelter
- Three weeks without food
- Three months without love

**TALK IT OVER**

**Reflect:**

- What items did you first choose for your packs to take on a day hiking trip? Did you make any changes? Why?
- How did you make your decisions about where items should go in your packs?
- Why were your choices of the pack, the gear, and the placement of gear in the pack important?

**Apply:**

- What could happen if you didn’t have the right pack and gear for a trip?
- What can happen if you’re not prepared for other situations?

**ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**

**Enhance for Older Children:**

- Have youth develop a list of equipment needed for an overnight hike.
- Demonstrate how tents or other shelters can keep participants warm and safe on a hike.

**Simplify for Younger Children:**

- Limit your hikes to short day trips with a limited amount of gear.
- Use a water bottle and a few items in a small fanny pack to demonstrate what is most essential to our survival.

**ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS**

- American Hiking Society, [www.americanhiking.org/](http://www.americanhiking.org/): Since its founding in 1976, the society has been the national voice for hikers – fighting to protect and preserve footpaths, preserve the natural areas that surround them, and promote hiking itself. Check out information on a wide range of hiking activities, including National Trails Day held in early June each year.
- National 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System Outdoor Adventures project, <http://www.4hccsprojects.com/outdoor/>: Fun activities for youth and leaders.

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## Backpack Gear Insurance Policy

For just a few dollars, you can build a survival kit that will get you out of all kinds of trouble. Fold everything neatly, pack efficiently, and the whole 3-pound, 14-ounce kit and caboodle will fit inside a standard fanny pack. The survival kit is intended to supplement the regular contents of a hiker's pack. It should be worn at all times and separate from the backpack. Don't leave camp without it! Here's what you'll need:

- One each of gallon- and quart-size zip-lock bags for collecting, distilling, or holding water. The bags should have wide mouths so you can skim for water and reach into crevices.
- Tincture of iodine to disinfect water. Use five drops per quart.
- Plastic drinking tube (3 feet long) for drinking from crevices or hard to reach places.
- Orange flagging tape to mark your route or write a message.
- Dental floss (100 feet). It's a tough string with many uses.
- Duct tape (3 feet). Get the strongest variety available.
- Mini flashlight with an extra bulb.
- Extra flashlight batteries with date marked. Replace the batteries every 12 months.
- Magnesium block with striking insert. Carry a minimum of three as a means of starting a fire.
- Cigarette lighter. Get a bright color so there is less chance that you'll lose it.
- Strike-anywhere matches dipped in paraffin.
- Firestarters. Cotton balls saturated with petroleum jelly and stuffed in a film container pack the smallest, but you can also use chips or other dry, fatty foods or even dryer lint coated with paraffin.
- Magnifying glass for signaling and fire starting.
- Glass signal mirror with sighting hole and a whistle.
- Light space blanket for shelter and signaling.
- Heavy-duty space blanket with grommets and a reflective side for shelter and signaling.
- Three heavy-duty, plastic leaf bags. Use as rain suits, shelter, tube tent, tarp, or rainwater collector.
- Military parachute cord (50 feet), 550-pound test.
- Extra knife. It should be an all-purpose knife with a fixed, double-edged, carbon-steel blade that can throw a spark.
- Brightly colored bandanna, which can double as a pot holder, hat, or water filter.
- Basic first-aid kit with wound dressing, moleskin, antibiotic ointment, and other items.
- Topographic map and compass.

Other items for hiking:

- Dried fruit or nuts for snacking.
- Water bottle filled with water. This is an *essential* item!

## Evaluation: Gearing Up

Please circle the number that shows your level of understanding or learning in this session.

	<u>A little</u>		<u>Some</u>		<u>A lot</u>
1. I knew "this much" about choosing gear for a hike:					
Before this lesson:	1	2	3	4	5
After this lesson:	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel I know how to decide where to pack items for easy use:	1	2	3	4	5

Final comments: