



Camp Roger

Outdoor Education Curriculum Catalog

Camp Roger's outdoor education program creates enjoyable, educational experiences for over 11,000 students per year. Listed below are just a few of the enriching activities that we have led in the past. Please know, however, that we are always excited to work with teachers, administrators, and youth leaders to create unique, meaningful experiences for students. What are your values? What are your goals? How can we help you reach those goals outdoors at Camp Roger?

Contact Us

We would love to hear your ideas and thoughts. Contact Jason Hoeksema, Director of Outdoor Education, at jason@camproger.org or call the office at 616-874-7286.

Exploring and Discovering

Animals and Their Habitats

All creatures—including human beings—need healthy habitats in which to survive, grow, and thrive. What are the necessary ingredients of a healthy habitat for woodland animals? We will contrast how man can drastically alter his environment to fit his needs with how the animals adjust to this change. This activity includes some tracking and simulation games. *Vocabulary Used: habitats, camouflage, predators, prey, omnivore, herbivore, carnivore producers, consumers*

Birds

Are you a birdbrain? You could be! This introduction to the world of birds and birding will be valuable for your students. Appreciate the creative adaptations birds have and understand more about the variety of species that Michigan has. The students will also have opportunity to identify some birds at the feeders or on a hike. *Vocabulary Used: ornithology, species, raptor, songbird, migration*



Earth: What Is It REALLY Made Of?

We know that peanut butter and jelly make a fine sandwich, but what is the earth really made of? This option explores how the forces of nature (wind, water, time) change the earth. We will also take a semi-scientific look at the layers of the earth. The geology of the greater Camp Roger area will also be discussed. *Vocabulary Used: geology, bedrock, glacier, moraine, kettles, loam, sand, magma*

Insects

Over one million different species of insects have been discovered—more than twice the total of all other kinds of animals combined! This class looks at what makes an insect...an insect. We include a brief introduction to the world of insect classification and then explore the amazing adaptations God has allowed insects to have. *Vocabulary Used: life cycles, nymphs, larva, pupa, head, thorax, abdomen, cocoon, chrysalis*

Invasive Species

“We are being invaded!” While this warning may apply to science-fiction movies, it also applies to the natural world. The invaders are the non-native species of plants and animals that are now taking up residence in the Michigan woods and waterways. Learn the species, discover the dangers, and explore the solutions to this ongoing and lethal problem. *Vocabulary Used: native vs. non-native species, alien, invasive, and exotic species*

Little Bostwick Lake Expedition For Little People

Take a leisurely tour all the way around an entire lake! This journey is designed to help younger children appreciate the pond community of Camp Roger. We will visit “The Valley of the Giants,” learn about noise pollution, and view the lake from an elevated platform. We will cover the ½ mile loop in about an hour. *Vocabulary Used: distance, depth, spring-fed, kettle lake, glacial deposits*

Michigan: A Great State

We live in a fascinating state. This adventure option focuses on the statistics, history, and cultural identity that make Michigan such a unique component of our country. This is a great opportunity to support the facts that you may be learning in the classroom! *Vocabulary Used: Great Lakes, virgin timber, population, area, history, Native Americans, European influence, wolverine, robin, white pine, Petoskey stone*



Our Changing World

As we grow, we are constantly changing. Our clothes that fit last month are now too small. The haircut that looked good three weeks ago is getting a bit shaggy. But what about the natural world? It is always changing too. This workshop is designed for your younger students to think about change. Change always happens. Explore the world of change with us! *Vocabulary Used: adaptations, decomposing, renewable resources, non-renewable resources*

Plants: A Primary Introduction

What makes a plant...a plant? In a fun and creative way, we spend some time exploring how plants survive, the different functions of various parts of the plant, and what happens to the plant in the winter. *Vocabulary Used: seed, germination, embryo, water, soil, light, seed pod*

Reading the Woods

If reading the movement of animals was as easy as reading a book, we could all be experts in a few short lessons. But many variables enter into this “art” of tracking the movement and activity of the animals. Come and learn more as we offer this first course in “reading the woods.” *Vocabulary Used: habitats, talons, claws, migration, hooves, paws*

Seeing Is Believing

Because we are human beings living in the 21st century, we have learned to rely on one sense more than any of the others: the sense of sight. But many animals do not see particularly well. How are they able to survive in the woods? This special adventure puts the student into “sightless” situations and allows them the challenge of still sensing—in new ways—what is around them. *Vocabulary Used: sensory awareness, sensory deprivation, nocturnal, diurnal*

Trees

This adventure will look at man’s most important natural resource—trees. This class discusses such topics as: various species, the history of lumbering, measurement, forest management techniques, and future concerns. Stories and play-acting add to the lively class session. *Vocabulary Used: coniferous, deciduous, broadleaf, needles, hardwood, softwood, sap*



The Journey

We all love to explore. This trip is designed to explore some of the areas of Camp Roger and The Fred Meijer Pickerel Lake Nature Preserve that few people visit. One can never predict from day to day what might be seen: a flock of turkey, turtles hatching from a sandy shore, a beaver at work, beautiful swans, or a hunting owl. Learn as we journey, for often the journey is more important than the destination! *Vocabulary Used: Whatever we find!*

The Wetlands

According to an old farmer, wetlands are those areas that are "...too thick to drink and too thin to plow." We may call them swamps, bogs, marshes, fens, or some other term, but the focus of this time is to demonstrate how vitally important the wetlands are to the overall health of any ecosystem. We will learn about the importance of protecting these endangered areas.

Vocabulary Used: bog, fen, vernal pond, swamp, marsh, peat, decomposition

The Water Cycle

It rains...it evaporates...it rains again. But there is so much more to learn about the hydrological cycle than such a simple explanation. Take a new look at water conservation, erosion, run-off, and "thinking like water" in this activity. *Vocabulary Used: condensation, evaporation, conservation, run-off, flooding, drought*

Observing and Reflecting

Cemetery Study

A trip to the nearby Old Bostwick Cemetery will reveal some of the history of the people who lived in Cannon Township. Discover many interesting facts and nostalgia on this expedition. Many markers date back to pre-Civil War days. This is a great springboard into the world of history! *Vocabulary Used: Civil War, consumption, longevity, history, township, veteran*

Earth Keeping

What problems does man inflict upon the natural world because of his excess and his abuse? Pollution is obvious—and sometimes not so obvious. This adventure offers an overview of the types, the causes, the effects, and the possible solutions of the pollution problem. Several



experiments and practical suggestions for making a difference are offered during this presentation. *Vocabulary Used: litter, garbage, landfills, leachate, methane, acid rain, global warming*

Knowing the Creator

“The heavens declare the glory of God; / the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” Spending quiet time in creation invites us into a better understanding and love of both the creation and the Creator. Through silent walks, sit spots, spiritual journaling, and prayer, students will be offered a guided opportunity to meditate on God, his world, and his love. *Vocabulary Used: beauty, wonder, awe, mystery, Creator, creation, prayer, silence, solitude*

Worship

Who or what we worship forms us into the type of people we become. The heart of Christian worship involves seeking, knowing, and loving God. Students have been worshiping God in the unique setting of Camp Roger for over 100 years. Closing the day around a campfire in worship at Camp Roger reminds students who and whose they are.

Adventure and Unity

Archery

After a quick lesson in terminology and technique, the students will experience this once-important method of survival by shooting at targets for prizes. The presentation will include some description of how the Native Americans made their bows. The students will gain a greater appreciation for the skill needed to survive in Michigan’s pre-pioneer days. *Vocabulary Used: Native Americans, nock, compound, recurve, bowstring, fletchings, straddle*

Climbing Tower

The Climbing Tower features four climbing faces and six different climbing routes over a 30-foot-high tower. Using various rock holds the climber navigates up the tower while an instructor keeps them safe with a belay (safety) rope. Climbers have fun practicing goal setting, encouragement, and perseverance.



Cross Country Skiing

Come and ski the Michigan winter wonderland! We will spend time teaching about the various techniques, equipment and history of this Nordic sport. Then we will journey on skis into the woods of Camp Roger! *Vocabulary Used: Nordic, bindings, poling, skating, telemark*

High Ropes Course

Our High Ropes Course features challenge elements that are positioned 30 feet above the ground. Participants and groups choose to challenge themselves within the supportive and safe atmosphere.

Ice Fishing

Why would anyone wish to stand on a frozen lake, drill a hole, and wait for fish to bite? It is all about the challenge! Learn more about this pastime during our winter months by trying various methods of ice fishing and comparing it all to how one would fish during the non-winter months. Get ready for a fish dinner! *Vocabulary Used: bait, cut worms, tip-ups, auger, ice safety*

Ice Games

When the Little Bostwick Lake freezes over for the winter, most people head inside by a warm fire and wait until spring. But the lake can also provide a wonderful “playing field” for games and challenges that cannot happen without a surface of ice. Come try out some games that could not even be attempted when there is no ice! *Vocabulary Used: snow snakes, broomball, curling, turnover, ice safety*

Snowshoeing

Come and experience this ancient method of winter travel. The Native Americans, the voyageurs, and the early homesteaders found snowshoes to be more than just a sporting oddity. Today we can go for a walk in the woods and appreciate the importance of these tools of travel! *Vocabulary Used: transportation, Native American, trappers, bindings*

Team-Building Games

We will introduce a few simple team-building cooperative games that you can use and take back to school with you. These games are designed to challenge a group of people with a problem and allow them the joy—or the heartache—of solving it themselves. This is a great option for



building a sense of unity and cooperation among your students. *Vocabulary Used: community, cooperation, teamwork, trust, communication*

Team Challenge Course

The Team Challenge Course challenges participants to work together as a group to overcome obstacles using group cooperation, problem solving, and encouragement. Key objectives include enhanced communication skills, trust building and teamwork.

Zip Line

The Zip Line allows participants to climb to a small platform 30 feet above the ground and "zip" through the woods down a 300-foot-long cable for a thrilling ride. By stepping into the unknown, participants are challenged to overcome their fears.

Creating and Doing

Historical Simulation -- Lewis and Clark

We have nothing in our lives to compare with the adventure that faced Lewis and Clark during the years of 1803-1805. Tabbed by Thomas Jefferson to explore the recently acquired Louisiana Purchase and to find the Northwest Passage (which we now know was mythical), the Corps of Discovery Expedition knew nothing of the extent of their journey, the Native Americans they met, and the animals and plants they would encounter. What was it like to leave home and family for an undisclosed amount of time simply to trek through uncharted lands? This may be an opportunity to bring history alive for some for the very first time! *Vocabulary Used: pemmican, hardtack, musket, dysentery, Continental, Redcoats*

Historical Simulation -- Valley Forge

When George Washington brought his Continental army into Valley Forge for the winter of 1777-78, what was lifelike for the soldiers? How does an army of 12,000 fighting men survive during a winter of hunger, disease, and cold? In this simulation challenge, students will encounter some of these questions and in doing so will better understand what those heroes of long ago had to endure. We can forget the hardship of unnamed heroes in history – in doing so we can appreciate them so much more. *Vocabulary Used: pemmican, hardtack, musket, dysentery, Continental, Redcoats*



The Impact of Early Settlers

What was lifelike for those who first came to settle this part of western Michigan? This adventure calls for the students to become detectives in the woods as we look for clues about the impact on the land that people of prior generations have left behind. This is a fascinating look at “how to read the woods.” We can also make candles...the old-fashioned way! Imagining what life was like for those early people helps us to appreciate their courage and ingenuity even more! *Vocabulary Used: trapping, trading, farming, hunting, homesteaders, trappers, voyageurs*

Living off the Land

If a visit to the Holiday Inn is “roughing it” for you, this class will make you better able to live in the world of camping. We will encourage your students to learn more about the joy of living in the woods. Both the “city-slicker” and the “expert woodsman” will find helpful tips for enjoying a time in the woods. *Vocabulary Used: “leave no trace,” fire-building, lashing/frapping, campsite*

Map Skills and Orienteering

Where are we? How do we get from here to there? Explore how the early travelers used primitive tools to navigate through the wilderness. Learn how to read a compass and use a topographical map. Gain understanding and appreciation for those who traveled these woods many years ago with only these tools! *Vocabulary Used: direction, topographical maps, bearings, sightings, compass housing, degrees, magnetic north, true north, degree measurement*

Native Americans

Too often misunderstanding and false information cloud the truth of history. During this time, we will dispel some of the myths of what life was like for the Native Americans of this area. We will discuss and experiment with different aspects of tribal life. We will also play some games that Native American children played hundreds of years ago! *Vocabulary Used: Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, Anishinaabe, wigwams, scouts*

Nature Crafts

Nature is God’s masterpiece. But he has also given his children a sense of artistic ability and creativity. During this adventure we will “do art” using only natural materials and items found in the woods. Dare to be creative! *Vocabulary Used: creativity, imagination*



Outdoor Cooking and Edible Plants

Out in the woods with nothing to eat? A little knowledge can change all of that! This class explores the world of edible plants that are all around us. We will dine together on whatever we find that is edible! P.S. Bring your lunch anyway...just in case! *Vocabulary Used: edible, energy, toxic, nutrition*

Scavenger Hunts Spectacular

We all love to find treasure. We all love to add a measure of success to our group. Our different scavenger hunts guide children in doing what they want to do anyway: explore! We have different options on our scavenger hunt menu, including the "ABC's Search" and "The All-Natural Scavenger Hunt." Different scavenger hunts are available for different ages.

Survival Skills

Stories of survival abound in the world of children's literature. Popular authors such as Jean George and Gary Paulsen capture the imaginations of their readers with tales of survival against incredible natural odds. But what would it really take to survive in a Michigan woods? Come along and experiment with us as we survive the woods together! *Vocabulary Used: fire starters, preparedness, distress signals, hypothermia, dehydration*

Winter Survival Skills

Surviving in the Michigan woodlands is EASY compared to surviving in the Michigan woodlands in the winter! What would it take to survive in three feet of snow with temperatures hovering around the zero-degree mark and a thirty-mile-per-hour wind? Don't fear! We have some answers! Explore the possibilities with us! *Vocabulary Used: fire starters, preparedness, distress signals, hypothermia, dehydration, squirrel hut, snow cave, moisture, wind-chill factor*

