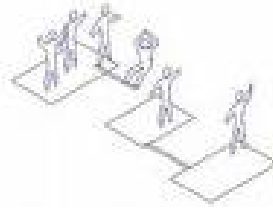


Low Ropes Course Activities



Alligator Crossing

Description:

The Alligator Crossing is a series of platforms set out approximately 8 feet apart that the group must cross using a 6 foot board. Each platform becomes progressively smaller. The object is to get the entire group from behind a line on the ground onto each successive platform until they crossed to a span of an imaginary river without touching the ground. The group must do this without the aid of any foreign objects (sticks, rope, etc) EXCEPT the one 6-foot board they are given. The group must create a strategy, assign roles, work as a team, and assess progress throughout the entire activity.

Sample Story Line:

Explain to the group that they are foreign correspondents in a far away land in the deepest part of the jungle. While doing a report on the local people, one of your group waved enthusiastically to a team of warriors, not knowing that the "wave" is a very insulting gesture. Unfortunately, you are now being chased for your lives through the jungle.

You've managed to slip the war party momentarily, and your run through the jungle has led you to the bank of a very deep, wide river. There is no way to jump across it and no way to swim across it, as the current is too strong and it is infested with alligators.

Fortunately for you, one of your members grew up in the 80's and remembers the game "Pitfall," where the hero safely crossed across river on the heads of alligators! And to think his parents said playing video games wouldn't pay off.

Explain to the group that they can only use the 6-foot board to cross the river. The goal is to cross the river, without anyone falling in (they would be eaten) or allowing the board to touch the water (it would be instantly swept away).

The group has about a 15-20 minute head start on the war party - time is ticking!

Some facilitation tips:

Set out a rope or stick that defines the banks of the "river."

The platforms should be 6" to 1' further apart than the length of the given board. You can give them the board on "dry land" or have it resting on top of the first alligator platform. If it is on the first platform, the edge of the river bank should be 2-3 feet away from the first platform.

Decide beforehand what the consequence will be for falling off of a board, such as returning to the beginning, or the previous platform. Be cautious in assigning too stiff of a penalty (the entire group must start over, etc).



Mohawk Walk

Description:

The Mohawk Walk is series of foot cables strung between trees or poles, typically in a zig zag pattern. The object is to get the entire group from the first tree to the last without touching the ground, and without the aid of foreign objects (sticks, rope, etc). The group must create a strategy, assign roles, work as a team, and assess progress throughout the entire activity.

Sample Story Line:

Explain to the group that they have been wrongfully detained in a high security prison in a far off land.

You've learned that the guard changes shift every night, and that for about 20 minutes, the walls at the top of the prison are unguarded. If the group is going to make a break for it, now is the time!

Explain to the group that the walls are very high, and if anyone falls off, they are sure to be captured. Also, explain to the group that the entire team must make it across. If anyone from the team is caught before the group escapes, the guards will quickly turn on all of the lights, seal off the escape entrance, and then it's back to jail.

Some facilitation tips:

Set out a rope or stick that defines the starting and ending points. Groups have a tendency to bunch up and get in the way at both ends.

You could have the group carry an object, such as a bucket or stuffed animal, from start to finish.

To make the activity easier for younger or less able groups, you can secure a hand rope between the trees or poles.

Be sure to have spotters on both sides of the participants, in each section. You can rotate the individual's roles once they get to a certain point.



Wild Wozy or Commitment Bridge

Descriptions:

The commitment bridge has two foot cables that form a "Y" between trees or poles.

The objective is work with a partner to try to go as far along the cables as possible without falling.

Sample Story Line:

Your group is returning from a long burro ride at the Grand Canyon. When they arrive to the bridge near their camp, they discover that the boards from the bridge have fallen. Fortunately, the original cable still remains.

The group must pair up with someone approximately the same height and weight as them and attempt to cross the span.

Some facilitation tips:

Be sure that that group has practiced spotting before attempting this activity.

Have group members spot the participants along the length of the cable.

Be sure that only properly trained staff supervises all ropes course activities!



Porthole

Description:

The Porthole is constructed by suspending a tire between poles or trees. The objective is to cross from one side of the porthole to the other without touching the porthole. The group must create a plan that takes participant physical ability and size to lift, pass, and spot participants in order to get them through.

Sample Story Line:

Explain to the group that they have been sent on an all expenses paid cruise because they have been communicating so well throughout the other activities. (Hopefully that is the case). However, the cruise ship that they are on was the cheapest one available, the SS Soup Strainer (insert your own goofy name). It hadn't been serviced in a very long time, and wouldn't you know it, the rough stormy weather has punched holes in the bottom the ship and it is sinking. The captain has just informed the group that there are enough life boats, but since your rooms are by the engines in the bottom of the ship, you must escape through the lone porthole in your room. The captain estimates that the ship will be completely submerged in 20 minutes. Explain to the group that only the inside of the tire (the porthole) are accessible. The ropes and cables that hold the tire up, as well as the outside edges of the tire are really there, and can't be used. Good Luck!

Some facilitation tips:

Be sure the group has practiced spotting and lifting, and that they are mature enough to safely do both. This activity requires lifting and must be taken seriously.

Avoid making too short of a time period to avoid rushing. If you make the time too urgent, groups begin to rush and become careless lifting and spotting.

Do not allow a run and dive for any participants! It is simply not safe and there are other methods. Ask participants to tuck their shirts in. When being passed through the tire, it is very easy for shirts to come un-tucked and pulled up. Be mindful of this while observing the group and discreetly hold onto the bottom of someone's shirt if it begins to rise.

The hardest people to get through are the first and last person. Make sure the group does not plan anything dangerous. A general rule of thumb is everyone's head must remain higher than their feet at all times. This is a very physical demanding element. Based on your observations of the group, it may not be appropriate based on the collective physical limitations of the group. There are so many universally adaptable activities out there, that we remind you to choose activities that set up for success the highest number of people.

Spider's Web - Low Ropes Course



Spider's Web

Description:

The Spider's Web is a popular ropes course element that is constructed between trees, or on portable or stand-alone structures. The objective is to cross from one side of the spider's web to the other without touching the web. The group must create a plan that takes participant physical ability and size to lift, pass, and spot participants in order to get them through.

Sample Story Line:

Explain to the group that they were exploring caves, looking for treasure, in a remote part of the world. (You'll notice a lot of "remote" locations in our activities). Fortunately, they were able to find the treasure in the last cave they were looking in. Unfortunately, a giant poisonous spider has spun a web across the entrance to the cave while they were inside. There are no other ways out of the cave. The group must help each other through the web without touching it, else that person would become stuck in the extremely sticky web. Really! Just brushing against a strand ever so slightly would cause someone to become stuck. Although very strong and sticky. The web is very sensitive. The vibrations from someone passing through a hole causes it to close, making it impossible to pass another full body through the hole. For some unknown reason, it is still large enough to put hands through. The entire group must get through, because each member of the team has a special piece of the map needed to get back to safety. You can't just give the map pieces to save the others, either, as it is tattooed on your body.

Some facilitation tips:

Be sure the group has practiced spotting and lifting, and that they are mature enough to safely do both. This activity requires lifting and must be taken seriously. Use clothes pins to mark holes that have been passed through. After the first few people go through, it's almost impossible to remember which holes are available to use. You can add a time restriction if you like. The spider will be back in 15 minutes, after all. Rope Variation: You can use this element by threading a rope through all of the holes without it ever touching the web. This variation is difficult in its own right, but is perfect for groups that you do not want to do lifting for any reason.



Tee Pee Shuffle

Description:

The Tee Pee Shuffle is simply a log or pole on the ground that groups can balance on. You can make one with more of a finished look by elevating the log. The objective is to have the group perform various tasks while balanced on the log.

Sample Tasks:

Build the challenges in increasing degrees of physical demand. Start with having the group get up on the log for a certain length of time.

Once balanced, have the group do "bobs" by collectively squatting up and down a certain number of times without falling off.

Have the group arrange themselves by shortest to tallest while balancing on the log.

Have the group arrange themselves by birth month, number of siblings, or age.

Some facilitation tips:

Be aware of the group's success rate. Remember that the process is important, not just the act of balancing. By progressively making the challenges harder, you can provide opportunities for success.

If the group is working as a team, but has reached their balancing limits, stop and debrief.



Whale Watch

Description:

The Whale Watch is a popular ropes course activity that is constructed by create a large platform with a see saw action, which imitates the rocking back and forth of a ship.

The objective is to have the group perform various functions on the platform without allowing the edges of the platform to touch the ground..

Sample Story Line:

Before you begin. Be sure that the whale watch is properly balanced, so no ends are touching. The group should be standing off to the side. Your group is the worthy crew of a commercial whale watch ship. As deck hands, there job is simply to do what the captain says, without tipping the boat. The first thing the group needs to do is line up in the very center of the boat (above the fulcrum of the boat) and awaits their orders. Once the group lines up, apologize for not being clear on the instructions. They must line up in the center by age. Or height. Or whatever you choose. Once the group has completed this task, advise them that they must report to their stations on either end of the ship. Divide the group in half however you like. Once the group is separated on either end of the boat, apologize for giving them the wrong stations. They must switch sides. When in place, you can give one side a bucket of water and tell them that they must make a chain from one end of the boat to the other and begin to bail out the extra water that has collected in the hull of the boat. Feel free to add you own challenges before having them exit the boat - without capsizing it.

Some facilitation tips:

This is a great universal activity. It is very challenging and fun, and participants with all levels of physical ability can be successful.

You can blindfold folks, or make the group silent, to increase the level of difficulty.

If you have time, have the group sit and eat lunch on it.