

Group Travel

Lesson Overview

During this lesson, students will practice their relationship and critical thinking skills to identify how to safely travel with a group during outdoor education activities.

Overall and Specific Expectations

- A1: A1.4, A1.6
- B3: B3.1, B3.2
- D1: Gr. 8 – D1.2
- D2: Gr. 4 – D2.2, Gr. 8 – D2.2
- D3: Gr. 1 - D3.1, Gr. 6 - D3.2

Learning Goals

- I can behave responsibly and follow safety rules and procedures to avoid injuries and keep myself and others safe during outdoor activities.
- I can use my relationship and critical thinking skills to analyze situations, identify risks, and make safe choices while participating in outdoor activities.

Materials

- Materials to create an imaginary trail (for example, cones or rope, bean bags, pool noodles, cardstock for signs)
- Pinnies or cloth
- Safety whistle (optional)
- [Student Resource: Group Travel and Trail Etiquette - Self-Check \(primary\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Group Travel and Trail Etiquette - Self-Check \(junior\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Group Travel and Trail Etiquette - Self-Check \(intermediate\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Group Travel Safety Rules](#)
- [Student Resource: Trail Etiquette](#)

Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education

Activities

- [Backpacking/Hiking](#)
- [Camping](#)
- [Cooperative Games](#)
- [Orienteering](#)

Tools and Resources

- [Disability-Centred Safety](#)
- [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)
- [Sample Curricular Medical Information and Acknowledgement of Elements of Risk Form](#)

Other

[Risk Management](#)

Assessment for Learning

At the beginning of the lesson, work with students to co-create criteria for assessing knowledge and skills needed to apply safety rules and procedures during outdoor education activities. For example, success criteria might include:

- I know how to signal for help using the recognized distress signal.
- I can describe the rules of etiquette when hiking on trails with a group.
- I can describe and apply safety rules when traveling in a group during outdoor education activities.
- I can explain the separation and compression effect and why it can impact a group during a hiking experience.

After the activity, review the co-created criteria with students, and have them complete the *Student Resource: Group Travel and Trail Etiquette - Self-Check*.

Assess students' application of trail etiquette and safety rules for group travel through their participation in class and outdoor education activities and their *Student Resource: Group Travel and Trail Etiquette - Self-Check*.

Use the co-created criteria to assess student learning and offer feedback. If needed, provide feedback to individual students or the entire group, to clarify or reinforce their understanding of trail etiquette and group travel rules, and answer any remaining questions.

Minds On

Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Explain to students that whether they are walking around the school, around paths at the local park, on a neighbourhood trail or a wilderness trail, learning to travel as a group is very important. When they hike with friends, family, or others in the community, there are rules that everyone needs to know and follow to stay safe and to respect the privacy and enjoyment of others who are also hiking the trail.

Action

Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Provide and review the *Student Resource: Group Travel Safety Rules and Trail Etiquette* with students.

Practice the rules with students. For example, use a whistle to demonstrate the distress signal, have students call out “help” 3 times, decide on and practice the non-verbal communication signals for stop, listen, and look. Note that if practicing the distress signals in the classroom, or in and around the school, be sure to alert colleagues so they know it is a practice lesson.

Locate a large space in or around the school (for example, gym, activity space, blacktop, adjacent park). Have students play Buddy tag to practice the buddy system and Dragon’s Tail to practice group travel rules.

Buddy Tag: Elect or ask for volunteer(s) to be the tagger. Students move about the space avoiding being tagged by the tagger. If touched, they are frozen and stay in place where touched. They can only be freed by a buddy by linking arms. After they are freed they can unlink arms to continue moving around the space.

Dragon’s Tail: Create small groups of 6-7. Have group members form a line and place their hand on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The first in line is the dragon’s head and the last person is the tail. Provide each group with a pinnie to use as a tail to be captured, or have others tag the last person as a way of catching the tail. The object of the game is to work cooperatively to stay connected from head to tail while avoiding other dragons catching their tail. Each time a tail is caught, the tail player becomes the new dragon head with everyone else in the group moving back one position. Remind groups to move cooperatively so everyone remains safe.

To increase the challenge consider having all participants form a dragon with the object being for the head to catch its own tail. Players near the head work together to assist the head of the dragon while players at the back work together to help their tail avoid being caught.

Use the same large space in or around the school to set up an imaginary trail for students to practice trail etiquette in small groups. If feasible, consider taking students on a walk through the school neighbourhood area or a day hike in a local area to apply their learning about group travel safety and trail etiquette.

Note: With permission of school administration, this activity can also be done as a silent activity in the school for students to practice trail etiquette rules. Students travel as a group, walking through the halls and available spaces using the rules of travel, practicing non-verbal signs, and giving way to other students/ staff they might meet on their “trail” route.

Imaginary Trail: Create small travel groups of 4-5. Have an equal number of groups travel in opposite directions as they navigate the trail to practice trail safety and etiquette. Use available equipment to create the trail. For example, use cones or rope at intervals to create the trail, bean bags and pool noodles to mark hazards or natural elements such as creeks that cross the trail or roots on the trail. Include signs to designate features of the trail such as uphill climb, down hill, creek, sharp turn, roots ahead, trail narrows, rest spots or “quiet”, animals nesting nearby. Once groups have navigated the trail, consider having them create their own trails for others to follow.

Consolidation

Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Divide students into groups of 4 -5. Have students use the *Student Resource: Group Travel Safety Rules and Trail Etiquette* to create a scenario about an issue/ problem a group encounters during an outdoor education activity. Have groups exchange their scenario with other groups. Have groups generate solutions for the scenario and share their solutions with the class. Use the group sharing to consolidate student understanding of group travel safety rules and trail etiquette.

Have students work in their travel group to complete the *Student Resource: Group Travel and Trail Etiquette - Self-Check* to assess student understanding of group travel safety and trail etiquette to stay safe and maximize their enjoyment and the enjoyment of others while participating in outdoor education activities.

Notes to Teachers

Remember to check school board policies and procedures applicable to any outdoor education activity.

A variety of assessment strategies have been identified in the Assessing for Learning section of each activity. Please note that these assessment strategies have been provided as a means for teachers to gather information to determine what students already know and can do, to inform instruction, scaffold learning, differentiate instruction in response to their students needs, and help students keep track of their progress in achieving the learning goals. These are not meant to be used for formal assessment and evaluation purposes.

The complexity of the activity can be increased by giving different students tasks along the trail to complete, or by having some students transport heavier objects or a bucket of water, while others have lighter objects or nothing at all. Each of these can symbolize comfort, ability, and/ or goals for a hike, and used to discuss how each student interacts with a hike differently. This activity can be used to increase group awareness and establish norms for the group when travelling along a trail.