

# Awareness and Appreciation

## Lesson Overview

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During this lesson, students will practice their self-awareness and critical thinking skills to build their appreciation for the environment and increase their awareness of potential hazards. Students identify safety hazards and describe rules and procedures to keep themselves and others safe from injury during outdoor education activities.

## Overall and Specific Expectations

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- A1: A1.4, A1.5, A1.6
- B3: B3.1, B3.2
- D1: Gr. 8 – D1.2
- D2: Gr. 3 – D2.2, Gr. 4 – D2.2, Gr. 8 – D2.2
- D3: Gr. 1 - D3.1, Gr. 6 - D3.2

## Learning Goals

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- I can use self-awareness skills during outdoor education activities to build my appreciation for the environment.
- I can identify environmental hazards and make safe choices while participating in outdoor education activities.
- I can behave responsibly and follow safety rules and procedures to avoid injuries and keep myself and others safe during outdoor education activities.

## Materials

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- [Student Resource: Awareness and Appreciation - Self-Check \(primary\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Awareness and Appreciation - Self-Check \(junior\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Awareness and Appreciation - Self-Check \(intermediate\)](#)
- [Student Resource: Awareness Tips for Outdoor Education Adventure](#)
- [Teacher Resource: Awareness Tips for Outdoor Education Adventure](#)
- [Teacher Resource: Outdoor Education Awareness Tips](#)

## Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education

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### Activities

- [Backpacking/Hiking](#)
- [Camping](#)
- [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

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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 can use my self-awareness skills to build an appreciation for outdoor education experiences.
- I can use my critical thinking skills to identify actions that can impact the environment.
- I can identify potential hazards and rules to follow to keep myself and others safe while participating in outdoor education activities.

After the activity, review the co-created criteria with students, and have them complete the *Student Resource: Awareness and Appreciation Self-Check*.

Assess students' responses during the small group and class discussions. 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 how to avoid careless actions that impact the environment and hazards to keep themselves safe during outdoor education activities, and answer any remaining questions.

## Minds On

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### Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Explain to students that they will complete a Mindful Sit outdoors in an area around the school using their five senses to increase their awareness of the natural world around them.

Review the importance of using the five senses to collect information and respond to what students are experiencing. Remind students that when they use their five senses outdoors, it helps them connect with their environment, refresh their mind, slow down and build appreciation and awareness of the natural world and their responsibility to look after it.

Take students to an open space on or near the school grounds. The space should be large enough for all students to find their own spot, two to three arms lengths or giant steps away from anyone else. Create boundaries for the space. Consider providing each student with a hula hoop to define their space.

Have students choose and check their spot for any safety hazards before they sit down. Students may want to sit on a sweater or jacket. Tell students that for the next ten to fifteen minutes they will be guided through a series of questions. They won't verbally respond; they will notice their responses as they "float" through their mind. Remind students that this is a silent activity and to respect the space and experience for themselves and others.

Instruct students to take in four to five deep breaths to relax and clear their mind. They may close their eyes if it helps them focus. Have them open their eyes and focus their attention on everything around them. Pose the following questions, pausing between each question to allow students to be mindful of the responses that come to mind.

Mindful Sit Questions:

- What do you see? (birds, trees, buildings, flowers, buildings)
- Take a deep breath in through your nose. What do you smell? (flowers, the grass, dirt, human scents, animal scents)
- Bring your attention to your ears. What do you hear? (natural sounds, human made sounds, the wind)
- Focus on your hands and skin. What can you touch? What can you feel on your skin? (the ground, grass, their skin, the wind on their skin, the sun on their eyelids).

(Mindful Sit activity: ALIVE, 2021).

After students have had time to reflect about each question, group them in triads to reflect on everything they experienced and how it helps them appreciate the world around them.

## Action

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### Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Explain to students that along with appreciating the experiences they have in the outdoors, they also have to be aware of their surroundings to avoid careless actions that impact the natural world and to keep themselves and others safe while participating in outdoor education activities.

Provide students with the *Student Resource: Awareness Tips for Outdoor Education Adventure*. Have students work alone or in small groups to generate tips they would share with others before they head out on an outdoor education adventure. Invite students to share their tips. Use the *Teacher Resource: Awareness Tips for Outdoor Education Adventure*, and student responses to consolidate and extend student understanding of the importance of being aware of their surroundings when participating in outdoor education activities.

## Consolidation

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### Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Have students complete the *Student Resource: Awareness and Appreciation Self-Check* to assess student understanding of the importance of being aware and appreciating their surroundings to have fun and stay safe while participating in outdoor education activities.

## Notes to Teachers

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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.

Consider pairing this lesson with “Navigation” for students to learn how map and compass skills are important to awareness and safety in natural areas.

## Reference

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ALIVE. (2021). [A Moment of Intentions: Mindful Sit Spot](#).