

# Safety Shelters

## Lesson Overview

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During this lesson, students will learn about natural shelters that can be found or built to keep themselves safe from weather conditions or when waiting for help in the outdoors.

## Overall and Specific Expectations

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- A1: A2.4, A1.6
- B3: B3.1
- 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 behave responsibly and apply appropriate safety rules and procedures that maximize my safety and that of others during outdoor education activities.
- I can think critically to analyze situations, evaluate my choices and make safe decisions that maximize my safety and that of others during outdoor education activities.

## Materials

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- **Student Resource: Natural Shelters**

- [Student Resource: Safety Shelters - Exit Card](#)
- [Teacher Resource: Natural Shelters](#)

## Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education

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### Activities

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

### 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 identify natural features that can be used as a safety shelter.
- I can use my critical thinking skills to take precautions before using or making a safety shelter.

After the activity, review the co-created criteria with students, and have them complete the *Student Resource: Safety Shelters - Exit Card*.

Assess students' responses during the class discussions and on the *Student Resource: Safety Shelters - Exit Cards*. Use the co-created criteria to evaluate student learning and offer feedback. If needed, provide feedback to individual students or the entire group, to clarify or reinforce their understanding of safety shelters, and answer any remaining questions.

## Minds On

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### Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Explain to students that planning ahead is key to safely enjoying outdoor education activities. This includes dressing in layers for the weather conditions and carrying extra clothes, food, and water for all types of weather conditions, and knowing where they are at all times. Sometimes, in spite of good planning, they may need to seek shelter. Have students generate answers to the following question: "What kinds of situations might we encounter when enjoying outdoor education activities where we need to seek shelter?"

Possible Answers:

- We may be too hot so we need to get out of the sun.
- It may be windy so we need to take a break from the activity out of the wind.
- We may get caught in the rain so we need to find shelter from it.
- We may get lost and have to stay in one place until someone finds us.

## Action

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### Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Explain to students that shelters can be made of blankets, tarps or garbage bags but they can also be something build out of natural materials or something found in their surroundings. Learning how to build or find a natural shelter can help keep them safe until they are able to resume the activity, until the weather gets better, or until help arrives. The first step is to know where to look for shelter and/ or natural materials that can be used to build one.

Provide students with the *Student Resource: Natural Shelters*. Divide students into pairs or small groups to generate ideas about how natural landscape features or natural materials may be used as a shelter. Have students identify precautions that might need to be taken before using a natural shelter or building one. Invite students to share their ideas with the class.

Have students generate ideas about what they would think about when selecting a site and building a natural shelter.

Possible ideas:

- Stay away from tree roots in case of lightning.
- Don't set it up under any dead branches or trees.
- Set it up on a spot that is higher than the ground around it to avoid water getting into the shelter.
- Build the door facing southeast where the sun rises to allow the shelter to warm up first thing in the morning.
- Keep the shelter small and close to the ground so you don't lose body heat to the air around you.
- Test out the branches and logs to make sure they won't collapse on you.
- Make it thick and layered enough to keep out the wind and rain.
- Stuff crack with grasses, leaves, moss and/ or mud.

## Consolidation

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### Primary/Junior/Intermediate

Have students complete the *Student Resource: Safety Shelters - Exit Card* to identify natural features that can be used as safety shelters and safety precautions to take when choosing a shelter.

Consider planning a class hike where the class is divided into groups of four or five to practice locating natural shelter areas and/or building one.

## 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.