

Campfire

Concepts:

1. The origin of the campfire is unknown; however, it has been used throughout human history as a means of warmth, light, social gathering, and entertainment.
2. Participating in a campfire is an experience that promotes group and social interaction.
3. Campfire activities foster creativity and personal expression.

Outline:

I. Preparation Before Activity

II. Introduction (10 min.)

- A. Greeting, Grabbing, and Purpose
- B. Introductions
- C. Activity Description
- D. Behavior Guidelines
- E. Task Analysis/Learner Assessment

III. The Campfire Book

IV. Campfire Activities (1 hr. 15 min.)

- A. Songs
- B. Skits
- C. Games
- D. Stories/Poems

V. Sample Campfire Sequences

- A. Sample Sequence 1
- B. Sample Sequence 2

VI. Additions

VII. Conclusion (5 min.)

VIII. Clean Up

IX. Appendix

- A. Equipment
- B. Glossary
- C. Class and Safety Management
- D. References/Resources
- E. Campfire Activities Index

Campfire

I. Preparation Before Class

Collect any necessary props for skits or games. Speak with adult chaperones in the group ahead of time and advise them on their role during the campfire (assisting with an activity, participating with the students, addressing discipline problems, etc.). Set up a fire at the campfire ring using wood from the shed. Be sure to have extra wood available to keep the fire going. Light the fire before the students arrive. Have a written or mental list of the types and order of activities that you would like to do during the campfire so that there is little “down” time.

II. Introduction

A. Greeting, Grabbing, and Purpose. Begin the campfire by welcoming the students and adults. Perform a short, one-or-two person skit to get things going and establish a fun atmosphere. The “Candy Shop” skit, “Flora the Flea” skit, or “The Lost Teacher” skit are good as openings.

B. Introductions. Introduce yourself and other campfire leaders by telling the audience a little bit about yourselves.

C. Activity Description. Explain to the audience that the campfire will be approximately an hour and a half long and require student and adult participation. There will be a variety of skits, stories, games, and songs performed during the campfire. Volunteers will be needed for some activities, but others will require full audience participation. If the group is having ‘Smores at the campfire, allow 20-40 minutes at the end for that activity (depending on group size).

D. Behavior Guidelines. Discuss clearly and specifically which behaviors you expect from the students during the campfire (examples: no standing on benches, students should not put or throw anything into the campfire, everyone should remain at their seats unless assisting or directed otherwise, etc.). Explain the need for respect for you, each other, the equipment, and Eagle Bluff itself.

E. Task Analysis/ Learner Assessment. Ask students if they are ready to act, sing, dance, and have a great time! Ask if any of the students have songs, skits, stories, that they would like to share. Tell the students that this campfire is meant to be a fun activity where everyone can be creative, expressive, and interact with one another.

III. The Campfire Book

The campfire book is Eagle Bluff’s resource for campfire activity ideas. It includes songs, skits, games, and stories that can be used for any campfire. The campfire book can be obtained from your Eagle Bluff staff liaison. The book is divided into sections

according to activity type (songs, skits, etc.). Choose the activities you would like to include in the campfire, perhaps developing an order in which you would like to do them. It is best to do this prior to the campfire (a couple of hours before the campfire at least). Copies of all the activities may be included in folders in the campfire book for your use or can be made by your Eagle Bluff staff liaison. Please leave the original (plastic covered) copies in the book.

IV. Campfire Activities

After the introduction, a great way to continue the campfire is to get everyone involved. A suggestion for this would be singing a song that requires everyone to participate (ex. Baby Shark, Bugaloo, Boom Chick-A Boom). The order of activities during the campfire is not very important as long as you keep everyone involved and adjust your activities to what the audience seems to be enjoying. However, mix the activities up so that you are not doing all the songs in a row, then all the games, etc. There are many ideas available in this book. Plan the activities that you want to present; planning more than you will need is a good idea. Students may have activities that they would like to share as well. See where spontaneity takes you!

A. Songs. Singing is a campfire tradition and there are many campfire songs out there. The most effective songs will be the ones that are silly or include actions. There are many suggestions in this book, but feel free to use other songs that you know as well. Just remember, you do not have to be able to sing to sing a campfire song!

B. Skits. There are many different kinds of campfire skits that can be performed, and some are more appropriate than others. If you plan to do a skit, make sure to collect the props beforehand. Skits can be staged using the leaders only, the leaders and volunteers from the audience, or allowing groups of students to develop their own skits using a bag of props. Skits should be fairly short (no longer than 3-5 minutes in duration), but the best ones are often much shorter. As before, there are skit ideas in this book or you can present one of your own.

C. Games. It can be difficult to play campfire games with a large group of people; however, the non-participating students usually do well as the audience and enjoy laughing at the antics of their peers. Some games are suggested in the campfire book, but other games can be used as well.

D. Stories/Poems. Stories are probably the oldest form of campfire entertainment. Native American cultures typically told stories around the campfire that explained natural phenomena and taught moral lessons to the listeners. There are many good stories that can be told around a campfire; however, the audience's attention will wane with stories that are too long. Be sure to talk with your lead teacher ahead of time as some prefer not to have any stories told that may be even slightly "scary".

E. 'Smores (or other campfire food). 'Smores seem to be the quintessential campfire food and are certainly a tasty activity for people of all ages. Groups can supply their own

‘Smores ingredients or they can be pre-ordered through Eagle Bluff (this should be listed on the scheduling and billing form). When making ‘Smores, use the designated marshmallow sticks (your liaison can assist with this). Do not allow more than 10-15 students to roast marshmallows at any one time; there is limited room around the fire and it could be dangerous. Always have an adult monitor the activities around the campfire. Whether your group makes ‘Smores or has another food at the campfire, please take any trash back with you to the dorm. Do not burn the trash in the campfire. Also, please return the marshmallow sticks to your liaison.

V. Sample Campfire Sequences

A. Sample Sequence 1.

Activity	Time
1. Candy Shop skit	10 min.
2. Welcome group	3 min.
3. Baby Shark	6 min.
4. My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean	6 min.
5. The Mediquin	10 min.
6. Group Charades	15 min.
7. Bugaloo	6 min.
8. Big Bob’s Bait Shop	10 min.
9. The Lost Teacher skit	3 min.
10. I Met A Bear	3 min.
11. Guess the Story	3 min.
12. Is It Time Yet?	3 min.
13. The Call of the Wild	10 min.
14. Rainmaking	3 min.
Total	91 min.

B. Sample Sequence 2.

Activity	Time
1. Flora the Flea	3 min.
2. Welcome group	3 min.
3. Boom Chick-A Boom	6 min.
4. The Little Green Frog	6 min.
5. Question Machine	10 min.
6. Baby Shark	6 min.
7. Is It Time Yet?	3 min.
8. Spring is Sprung	6 min.
9. The Cremation of Sam McGee	6 min.
10. ‘Smores	40 min.
Total	89 min.

VI. Additions

The activities listed above are suggestions that have been collected by Eagle Bluff staff members; they are not required campfire activities. Teachers or other campfire leaders may use their own campfire ideas and activities in place of those listed in the campfire book. Please feel free to share songs, skit ideas, and campfire stories with staff members to be included in our campfire book. Any contributions are very appreciated.

VII. Conclusion

At the conclusion of the campfire, bring the students back together for one last group activity. This may be singing a song or listening to a short story. Ideally, the activity should be a quiet or calming one, as the students will soon be settling down for the evening. Thank everyone for their participation and wish them a good night.

VIII. Clean Up

Collect any props that were used for skits and return them to their home. Pick up any garbage, recyclable items, or personal items left behind and take them to the proper location. Extinguish the fire by separating half-burnt logs, stirring the ashes, and pouring water over the fire. **MAKE SURE THE FIRE IS COMPLETELY OUT BEFORE YOU LEAVE!** Return unused wood and fire starting materials to the shed and turn off the shed lights. Clean marshmallow sticks before hanging them on the mailboxes. Record matches, newspaper, firewood, water bucket or repairs needed on the class maintenance clipboard in the kit room.

IX. Appendix

A. Equipment

- campfire book
- bag skit props (will vary)
- wood and fire starting materials (located in box at wood shed at campfire ring)
- marshmallow sticks (hanging on mailboxes in dorm office)

B. Glossary

ad lib – to improvise; spoken, composed, or performed without preparation

campfire – an outdoor fire for warmth or cooking; a reunion of soldiers, scouts, etc.

charade – a game in which a player (or players) pantomimes a word or phrase, often syllable by syllable, for others to guess

skit – a short, usually comical, theatrical scene or act

C. Class and Safety Management. Be sure to have a list of ideas of what you want to do at the campfire in order to keep things moving. Involve the students as much as possible; perhaps even letting some of them lead parts of the campfire. Keep an eye on the fire and add wood as needed. If you are using marshmallow sticks, do not allow the students to play with them when they are not being used. Also, do not allow students to

throw anything into the fire. Be careful to monitor student activity around the fire to prevent anyone from tripping into the fire pit. At the end of the campfire, be sure that the fire is completely out before you leave and that the lights in the shed have been turned off.

D. Resources

1. www.thegap.scouts.org.au/documents.htm
2. Service, Robert. 1940. Collected Poems of Robert Service. Putnam: New York. pp. 735
3. The contributions of many campfire enthusiasts throughout history