



Winter Survival Pre-visit

Classroom Activities

Brief Synopsis

In the first activity, Survival Bingo, the basic survival needs for humans will be examined as students play Survival Bingo. Students must prioritize what is essential in a survival situation, especially in a harsh winter climate. In the second activity, your students will practice arranging fire building materials. Fire building is an important winter survival skill that students often struggle with.

Ages: Designed for 4th–8th grade

Time Considerations: Activity 1, ~ 1 hour 30 minutes
Activity 2, ~ 10 minutes per student

Materials, Activity 1:

- 2 Sheets of paper
- Pen/pencil
- *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen (optional)
- Backpacks (students own)
- Survival Bingo Sheet

Materials, Activity 2:

- Fuel materials
- “Laying a Fire” Sheet

Vocabulary:

Tinder, Kindling, Fuelwood

Outcomes:

1. Students will know the seven basic needs for survival in an emergency situation.
2. Students will learn how to be prepared for a survival situation and how they can be more prepared in the winter.
3. Students will learn how to construct different fire models.

Minnesota Academic Standards:

Language Arts: 4.I.D, 4.II.E.1, 4.III.A, 5.I.D, 5.II.E.1, 5.III.A, 6.I.D, 6.II.E.1, 6.III.A, 7.I.D, 7.II.E.1, 7.III.A, 8.I.D, 8.II.E.1, 8.III.A,

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Activity 1: Survival Bingo

Background:

Students will distinguish between wants and needs in order to learn the seven basic needs for survival: oxygen, a positive mental attitude, shelter, warmth, water, rest and food. They will also learn that no matter how great your survival skills are, there is no substitute for positive attitudes and good teamwork. After learning what is important for survival, students will be more prepared and able to think ahead to avoid serious survival situations.

Procedures:

1. Gather the materials listed on the left. Print out the *Survival Bingo Sheet*, which includes a sample survival scenario and a list of survival circumstances.
2. (Optional) Have students read chapter 5 from Gary Paulsen’s *The Hatchet*. This chapter discusses how Brian assesses his survival situation by taking inventory of his supplies and determining his immediate needs for survival. You can find a list of discussion questions that will help students prepare for the next activity at <http://www.lclark.edu/~krauss/hatchetweb/deb's%20workbook/hatchetworkbook.html#ch5>
3. Read The Survival Scenario from the *Survival Bingo Sheet* to your students (you may want to develop your own scenario, or have the students develop their own).
4. Have students grab their backpacks and create a list of everything in their backpack, just like Brian from *The Hatchet* takes inventory of his belongings. This list can also include hats, mittens, gloves, lunches, and whatever else students brought to class with them today. Like the example Survival Scenario suggests, they have nothing but what they brought to school with them!
5. Next have students create another list of items they wish they had. These items must be able to fit in their backpacks.
6. Now the students will create a “bingo” card. Students can use any notebook-sized sheet of paper and fold it in half 4 times (for 16 squares). Have students think about what items will be most important in a survival situation, and pick 4 items from their “wish list” and 12 items from their backpack lists. Then they will fill their bingo card with one item per square.
7. Finally it is time to play! Read off each of the Survival Circumstances from the *Survival Bingo Sheet*. If a student’s bingo card has an item that does not help him/her survive, have the student cross out that square. If the student’s bingo card has an item that will help him/her survive, have the student circle that item. If a student makes a “bingo” with circles, he/she survives; if the student makes a “bingo” with x’s he/she does not survive.

Activity 2: Fire Building

Background:

Fire can be very important to survival in the winter, it provides light, warmth, a fast way to dry wet gear, heat for cooking and purifying water, and a comfortable atmosphere to improve morale. One of the biggest challenges to starting a fire is having enough tinder, kindling and fuel. *Tinder* is easily combustible material ready to catch fire (think of your Christmas tree a week after Christmas). *Tinder* should be about the width of tooth pick and around 10 inches long. These materials would work well as tinder: birch bark, lint, frayed rope, cotton balls, paper, and small twigs. *Kindling* is slightly bigger than tinder, approximately the size of a pencil. Lastly, there is *fuel*. This is what you imagine when you think of putting a log on the fire. However if you are building a fire for survival in the woods your fuel might be smaller like the width of a paper towel roll.

Once you have enough material, it is important to arrange the tinder, kindling and fuel before lighting the first match. Heat rises so place the paper under the tinder, and the tinder under the kindling, and so on.

Procedures:

1. Go to the website www.campfiredude.com and look under “Fire Fuel” to learn the definitions of different types of fuel (tinder, kindling, and fuel wood).
2. Bring in tinder, kindling, and fuel materials to your classroom. They can be from your backyard or items such as bamboo skewer for tinder, a pencil for kindling, or a paper towel roll for fuel wood.
3. Go to <http://www.campfiredude.com/campfire-lays.shtml> and print off the page titled “Laying a Fire,” Hang this sheet next to the area where the “fuel” is located. Have students practice building different fire styles whenever there is spare time.
4. If you have older students and the opportunity, take students outside and practice lighting Strike Anywhere Matches.

Teacher Tips

- Do not tell the students they are make a bingo card, have them mix-up their “wish list” items with their “backpack list” items.
- You know what your students might be carrying in their backpacks, feel free to add statements to the Survival Circumstances to utilize common items they may have.
- If students can think of good reasons why an item in their bingo square would help them survive let them circle it.
- If students call out Bingo because they survive, have them jump up and yell “Bingo!” If they call out Bingo because they die, have them put their heads down on their desks and moan “Bingooo...”



Additional Resources

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteer/janfeb04/lost.html>

This is a helpful link to an article from the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer Magazine providing useful background information on outdoor survival skills. It is also used in the [Winter Survival Post-Activity](#).

<http://www.lclark.edu/~krauss/hatchetweb/deb's%20workbook/hatchetworkbook.html#ch5>

Questions for discussion and journaling from chapter 5 in the *Hatchet*.

<http://www.campfiredude.com/default.shtml>

This link will help you learn about fire building.



The Survival Scenario:

Your mother picked you up from school today and you started driving North to your grandparent's cabin isolated deep in the woods. Because you visit your grandparents frequently, everything you will need for the weekend is already there. Unfortunately, your Mom's car breaks down and is starting to run out of gas so you leave the car and start walking backing to where you think you remember a gas station. You have been walking for hours and haven't found the gas station; you think you might be lost. And it's getting dark and cold...

The Survival Circumstances:

1. There is no cell phone reception (place X in square if it says cell phone)
2. It is starting to rain/sleet (Circle rain coat/tarp; if there is no protection students must put an X through a square of their choice)
3. Your granola bar is great survival food (circle any square with food in it)
4. Your matches started a fire and kept you warm all night! (circle matches/lighter/flint & steel)
5. Your flashlight batteries run out making you even more lost (X off flashlight square)
6. Your notebook helped you start a warm fire (circle notebook/textbook square)
7. Your pens/pencils/markers/crayons/erasers/pencil sharpener can't help you too much now (put an X through all squares marked with these items)
8. Your scissors helped you shave bark from a tree that helped you light a fire (circle scissors)
9. The temperature dropped but your hat, gloves and coat kept you warm (circle hat, gloves, and coat)
10. You always carry a compass and your Minnesota Geography textbook had a map in it! (circle compass and map)
11. You were listening to your ipod/playing with your gameboy/PSP and don't notice a car pass (X through ipod, gameboy, etc)
12. You remember to grab your mother's flare out of the glove compartment before you start walking to the gas station and help finds you (circle flare)
13. You had a great attitude throughout the long, cold night (circle good attitude/happy, if they do not have a square with this put an X through one of their choice)
14. You brought a water bottle with you and stayed hydrated (circle water)
15. You used scissors to cut apart an extra piece of clothing to make rope and create a shelter (circle scissors)