Survival

Class Overview

1. Introduction
    a. Ask the students to go around the circle and give their name and one thing they could not imagine living without.
    b. What is a survival situation?
    c. Has anyone ever been in a survival situation?
2. Progression of Activities
    a. Survival Kit
    b. Rule of 3/STOP
    c. Shelters
    d. Fire(only if time allows)
3. Learning Standards Addressed
    a. 4.A.2b , 4.A.2c , 4.A.3a , 4.A.3d 4.B.2b
    b. 19.C.2a , 19.C.3a
4. Wrap Up
    a. List the "Rule of Threes."
    b. What does STOP stand for?

Survival Kit

Objective: Students will start to think "outside the box" by coming up with uses for common items in a survival situation.

Location: Anywhere

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials: Survival Kit

Background Info: In a survival situation you might not have time to pack important items or even have very many items on you in this stressful time. It will be important in situations like this to be able to think of different ways to use common items you may have or find. For example a bandana can be used to tie a structure together, make a signal, or be used in first aid. This activity will help the students think about alternate ways to use some common items.

Procedure:

1. Have the students sit in a circle.
2. Open up the survival kit and lay the items out for everyone to see.
3. Have each student pick an item and brainstorm what they could use the item for and how it would help the group in a survival situation.
4. Have each person show their item and discuss what they would use it for. If any other students have ideas about an item, let them share it with the group.
5. Some items might need a demonstration (i.e. batteries/steel wool, magnesium striker).

Wrap Up:

1. What do you think the most important item in the box is?
2. What is the least important?
3. Does anyone have anything in their pockets or backpacks that might be useful in a survival situation?

Rule of 3/STOP

Objective: Students will learn how long they can survive without critical items in a survival situation.

Location: Anywhere (inside or outdoors)

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Rule of 3 poster

Background Info: Most people will likely never find themselves in a survival situation. However, the skills to survive in the wilderness can be very beneficial. It will be most important to stay calm and think about what your plan of attack should be. The "rule of threes" is a convenient way of memorizing the order of importance for each basic survival necessity. The "rule of threes" applies to extreme survival situations and is just generalized approximations. Each survival situation is different, but keep in mind the "rule of threes" and STOP for a positive outcome.

Procedure:

6. Start off by asking the students what we need to survive? How long do you think we could live without food, water, shelter?
7. Show the students the "Rule of 3" chart. Besides food, water, and shelter, air and PMA are also listed on the chart. Ask, "Why is air important?" and, " What is PMA?" PMA stands for Positive Mental Attitude.
8. Have the students come up with a list in their heads about what they think would be the most important in survival situation to the least important. Take a vote for each of the 5 items. Have the students describe why they think that item would be most important.
9. Go over the actual answers:
   3 seconds: PMA. It is important to have a positive attitude because our minds need to be in survival mode. We need to think about survival not death.
   3 minutes: **Air.** This would be situational, but on average this is how long we can live without air before it causes major trauma to our bodies.
   3 hours: **Shelter.** Shelters provide us with warmth or shade and protection from the elements. It is important to find or create a shelter first, because your body will have the most energy at this point and needs to be protected from hypothermia- inducing cold or stroke-inducing heat. Shelter also includes fire.
   3 days: **Water.** This is also situational. More water is required in hotter conditions or if we are getting exercise, but in general, we can live 3 days without water
   3 weeks: **Food.** Our bodies have a lot of reserves when it comes to food, and even though it might not be pleasant, we can live a while without food.
10. Tell the students that today, we will only be focusing on PMA and shelter. We have plenty of air and will not be out long enough to deal with water or food.
11. Tell the students that in any survival situation it will be important for them to **STOP**: **S**it, **T**hink, **O**bserve, **P**lan. This will be important when building shelters.

Wrap Up:

1. What is the Rule of 3:
2. What does STOP stand for?

Shelters

Objective: Students will practice survival skills by building a shelter.

Location: Outside in an area with lots of fallen sticks

Time: 40-60 minutes

Materials: Bottle of water (optional)

Background Info: Shelters are a very important part of a survival situation. Besides a positive attitude and oxygen, a shelter should be your number one priority in a survival situation. The first thing to think about before building your shelter is the location. Make sure you pick a spot that is dry and will stay relativity dry when it rains. There is no right way to build a shelter as long as it is sturdy and can protect you.

Procedure:

1. Discuss why having shelter is important in a survival situation. Remind the students about protection from the elements (wind, rain, snow, hail, sun).
2. Tell the students that they will be working in groups of 3 to 4 students, and their job is to construct a shelter that can protect them from the elements. These shelters will not be perfect, but they need to do the best they can in the time allowed.
3. Each group's shelter should only be able to fit one or two people lying down. This will make the shelter small but will conserve heat and energy. The height of the shelter should not exceed the tallest group member's hip.
4. Students may use a live tree to lean their shelter on. This is the ONLY living item they can use in their shelters. Limbs, bark, and leaves that are being used must be dead and found on the forest floor. No picking of any live material for shelters.
5. When carrying dead limbs, students must walk and be careful of their surroundings. If a branch/limb is taller than a student, it needs to be carried by two students. If a branch/limb is twice the height of the student, it should not be used.
6. Periodically go around to each shelter to see how each group's progress is coming. If you feel like the shelter might be a safety risk, bring it up to the group and offer suggestions for improvement. Also, make sure during the building process that students are using the limbs appropriately and not hitting with or throwing them.
7. After the time limit is over, gather all the groups back in the center. Explain that they will be embarking on a "tour of homes" to see what each group has done. At each shelter, have the group explain their shelter (why they choose that spot, etc) and what they would do if they had more time. Allow other students the opportunity to give feedback as well, and talk about the strengths and improvements that could be made to each shelter. If you want, you can even do a water test on each shelter to see if the students would stay dry.
8. At the end of class, all the shelters have to be taken down. This process needs to happen the same way the students put the shelter up, one stick at a time. Students are not allowed to push over their shelter or take out their support stick. They must take each stick down one by one and spread out the sticks as they go.
9. Before leaving the site, make sure that the sticks are spread out and that each shelter is down.

Wrap Up:

1. What would they do if they had more time?
2. What is the other component of shelter?

Fire

Objective: Students will practice survival skills by constructing a fire.

Location: Outside

Time: 15-30 minutes

Materials: Matches, Water

Background Info: Fire is considered part of shelter in the "Rule of Threes," because it helps provide warmth. It is important that when building their fires, they are not inside of the students' shelters. For this class, instruct the students to build very small fires (size of one's fist) for demonstration purposes only. We are not trying to produce a fire for heat.

Procedure:

1. Have the students brainstorm different ways/methods to start a fire.
2. Explain that today they would be starting one-match or survival fires.
3. Each group of students will have the opportunity to construct and attempt to start a fire.
4. Explain the basics of fire building.
    - All fires need dry fuel to burn properly. Wood can be tested by breaking a piece. If it snaps clean, it is probably good burning wood. If it bends or crumbles, the wood is probably too moist to burn effectively.
    - There are 3 size categories of wood: tinder (small), kindling (medium), fuel (large).
        - Tinder consists of very small twigs as well as dry leaves, bark and other small items that burn really well. Tinder starts the fire.
        - Kindling consists of larger branches (up to 2 or 3 inches in diameter). It makes a good base to the fire.
        - Fuel refers to large branches and logs. It can burn for long periods of time and is good for creating coals to cook over.
    - The tinder should be placed at the bottom of the fire.
    - Because fire burns upward, kindling should be placed around and above the tinder.
    - Fuel should only be added when the fire is burning well. Because of the size of the fires the students will be building, fuel will not be needed.
    - All fires need air, so care must be taken to allow room for air to circulate around the flames. Too much wood at one time could smother the fire. The students should be encouraged to have a structure to their fires (Log Cabin, A-frame, Tipi, etc)
    - Instruct the students to make fist-sized fires. Tinder and kindling should be very small.
    - Much more time should be spent gathering wood and building the fire than burning matches. A good fire can be started with one match!
5. After each group has gathered materials and made a structure, go around to each group with one match to see if anyone is successful.
6. **BE SAFE!!** Make sure the fire is under control and cannot spread. It is also a good idea to have a bucket of water or sand nearby to help control the fire if necessary. Do your best to keep all of the fires in one area and to practice low impact camping skills (keep your fire small, clean up when done, do not rip leaves or branches off living trees, etc.).
7. When finished, make sure the fire is completely out. You should be able to touch the ashes and feel no warmth.

Wrap Up:

1. How many groups were successful?
2. What could they have done differently?
3. In a survival situation, why plan to use only one match to start a fire?
4. If matches aren't available, what are some other methods of fire starting?