

Evening Activities and Campfire

Day 1: Community Responsibility River Challenge

Choose a large outside or inside area, and set up challenge stations as described on this page. Areas designated as water or islands must be well defined. Use posters to help explain the layout. Understanding the directions are important to the success of the activity.

Create teams of three or four campers each. Start each team at a different station and give the class fifteen to twenty minutes at each station, working together as a team to meet the challenge. Emphasize the importance of teamwork. Rotate the teams around the stations until every team has completed all three. If space is limited, stations can be set up one at a time and taken down after the completion of the activity.

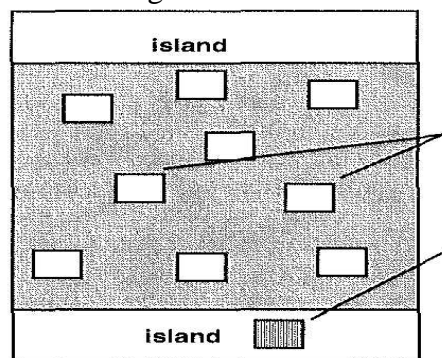
After the River Challenges, gather the campers together and discuss what happened at the stations.

- What did they like or dislike about the challenges?
- Did they successfully complete all three?
- Why or why not?
- How did working as a team help?
- How were the gifts of all used?
- How did leadership emerge at each challenge?

Rafting the Rapids

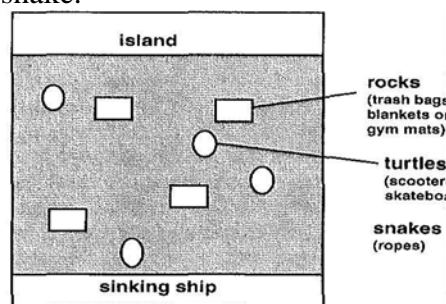
Campers must create a raft out of cardboard boxes, trash bags, or other supplies large enough for all members of their team to get on and maneuver down the rapids and around the rocks. They must use their hands as paddles to move the

raft along, but if anyone falls into the water or the raft comes apart, they must start again.



Sinking Ship

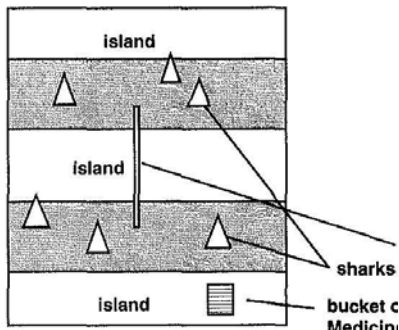
Each team must get from the sinking ship to the island at the other end safely. They must move from rock to rock by helping each other. Rocks are trash bags or carpet squares. Also in the water are turtles (skateboards) and snakes (pieces of rope). Team members can be moved from rock to rock on a turtle by pulling them with the snake.



Island Hopping

Campers must hop from island to island avoiding piranhas and sharks while carrying a cup full of medicine (water) in one hand. Medicine is precious and should not be spilled. The

islands should be laid out far enough apart to create a challenge, but close enough to allow for success.



Campfire

Begin this first campfire with familiar fun songs. Set the tone for expectations at campfire. For some campers, this may be their first campfire experience.

Introduce the *Rainstorm Rhapsody*

- Start with finger snapping for the beginning raindrops
- Move to clapping hands as the rain increases.
- Slap legs as the water pours down,
- Slap legs and stomp feet as the storm breaks loose.
- Move back to just slapping legs as the storm lets up.
- Shift to hand clapping.
- End with finger snapping as the rain finally stops.

This can also be done while singing “Go Forth With God” in *Songs for Camps and Reunions*.

Sing “Once There Were Three Fishermen.” Verses include:

- Once there were three fishermen,
Once there were three fishermen,

Fisher Fisher men men men
Fisher Fisher men men men
Once there were three fishermen,

- The first one’s name was Abraham ...
- The second one’s name was Isaac...
- The third one’s name was Jacob.
- They all went down to Jericho.

Say: Jesus spent a lot of time around water with his disciples. Our scriptures in Mark 4:35-41 tells the story of the frightened disciples when they were out on the water and a storm came up. The storm in the story was a wind storm, but we’re going to create sound effects for a rain storm.

Watch_____for directions for each sound effect as the story is told. (Leader starts each new step of the Rainstorm Rhapsody as the story builds.)

Jesus was tired. He had been talking to people all day. Now he boarded the boat that belonged to his disciples, found a quiet place in the stern, and went to sleep. (Begin rain.)

The storm grew worse. (Clap hands) Jesus slept on. Waves rocked the boat. (Slap legs.) The disciples struggled to stand. (Slap legs, stomp feet.) Help! Help, Jesus! Save us!

Jesus woke up. (Shift to slapping legs.) He stood and faced the rolling water (Shift to hand clapping.) He stretched his arms and said, “Peace, be still.” (Shift to finger snapping and drift to silence.)

Our scriptures in Matthew 14:21-32 tell of another time when a storm came up on the water This time the boat had already sailed when Jesus came aboard.

It had been a long day. The 5000 had been fed and returned to their homes for the night. Jesus sent the disciples on to the ship while he went alone to the hills to pray. (Finger snapping.) A wind came up (clapping) and tossed the ship to and fro (slap legs). The disciples were afraid. (Stomp feet.)

Suddenly they saw someone coming toward them. But that was impossible. They were no where near the shore. It must be a ghost! (Slap legs, stomp feet.)

Wait! (Shift to stomping feet.) Don't be afraid. It is I, Jesus. (Shift to slapping legs.)

Peter saw him and said, Lord, can I come to you? Jesus nodded and Peter stepped over the side of the boat. He walked toward Jesus on the water. Then he noticed the wind in the storm. (Clap hands.) He became afraid and started to sink. Jesus reached out and took his hand. (Finger snapping.) They reached the boat and climbed aboard. The storm stopped. (Silence.)

Sing some transition songs such as "I've Got Peace Like a River" or "Peace I Ask of Thee, O River"

Challenge

Christ is your River Guide. He will call out to you, help you in simple and miraculous ways, pull you up, and walk with you through troubled waters. Do you have the faith to follow him? Do you have the courage to walk on water with him? Can you do what he asks you to do?

The person who represented Christ in the morning devotions returns at this point to stand beside the campfire. A blue cloth is unrolled in front of him. The scripture from John 14:12 is read.

Anyone who believes in me shall do the works I do, and greater works

than this shall you do in my name.

Invite campers to come up and walk on water with Jesus. As they walk on the blue cloth, Jesus hands them a scripture gift—the scripture just read written on a fish shape or rock shape.

Day 2: Christian Values

Treasure Hunt

Prepare for this activity ahead of time. Draw maps, make a bowl of Jello, and create a poster.

MAKE A MAP OF THE CAMP ON YOUR POSTERBOARD THAT SHOWS THE POOL, DINING HALL, BATHROOMS, CABINS, AND LAKE.

Draw a line of arrows to show how to get to:

1. TO POOL FROM HERE
2. TO DINING HALL FROM HERE
3. TO BATHROOMS FROM HERE
4. TO CABINS FROM HERE
5. TO LAKE FROM HERE

First team to arrive makes their map to the pool, crosses that line off the directions, and takes their map with them ...

Campers will be divided into groups to make five teams. Supplies for each group will be arranged on a table. Each member of the team must choose one of the following materials, depending on how valuable they believe it will be in the hunt. If there are less than seven in the group, some campers will need to take more than one thing.

- can opener
- paper and pencil
- small plastic bag
- large trash bag
- spoon
- large sheet of poster board

- a dozen markers

When the groups are ready, hand each one a copy of the map you created based on your particular campgrounds. Include the following:

- Directions to the place where notes will be written to cheer the next group coming. *The sign here will say, use the paper and pencil to write a cheery note of at least ten words for the next team to encourage them in their hunt. If you are first, write your note and move on. If you are next, read your cheery note, write a new one to leave, and take your note with you.*

- Directions to the place where a bowl of Jello is waiting. Sign at the site will say; *Take with you three spoonfuls of Jello.*

- Directions to the place where a can of peas can be found. Sign at the site will say:

First one here must open the can, put the lid in the large trash bag, and remove ten peas to take with you. Each succeeding group must take ten peas with you. Peas will be counted at the end and must not be squashed Jello and peas cannot share the same plastic bag.

- Directions to the site where posters will be created according to the information on the sign hanging there.
- Directions to the finish point where items can be turned in for a treat such as a watermelon feed or ice cream and cake.

During debriefing, talk about the challenges and successes. How did the team work together? Which part would have been difficult or impossible without the right tools?

Campfire

As a part of campfire tonight, consider serving communion. Instead of the traditional grape juice, use water

explaining that this is customary in other faith groups including our own in cultures where grapes are not available. Have campers come forward to receive the bread and water.

Read the scripture below:

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'"

—*John 7:37-38 NRSV*

Day 3: Restoration Principles

Levees of Life

Introduce the concept of levees. *A levee is an embankment built along the side of a river to prevent water from flooding land*

The project for this evening is to experiment with levees and the flow of water. Use a stream on the campgrounds if available. Be sure to put things back exactly as you found them when the project is finished. Otherwise, create a space on the grounds using sand, dirt, water, and other tools. Set up a miniature river with a meandering course. Observe the effect of runoff from hills. Create levees to make lakes and observe the results. Some things will be learned from this activity, but its main purpose is to play in the water. Tiny houses, trees, cars, and other additions will make it interesting.

Campfire

Thunderstorm Rhapsody: Repeat the activity from Day 1 or use the

activity with the song “Go Forth With God” found in *Songs/or Camps and Reunions*, page 91..

Music: Use traditional campfire songs about water such as the “Beach Comber Song,” “Hole in the Bucket,” or “Lord Told Noah.”

Water Cycle: Campers spread out and sit on the ground. Each is a drop of water. As the action begins, the leader yells “evaporate” and each camper “evaporates” by slowly rising. Leader yells “condense.” Drops of moisture then collect and condense (group moves together). When the saturation point is reached, the leader yells “rain” and rain falls (everybody down). The “water” runs off into the streams and rivers (campers scatter in groups) until the leader yells “evaporate” and the process starts over. After a few minutes of this, return campers to their places.

Idea to Consider: Life with Christ can be a little like a water cycle.

- It starts with us as individuals. Someone teaches us about God or Jesus.
- We learn to pray and offer our prayers to God (*evaporation*),
- Our prayers and our study bring us together with others with like beliefs (*condensation*).
- The Holy Spirit fills us (*precipitation*)
- We are filled to overflowing (*saturation*).
- We flow out into the world (*run off*) carrying the message and sharing what we have learned,
- We thank God for the joy of the experience (*evaporation*) and the process starts another cycle.

Challenge: Invite campers who are willing or who have prepared for this to share examples of times when they have experienced one of these parts of

the cycle—special prayer time, support from others, experiences with the Spirit, excitement about something that had to be shared, changes in someone’s life because of what was shared.

Music: Spirit of the Living God, Peace Like a River, Where He Leads Me, I Will Follow

Day 4: Peace and Justice

In the Woodstock

Organize an outdoor festival of music based on peace and justice, present and past. Choose music from *Songs for Camps and Reunions (SCR)*, current popular music, hymns, and music from tapes and CDs. Campers can sing along with tapes and CDs or provide rhythm and dance.

Introduce songs with short histories that connect the music to the time period. Many Spirituals evolved from repression and domination. Those singing looked forward to a time when they would be with God and Jesus. Dying often seemed the only release.

As countries passed through civil disorders, songs emerged to unite those whose hearts beat together, “We Shall Overcome” was sung during marches of African Americans seeking equal rights, peace, and justice.

Each era had folk songs of its own that held up messages of concern for the age. Writers continue to produce music that touches the heart in ways nothing else can.

Songs listed below are intended to stimulate ideas that will work for this camp. Some can be found in camp song books, tune books, the Peace hymnal, and in collections belonging to youth. Make the experience a time of teaching, feeling, and celebration.

Rocka My Soul
 Blowing in the Wind
 Do Lord
 Good News, Chariot's Comm
 One World SCR 35
 No Mountain HighEnough SRC
 38
 Study War No More SRC 35
 Be Reconciled! SCR 56
 Jacob's Ladder
 Lonesome Valley
 We Shall Overcome
 Free at Last SCR 64
 If I Had a Hammer SCR 77

Campfire

Continue the atmosphere created with the song festival into the campfire experience. For this night, consider a candlelight center Campers gather around an assortment of candles in all sizes, shapes, colors, enough so that each camper will be able to light one.

As they arrive, none are lit. Someone specially selected moves forward to light the large center candle as this scripture is read:

*I am the light of the world .
 Whoever follows me will never walk in
 darkness, but will have the light of life.*

—John 8:12

Invite the campers to come forward one at a time to light a candle. Two candles should be lying on either side. Demonstrate how these candles can be used to obtain a light from the center candle and light the candle of choice for the camper. This candle can then either be handed to the next person or blown out, laid down, and left for the next person. Special music can be playing while the movement is going on to help set the mood. When all candles are lighted, sing songs of peace and Justice the campers know. In between songs, ask those who are prepared to offer a

prayer for peace and justice or share a story or testimony on the subject.

Day 5: Community Responsibility

Pick a Party

The following suggestions can be used for planning this evening's activities. Choose one or more, depending on the needs of your camp.

Option 1:

Contact the National Forest Reserve office in your area. Ask the local officials to help you select a project that the campers can complete in two or three hours,

Option 2:

By cabins or paired cabins, have the entire camp work on cleanup projects in the camp.

Option 3:

Contact the local Red Cross office and offer the services of the campers on local projects the campers can complete in a few hours.

Campfire

WHAT YOU NEED FOR THIS CAMPFIRE

one small votive candle per camper

“River of Life” centerpiece from the morning devotions

paper to wad up

To start the campfire, ask a representative from each cabin to come up. Give each a long fireplace match. Ask them to work together to light the campfire. Then ask them to keep the match stick to use later in the campfire. As the campfire begins to burn, ask the campers to place, toss, throw their wad of paper into the campfire and observe the results. The campfire was already burning, but each addition made the fire

burn brighter. They all had a part in the action.

Sing fun camp songs and let the cabins take turns with skits they have prepared. Switch to transitional songs. Say something like: This is the last full day of camp and our last campfire. We have sung songs, acted out skits, lighted fires. Soon we will return to our communities. But we can make a difference there as we have made a difference here. Ask the camp director and camp pastor to share observations made throughout the week related to campers. Include positive words and random acts of kindness. Then offer time for others to share if they choose,

For a closing, pass out votive candles. Ask a representative from a cabin who helped light the campfire to come up. Cabin members should join their representative. This person lights the long match from the campfire, then names a camper and lights the candle until all in the cabin have lights. This group moves back to form the beginnings of a large circle as the next cabin comes up.

When all lights are burning and a circle has formed, sing songs such as “It Only Takes a Spark” or other songs of light and peace. Say something like: You are asked to leave quietly, walking back toward the camp. At some point choose to give your light to God for safekeeping and blow out your candle. Take it with you to your cabin and put it where you can take it home. Let it remind you that you carry God’s light and love to all you meet. God can reignite your light whenever you feel the need.

Have quiet music such as flutes

or guitars playing at points along the path back to camp. Cabin devotions will complete the experience.