

White Pines Ranch Outdoor Education Program Activities

FIELD STUDIES: The WPR site has deciduous forests, pine forests, meadows and fields. Natural features such as outcrops of dolomite and sandstone, a water formed canyon, meandering streams, erosion banks, natural springs and ox-bows are found on the 200 acre site. Concepts such as food chain/food web, adaptation, habitat, interdependence and energy transfer can be applied to the study of a field or forest ecosystem. Field studies introduce concepts and include the use of basic process skills of observation, classification, inference, data collecting, etc.

AQUATIC STUDIES: This field study emphasizes the affects of water on the landscape. Geologic features are studied first hand and students learn to interpret the landscape by observing natural phenomena and making inferences. Some organisms common to a fresh water environment can be studied in the stream and at the natural springs.

PROJECT WILD: Through simulations and group games, students are introduced to concepts relating to wildlife ecology such as population density, carrying capacity, predator/prey and camouflage. The affects of human activity on wildlife habitats is a key focus of the program.

WILDERNESS SURVIVAL: This activity is designed to engage students in problem solving and reaching consensus. Students will focus on the basic needs of humans as they work cooperatively through a simulation which requires them to consider survival in the wilderness.

QUARRY/FOSSIL STUDY: A visit to the Ordovician dolomite quarry for fossil hunting is the highlight of this activity. The introduction includes an explanation of the rock formation and an introduction to the types of fossils found here. Safety is emphasized as children learn how to use hammers and goggles in their search for fossils.

CEMETERY STUDY: Mt. Zion Cemetery is used to study math, social studies, science and language arts. Children are involved in finding, recording and processing data. The use of the 150+ year old cemetery requires the utmost consideration by teachers & students.

ORIENTEERING: Students receive a basic introduction to the use of the compass for finding direction and the pace for determining distance. Simple courses, complete with stories and group problem-solving activities, are followed by small groups of students.

INITIATIVE TASKS: Group problem solving activities emphasize cooperation, patience and persistence. Small groups of students are given problems to solve. Emphasis is given to planning and cooperating. Students analyze their performances and suggest ways to improve them.

TREE STUDY: Project Learning Tree activities are used to investigate the properties of trees and to help students realize the importance of trees in the natural environment and as a valuable resource to our society.

LANGUAGE ARTS: The outdoor environment helps to foster creativity for creative writing.

HORSEMANSHIP / RIDE: Students are given an introduction to horsemanship which includes trail etiquette and safety. The trail ride is geared to “first-time” riders.

EVENING ACTIVITIES: Tractor pulled hayrides, line dancing, new games, “ranch bingo” and campfires w/ songs and stories are offered. Groups are encouraged to bring along song leaders/story tellers.