

Extended Practices 4660-70

OUTDOOR SCHOOL

Fall 2015, University of Guelph

Professor: Diane Borsato

SURVIVAL TIPS

“If nature study is made a drill, its pedagogic value is lost. When it is properly taught, the child is unconscious of mental effort or that he is suffering the act of teaching. As soon as nature-study becomes a task; it should be dropped. But how could it ever be a task to see that the sky is blue, or the dandelion golden, or to listen to the oriole in the elm!”

From Handbook of Nature Study, by Anna Botsford Comstock, 1911.

“These new modes of working, in some fundamental, structural sense, return the oppositional concepts of culture and nature... understood not as separate but (the former) actively engaged with the latter, and artists seen as potential mediators between the two worlds – cultivators of a natural world full to bursting with material.”

Jeffrey Kastner, from *Art in the Age of the Anthropocene*, in Nature, 2012.

Since it's inception in the early 20th Century, experiential outdoor education has sought to 'cultivate imagination', observation, knowledge, curiosity, health, appreciation, and companionship. Likewise, instruction manuals for children and adults on survival in the wilderness, field, farm and even city – have aimed to not only enhance survival, but to deepen knowledge of cultural practices of the past, offer sometimes provocative counter-cultural alternatives for living, and stimulate connectedness with the natural world and with each other.

As contemporary artists interested in many of the same engaged experiences and goals, we can appropriate modes of teaching and learning from these sources. Our lessons may be regarded as art works in their own right – or as practical research toward larger and more complex and critical activities – in art or for living.

Students will prepare a short workshop that is **10 - 30 minutes maximum (strictly enforced)** that teaches a nature-related or outdoor-related skill.

YOUR WORKSHOP MUST:

Teach HOW TO PERFORM a select skill.

Be an uncommon, interesting, and/or surprising skill. You will need to do extensive research and practice and become an expert at one specific task to share.

Be safe for yourself and others.

You must use hands-on experiences, materials, in real sites and scenarios. Offer the experience to everyone in the class.

You must be organized. Gather supplies. Make bookings, test out and rehearse your lesson in advance.

Talk to the instructor about your *Survival Tips* workshop in advance.

Appoint one classmate to document your workshop, and you will post it (with descriptions) to the class blog.

EXAMPLES OF LESSONS:

HOW TO DO A PERFECT FRONT CRAWL
HOW TO SWIM LIKE ESTHER WILLIAMS
HOW TO MAKE RISOTTO ON A CAMP STOVE
HOW TO IDENTIFY POISONOUS PLANTS
HOW TO MAKE A WORMERY
HOW TO DO TAI CHI IN THE PARK
HOW TO MAKE A WILD PIE
HOW TO GRAFT APPLE TREES
HOW TO MILK A GOAT
HOW TO MAKE BIRD CALLS
HOW TO RIDE AN OSTRICH
HOW TO MAKE A FLOWER CROWN
HOW TO DRIVE A TRACTOR
HOW TO RAISE MONARCHS
HOW TO IDENTIFY TREES
HOW TO MAKE HONEY
HOW TO DO SUN SALUTATIONS
HOW TO TIE A FLY
HOW TO THROW A DISCUS
HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH FISH
HOW TO MAKE COMPOST
HOW TO GROW A CRYSTAL GARDEN
HOW TO HOLD A PIGEON
HOW TO MAKE A SHELTER
HOW TO MAKE A SWEATLODGE
HOW TO RAISE SILKWORMS
HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH THE SUN
HOW TO IDENTIFY CLOUDS
HOW TO