

Outdoor Education Curriculum Summary

The curriculum is the core of the student's experience at Camp. The classes selected can provide students with a sampling of all academic areas or concentrate on a specific focus. Each class is built around the ideas of appropriate teambuilding, academic standards, and the YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. The staff members strive to include science vocabulary, social studies concepts, and math problems throughout the entire Willson experience.

Many classes can be taught throughout the year, some classes are best suited in a particular season. We hope that the program will meet the curriculum of your school and provide the students with a fun and educational experience, building self-confidence and memories. Our staff can facilitate the classes or school teachers can present favorite activities. We have divided the classes into subjects for your convenience, though many of the subjects are interconnected. Each class is listed with a short summary.

Science Classes

EGG DROP: We have an "egg-citing" class that combines teamwork and physics. This activity allows small teams to draft and design an enclosure to keep an egg from breaking. We test our structures during the drop from the second story Conference Center porch and "egg-splore" the scientific method.

WATER ROCKETS: Use your math skills and scientific method as we have a "blast" testing our theories of propulsion, aerodynamics, and volume. Students will see Newton's Laws of motion at work as they launch their water rockets.

CAMPFIRE COOKING: Students will learn fire building techniques and cooking safety while they prepare a delicious snack. They will then eat their creations while talking about the differences between chemical and physical change. (Inside or out, weather dependent)

ASTRONOMY: In this one-hour, daytime class, students will interact and explore concepts concerning the planets, eclipses, moon phases, and constellations. Groups enjoy the "night sky" via our indoor star dome while learning about the myths and legends that helped name the constellation. (All seasons, inside)

WILLSON ROCKS: While reviewing geologic phenomena students practice the rock cycle, discuss Moh's hardness scale, and identify igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks. Try your knowledge on Rock Bingo. (All seasons)

AMAZING MAMMALS: Students use hands-on learning through a dichotomous key by studying animal skulls to identify local mammals. Other games and activities are incorporated to educate the students on mammal classification and behaviors. (All seasons)

AQUATIC STUDIES: Students discuss characteristics of aquatic life. They walk to the lake, collect samples, identify creatures under microscopes, and use benthic macro-invertebrate charts to determine the quality of Lake Mac-O-Chee. (All seasons)

FISHING: Especially great for groups who do not have enough time for everyone to fish during recreation, students head to Lake Mac-O-Chee with fishing pole in hand to see if they can catch their "trophy fish." We encourage students not to bring their own fishing equipment as it could get broken. (Sept to mid-Oct), (Mid-April to June) Fishing may also be offered to 12 children at a time during recreation, weather permitting.

INSTINCTS: Through role-playing activities, students reinforce the concepts of food chains, the balance of nature, life cycles, and other environmental concepts. (All seasons, outside time is reduced during extreme weather)

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS: Using live specimens of frogs, snakes, turtles, and toads, students learn the characteristic differences and similarities between local reptiles and amphibians. Students will learn the proper handling and care of these animals. (All seasons - indoors)

Social Studies Classes

EARLY AMERICAN CRAFTS FAIR: Students learn some of the crafts and skills that the pioneers used in everyday life such as candles, butter making, spinning wool, and more. Students take crafts home. Schools may bring supplies or purchase supplies from camp. (Two hours - all seasons)

PIONEER LIFE: Students will role-play family groups traveling and settling in early Ohio. Family groups will walk through the woods to visit our 1800's log cabin. This class will give students a better understanding of the life and hardships of the frontier times. (All seasons)

SHAWNEE CELEBRATION: We compare and contrast the ways of the Shawnee Indians of the 1700's with the Settlers and Plains Indians. Students will participate in games and sign language of the woodland Indians who lived in the local area. (All seasons)

ORIENTEERING: The students learn the basics of compass work and the aid of contour lines on a map. Using charts and simple math, they practice their new skills of paces and degrees on the sports field. (All Seasons)

MAC-O-CHEE MALL: Students role-play various people and animals in a community and decide the future land-use of Camp Willson. Many science and social studies topics are rolled into one activity, giving students the opportunity for in-depth decision-making choices about land and community. (All seasons, inside)

CLIMBING WALL: In this rock wall climbing class, students are challenged both as individuals and as a group. Staff members emphasize teamwork, trust, and cooperation. (Outside)

TEAM CHALLENGE: Promote the skills of cooperation and communication through a variety of initiatives. Challenge the students to depend on one another and to solve mutual goals - an all-time favorite. (Outside, All seasons)

SURVIVAL: Using communication and cooperation, students discuss and practice survival techniques. We review skills such as preparation for a trip, signaling, water and food collection, shelter building, and safety in the woods. (All seasons)

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES: Students will solve several puzzles and complete a large tangram. Thinking "outside the box" and teambuilding solutions are encouraged. (Inside/Outside, all seasons)

Language Arts Classes

POET-TREE: Review parts of speech, and use nature to create various types of poems. (All seasons) *Grab a pen, a pencil will do. For a fun educational time awaits you. A hike through the woods, Admiring a tree, Put it all together, And a poet you will be.*

SHAKE, RATTLE, & WRITE: Students will experience a traditional Native American story enhanced by percussion sound effects. Then small groups write and perform a story of their own. Attention to writing elements such as developing characters, setting, and plot will be used.

Camp Classics

ARCHERY: Students will learn the parts of the bow and arrow, as well as the safety rules for shooting on the range. Students will work with eye dominance, adjusting the aim for varying distances, and supporting each other as they learn.

CANOEING: Students learn about safety around the lake and boats. An instructor will teach them the basic strokes to using canoes. Working in pairs or groups of three the study group travels the lake in their canoes. (Weather and Temperature determined)

COMMON SENSES: Students learn the importance of each of the five senses. The class challenges the students to heighten the use of their senses. We investigate natural and man-made products. Challenge your observation and find the objects on the Un-Nature Trail. (All Seasons)

TRAIL RIDE: This camp highlight features a one-hour, single-file, instructor-led ride. Two to three staff members supervise each ride. Fourth grade and under will enjoy a Ring Ride and Arena Lesson. Fifth grade and up can hit the trails. There is an additional cost for this class (\$15). (All seasons) Horseback Riding Release form is required for all adults and students.

HORSE SENSE: Students discuss the physical and mental capacities of a horse. They participate in grooming, roping, and a practice ride. The Horseback Riding Release is not required. (All seasons)

Afternoon Activities

Each afternoon, the Willson staff offer a variety of recreational activities. Willson staff present a selection of age appropriate choices: indoor, outdoor, active, and passive. **Teachers and cabin leaders will have a meeting at this time.** The students select the activities in which they wish to participate. Some of these activities may include:

Dancing	Visit the Farm Animals	Floor Hockey	Arts and Crafts
Cloud Watching	Tobogganing (winter)	Group Games	Knitting
Capture the Flag	Aerobics/ Yoga	Fishing	Drama
Singing/Skit practice	Sports Field	Paper Airplanes	Hiking
Minute Mysteries	Feed Reps/Amps	And more...	

Evening Programs

You may select one to two activities per night, depending on the length of each. A snack is provided by camp.

Camp Classics

CAMPFIRE: An all-time favorite with singing, skits, and storytelling around the fire. (Inside or out, weather depending) S'mores provided when requested!

EVENING RECESS: Not enough time in your schedule for recreation? Need more of a chance to run? We meet at the Sports Field to run and play before the second half of evening program - equipment provided.

MINUTE TO WIN IT: Teams participate in crazy off the wall activities in ONE MINUTE! This TV show classic with a camp twist!

CREATIVE DRAMATICS: Groups are assigned a legend ("Why the turtle carries its shell on its back). They then perform a short skit involving all members of the group.

HUMAN CLUE: Just like the board game, campers are split into trail/cabin groups to search for Who Did It, Where, Last Words, and so much more!

Science

ECODRAMAS: Challenge your students to charades based on ecological concepts. Students act out science vocabulary and guess the themes during the other presentations. (All seasons)

NIGHT HIKES: This sensory experience will enable students to explore the difference in our world at night. A mix of large and small group activities will look at how our eyes work at night, some nocturnal animal's abilities, and how people have engaged with the world around us at night.

Social Studies

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A CAMP WILLSON NATURALIST: In small groups, students will work together answer to trivia questions on topics from science to sports. (All Seasons)

BAG SKITS: Give your students the chance to perform and shine! Each cabin group creates a two to four minute skit using words given to them. Then they perform in front of their peers. (All seasons)

THE BEAST: Working on communication skills, students must build a replica by describing the construction of the original structure. Similar to the game "telephone", the message being passed describes building the "Beast". (All Seasons, inside)

GAMES, GAMES, & GAMES: A combination of small group relay races and classic group games to build unity and get all participants actively involved and laughing! (Inside or out, weather depending)

INDIAN MEDICINE HUNT: A scavenger hunt where students must use teamwork and their creativity to find items that will help keep their "dying chief" alive. (Weather dependent)

NEWSPAPER PAGENT: Small groups will create new fashions by dressing their adult leader in newspaper for the "big show". (All seasons)

SQUARE DANCE: A true Willson experience, students learn traditional dances (like the "Virginia Reel") from one of our staff callers, while being accompanied by some great dancin' tunes. (All seasons)

TREATY OF GREENVILLE: A quiet indoor activity, students role-play Native Americans and reenact the events of 1795 to discuss whether to sell land to the Colonists or stay and possibly go to war. (5th grade and up)

THE WILLSON RACE: Work together as a team to “travel the world” in search of clues, answer trivia, and complete challenges.

Language Arts

BALDERDASH (Liar’s Club): Students are shown a variety of strange items and told even stranger stories for each one by their teachers/chaperones. They must then decide who is telling the truth and who is spinning a tale for them. (All seasons)