

APOEC Lesson Plan

SENSORY TRAIL

The Sensory Trail is a great activity to build confidence and give participants an exciting challenge. Individuals are blindfolded and lead to the start of a rope hand line. The rope winds its way through the forest over the ever changing terrain. The idea is without using their eyes and without letting go of the rope they must use their other senses to complete the course.

The course has many obstacles along the way like tree roots, boulders, trees, changes in terrain and even a missing section of rope. Inch by inch participants will walk slowly feeling their way to the end of the rope.

Along the course there will be three parent helpers to assist in any of the difficult parts should participants need help. They are also there to monitor participants' comfort levels along the course.

Typically each person will spend 15-20 mins on the course.

OBJECTIVES

- To learn basic principles about the senses and how losing one makes you rely on the others
- To learn about trust and self-belief through completing an activity by yourself in an unknown environment
- To discuss with your group the range of emotions people went through being blind fold and alone in the bush
- Have a fun and safe experience through a highly supervised sensory course

ORGANISATION

- Prepare activity by taking Blindfolds up to site which is behind the school
- Allocate and train a minimum of 4 adult supervisors on the course monitoring safety of students

INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT

- Backpack
- First Aid Kit
- Suitable running around shoes
- APOEC Radio
- Cell Phone
- Water bottle
- Additional Warm Clothing

ASSISTING ADULTS' EQUIPMENT

- Backpacks with required contents (spare clothing, rain jacket, water, food, personal medication, gloves, warm hat, sun hat)
- Running shoes or suitable footwear for trip
- 2x APOEC Radios

BRIEFING

Adults & Supervisors

- Their roles, you need adults distributed around the course ensuring students are going slowly and staying on the activity
- Who has the first aid kits and radios
- Any individuals that may require special attention (and how this will be managed)
- The adult at the start, 1 adult in the middle and adult at the end should have radios. The adult at the start should communicate when the first and last people have started.
- The adults should be positioned as follows: 1 at the start, 1 in the creek (first ditch), 1 where there's a break in the rope, 1 where the large rock is (near the end), 1 at the end. If there are additional adults, they can spread out inbetween and / or manage "loud" participants.

Student Briefing (at the site)

- Explain the first paragraph of this lesson plan - The purpose of the sensory trail (as in it's a solo experience where participants get to test their remaining 4 senses after being blindfolded through the forest etc.)
- Explain they should always have the rope in their **left** hand, when they get to a tree, follow the rope around it.
- Their right hand should be out in front of their face to ensure they do not walk into anything.
- Talk about the terrain (uneven, roots, logs etc.) and ask how they may navigate this while blindfolded...
- It is a challenging course so it is recommended that students take their time
- Adults will be in positions where there may be "tricky" sections to assist.
- This is a "Challenge by Choice" activity. Some students may be nervous... Explain that if they're having trouble, they can yell "help" and an adult will be nearby to help.
- Try to encourage students to be honest and not "peek".
- Also as everyone has different speeds, if they catch up with someone ask what they think they should do (they should stop and wait patiently)
- When waiting to start or for others to finish, **please keep noise to a minimum** to allow others to have the full experience.

SESSION

- Adult helpers will be positioned in “higher risk” areas to aid individuals who require it and just aid in general supervision of participants.
- In high winds, this activity is not to operate. The beech trees are too shallow rooted and are prone to wind fall in this area. The Centre Manager will check course prior to use.
- If you require any assistance you have the opportunity to use the radio supplied to contact the Centre Manager.

DEBRIEF

A debrief is a crucial tool for any session, particularly for the Sensory Trail. It is important to highlight how their learning about self and challenging their senses can relate to real life learning. Here are some suggestions:

- What did they hear along the route?
- What did they learn about how they coped as individuals?
- Was it a valuable experience?
- What was the most challenging section?
- What did they learn about themselves during their time blindfold and alone?
- How did being blindfold enhance their experience?
- Was it a challenge to keep the blindfold on?

PACKDOWN

Ensure all blindfolds are washed ready for the next group. (Teachers/parents running this session, please put the blindfolds in the washing basket in the workshop).