

Activity 11: Hauling supplies over the Trail

Activity Description:

1. Inform your students you've all decided to leave Skagway and travel to Dyea to take the Chilkoot Trail. To give students a sense of how arduous the trail was, have students perform a reenactment by creating an obstacle course. Ask students to bring approximately 2-10 pounds of supplies to school in a backpack (books, canned goods, etc.). Set-up an obstacle course in a large open area (such as a playground). Involve parent volunteers.

2. Begin the activity by having students load their backpacks with heavy objects. Next, weigh each pack. Record the weight of the pack on the student's ID card. The ID card should include a place for the student's name, the weight of the pack, and a way to record the number of obstacle course laps completed.

Remind students that they cannot pass each other on the trail. They must walk in a single-file line just as the original Stampeders did when they went up the pass. It makes it more authentic for the students. Students are also asked to dress appropriately.

Look at a [sample map](#) (PDF) of an obstacle course using playground equipment.

3. Once back in the classroom students get to do some calculations. If you pretend one lap of the obstacle course is the equivalent of one trip up the Chilkoot Pass, how many more trips would each student need to take in order to haul their entire outfit (2,000 pounds of supplies) up the pass? Students can make the calculations in their journals.

4. End the activity by having students describe in their journal their character's experience of moving his/her outfit over the pass. Provide a few guiding questions such as, "Did you carry all loads on your back? Did you use pack animals, hire packers, or use a sled to help? How did your body feel when you were done?" You may want to write key words on the board to help students remember the different stages they experienced in the reenactment (Dyea, Taiya River, Sheep Camp, The Scales, The Ascent, Avalanche Warning, Glacial Crevasse, Switchbacks, Golden Stairs, Provisions, The Summit). They should include many details of the experience in their journal entry.

Set-up Procedure: (how one school prepared their obstacle course):

Tables: Arrange with custodian to bring out two large tables. One for "provisions" and the other for check-in at Dyea. Tape appropriate signs onto tables, set at locations as indicated on attached diagram.

Ladder: This goes over the "Taiya River" and should be climbed over using hands and feet. Lay out tarp, then old mat, then blue tarp (water) and add cut outs of fish and paper icebergs. Tape or stake sign for "Taiya River" at the beginning of the ladder climb. You may want a parent volunteer at this station.

Scales: Set up 4 or 5 stations with scales at Sheep Camp location. Each scale needs a parent volunteer with clip board and pen. Put "Sheep Camp" sign at this station. Place scales per diagram on map.

Trail Markers: Use contractors tape to mark the direction of the trail. Begin at the trampolines and follow the diagram through the playground.

Monkey Bars: Place "*The Ascent*" sign on bars with tape
Red Raised Tunnel: Place tarp down at exit point, place map over tarp

Doughnut Boulder: Stake sign "*Big Boulder*"

Switchbacks: Stake sign or attach with tape on one of the benches

Avalanche Warning: Stake sign at location as indicated on map

Glacial Crevasse: Tape sign to parallel bars as indicated on map

Big Toy: Stake "Golden Stairs" sign near SW corner of structure near the step/stair like area

Hula Hoops: Arrange according to diagram before last tunnel

Tunnel: (Under covered area) Place tarp down, mat on top, then tunnel on top
Rope Climb: Tape the "Summit" sign to the wall of the portable. Tie one end of the rope to the support at the base of the last portable. Extend rope down to the covered area so kids can have the "illusion" of pulling themselves up to the summit.

Provisions: At snack table per diagram set out small Dixie cups filled with trail mix, sourdough bread, sourdough mini pancakes and beverages. Pour out enough for each class as they finish the course.

OBJECTIVE: To provide students a hands-on experience to reenact the arduous ascent up the Chilkoot Pass.

MATERIALS: (Essential)

1. At least 2 Scales
2. One backpack per student
3. Canned goods/books/ other items to load into backpacks
4. [Class set of I.D. cards](#) (PDF)
5. Student's journals
6. Other items to create an obstacle course
7. Pens & Pencils
8. Trampoline
9. Contractor's tape
10. Tunnel
11. Rope (tug-of-war type)
12. 6-8 hula hoops
13. Station signs on posts labeled: *Sheep Camp Scales, The Ascent, Big Boulder, Switchbacks, Avalanche Warning, Glacial Crevasse, Golden Stairs, Summit, Provisions*
14. 2-3 tarps
15. 2-6' tables Snacks (trail mix, sourdough bread or mini-pancakes and cups of water or juice boxes)

Obstacle Course Suggestions

1. As many parent volunteers (to oversee each station and activity as students go through course, to set-up and cleanup)
2. Parent volunteers to act as guides through the course (each class is broken up into 2 groups)

TIME: 45 - 60 minutes