



Brightwater Site

Winter Survival – Brightwater Cooperative Group Challenge

Facilitator Notes:

This group challenge is a sequence of initiative tasks. Its purpose is to help students to develop cooperative teamwork skills through simulated situations of interdependence. The tasks encourage creative thinking, problem solving and leadership. The winter survival scenario ties the tasks together providing the group with a unifying purpose - to survive!

As a facilitator you must allow the group to solve each problem on their own without offering any assistance. Through negotiating, thinking, experimenting and even failing together, without outside assistance, the group will learn important lessons. So when you have the natural urge to step in and help, stop yourself.

You give them the parameters and make sure that they are staying within the rules of each task. If they fail, have the person that didn't make it or the whole group start again whichever seems appropriate for the task. Avoid being too punitive – as long as they are learning the group effectiveness skills the tasks are working so if they get away with a slight rule infraction here and there it is not a big deal.

You also monitor for safety. If they are getting too risky for your comfort, step in and say "Safety!" which will alert them to a problem. They must come up with the alternative. No hints or clues from the facilitator!

The 7 Group Challenges (they may not get to all 7)

1. Pass the Sunscreen
2. Escape from the Stalking Porcupines
3. Open Water
4. Geothermal Warm Up
5. Tree tunnel and Ice Cave
6. Snow-blind through the Clear-cut
7. Snow-blind Emergency Signal Set Up

Have fun watching them learn how to work together. At the end of the session, on the walk back to camp, have them think about what they learned. Ask them to think about and discuss the questions listed on the card entitled "*Preparing for the Reporters*".

Winter Survival – Brightwater Cooperative Group Challenge

Your group is an international research team that has discovered some amazing new information about global climate change by studying the northern environment.

But, some opponents to the research have stolen your vehicle, your equipment and all your supplies. They have left you to die in the harsh and treacherous winter wilderness to stop you from sharing your research with the world.

Your challenge is to get your whole team back to safety. (Each of the scientists in your research team must survive because they alone can explain their part of the discovery you have made). You must overcome eight challenges by using the strengths and abilities of all group members.

You face 7 Group Challenges (that everyone must survive)

1. Pass the Sunscreen
2. Escape from the Stalking Porcupines
3. Open Water
4. Geothermal Warm Up
5. The Ice Cave
6. Snow-blind through the Clear-cut
7. Snow-blind Emergency Signal Set up

Because of your research, the health and safety of the whole world depends on your survival! Good Luck!

Challenge #1 “Arctic Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Pass the Sunscreen

- Begin at **Sully Field**, the baseball diamond in the field by the parking lot/ swimming pool building. Read the scenario to the students. Then walk a bit adjacent to the ski trail following the grey wood signs with “Escape #” marked along the trail. **DO NOT WALK ON THE CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRAIL PLEASE.** Thanks.
- Your group must **pass around a special hoop that will help reduce the harm from UV rays. In the winter, UV rays can cause harmful burns from reflection off the snow.**
- You must all hold hands in a circle. Facilitator puts a hula hoop on each arm and joins the circle holding hands. The scientists need to pass the two different colored hoops in opposite directions around the circle. If you let go of hands, the special UV coating won't work. You know that sunscreen is as important in the desert as it is in the arctic due to effects of climate change!
- Your group challenge is to figure out how to pass the two hoops back to the starting people as quickly as possible without letting go of each other's hands.
- Good luck! Don't forget to bring the hoops with you for the next activity (#2), Escape from the Stalking Porcupines!

Challenge #2 “Arctic Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Escape from the Stalking Porcupines

Facilitator: Look for the wooden sign “Escape # 2” in the prairie, following the ski trail (yellow markers).

N. B. You need to bring two different colored hula hoops with you for this program and the blue fanny pack.

Set Up: Hands Frozen Together - The intruders have left you bound together in this way:

- form a **circle** (whole team)
- reach across the circle and hold the hand of one person with your right hand and another person with your left (not the people right beside you) [this is like the game ‘knots’]
- You must **continue to hold** those same hands **throughout this challenge**. (By the end of the challenge your hands will have melted apart)

Challenge: Stay Ahead of the Stalking Porcupines

- Starting **near Sully Field ball diamond**, your group must travel (with hands frozen together) across the field and into the repellant hula hoops.
- The protection from the hoops only lasts for **45 seconds**. After that, you could get scratched by the porcupines. The tasks is for everyone to get their feet into the hula hoops with hands still frozen together. So this is the way the group will move along the trail.
- **Repeat** same sequence to the second set of hula hoops.

Facilitator: If the group takes longer than 45 seconds, you must start again at the beginning or from the 1st hula-hoop if you reached it successfully. Take the hula hoops along with you, for extra sunscreen protection and because you will need them for next session.

Challenge #3 “Arctic Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Open Water

Facilitator: Continue parallel to the ski trail, past the bushes and take an immediate left into the large pit in the ground. Look for a bright blue tarp that covers the wood for this activity.

Your group must get across what you believe to be a water pit. In your fatigued state, you think that there might be very deep water in this pit. You are all aware of the psychological delusion that will result if you fall off into something other than water. But make sure you don't sink!!

Challenge: **Cross the deep water using Planks and Logs**

- Your group finds **4 planks** (that sink) and **5 logs** (that float) wrapped in a blue tarp.
- You must use these 9 pieces of wood to get across the water. If anyone should fall into the water, the participant must start again. [Facilitator: use your discretion.]
- The group must go across all together because the water level is rising and no one can be safely left behind on the banks. Watch out for the very rare cactus at the right hand edge of the pit. The cactus is actually known as Prickly Pear Cactus (and is not really that rare!) and is a source of liquid for dehydrated beings where there is no snow. It is also a source of pain due to the sharp leaves (spines).

Challenge #4 “Winter Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Geothermal Warmup

- Your group has discovered a natural geyser in the ground that blows up every now and then.
- Because the eruption causes a noxious sulfur fume, you must cross as soon as possible.

The Challenge:

- Each group member must balance on the wood (Two railway ties located to right of trail by aspen bluff).
- Falling off the log will harm your lungs due to the fumes.
- Each group member must also touch each end of the log (right hands must touch the right end, left hands touch the left end) to collect samples of the sulfur fumes for further research about medicinal uses of the gases...A tree that is fed with minute quantities of these fumes brings healing.
- Remember, everyone must stay on the log while each member moves to both ends.
- Facilitator: this game is also called ‘waltzing the log’ which might give the scientists a bit of a clue...
- Another option is that only the two end people switch places which will speed up the activity if time is an issue or it is cold.

Challenge #5 “Winter Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

The Ice Cave

- Your group must **pass through the ice cave** by following the path that passes between the red markers and then your entire group needs to pass through the beautiful ice windows. Facilitators: Do not tidy up the tunnel but moving branches out of the way please.

Part 1: The Frozen Branches

- Each person must get through the cave without contacting any of the frozen branches which support it.
- Any contact with any branch will shatter and collapse the cave, trapping your group inside.

Part 2: The Ice Windows

- Blocking the exit is a **sheet of ice** with small openings or windows. *This ice sheet cannot be broken or melted as it contains a lot of your scientific evidence and it is the only one of its kind in the world.*
- You must **pass through or over the windows** without breaking the fragile ice sheet (don't bump it!)
- Also, only two people may pass through each window (more than two through an opening would melt the ice.)
- The trees at the edge are part of the crystal structure so they cannot be climbed but can be held on to, if necessary

Head up the deer path along the trail to escape #6, with logs in the way.

Challenge #6 “Winter Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Snow-blind through the Clear-cut

- Between your group and safety is a stump-filled clear-cut (area of the forest that has been completely cleared of trees)
- Once group members step into the clear-cut area they are blinded by the glare from the snow. (Must be blindfolded)
- Still, each group member must make it through the field without contacting any of the stumps.
- One member of your team has a set of traditional Inuit goggles to protect eyes from the glare. The person with vision can verbally guide members through the clear cut. (Use snow goggles – blindfold that is raised)
- Another option is to give the snow goggles to students so they partner up, make up a secret verbal signal to ‘step forward’, ‘stop’, ‘step left’ etc. (choose wisely – read *Transition* below)

Transition – Blindfolded to the Final Challenge

After this challenge you remain snow blinded - unless you have the goggles on. Your group must work together to get to the final challenge. – Suggestion is to link hands and walk in a chain to the final escape challenge, #7

Challenge #7 “Winter Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Snow-blind Emergency Signal Set Up

- Now that your snow-blind group has reached this open rise near the abandoned settlement (with a number of aircraft flying in each day), **you must construct an emergency signal. A triangle signals to aircraft that it is safe to land here. You need to make that sign. Even the person with snow goggles on has become blinded.**
- You have rope to work with but you are still unable to open your eyes due to the snow’s glare. (all group members are blindfolded)
- **Challenge:**
- With everyone holding the rope, form a *perfect* triangle as an emergency signal. Once it is formed, hold it in place until you hear the sound of an aircraft which indicates that **you have survived!** If you *do not* hear the aircraft sound, then your shape is not a perfect triangle. (the facilitator will make the aircraft sound)
- ***Once successful, read “*Preparing for the Reporters*” as you walk back to civilization.**

Challenge Debriefing “Winter Survival” Brightwater Group Challenge Series

Preparing for the Reporters (reflect on your experience)

Now that you have survived and are walking back to civilization, a pack of reporters from around the world is waiting for you. You should think and talk about how you will answer the following questions:

- **What allowed your group to be successful in your quest for survival?**
- **How will you use what you have learned during this ordeal in the rest of your life back in civilization?**
- **How did you feel about the way your group approached each challenge?**
- **What was the most memorable highlight from your group’s performance?**
- **What is the funniest blooper from your group’s performance?**
- **If you could have been granted one wish during your ordeal, what would it have been? Why would you have made this wish?**
- **What are you going to do now that you are back in civilization?**