

Christodora- Manice Education Center



Field Trip Lessons 2011



The Manice Education Center offers hands-on field based lessons within our 85 acres of natural wooded ecosystems. We are expanding upon subjects learned in the classroom through physical exposure and inquiry centered exploration.

Below you will find lessons and activities that are offered for spring and fall field trips to the Manice Education Center.

There are two selection options:

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### Let us assist you!

Knowledgeable and experienced MEC educators are happy to design your field trip for you. Please notify us by email at [manice@christodora.org](mailto:manice@christodora.org) or calling 413-663-8463 as soon as possible, yet at least **2 full weeks in advance of your departure date to MEC** so we can focus on developing your dynamic educational experience.

OR

### Design your own experience!

**Lesson selection directions:** If you wish to make selections to design your school's adventure, we respectfully request that you submit your selections at least **2 full weeks in advance of your departure date to MEC** to ensure our educators will have ample time to prepare for your group. **(submit page 2 to MEC via email or fax).** We will schedule your selections for you, based on our staffing, logistics, and our experience. Please read the field trip lesson selections on page 3 & 4 and view the enclosed sample schedule. Please understand late submissions may not be honored; our educators will proceed in planning your experience.

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Depending on resource availability, other lessons may be designed or chosen to compliment or expand upon school requirements & needs, or to build off of lessons that were brought to you through the Christodora Winter Ecology Program. Lessons are subject to change depending on our staff and environmental conditions; we will notify you of these changes.

We strongly encourage you to call the Manice Education Center directly at 413.663.8463 so that we may help you design a safe, rewarding, and enriching experience for your school group.

MEC Field Trip Lesson Selection Form 2010

Lesson summaries available on following pages.

Please remember to submit this form to MEC no later than 2 weeks prior to your trip via fax (413-663-5399) or email (manice@christodora.org).

Earlier submission is preferable!

CHOOSE TRIP FOCUS

Below you will find suggested itinerary selections to assist you in deciding which focus you wish your school group to experience. If you prefer different options, please feel free to discuss a specifically tailored trip by contacting MEC.

→ Academic Field Experience Focus

Choose: TWO from group B
AND ONE from Group B or C

→ Leadership Focus

Choose: ONE from Group A
AND ONE from Group B
AND ONE from Group C

GROUP A

Team Building/Leadership Experiences:

- Group Initiatives
- Low Challenge Course
- Controversy/Consensus Exercise
- Peer Leadership Practicum
- Conflict Resolution & Negotiation
- Environmental Debate

- Canoeing (weather dependant)

GROUP B

Academic Field Experiences:

Environmental Science & Awareness

- Forest Ecology
- Tree/Plant Identification
- Edible Plants
- Wildlife Search
- Geology
- Soil Formation/Sampling
- River Ramble
- Wetlands Exploration
- Sensory Awareness
- Organic Gardening

Adventure

- Woodland Survival
- Wilderness Skills
- Map and Compass/Orienteering
- Trail Work (need dependant)

GROUP C

Large Group Activities:

- The Beast
- Web-of-Life
- Mine Field (new)
- Other
(newly designed activity for your group)

Evening Activities

MEC schedules these activities for each trip.

Night Hikes: A fun and educational

series of sensory night activities designed to better acquaint students with the forest at night.

Night Games: Active group games for our whole class outside in the field. Some are designed to reinforce the day's learning. Some are for just plain fun!!

Campfire Program: Our instructional staff will lead a campfire program of games, stories, songs and skits & process your field trip experience while enjoying the delectable "smore".

MEC Field Trip Selection Descriptions

ACADEMIC FIELD EXPERIENCES:

Ecology and Awareness:

- Forest Ecology: A hands on introduction to forest components (ferns, mosses, fungi, herbs, shrubs and trees) and processes (succession, adaptation, energy flow and nutrient cycling).
- Tree/Plant ID: A series of hands on activities designed to introduce students to woodland vascular and non-vascular plants and methods of identification including dichotomous keys.
- Edible Plants: Students will seek out edible and medicinal plants. Native American and early American settler lore is often related to help identify plants by name and uses.
- Wildlife Search: A search party for animal tracks and traces. May include the dissection of rotting logs, observation solos, wildlife games of plaster casting of animal prints.
- Geology & Soils: Discover how weathering, erosion and decomposition contribute to soil makeup. Games, observation, examination of soil samples, and other exercises introduce students to geologic processes.
- River Ramble: Learn about watersheds, mountain stream/river water ecology while hiking along or in a nearby mountain stream or river. Water testing equipment may be used to learn how different qualities affect various types of aquatic life.
- Wetland Exploration: This lesson involves direct observation of various aquatic habitats (including our resident beavers) and use nets to collect and identify small aquatic creatures

such as frogs, tadpoles, crustaceans and insect larvae. Water testing equipment may be used to learn how different qualities affect various types of aquatic life.

Organic Gardening: Students participate in gardening activities. May include composting, fence building, planting, soil preparation or the harvesting of crops.

Sensory Awareness: A series of activities and games in which students use their five senses to explore the natural world.

Adventure:

Woodland Survival: Students will be taught basic survival principles by using games and hands-on experience constructing shelters, campfires, and finding edible plants. Focuses on decision-making skills that can help you survive in challenging conditions.

Adventure cont.:

Wilderness Skills: Learn Leave No Trace principles and how to apply them. Discuss judgment and decision making for the casual outdoor enthusiast and how this affects safety. What do you need to have a safe and enjoyable hike? How do you maximize your opportunity to see wildlife?

Map and Compass: Students are taught to identify map symbols, pacing, and how to orient a map before following bearings through the forest on a course designed with consideration of time and difficulty level.

Trail Work: How do trail crews create these trails? Get a chance to help maintain our local trails.

Canoeing: This introductory lesson includes both dry land training and practice paddling on our pond. Students learn use of safety equipment, proper stroke and basic maneuvers. We require that all persons wear personal floatation devices on the water. A certified lifeguard always supervises each group. An alternative selection may be implemented in the event of undesirable weather conditions.

Large Group Activities:

Web-of-Life: Following clue cards through the forest, students identify and discover certain essential forest elements/processes. Culminates in webbing these "items" together to demonstrate natural interdependencies.

The "Beast": Working in teams, students develop their communication skills by attempting to re-create the Beast. A zany twist on the "Telephone" game where time, information and resources are limited. Tests any group's patience, teamwork and creativity. Best for mature groups.

Mine Field: Working in teams and pairs, students will lead each other through an obstacle course. Designed to process the importance of effective communication, focus, and teamwork amidst chaos.

Other: Our staff will design and activity based on your group dynamics.