



Tree Tops High Ropes Pre-visit

Classroom Activity

Brief Synopsis

Eagle Bluff's Ropes course is designed to encourage participants to step out of their comfort zone and take a safe risk. Students will prepare for this unique experience by recognizing their own fears and challenges and take deliberate steps to set an attainable goal in order to promote personal growth.

Ages: Designed for 4th–8th grade.

Time Considerations: 20 minutes per/activity.

Materials: 3 Ropes (25'), Post-It-Notes, Pencils, Tree Tops Goal Setting Worksheet.

Vocabulary: Comfort zone, Goals, Anxiety, Fear, Failure.

Outcomes:

1. Students will define comfort zone.
2. Students will identify activities or situations which trigger an anxiety response.
3. Students will write a personal goal for the ropes course.

Minnesota Academic Standards:

Language Arts:

4.III.A, 5.II.A, 5.II.B, 5.III.A

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Activity 1: On The Move

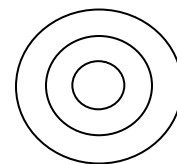
Background: Personal growth occurs only when a person moves out of their comfort zone and into the unknown to face a new experience or challenge. A person's comfort zone is a behavioral state in which a person operates in an anxiety neutral condition. Our comfort zone feels safe and familiar. Yet in order to enrich our lives, it is necessary to step out of our comfort zone and enter the learning zone. Often, deciding to take the first step can be the hardest.

Eagle Bluff's ropes course is designed to safely encourage students to move beyond their comfort zone. Students will encounter fear and anxiety as they attempt the course. That is okay. Moving beyond our comfort zone isn't easy, but every time we push through and live out of our comfort zone, we will never be the same!

Materials: 3 ropes approx 25', post-it-notes, pencils.

Procedures:

1. Introduce the concept of a comfort zone to the students.
2. Distribute 5 Post-it-Notes to each student. Each student will write down five examples or situations that they have experienced which make them uncomfortable. Experiences can be related to school, home life, sports teams, peers, physical challenges, work, etc...
3. List these general categories for the experiences on large butcher paper or use a class board. Students will place each of their Post-it-Notes under the appropriate category.
4. Select a handful of "experiences" that seem to be a common thread among your students. You may also choose from the list on the following page or create your own.
5. Lay out three ropes representing the three levels of comfort. Each rope will form a circle, with a smaller rope circle within. Explain the meaning of each circle.
 - **Inner Circle** = Comfort Zone: little to no stress or anxiety, very comfortable
 - **Middle Circle** = Learning Zone: some stress or anxiety, moderately uncomfortable
 - **Outer Circle** = Anxiety Zone: high stress or anxiety, very uncomfortable
6. To begin, students will stand outside of the outer rope. Read off 8-12 different experiences. As each situation is read, students will move between the circles and stand in the circle that represents their comfort level for that specific experience. This activity is done best with little talking.





- Engage the students in a class discussion determining the benefits of trying new things even though that situation may be uncomfortable.

Discussion Questions:

- Define the difference between a comfort zone and a learning zone?
- What are some reasons we hold back from moving beyond our comfort zone?
- What benefits will you receive when you purposely move beyond your comfort zone?
- What fears might you encounter when attempting Eagle Bluff's Tree Tops Ropes Course? How might you react?

Activity 2: Tree Tops Goal Setting

Background: Setting goals to overcome a fear or challenge is an excellent method to move from the anxiety/learning zone into the comfort zone. Learning how to set reasonable and attainable goals is a valuable lesson for people of all ages. Keep in mind a goal is something that is important to you personally. It must be something that you can make happen through your actions. You must have a reasonable chance of attaining this goal. Lastly the goal itself must be clear and defined with a specific set of actions.

Eagle Bluff's Ropes Course is a challenge by choice. Students will choose how far they will travel on the course. Setting a personal Tree Top's goal may make the difference between attempting the course to completing the course!

Materials: Tree Tops Goal Setting worksheet, pencils, information on Eagle Bluff's ropes course.

Procedures:

- Spend a few minutes describing Eagle Bluff's Ropes Course to the students. If you have never been to Eagle Bluff, use the resources listed under teacher tips to better familiarize yourself with the course.
- As a class, brainstorm some challenges students may encounter when attempting the course. Write these challenges on the board.
- Distribute a Goal Setting worksheet to each student. Explain the steps of writing a goal.
- Once completed, form small groups of 3-4 students to share personal goals.

Extension:

- Use a student from a past year to describe the course to your students.

Discussion Questions:

- What is the difference between a wish and goal?
- Have you ever set a goal that you did not reach? What happened? How did it make you feel? What did you learn?
- Is it ever okay to take risks? What risks are okay to take? What risks would not be okay to take?
- What role can you play to help another student through the ropes course? What is the difference between positive encouragement and put downs?

Teacher Tips:

- Example of Experiences for Activity #1**

Giving an oral report

Making new friends

Trying out for a sports team

Saying no to negative peer pressure

Approaching parents on an important issue

Interviewing for a job

Standing up for what you believe is right

Singing out loud

Giving someone 1st aid or CPR

- If you do not have rope for activity #1, use sidewalk chalk, chairs, playground equipment, etc...
- Setting goals for the Tree Tops experience will be most effective if reviewed just before arriving to Eagle Bluff. Your group will be assigned to one of the three ropes courses at Eagle Bluff. Each course has its own unique challenges to overcome.
 - The course is approximately 35 feet high.*
 - Students will wear a harness, helmet, and safety straps and be connected to the course at all times.*
 - Students will have a ground partner who will encourage and watch for safety.*
 - Students will walk through the course encountering different elements to cross (i.e. bridge, log, single wire...)*
 - Elements will gradually increase in difficulty as the student progresses and arrives at the zip line.*

Additional Resources:

<http://eagle-bluff.org>

Contains additional information regarding Eagle Bluff's ropes course and contact information.

You tube videos: Created by students/teachers attending Eagle Bluff. "Eagle Bluff Ropes Course 0001", "EB South Ropes Course Zip Line"

<http://www.goodcharacter.com/BCBC/Goals.html> Student activities focused on goal setting.

<http://charactercounts.org/resources/links.html> Barbra White: Beyond Better Development A website containing numerous links to organizations who aim to develop character education and youth development.

Tree Top's Goal Setting Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: When you attend Eagle Bluff ELC you will be participating in the Tree Tops Ropes Course class. The ropes course is a series of towers, cables, and bridges you must cross. For some students, attempting the ropes course can be challenging. You will be more successful in completing the ropes course if you set a goal. After reviewing the ropes course with your teacher and classmates complete the following steps in goal setting.

Four Steps to Goal Setting

1. Define the goal.
2. Outline the steps needed to achieve it.
3. Identify possible roadblocks and ways of dealing with them.
4. Set a deadline.

1

What Is Your Goal?

2

Outline The Steps You Will
Need To Take

3

What Will Be The
Roadblocks?

1.

2.

3.

4

When is the Deadline?