

# A La Carte Lesson Menu

## **If you have chosen A la Carte, please:**

1. Select one of the five themes from the boxes at the bottom of the page. (Many of the *A La Carte* lessons cover more than one theme.)
2. Turn to the section in this handout with the matching theme printed at the top.
3. Select appealing lessons listed under that theme that suit your curriculum needs. Grade level, time needed for each lesson, and a brief description is provided to help you choose lessons. The Program Manager will contact you to discuss your choices and advise you on your program.
4. If you have selected an overnight visit choose your evening programs from the “**Evening Programming**” page and check the appropriate box on your “**Program Planning Form.**”
5. Visit the CWES website for **pre-visit activities** at [www.uwsp.edu/cwes](http://www.uwsp.edu/cwes). Click on the “School Programs” link. Pre and Post Activities can be found under specific programs.

We will add theme related openers, closers, and games breaks (time permitting) to provide a well-rounded and integrated program for your students.

**If you have chosen Wisconsin Forestree, Changing of the Land, or Winter Ecology**, you have chosen a unit-based educational program and no additional choices are necessary.

However, if you would prefer to make substitutions, suggested lessons are indicated by:



*Wisconsin Forestree*,



*Changing of the Land*, and



for *Winter Ecology*

### Themes

- **EARTH EXPLORERS**-Excite your students about the environment! Students participate in hands-on and sensory awareness activities that help students in their first explorations of the environment. **K-3<sup>rd</sup> grades**
- **ADAPTATIONS**-All organisms have their own special adaptations. Students explore traits that help plants and animals survive in their unique environments. **K-12<sup>th</sup> grades**
- **WATER RESOURCES**-Explore the variety of aquatic environments around CWES. Students study water resources, including pond organisms, lake ecology, and ground water. **7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades**

The lessons in the following two themes can be mixed with any other themes where age appropriate. For example, you can choose the Adaptation theme, two adaptation lessons, and **one Outdoor Skill Development lesson.**

- **OUTDOOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT**- Challenge your students to develop a new outdoor passion. Immerse yourself and your students in the environment around CWES while learning some lifelong skills. **4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades**
- **HUMAN INTERACTIONS**- Problem solving as a team is an important skill necessary for resolving environmental and everyday issues. Your students will learn to work together and will also gain trust in themselves and others, self-confidence, and self-esteem. **5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades**

# Earth Explorers      Grades K-3

## Colorful Confusion

Grade Levels: 1-4                      45 minutes-1 hour

Students will learn how coloration helps to hide an animal or draw attention to its niche in an animal community. Using model animals and various habitats around CWES, the students examine which animals are best camouflaged for survival in specific habitats. The concepts of warning, disruptive, advertising and false eye spot coloration will be introduced to older students.

## Feathered Friends

Grade Levels: K-2                      45 minutes-1 hour

What makes a bird a bird? Discover the interesting adaptations of birds. Your students will make their own bird and then head out on the trails in search of our Feathered Friends.

## Leaps and Bounds

Grade Levels: K-2                      45 minutes-1 hour

Slink, slither, hop, and stomp through this lesson about how animals move. Students will learn about different types of movements and how they help animals survive in its environment.

## Micro-World, Macro-WOW!

Grade Levels: K-3                      45 minutes-1 hour

Students search out and examine the small creatures and their roles in nature's micro-world. They will explore the basic needs for survival of microorganisms and compare these needs to those of larger organisms. **Warm months only.**

## Pond Study

Grade Levels: K-6                      1-1½ hours

Students explore a pond community by locating, collecting, and identifying pond animals. They also examine the role of each animal in the pond food web and some adaptations aquatic animals have for living in their watery environment. **Warm months only.**

## Spring Fling

Grade Levels: K-2                      45 minutes-1 hour

Students will "sense" their way into spring through hands-on discovery activities. Exploration of soil texture, temperature, and smells, as well as, colors and shapes of natural objects will enhance your student's observational skills. **Springtime only.**

## Survival Lessons from Nature \*

Grade Levels: 1-4                      45 minutes-1 hour

The students will observe how animals survive winter through conservation of heat energy and storage of food. They will compare how humans use these lessons from nature in our daily lives. An outdoor miniature shelter building activity allows creativity and puts their newly learned information to the test. **Cold months only.**

# Adaptations      Grades K-12

## Beaver Adaptations

Grade Levels: 4-7      1 hour

Through an explorative hike and a dress-up activity students learn about beavers and their many adaptations. Behavioral and physical adaptations will be examined while searching for beaver signs along the shore of Minister Lake.

## Becoming a Bird Expert

Grade Levels: 6-12      1-1 ½ hours

During this lesson students will learn how to identify common Wisconsin birds by their key field marks. The students will start out in the classroom learning the names of bird body parts, what field marks are and how they can be helpful in bird identification. In groups the students will become experts in one Wisconsin bird and explain the field marks of that bird to the class. The students will then go on a birding hike to identify as many birds as they can using the field marks they just learned.

## Colorful Confusion

Grade Levels: 1-4      45 minutes-1 hour

Students will learn how coloration helps to hide an animal or draw attention to its niche in an animal community. Using model animals and various habitats around CWES, the students examine which animals are best camouflaged for survival in specific habitats. The concepts of warning, disruptive, advertising and false eye spot coloration will be introduced to older students.

## Forest For the Trees

Grade Levels: 2-6      1 hour

Students discover what makes trees and forests special. After investigating tree characteristics, students explore the forest and its distinct layers. **Warm months only.**



## Have Seed Will Travel

Grade Levels: 3-5      1 hour

Students will discover the function and importance of plant seeds. Methods of seed dispersal as a plant adaptation are emphasized in this lesson. Students will invent a seed that could be dispersed by one of the methods. Comparisons to actual seeds will be made and implications of the adaptations discussed.



## How Birds Make a Living

Grade Levels: 3-5      1 hour

Students become hungry birds and feed in different habitats with specialized beaks. Their experience of trying to “feed” in these different habitats using special tools helps students understand how beak adaptations help birds survive. Quiet exploration of the Environmental Station reveals birds in their habitats.

## Laws of Nature

Grade Levels: 4-12      1-1½ hours

What principles govern the natural world? Do humans follow these principles? Students will be introduced to four “Laws of Ecology” and have a chance to prove them wrong/right. Students apply the four laws to the data gathered from an active game illustrating the concept of bioaccumulation.



### Pond Study

Grade Levels: K-6                      1-1½ hours

Students explore a pond community by locating, collecting, and identifying pond animals. They also examine the role of each animal in the pond food web and some adaptations aquatic animals have for living in their watery environment. **Warm months only.**

### Skullduggery

Grade Levels: 4-8      1 hour

Blindfolded students will be introduced to an array of mammal skulls. Using a dichotomous key, students discover the secret identity of their animal. A variety of different skull adaptations will be discussed, especially those relating to the structures and functions of different types of teeth.

### Sound Surveillance

Grade Levels: 6-12    1-1 ½ hours

Students will enhance their listening skills as they begin to use sound to distinguish birds from other sounds in the forest, and tell the difference between individual bird calls. They will begin to learn ways to remember bird calls and use the calls as a tool for identification while out on a birding hike.

## Water Resources                      Grades 7-12

### Bottom's Up

Grade Levels: 7-12                      1-1½ hours

Students investigate the thermal stratification of a temperate lake. By measuring temperature, dissolved oxygen, and light penetration, they will draw a profile of the lake, plot each factor and determine which part of the annual cycle the lake is in. The effect stratification has on the biotic community will be discussed as well as how humans can affect stratification.

### Pond Power

Grade Levels: 7-12                      1 –1½ hours

Students explore a pond community by locating, collecting, and identifying pond animals. They examine the adaptations of each animal and their role in the pond food web. They will develop an energy flow pyramid for the pond by collecting and categorizing various pond organisms. **Warm months only.**

# Outdoor Skills Development

# Grades 4-12

You can choose these lessons on their own as a theme or incorporate them as part of any of the other themes where age appropriate.

## Canoeing



Grade Levels 6-12     1 ½-2 hours

Students will learn the basics of canoeing while paddling the shores of Sunset Lake. After reviewing canoe and paddle parts and techniques, the students will practice their skills while learning some of the geologic and natural history of Sunset Lake. During inclement weather, another lesson will be chosen.

## Cooperative Compass (Outdoor activity)



Grade Levels: 5-12     1-1½ hours

Students participate in a physically active orienteering exercise. After reviewing basic compass and pacing techniques, students will rely on their teamwork and orienteering skills to complete an off-trail compass course. **Long pants and closed toed shoes are a must.**

## Map and Compass Skills (Indoor activity)



Grade Levels: 6-12     1-1½ hours

Using a map scavenger hunt, students learn how to locate land features on a map, how to measure distances between two points on a map, and how to plot a course on a map with a compass. This is a great extension to basic orienteering skills learned previously or in conjunction with *Cooperative Compass*.

## Global Positioning Systems

Grade Levels: 6-12     1-1½ hours

Students will learn the basics of global positioning system (GPS) units. After mastering the basic GPS concepts and techniques, students will complete a geocaching activity. This is a another extension to basic orienteering skills learned previously or in conjunction with *Cooperative Compass*.

## Nature Journaling



Grade Levels: 4-8     1-1½ hours

After creating their own journals, students use them as a tool for closely observing the natural world and reflecting on their personal connection with the environment. Through writing and drawing, they develop critical and creative thinking skills, build awareness and knowledge, and reflect on their values in relation to the environment at CWES.

## Snow Walkers





Grade Levels: 4-12     1 hour

After learning about the history and types of snowshoes, students will experience them by tromping through the woods. They also discuss winter survival adaptations for animals. Exploring CWES by snowshoe will give your students a unique perspective on the world of winter. **Winter months. If snow cover is inadequate another lesson will be substituted.**

# Human Interactions



# Grades 5-12

You can choose these lessons on their own as a theme or incorporate them as part of any of the other themes where age appropriate.

Challenge Course  

Grade Levels: 6-12      2-3 hours

The Challenge Course is a team-building course that allows students to develop their skills as productive, cooperative team members. Utilizing trust, communication, cooperation, and problem solving skills, students will overcome physical and mental challenges. Frequent group discussions relate their experiences to life beyond CWES, and connect to team skills needed at home, school, and in their futures. **Available upon request and to overnight groups only. Challenge Course requires additional time and student preparation that cannot be accommodated in a one-day program. See Group Initiatives below for an alternative.**

Group Initiatives  

Grade Levels: 5-12      1-2 hours

Teamwork leads your students to success! As a group, students participate in activities that challenge them both mentally and physically. Through these challenges and the ensuing discussion they learn the importance of communication, cooperation, trust, and problem-solving skills in their every day lives.

Resource Management Role Play  

Grade Levels: 5-12      1-1½ hours

Students role-play resource managers in a land use planning activity. In this simulation, a section of land requires management for water, timber, wildlife, and recreation resources. Teams of students develop their public speaking skills by presenting their plan to the rest of the group. They will then problem solve and compromise with other teams in order to meet the needs of all the managers.

# Evening Programming

Our typical evening program consists of an animal program, followed by a night hike or campfire.

## Hoo Gives a Hoot

Grade Levels: 4-12                      1 hour

Students are introduced to owls and their nighttime adaptations. Compare and contrast owls to hawks and discover the special adaptations of these magnificent creatures through sensory activities. A dress-up activity allows for teachers to get involved if inspired!

## “Loon”ey Tunes

Grade Levels: 4-8                      1 hour

Students become familiar with the common loon and its adaptations for surviving in its watery environment. Students listen to the loon’s calls and view slides of its habitat. A dress-up activity allows for teachers to get involved if inspired!

## Baffling Beaver                      1 – 1 ½ hours

Grade Levels: 4-12

Students will be introduced to the world of beavers. They will learn a little bit about the history of the beaver, its adaptations and lifestyle. Inside, students will see some amazing beaver pictures and get to touch real beaver pelts and skulls. Outside, the students will become beaver detectives looking for signs of beaver activity, and examining a real life beaver lodge at Minister Lake. Note: This is a great program is you are not doing the Beaver Adaptations lesson.

## Bald Eagles of Wisconsin 1 hour

Grade Levels: 4-12

The Bald Eagle is our national symbol and might actually be seen at CWES during your stay. Learn about the natural history and get a chance to touch replica skulls and talons. A hands-on nest building activity will teach your students how humans affect this amazing raptor.

## Stars and Stories

Grade Levels: 4-8                      1 hour

Experience the stories behind the constellations! This evening program includes hands-on activities designed to unravel the mysteries of space. Depending upon weather, you might be able to step outside and see some astronomical marvels.

## Night Hike

Grade Levels: 4-12                      30-45 minutes

Students experience the night world by hiking in small groups and performing various sensory activities. They learn about nocturnal animals, experience their own night vision, and, hopefully, begin to feel comfortable about being outside in the dark.

## Campfire

Grade Levels: 4-12                      45 minutes –1½ hours

After a full day of learning, let your students relax and have a little fun. The CWES staff will entertain your students through songs and skits. Students and teachers are encouraged to get in on the action.