

CHOOSE YOUR OWN CANOE ADVENTURE

6th-8th Grade Discussion Guide

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SCIENCE CATEGORIES

Life Science

TIMEFRAME

Two to Three Class Periods

MATERIALS

[Choose Your Own Adventure Scenarios](#)

KEYWORDS

Canoe, Hypothermia, Personal Flotation Device, Float Plan



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Articulate the procedures required to take a canoe trip.
- Compare a written text to a video clip for similarities and differences of information.
- Write a narrative including real-world facts.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Students will explore how to be prepared for adventure on the water and safe in the event of an accident. They will specifically look at canoeing as one example of a water sport and the necessary safety precautions. After watching the video clip, students will think-pair-share a collective list of the safety precautions to consider when canoeing.

Then students will read a canoe safety checklist blog and engage in a compare/contrast activity between the video and blog culminating in a collaborative writing project.

Students will then take what they have learned about canoe safety to collaboratively write a choose your own adventure narrative for a younger audience. This will also act as a teaching moment for the rare 2nd person point of view writing style. Finally, students will apply their knowledge of canoe safety to other forms of water recreation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Part of having fun on the water is being prepared and staying safe.

There are many fun ways to enjoy the water like kayaking, windsurfing, sailing, canoeing, boating, wakeboarding and dock fishing. There are different safety standards for each activity so it is important to do your research first.

This video covers canoeing as an example of safety steps to take when enjoying the water. First, always be sure each passenger has a PFD, each canoe has a throwable flotation device and that you bring an extra paddle. Make sure you have a float plan and share it with someone. For canoeing, the more experienced paddler should sit in the back to be in charge of steering. They should also hold the canoe steady while the front paddler enters the boat. By walking on the centerline of the boat, it will stay steady. Also keep three points of contact, like both feet and a hand while staying low to the boat.

If you and your partner flip a canoe, the first thing to determine is if you can swim the canoe to shore or a shallow area to turn it upright. If you are unable to get to shore, try to flag someone down to help flip the canoe. If no one is around, then you and your partner can try to upright the boat where it is. Flipping a canoe and reentering in water is a skill that should be learned and practiced. If you or your partner don't have this skill level, you may want to abandon the canoe and head for shore. This may also be a good option if you are in cold water, dangerous weather is present or the tide is going out. You can then get help to retrieve your canoe.

VOCABULARY

CANOE: A narrow boat with pointed ends, propelled by a paddle or paddles.

PFDs: Personal Flotation Device, a life jacket or similar buoyancy aid.

HYPOTHERMIA: The condition of having an abnormally low body temperature, typically one that is dangerously low.



LEARNING PROCEDURE

Instructor states: "We've learned a lot about the different considerations of using a canoe safely. Let's collectively generate a list of both the tools and actions someone should take when planning a canoe trip. We'll start with a think-pair-share. With a partner, see how many of the safety considerations you can remember from the video. I'll ask each partner to share one example."

Instructors should be prepared to collect responses visually to be used for future activities. This could be done on an anchor chart or whiteboard. Continue soliciting responses from partners until you have gathered all the responses. (See list for reference below)

- Every passenger is wearing a PFD
- A whistle is attached to the PFD
- There is an extra paddle in the boat
- A float plan has been written and shared with someone
- The canoe has a throwable flotation device
- The experienced paddler sits in the back
- When you get in the canoe walk down the center seam and maintain three points of contact



ACTIVITY 1:

Say: "We had a chance to see several canoe safety considerations in the video clip. Let's take a minute to dig into a [blog post](#) that also covers canoe safety. While individually reading the blog, take notes using a simple t-chart with one side of the t listing those things that were similar in both the video and blog and the right side those things that were unique."

After students have individually read and created a t-chart, ask them to formulate, in small groups, a paragraph comparing and contrasting the two media using sentence stems.

Compare:

1. _____ and _____ both slow _____.
2. _____ and _____ are alike in that they both _____.
3. _____ and _____ all show _____.
4. Likewise, both are _____.
5. Similarly, _____ and _____ are _____.
6. In the same way, _____ and _____ are _____.

Contrast:

1. _____ is _____, while _____ is _____.
2. _____ is _____, but _____ is _____.
3. _____ and _____ are different in that _____.
4. While _____ shows _____, _____ shows _____.
5. _____ is _____, on the other hand _____ is _____.
6. _____, yet _____.
7. Although _____, _____.

After the groups have finished their paragraphs say, "Given your new learning, are there any new safety considerations you would like to add to our group list?"

ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that as a class they will be writing a choose your own adventure book to help teach younger classes canoe safety. It will be helpful to take some time to explain how choosing your own adventure texts work before beginning the project.

In a choose your own adventure book the main character, or protagonist, is the reader. This means that you will use a rare point of view, 2nd person point of view.



In using this point of view, you will use “you” to designate the main character. Throughout the story, you will have choices to make which could change the course of the story. In the case of our story there will be one good choice and one poor decision. If the reader chooses the poor decision, they will be prompted to return to the storyline and choose the correct decision.

We will be writing a story about two characters who have decided to take a canoe trip. One of these characters will be the reader and the other will be a passenger in a canoe.

NOTE: At this point the instructor will want to decide if they write a brief introduction to set the scene, assign this task to a student or write it collectively as a whole class. Once the introduction is established, you can share an example of what each partner will be responsible for.

Returning to the list of safety practices and tools. Say: “Each group will be assigned one tool or action to write both a good decision and a poor choice. Let’s take a look at PFDs as an example.”

Page 1 You couldn’t find any PFDs near the canoe so you...

Group 1: Choose to go canoeing without a PFD (Pg. X)

Group 1: Return to the rental shop and ask for a PFD (Pg. Z)

Say: “Once you are assigned a scenario you will be tasked with writing one chapter of our collective narrative. Although this is narrative writing, it should be realistic and take into account what you have learned about canoe safety. Let’s continue with an abbreviated example for our PFDs.”

Group 1: Choose to go canoeing without a PFD (Pg. X)

You have decided to head out onto the water without your PFDs. Everything is going great and you are having a wonderful time. The sun is out and there are few clouds in the sky. A Blue Heron just flew overhead and you can see some fish swimming in the clear waters. The water is calm and still and your canoe moves swiftly and smoothly over the surface. Then from around the corner a speed boat pulling a water skier comes into view. The large boat creates a wake and the wave hits the side of the canoe. It startles you and you move the paddle to face the canoe into the wake, but your canoe partner chooses to paddle in the opposite direction. This movement combined with the wave tips the canoe over throwing both you and your partner into the water. It all happened so suddenly. You accidentally swallow water and come up gasping for breath. You begin to panic. Fortunately, the driver of the speedboat saw the canoe flip and was able to rescue both you and your partner, but it could have gone much worse. You learned a valuable lesson to always wear a PFD while canoeing. Return to page 1.

Group 1: Return to the rental shop and ask for a PFD (Pg. Z)

You and your partner were both given a coast guard approved PFD and the worker ensured that they fit properly. You headed off to the lake. Everything is going great and you are having a wonderful time. The sun is out and there are few clouds in the sky. A Blue Heron just flew overhead and you can see some fish swimming in the clear waters. The water is calm and still and your canoe moves swiftly and smoothly over the surface.



Then, from around the corner, a speedboat pulling a water skier comes into view. The large boat creates a wake and the wave hits the side of the canoe. It startles you and you move the paddle to face the canoe into the wake, but your canoe partner paddles the opposite direction. This movement combined with the wave tips the canoe over throwing both you and your partner into the water. It all happened so suddenly. Even though it was startling, the PFD keeps you and your canoe partner above the water. You are not far from shore so you make a plan to swim the canoe towards shore until you can both touch the lake bottom. Once you are both able to touch, you carefully flip the canoe upright and are able to get back in. You check your gear, take a moment to let the sun dry you off, and continue on your adventure.

At this point the instructor can assign each partner a scenario linked [here](#). Note that if you added more safety considerations to the class list following activity one, you may want to develop scenarios to match them. It may be worth reminding the groups that they will be writing for a younger audience.

CONCLUSION

You don't have to sacrifice fun for safety. What are some ways you can practice safe water sport fun?

Say: "Think of water sports other than canoeing. What are some other safety precautions you might take that are different from those we learned about today." Provide each student with a sticky note that will act as an exit ticket. Encourage students to stick their notes on a visible surface as they exit the classroom (or transition to another activity). If you continue with the 2nd water safety activity, this visual will provide a good connection to prior learning.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

- Have students research a nearby waterway they would like to explore by canoe. After charting a route, invite students to complete a USCG float plan found in the related links.
- As a class use the related link on how PFDs save lives and engage in a group or partner discussion using a protocol.
- Based on the new learning, have students create a multiple-choice quiz for their peers.
- Research the history of canoes and safety.

RELATED LINKS

- Required gear for different watercrafts: https://www.usps.org/national/vsc/conductvsc_files/USCGMinReq_2012.pdf or <https://www.skisafe.com/blog/Entry/2/uscg-requirements-for-recreational-vessels#:~:text=Recreational%20vessels%20are%20required%20to,is%20needed%20in%20international%20waters.>

- License requirements for different types of large vessels: <https://trlmi.com/u-s-coast-guard-captains-license-credential-requirements-oupv-up-to-100-gt/#:~:text=Must%20be%20at%20least%2018,years%20of%20when%20you%20apply.>

or <https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=054-09&category=captainslicense-info>



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

- Public boating courses people could take: <https://wow.uscgaux.info/peclass.php?unit=054-09>
- Statistics on how PFDs save lives <https://www.ul.com/news/statistics-show-personal-flotation-devices-help-save-lives>
- USCG Float Plan: <https://floatplancentral.cgaux.org/download/USCGFloatPlan.pdf>

The following National Common Core Standards can be met teaching;

CHOOSE YOUR OWN CANOE ADVENTURE

4TH GRADE

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.4** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pacedescriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

5TH GRADE

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.4** Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

6TH GRADE

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.



7TH GRADE

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.4

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

8TH GRADE

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.4

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

9-10 GRADE

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.



Educational Partners:



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11-12 GRADE

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.