Ice Age Trekking Script

Exploring the science of nature often involves an outdoor “field expedition” to discover the science firsthand.

For instance, take Wisconsin’s ice age mysteries along the Ice Age Trail. Though we can learn a lot from books and websites, nothing gives us a true sense of ice age features like exploring them on the ground. Plus, field expeditions offer the opportunity to also explore the ecosystems and biodiversity of an area.

So how do we plan a field expedition along the Ice Age Trail so that it’s safe and educational?

First you need to pick a section of the trail to explore using the Internet or a printed Trail Guide. Plan it with the help of a parent or friend to be sure the trip is safe and a reasonable distance. You can download and print a map of your section from the Ice Age Trail website.

Christopher Columbus didn’t sail to the new world without a plan and a map for success. And you should map out your plan for successfully exploring the Ice Age Trail. So create a written “journal” of things to do in preparation, and so that you can record what you discover during your trek.

Because the Ice Age Trail crosses so much private property, respecting trail landowners should be part of your plan. Add these points to your trip list.

* Stay on the trail.
* Don’t mistreat the land along the trail.
* Only camp in areas open to primitive camping. Check you Ice Age Trail Atlas for this one.
* Once you’ve selected the where and when of your trail trek, check off your list for staying safe on your adventure. One of your trekking partners should be a parent or approved adult. Before departing, leave a copy of your planned trek times and location, and your cell phone information with at least two adults.
* Carry a cell phone and bring a map to know where you are and where you’re going. Also, check weather conditions to know what to expect during your trip.
* Pack the right amount of clothing, food and water to match the conditions and distance of your trip. No matter what the forecast, it’s always smart to pack rain gear. Even if it doesn’t rain, it can help break the wind and keep you warm.
* Expert trail trekkers also recommend wearing hiking boots with good ankle support and long pants to ward off bugs and brambles.
* A fanny pack or daypack will work for packing the supplies for your day hike.

And those supplies should definitely include the following:

* Map
* Compass or GPS
* Water
* Flashlight
* Matches
* First aid kit
* Food
* Signal whistle

Besides packing safety gear, use safety sense, such as not hiking the trail during hunting seasons, bad weather, or extreme cold. And if it’s sunny, dress or use sunscreen to avoid sunburn.

Some people like to hike with their dog. First, make sure your section of the trail permits dogs. Pack animals are not permitted on the Ice Age trail.

If you take your dog, it’s best kept on a leash. And be responsible to carry out or bury its waste.

To help preserve the natural beauty of the Ice Age Trail for everyone to enjoy, only leave your footprints. Carry out what you carried in, including all food and garbage.

Despite the temptation, don’t disturb nature along the trail, including flowers, creatures, or bark from trees. Also, don’t disturb or take artifacts or historical structures.

And respect other hikers by keeping disturbances to a minimum and letting them enjoy nature.

Finally, take time to record with your camera and in your journal some of the plants and wildlife you observed on your trek. And share your pictures or journal note about the discoveries you made about the ice age features that you encountered while trekking the Ice Age Trail.