Title: Life Skills on the Trail

Abstract/Vignette: This curriculum is multi-disciplinary in its approach and written specifically for special education students. Not only is it directed toward hiking and walking outdoors, but also in exploring the history, natural, and cultural aspects of living near the Appalachian Trail, utilizing the A.T. as a means to educate students in many facets of life.

Grade level(s): Please check all that apply.

- [ ] K-2
- [ ] 3-5
- [ ] 6-8
- [x] 9-12
- [ ] College and Lifelong Learning

Discipline: Please check all that apply.

- [ ] Art and Music
- [x] Health and PE
- [x] Foreign Language (Cherokee)
- [ ] Literature and Language Arts
- [ ] Mathematics
- [x] Science
- [x] Social Studies and Geography
- [ ] History
- [x] Technology

Year Developed: 2010

Period (month, week, year): Year

Teaching environment:

- [x] In the Classroom (indoors)
- [x] Outdoors
- [x] In the Community
- [ ] Online/Virtual
**Project Name:** Life Skills on the Trail – Lenox Memorial Middle and High School

**Teacher:** Sarah Burdsall

**Grade Level:** High School Adapted Physical Education – Ages 17-20

**Time Frame:** Year long curriculum encompassing lessons learned in each state on the trail. Lessons will occur with hikes on the Appalachian Trail, local trails, campus trail, Fitness Room and the classroom.

**Part I. Background**

We live in a very rich environmental and cultural area with many educational and recreational opportunities surrounding our town. Most students, especially those with special needs learn best by “doing”. It is with these particular students in mind and this experiential model that the curriculum was developed.

**“Life Skills” on the Trail – What is it?**

This year the Adapted Physical Education program has been participating in a special curriculum derived from “A Trail to Every Classroom”. This concept is sponsored as a joint venture between the National Park Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy with the intent of utilizing the Appalachian Trail as a means to educate students in many facets of life. This curriculum which is called **“Life Skills” on the Trail** is multi-disciplinary in its approach, is written specifically for special education students, and not only is directed toward hiking and walking outdoors, but in exploring the history, natural, and cultural aspects of living near the Appalachian Trail.

**What is a “Ranger Book”?**

Each student has been issued a “Ranger Book” that includes lessons that we will participate in as we explore the Nature Trail on campus and two all day adventures/hikes in the surrounding area. Many lessons will be adapted and added to the Ranger Book as we continue our explorations. These lessons will reflect each students’ individual work and work completed as a group.

**I have seen the 15 foot map of the Appalachian Trail in the Fitness Room. Why is it there?**

The class will continue to exercise in the Fitness Room weekly, with our present goal to complete a “virtual tour” of the Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia by collectively exercising. Each minute will accumulate and count as a mile on the trail with the hope that we will complete 2,179 minutes (2179 miles) of movement that represents moving along the trail.
As we move through each of the fourteen states on the AT, students will be taught 1-3 lessons about the area.

**What kinds of activities are the students exploring?**

Students will be finding deer scat and perhaps antlers outside and comparing it to markings left behind by moose. A Ranger will visit our classroom soon and the students will be conducting an interview with the Ranger. Students will be singing songs, dancing, drawing, drumming, watching birds soar and hopefully in the spring, visiting with Gil, a leader from the Cherokee Nation in North Carolina to learn about Native American folklore. Also in the spring, we will have a celebration of the completion of the trail and presentation of all we have learned. Students will be collecting pledges and donating their exercise earnings to a local trail club.

**Whose work will we be seeing in the display case this year?**

Share the excitement of your classmates in the Life Skills Program as we explore our neighborhood and surrounding area. This curriculum is written by Ms. B, and shared by Ryan, Jessica, Ali, and Jeffrey. Thank you for your support!
Part II. Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

Health and Physical Education Frameworks

2.12 Participate in activities that promote physical fitness, decrease sedentary lifestyle, and relieve mental and emotional tension

3.9 Describe a healthy diet and adequate physical activity during the adolescent growth spurt

9.3 Describe personal responsibility for reducing hazards and avoiding accidents

9.9 List safety rules for recreational activities, including the use of helmets, pads, and the proper use of equipment

13.4 Identify individual and community responsibility in ecological health

Life Science – Biology

6. People and other animals interact with the environment through their senses.

7. Animals and plants go through changes in appearances as the seasons change.

8. Organisms habitat provides for its basic needs.

Technology and Engineering

1.1 Characteristics of natural and human made materials

History and Social Science

History and Geography

4. Describe a map and representation of a space.

5. Identify cardinal directions and apply them to a map.

United States Leaders and Events

1.7 After reading and listening to folktales, describe the main characters and their qualities

3.9 Identify historic buildings, monuments or sites in the area and explain their purpose and significance

Concepts – Grade 4

2. Interpret a map (the AT map) using information from the title, compass rose, scale and legend

Foreign Language

Interpersonal Communication

1.1 Greet and respond

1.2 Introduce and respond

1.5 Exchange information and knowledge
1.6 Express likes and dislikes
3.4 Describe people places and things

Learning Standard 4
4.2 Interact appropriately in a group cultural activity
4.3 Identify distinctive cultural products from the target culture presented in stories
4.6 Demonstrate knowledge of artistic expression in the target culture by identifying, learning and performing songs, dances, and memorizing poems and making examples of crafts and visual arts.
Part III. The Ranger Book

The Ranger Book is divided into several sections as a description of this project and specific to the course requirements.

Section 1 – Ranger Book Table of Contents, Massachusetts Frameworks and the required curriculum guide and bubble map.

Section 2 - Ranger Book Lessons developed up until November 1, 2010

Section 3- Additional Resources

Section 4 - Pictures of students participating in activities

Section 5 – Description of lessons not yet developed

Part IV. Service Project and Community Partnership

Students will collect pledges that reflect a penny per mile on the AT. For every minute they work out during Adapted Physical Education class, they will earn one mile on the AT.

One minute = 1 mile = 1 penny We keep track of this progress on the big map in the Fitness Room and when we enter a new state, I teach them different kinds of lessons about the region. At the end of the year, students will present their collective $21.79 to a local trail club in the end of the year ceremony/celebration.

The end of the year ceremony will be attended by our “Ranger” who is a local forester from the Massachusetts Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the students parents, LMMHS administration, the Massachusetts State Representative “Smitty” Pignatelli, and students from an area Life Skills program.
Appendix


   With the permission of Claire Long, CE Specialist White Mountain NF, some activities were modified and used in the LMMHS Ranger Book.


3. Trail To Every Classroom (TTEC) Grant proposal and project 2010

4. Parental Letter of Permission
Proposed Lessons for remainder of the academic year

16. Rhyming Quest

Students will be given pairs of words that rhyme with each other. Student will walk on the Fitness Trail and stop at numbered spots, will look around them and try to complete the rhyming sentences with words appropriate for their surroundings.

18. Would you believe we get so much from trees?

Students will choose an item out of a box that is made from some part of a tree. They will decide how it came from a variety of sources, then will attach it to a log, making a kind of Christmas tree of “wood” product ornaments.

19. The Housatonic River from our backyard to the Long Island Sound

Students will use a map to trace the path of the Housatonic River in our neighborhood to its’ exit in the Long Island Sound

20. Bear Mountain?

Students will research how Bear Mountain got its name in New York state

21. Fruits and Vegetables in New Jersey

Students will learn about the agriculture of New Jersey and the contributions the state makes to the food we buy in the supermarket.

22. Hawk Flights and Migration

Students will study how birds soar and fly by observing on our hilltop. Students will then learn the term migration and research what kinds of birds migrate.

23. Maryland My Maryland

Students will learn how Maryland was the state that had to be aware of both Union and Confederate soldiers marching through their towns during the War.

24. Harper’s Ferry West Virginia

Students will learn about the role of Harper’s Ferry in the war.
25. Cherokee Nation Drumming and the Eagle Song

Students will drum and dance with Gil Jackson, a Cherokee from North Carolina. Students will also learn and sing the Eagle song.

26. Let’s Dance to a Tennessee Fiddler!

Student will learn a dance to a fiddle song performed by another teacher.

28. Way down yonder on the Chattahoochie....

Students will compare the Housatonic to the Chattahoochie rivers.

29. What I learned from Maine to Georgia

Students will all choose several facts and topics learned from the year and share those facts for the people celebrating at their end of the year ceremony.

30. Certificate of Completion

Students will receive a certificate at the end of the year during the ceremony.