The Great Expedition Challenge

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Youth will learn

*Workforce Skills:* Teamwork and communication  
*Success Indicators:* Youth will identify teamwork skills and describe the value of performing as a member of a team.

What You Need:

Suggested Time Involved: 30 minutes  
Suggested Group Size: Any size  
Materials Needed:  
- Pencils or pens  
- Notecards (optional)  
- “The Great Expedition Challenge” Handout

Facilitator Tips:  
Use the question in the Talk It Over section to discuss the process of teamwork.

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The Activity

1. Organize your teens into small groups. Groups of four or five work well.
2. Explain that you are going to share with them a teamwork activity that will help them work better as part of a group. Read or present them with the scenario worksheet with equipment list.
3. Give the groups an allotted amount of time to solve their problem. Fifteen minutes should be enough for a moderate-sized group.
4. Those who are more visual may choose to write all the equipment on a notecard (separate for each item) to help with remembering what the group was keeping or not.
5. If necessary, remind groups that it is up to them what to take, but that each choice to include an item means another will be left out. Encourage the groups to consider their choices carefully, and remind them that they need to all agree on whatever choices are made.

6. While the groups are working, make note of your observations about how they are working well or not so well.

There are a few things you may see with teamwork activities such as this one. A natural leader may emerge to direct and lead the other members in many teamwork activities and recreation games. This person may already lead well and will listen and consider the opinions of others. Or there may be a beginning leader, one who tends to take over and impose his or her views onto others regardless of what others are saying. You may see intense conversation and discussion (and some arguments) about what to take and why. This will happen particularly if there is no true leader, or if there is more than one leader in the group. Left unchecked, these groups could break down. Let them struggle a bit, but intervene when needed to keep the activity moving along. A set time frame and some words of encouragement from you will help move the discussions toward an end point.

7. After the time limit has passed, bring the groups together and use the questions in the Talk It Over section discuss how the decisions were made, not the decisions themselves.

8. Create a list of comments made by group members about the positives and negatives of their group experience, and what they think could be done better next time around.
Talk It Over

Share
• Have the groups share what items they decided to take with them. Allow the youth to give reasons for why they chose the items they did.

Process
• What are some of the things that worked well and some things that did not work well when making decisions as a group? Remind the group that you are now talking about the process of working together as a group, not the choices themselves here.

Generalize
• What kind of situations might you encounter as a camp counselor that would be similar to this scenario?
• How could teamwork and communication skills be critical when making important decisions?

Apply
• What have you learned through this activity that could be useful in other situations you encounter as a camp counselor? At school? In a work setting?
The Great Expedition Challenge

The Challenge
“You are in charge of putting together a team of explorers to ski to the magnetic north pole. From the list provided, decide which items you will take and which you will leave behind. You can choose only 10 items. You will need reasons for your choices, and you will all need to agree in the choices you make. After all, if you cannot agree together here, you will really struggle on the ice!”

The Equipment

- good quality climbing rope (25 m)
- cheap rope (50 m)
- a box of assorted climbing gear (bolts, carabiners, gear belts, etc.)
- a lightweight summer tent
- a bag of heavy duty ice pegs to hold down a winter tent
- a bag with the heavy duty fly for your winter tent
- a bag with the heavy duty tent and tent poles
- a box of summer tops
- a compass
- a GPS
- a torch
- a cooking stove and fuel
- waterproof matches
- a first aid kit
- a climbing headlamp on a helmet
- a rescue stretcher
- a rescue sled
- a pair of skis
- an umbrella
- a non waterproof torch
- a radio to talk to base
- an atlas
- thermal clothing
- a pedometer to measure footsteps
- a heart monitor to measure heart rate
- a thermometer to measure temperature