

Pictou County Forest School - Grade 11 Lesson Plans
Biology 11 - LITERATURE SEARCH AND REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH

Activity: PCFS Wellness Retreat (suggested time: full day activities)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes:

IN-DEPTH TREATMENT: LITERATURE SEARCH AND REPORT ON MENTAL HEALTH (5%) *f*

- collect information on how the brain functions with respect to the biology of mental health and mental illness compared with other diseases (AB-1) *f*
- define mental health and mental illness, giving the causes and strategies to address them (AB-2) *f*
- examine society's expectations about positive mental health and mental illness (AB-3) *f*
- report on mental health and mental illness from a medical or societal perspective (AB-4)

Materials:

- Stop watches for heart rate checks (phones)
- Cooking implements / food
- Sculpture activity: jute twine, scissors
- "Can forest therapy enhance health and well-being?"
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/can-forest-therapy-enhance-health-and-well-being-2020052919948>
- "PaRx Launches in the Maritimes"
<https://www.parkprescriptions.ca/blogposts/parx-launches-in-the-maritimes>

Big Idea: Spending time in nature is beneficial to our overall health.

Activities: *All or some of these activities can be chosen based on available time/goals for the group.*

Intro/warm-up (20 minutes)

- Ice breaker activities; setting intentions for the day; taking our first of many pulse checks throughout the day as a baseline marker.
- Brief overview of the PaRx 'Park Prescription' national program
- Asking students to be mindful of their physical and emotional states throughout the day (we will do group check-ins throughout the day).

Nature Walk (45 minutes)

- Nature walk to hammock village; hammock time
- This can be done barefoot as well (additional benefits of walking barefoot can be provided)

Silent Sit (30 minutes)

- Students are instructed to find a quiet place to sit individually for 20/30 minutes of quiet contemplation.
- Heart-rate check

Cooking (60-90 minutes)

- Shared meal together, either prepared by students or pre-cooked by PCFS staff.

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Art/building (60 - 90 minutes)

- Students are called to create an art installation in the forest using found natural items and biodegradable jute twine.

Body Movement:

- camouflage; man tracker; capture the flag; barefoot movement session etc. (30 minutes)

Reflections/Further Questions

- Check-in prior to departure:
 - How does spending time in nature make us feel (physically, emotionally, psychologically, spiritually)?
- Final heart-rate check