OUTDOOR LEARNING CARDS

Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel — advice, support & monitoring of visits & outdoor learning

BOULDERING B8

BOULDER PROBLEMS

Activity

- Work in spotter/climber pairs to try different graded boulder problems set by your leader.
- You can make an easy problem harder by repeating it from a sitting start (sitting on the floor with feet on the starting holds - not touching the floor!).
- When you are ready, ask your leader if you can set some of your own boulder problems.

Review & Evaluation

- What was your favourite boulder problem?
- Why was it so good?
- What footwork/handhold techniques did you use on the boulder problem?
- Which boulder problems are you going to try in the next session?
- What are your key strengths in climbing?
- What are your partner's?
- What skills do you still need to work on?

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Organisation & Resources

Context:
Bouldering is all about finding difficult features (boulder problems) to climb on a natural or man-made boulder/crag. Boulder problems are often given a name, description and grade by the first ascentionist. This allows other people to find and attempt the problem in the future. Guidebooks and websites list the natural, outdoor bouldering areas and the boulder problems that have been climbed on them.

Venue choice and/or wall design are crucial - the ideal venue will allow you to create lots of different boulder problems with a wide range of difficulty from easy to very hard.

Sit-starts
Sitting starts (i.e. starting position for the problem is sitting on the floor with feet/hands on the starting holds) are great for developing power and also for making best use of a low-level traversing wall to allow more 'up' movement.

Safety Points

As Card 1.

Preparation

You will need to create a number of boulder problems (at least one per pair in your group) before the session. These problems should involve a range of techniques including up problems, standing starts, sitting starts and traverses and should be given a description (e.g. green holds only) and grade (e.g. easy, medium, hard, very hard) so that young people can attempt to repeat them. (See Outdoor Learning Cards CD for lots of good ideas for boulder problems.)

Differentiation & Progression

Harder
(a) Young people work in pairs to create their own boulder problems. They can then swap with other pairs to try each other's boulder problems.

(b) Young people produce a guidebook to boulder problems on their school/centre wall (see Outdoor Learning Cards CD for more on creating a topo of your wall). This would give the potential for school/centre groups to visit other school/centre walls to try out their boulder problems and could be the starting point for inter-school bouldering competitions.

Skills & Knowledge

- Present/express ideas orally.
- Recognise and applaud achievements of others.
- Provide constructive support and feedback to others.
- Appreciate own strengths and limitations.
- Talk openly about successes and setbacks.
- Improve own learning and performance through reflective thinking and actions.
- Try a variety of solutions.
- Show initiative in the face of challenging activities.
- Try hard to succeed at activities they find physically challenging.
- Work positively towards goals.
- Perseverance.
- Manage risk.
- Self-reliance.
- Develop, adapt and apply skills.
- Positive self-image.

Activity skills
- Following set boulder problems.
- Boulder problem 'language' – problem description (including sit starts), naming and grading.
- Power and stamina training.

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HARVEY