



TEACHER'S GUIDE



Outdoor Adventure Education for Social & Emotional Learning in Physical Education

About the Guide

Level: K-12

Themes:

Adventure Education,
Outdoor Education,
Physical Education,
Social and Emotional
Learning

SYNOPSIS

The present teacher manual seeks to lay the pedagogical framework and provide an overview of concepts relevant to Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE) for the promotion of students' Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as part of the Physical Education (PE) curriculum.

By using a transdisciplinary and pedagogically based approach, the manual is intended to present principles of curriculum design and help teachers at all levels and domains to choose and implement those that are relevant for the contextual needs.

By using this manual, PE teachers should both gain knowledge and be introduced to skills and concepts that they can themselves use in their everyday practice when teaching with, in and about OAE for SEL.

Further, the manual seeks to work on the building blocks of teacher competency (i.e. knowledge, skills, and attitudes) and enable capacity building in the field of OAE for educational, entertainment, game-based and group bonding practices



BACKGROUND

Why Outdoor Adventure Education: Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE) refers to a specialized form of experiential learning which focuses on promoting personal and social development, teamwork, and environmental awareness through adventurous activities and challenges.

What are the characteristics of Outdoor Adventure Education lessons:

Education has the primary role – in order to make each experience as educational as possible, the teacher uses every situation as an opportunity for students' learning and growth;

Education takes places in close interaction with outdoor environments - Nature serves as a key component in the education process;

Elements of risk are part of Adventure Education - risk inherent to an activity must be pedagogically planned so as to empower students within their zone of development, without stretching their limits to a panic zone;

Open Ended Learning outcomes – Learning outcomes occur as part of students' involvement in the learning activities, and are based on their ability to effectively coordinate their physical, social, emotional and leadership skills ([link](#)).

Debriefing through reflection -

Reflection is a vital component of experiential learning. It is also a pivotal element in OAE/SEL, fostering deep learning and personal growth. Various reflective models provide structured frameworks for educators to assess experiences, emotions, and future applications.

Debriefing enables the connection between lived experience and learning outcomes. It is a purposeful activity that is structured to encourage individuals to analyze, and communicate about their experiences, and can occur any time before, during or after the activities.

For gaining a better insight on the different aspects of Outdoor Adventure Education and its different applications within the Physical Education Curriculum, explore project's website (<https://www.outdoor-adventure-education.eu/>).

What do we mean with Social and Emotional Learning:

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is **the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success.** (<https://www.cfchildren.org/what-is-social-emotional-learning/>)

Numerous studies confirm that SEL is an important factor for enabling students from all grade levels to achieve holistic learning outcomes.

Why in Physical Education: A positive social and emotional climate in the Physical Education (PE) classroom allows for students to communicate and interact in beneficial ways.

PE is a school subject that provides students multiple opportunities to achieve learning in the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains.

Within the lesson, the PE teacher can use games, activities, and experiences to assist and strengthen students' SEL by implementing appropriate instructional practices. OAE can be organized and implemented as practices of this kind. OAE can be used both as a context and as a content for achieving SEL outcomes in PE via setting the stage for the development of SEL skills in participants (Bean et al., 2018) and facilitating their transfer in other areas of living and learning.

Learn more about International Literature on Outdoor Adventure Education

(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213078023000385?via%3Dihub>).



VOCABULARY

(used within the Guide)

OAE: Outdoor Adventure Education

SEL: Social and Emotional Learning

OAE Activities:

- **Get to Know Each Other and the Environment**
- **Feeling at Ease through Interaction**
- **Awaken Your Senses and Engage with Your Surroundings**
- **Fostering Trust and Responsibility**
- **Group Problem-Solving and Effective Communication**
- **Decision-Making and Risk Assessment**
- **Emotional and Physical Engagement**
- **Learning Outdoor Sports Fundamentals**
- **Real-life Challenges and Safe Practice**
- **Learning from Experience**

SEL Skills:

- Openness to experience (open-mindedness)
- Conscientiousness (task performance)
- Emotional stability (emotional regulation)
- Extroversion (engaging with others)
- Agreeableness (collaboration)

BEFORE INTRODUCING THE MODEL

Before introducing this curriculum model to your students, you may wish to develop background and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

1. What do you know about social learning? What are some examples of a socially competent person? Why do we need to have social skills?
2. What do you know about emotions learning? What are some examples of an emotionally competent person? Why do we need to have emotional skills?
3. Share an experience you have had during a Physical Education (PE) lesson/project where you practiced your social and emotional skills.
4. What do you know about Outdoor Adventure Education (OAE)? Have you ever participated in OAE within your PE courses? What were some challenges you may face? Why PE may be a good environment for OAE activities?

OECD Framework for SEL

Openness to experience (open-mindedness)

Open-mindedness is regarded as a key skill for explaining and understanding the behavior of individuals in uncertain and easily changed settings. Its subdomains are intellectual curiosity, creativity/imagination and tolerance/cultural flexibility.

Conscientiousness (task performance)

Conscientiousness is defined as the propensity to be self-controlled, responsible to others, hardworking, orderly, and rule-abiding

Emotional stability (emotional regulation)

Emotional stability is defined as the ability to remain calm and composed in stressful situations, and to avoid overreacting to minor issues 1. It is a personality trait that is strongly associated with mental health and well-being

Extroversion (engaging with others)

Extroversion is defined as the propensity to be outgoing, sociable, talkative, assertive, and enthusiastic.

Agreeableness (collaboration)

Agreeableness is defined as the propensity to be cooperative, polite, kind, and friendly 2. It is a personality trait that is strongly associated with prosocial behaviors such as trust, affection, and altruism.

Teaching with OAE/SEL Activities

(Explanation of OAE/SEL Activities)

Activity Introduction: Get to Know Each Other and the Environment: Activities that focus on getting to know others and familiarizing oneself with the group, materials, or new spaces. Participants share personal details like name, city of origin, and tastes, fostering an understanding of their group members. These activities also help acquaint individuals with the materials and settings they'll be engaging with.

Relaxation and Disinhibition: Feeling at Ease through Interaction: Activities aiming to create a comfortable, relaxed environment promoting interaction through movement, dance, and songs. The goal is to ease group tension and encourage disinhibition while encouraging energy release and enjoyment.

Sensory Rediscovery: Awaken Your Senses and Engage with Your Surroundings: These activities aim to awaken the senses, encouraging participants to interact with their environment. Participants decipher activities through trial-and-error techniques, fostering observation and self-learning. This step includes sensory activities activating touch, sight, hearing, taste, self-perception, balance, pain, and the sense of heat.

Trust-Building: Fostering Trust and Responsibility: Trust activities involve collective challenges that encourage mutual support and care. Participants engage in collective challenges, learning to trust others, the environment, and basic adventure sport techniques, building trust and a sense of responsibility towards each other.

Cooperation: Group Problem-Solving and Effective Communication: Activities that focus on resolving group challenges, promoting basic communication rules and conflict resolution. Challenges with multiple solutions are proposed, requiring effective communication and creative problem-solving. These activities enhance interpersonal communication, nurturing habits like active learning and dialogue.

Initiative: Decision-Making and Risk Assessment: Activities that focus on decision-making, self-assessment, and risk-taking. Activities require courage, a sense of responsibility, and prior analysis of one's skills and the situation, fostering sound decision-making.

Instinct: Emotional and Physical Engagement: Activities that engage participants intellectually, emotionally, and physically. These games involve simulation and role-playing, provoking emotional engagement and intellectual interactions.

Basic Techniques: Learning Outdoor Sports Fundamentals: Activities that emphasize learning basic techniques applicable to outdoor sports, utilizing games and proposals to teach simple sports materials and techniques.

Outdoor Adventure Sports: Real-life Challenges and Safe Practice: Activities to provide a direct experience, incorporating apparent or real risk. Participants practice complex sports in natural or mixed environments, adhering to safety protocols.

Reflective Thinking: Learning from Experience: Reflection activities to analyze events, behaviors, and moral principles encountered throughout the process. The step aims to contribute to learners' humanization process, fostering self-awareness and personal growth.



PLANNING WITH OAE/SEL

(a) Broad areas of learning in physical education:

What physical education / OAE learning areas are incorporated into this unit?

(b) SEL Competencies:

What are the SEL competencies that will be incorporated in this unit?

(c) Learning outcomes:

What learning outcomes will this unit address?

Knowledge: What knowledge will student acquire because of this unit?

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Skills: What skills will students acquire as a result of this unit? List the skills and/or behaviors that students will be able to exhibit as a result of their work in this unit.

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Assessment Standards and Criteria for Success: By what criteria will task performance, knowledge, skill, and understanding be judged?

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Formative & Summative Assessment: Through what other evidence (work samples, observations, quizzes, tests, journals or other means) will students demonstrate achievement of the desired results?

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★ Place-based education:

Place-based education focuses on connecting learners with the local environment and community. It utilizes the natural and cultural resources of a specific place to provide meaningful learning experiences. In outdoor adventure education, place-based education encourages participants to develop a deeper understanding of the natural environment, cultural heritage, and ecological systems through activities in specific outdoor location.

★ Adventure-based learning:

Adventure-based learning integrates adventure activities, such as rock climbing, backpacking, and kayaking, with educational goals. It emphasizes personal and group development, problem-solving, and skill acquisition through adventure experiences. Participants engage in challenging activities that require them to work together, communicate effectively, and develop critical thinking skills. It involves designing activities that require participants to collaborate, problem-solve, communicate effectively, and develop leadership skills while engaging in adventurous experiences.

★ Challenge education:

Challenge education involves presenting participants with intellectually, physically, or emotionally challenging tasks. These challenges are carefully designed to promote personal growth, self-efficacy, and problem-solving skills. In outdoor adventure education, challenge education uses outdoor activities to create opportunities for participants to push their limits, overcome obstacles, and develop resilience.



★Cooperative learning:

Cooperative learning promotes collaboration, teamwork, and positive interdependence among participants and is commonly used in outdoor adventure education. It involves structured group work where individuals work together to achieve common goals. In outdoor adventure education, cooperative learning encourages participants to work in teams, communicate effectively, and support each other in achieving shared objectives. Collaborative and cooperative learning foster teamwork, communication, and interpersonal skills. s.

★Reflective practice:

Reflective practice involves structured reflection on experiences, thoughts, and emotions to enhance learning and personal growth. In outdoor adventure education, reflective practice encourages participants to debrief and discuss their outdoor experiences, identify lessons learned, and connect those experiences to their own lives and the broader world. This involves structured discussions, journaling, and guided reflection on experiences, emotions, and lessons learned during outdoor adventures. Reflection and debriefing allow participants to make meaning from their experiences and connect them to personal growth and learning outcomes.

★Challenge by Choice:

The "Challenge by Choice" approach respects individual autonomy and allows participants to choose the level of challenge they are comfortable with. It emphasizes personal decision-making and encourages participants to stretch their limits, take risks, and step outside their comfort zones while participating in outdoor adventure activities.

Facilitating with OAE/SEL

The integration the experiential learning cycle is part of the foundation of the OAE/SEL approach. There are four levels through which learning occurs:

Concrete Experience – the learner encounters a concrete experience. This might be a new experience or situation, or a reinterpretation of existing experience in the light of new concepts.

Reflective Observation of the New Experience – the learner reflects on the new experience in the light of their existing knowledge. Of particular importance are any inconsistencies

between experience and understanding.

Abstract Conceptualization – reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept (the person has learned from their experience).

Active Experimentation – the newly created or modified concepts give rise to experimentation. The learner applies their idea(s) the world around them to see what happens.

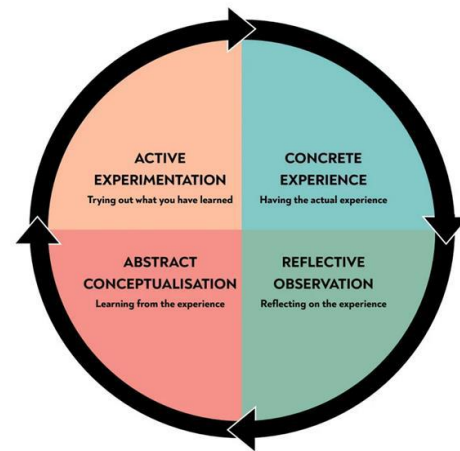
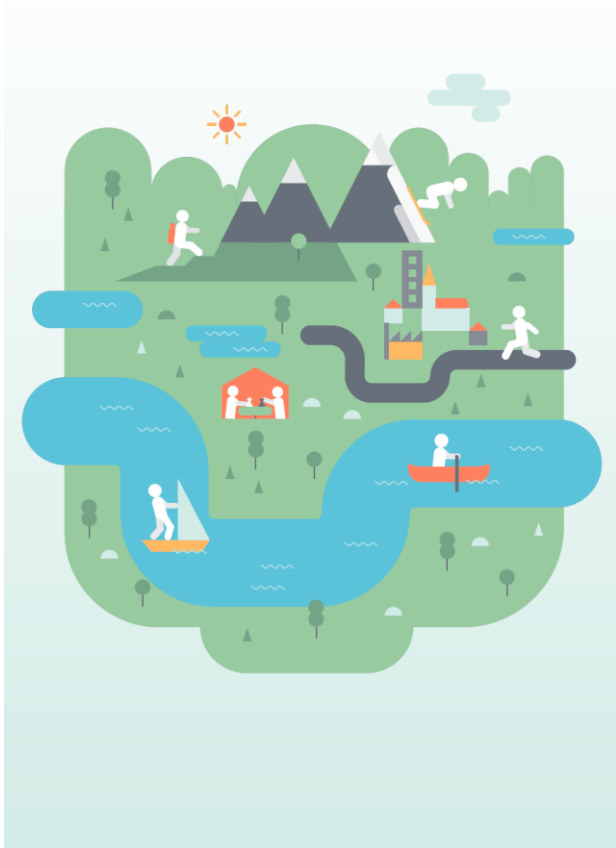


Figure . Kolb's¹ (1984) four-step learning model

¹ Kolb's model

Kolb's Learning Cycle is widely recognized as one of the most used learning models and, if not overly rigidly applied, it can effectively serve in facilitating OAE/SEL processes.



ABOUT THE OAE PROJECT

The project 'Outdoor Adventure Education through Physical Education' (OutAdvEd) attempts to connect Outdoor-Adventure Education (OAE) and Teacher Education (TED) (initial, induction and continuous professional development), with a special focus on the promotion of Youth Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) within Physical Education (PE). The project is an innovative intervention focused on establishing a model OAE for SEL curriculum across the continuum of TED. The key objective is to encourage discourse around the provision of guidance, recognition and validation of teaching competences across the teaching continuum, starting with the continuum of Physical Education. OutAdvEd addresses the existing need for validating coherent material and educational policies, at a European level, which will help teachers seize the opportunities for high quality education mindful of tackling teaching challenges head-on.

More Information for the OAE Project

RESOURCES ON THE WEB:

Learn more about at:
<https://www.outdoor-adventure-education.eu/>

