COACHING IN COMMUNITY SPORT

Introducing Children to Sprint CanoeKayak

TECHNIQUE & ACTIVITIES

www.canoekayak.ca

Ver. 2016
PARTNERS IN COACH EDUCATION

The National Coaching Certification Program is a collaborative program of the Government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, and the Coaching Association of Canada.

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<td><strong>BEGINNER</strong></td>
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<td>□ In a canoe with a partner, perform javelin toss with paddle and hand-paddle to retrieve the paddle.</td>
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<td>□ Paddle 4000m in a canoe and kayak</td>
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**SAMPLE CANOEKIDS PROGRAM**

This sample program is based on a six week session with five two-hour sessions each week devoted entirely to paddling. This allows for 15 minutes at both the beginning and end of the session to deal with equipment. The remaining 90 minutes is used to accomplish the warm up, teaching, activities and cool downs.

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CK FUN REGATTA
SAFETY
THE CANOEKIDS WAY

On-Water Safety Rules and Guidelines
Water Emptying Procedures
Righting a Capsized Boat
Warm-Ups, Cool Downs
Potential Hazards
Risk Assessment Template
Emergency Action Plan Template
The First Day

Introduce yourself to your group of participants and to any other club employees they may need to know – head coach, club supervisor and your assistants. Have participants introduce themselves to each other. Introduce the program to the participants briefly by describing what the daily routine will be, what they will be learning and the events in which they will participate. Take the group on a tour of the facility. Show them the areas where they may go alone and the areas where they must be accompanied by a coach. As you approach each area, explain the rules and regulations, e.g. around the boat launching area the participants must be wearing P.F.D.s. Show the group specific areas of interest: washrooms, change areas, emergency equipment, office, paddles, boats, etc.

Safety Procedures

Life Jacket and PFD selection
★ All Canoe Kids must wear appropriately sized PFDs.
★ Check to ensure that the jacket is the correct size for the participant – usually determined by the participant’s weight.
★ Take the time to explain how to find the right size and how to fasten it up securely.

Buddy System
★ Have participants pair themselves up with someone of approximately the same size to work with, and as a means of accounting for the presence of everyone in the group in case of an emergency.

Whistle System
★ Use the whistle system as a method of communication when the group is on the water.
★ One whistle means freeze and listen.
★ Two whistles means find your respective buddy and raise each others’ hands.
★ Three whistles means return to the dock immediately.

Safety Rules
★ A life jacket or PFD must be worn at all times when near or on the water.
★ No one is to take a boat without the coach’s permission.
★ No swimming unless authorized by the coach.
★ Stay within the designated area for paddling.
★ Wear light clothing and a hat to avoid sunburn or sunstroke.
★ Keep plenty of water handy for regular hydration – especially important on hot days.
★ Use the buddy system at all times.
★ Don’t overload the boats.
★ If you capsize far from shore, stay with your boat. Don’t swim for shore or go after drifting paddles.
★ Always inform the coach of any health issues.
Water Emptying Procedures

Canoes
1. Remove all equipment from the boat.
2. With the boat upright, hold the bow and slowly lift. This allows the water to slowly drain from the stern. This may take four or more of the younger paddlers.
3. Once most of the water has been drained, the paddlers may remove the boat from the water (opposite to launching procedure) and turn the boat upside down to empty it completely or use the bailer while the boat is still in the water.
4. In most cases, the coach should assist the paddlers in emptying the boats as they are extremely heavy when filled with water.

Kayaks
1. Always assist paddlers in emptying boats as they are very heavy when full of water.
2. Remove the equipment from the boat.
3. Hold the stern and push the bow away from the dock.
4. Push the stern down to allow the water to flow from the bow to the stern.
5. In a single motion, lift and turn the boat to allow the water to flow out of the cockpit.
6. Repeat this motion until the boat is completely empty.
7. If the boat is extremely full of water, turn the boat over and slowly lift the stern to allow half of the water to flow out. Continue with the above procedure.

Capsizing Procedures

Canoes
★ It is important to explain this procedure prior to taking any boats out on the water.
★ Paddlers must stay with their boat.
★ If there are two paddlers, have them turn the canoe upside down so that they may hold each others’ hands over the bottom of the canoe (one paddler on each side of the canoe).
★ If the paddlers are very close to the shore, have them upright the canoe, place equipment inside the canoe, and swim or walk the canoe to shore.
★ If the paddler is alone, instruct him/her to hold the bow and swim or walk to shore ONLY if they are very close to the shore.
★ If one paddler falls out of the boat and the other stays in, have the paddler in the boat tow the other to shore instead of trying to lift him/her into the boat.
★ It is sometimes appropriate to capsize the canoes on purpose as a drill to ensure paddlers are familiar with the procedure and do not panic in the real situation.

Kayaks
★ It is important to explain this procedure prior to taking any boats out on the water.
★ Immediately upright the kayak when it is tipped to stop the boat from filling up with water.
★ Put the paddle, seat, or any other equipment into the cockpit.
★ Leave the equipment where it is to be picked up later if it has floated out of reach.
★ Swim to the bow, hold it and swim with the boat to the dock or shore.
★ The boat floats, so paddlers must always stay with their boats!
Warm Ups

A warm up session gets the participants’ minds and bodies ready to do physical activity.

Some examples of warm-up activities include:

- A short game of soccer
- A jog around the club house
- Jumping jacks and other calisthenics
- Stretching of large muscle groups: upper body rotations, arm circles and windmills, quadriceps stretch, hamstring stretch, calf muscle stretches, etc.

Cool Downs

A cool down period allows the participants’ bodies and minds to recover from practice. A good cool down will help participants avoid sore muscles the next day. Cool downs are an essential component of injury prevention and should be completed after every practice session.

An example of a cool down is a 5-10 minute leisurely paddle. Try to plan your practice so that your last activity finishes far enough away from the dock that it will take participants 5-10 minutes to paddle back. Be sure to take into account factors like fatigue, wind and weather when plotting your “end” location.
Potential Safety Hazards at your Club

- Broken equipment (cracked paddles, broken rudders, etc.)
- Paddlers who can’t swim
- PFDs that don’t fit
- Shallow water
- Submerged obstacles (rocks, logs, ...)
- Rough or moving water
- Wind
- Sun
- Cold
- Heat
- Storms
- Lots of kids and only one coach
- Others....
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Corrective measures: avoid, add, replace, modify, throw out, clean, repair, check, etc.
Emergency Action Plan

Team / Event: ________________________________

Site: ______________________________________

Charge Person: ______________________________

Alternate Charge Person: _____________________

Call Person: _________________________________

Alternate Call Person: _______________________

Number Card

Locations of Phones near training site: ________________________________

Phone Numbers

Emergency: _________________________________

Ambulance: ________________________________ Police: ________________________________

Fire: ________________________________ Hospital: ________________________________

Poison Control: ______________________ Facility: ________________________________

Location Directions for Emergency Personnel: ________________________________

__________________________________________
CanoeKids Participant Profile

Name: ___________________________  Age: _____

Emergency Contact #1: Name: ___________________________

Phone Numbers: (____) ___________  (____) ___________

Emergency Contact #2: Name: ___________________________

Phone Numbers: (____) ___________  (____) ___________

Address: ___________________________________________

Phone Number: (____) ___________

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TEACHING TECHNIQUE
THE CANOEKIDS WAY

Three essential technical components
Equipment – selection and care
  Teaching Balance
  Teaching Propulsion
  Teaching Steering
Introduction

The three technical components that Coaches need to teach Canoe Kids are

1. BALANCE
2. PROPULSION
3. STEERING.

Canoe Kids need to be able to do these three things confidently and correctly before they move into racing boats.

As a Canoe Kids coach you are the most influential coach a paddler will ever have. You are setting the technical groundwork that will remain with the paddler the rest of their paddling life.

Equipment Selection

Before you can begin to teach the three technical components of balance, propulsion and steering, you will need to equip your athletes with boats, paddles and PFD’s.

Paddle Care Rules – Canoe and Kayak

Paddles are to be handled with care. Whether made from wood or fiberglass, paddles are subject to damage and breakage. Paddles should be placed carefully; never thrown or dropped on the ground. Paddles are to be rested on your foot or on the grip of the paddle, never on the tip. Care should be taken when placing a paddle on the rack so that it does not fall over, knocking other paddles over with it. Avoid placing paddles in cracks along the dock. Remind participants that paddles cost lots of money to replace.
Parts of the Paddle.
Identify the different parts of the canoe and kayak paddle with a demonstration.

Canoe Paddle Selection
★ Hold the paddle vertically in front of the paddler. Vertically placed, the paddle should reach from the ground to a height between the chin and the eyes of the user to be technically correct. The stronger the paddler, the closer the paddle should reach to the eyes.
★ For beginning and intermediate Canoe Kids, use the chin as the height reference. More advanced Canoe Kids may use their nose as the reference point.
★ Always double-check each paddler before they go out on the water to avoid any injuries from using a paddle that is too long.

Kayak Paddle Selection
★ Hold the paddle vertically in front of the paddler. Vertically placed, the paddle should reach from the ground up to a height where the paddler’s outstretched fingers can fold over the tip of the blade.
★ Place the paddle over the head while holding the paddle in the correct position. The paddle is the right length when holding paddle in the correct position over the head allows the elbows to bend at a 90-degree angle. This approach takes long arms and legs into consideration.

Canoe Hand Position and Grip
★ When paddling on the left, the paddler holds the grip with his/her right hand and the left hand holds the shaft approximately two fist lengths from the blade, or measured from the pinky finger, no less than half way down the shaft from the t-grip, but no more than 54% of the length of the paddle. A paddler on the right holds his/her paddle in the same position with the opposite hand on the grip and shaft.
Hold the paddle parallel to the ground so that the shaft of the paddle rests lightly on the paddler’s head.

The top hand-arm is bent at 90 degrees at the elbow with the upper portion of the same arm parallel to the ground.

The bottom hand is adjusted on the shaft so that it too, is bent at 90 degrees at the elbow with the upper portion of the arm parallel to the ground.

Kayak Hand Position and Grip

- The paddle is held horizontally with both hands.
- The kayak paddle is placed over the head so that the elbows are bent 90 degrees.
- The hands must be adjusted so they are same distance from their respective blades.
  - The kayak paddle should be divided into thirds, with the grip between the 2 hands being between 33% and 35% of length of paddle.
  - It is crucial when measuring that the hands are EQUIDISTANT from the blades.
- The twist should be introduced right away with the grip. A left twist paddle is rotated with the left hand and right twist paddle is rotated with the right hand.
- The hand that actually twists the blade remains in a constant position with respect to the shaft; the shaft rotates within the opposite hand. To ensure this happens, paddlers should not hold the paddle in a “death grip”. If possible, have athletes, experience both left and right twists.

Parts of a Canoe and Kayak

Identify the different parts of a canoe and kayak with a demonstration.

Racing Canoe

- bow, stern, seat, gunnel, thwart, keel, flotation tank.

Racing Canoe

- thwart, bow, stern, gunnel, deck, keel.

Racing Kayak

- bow, stern, cockpit, seat, footrest, rudder, rudder stick, keel.

Boat Care Rules

- Always use two or more participants when carrying the boats. Be sure regular club members to do the same. If your participants see older athletes carry their own boats, simply explain how size and experience determine when to carry his or her own boat.
- Boats are to be handled with great care, as they are very fragile regardless of their material.
- Boats are to be rested only on boat racks, on the grass upside down, gently on the dock for short periods of time, making sure the rudder of a kayak is hanging over the water.
- Kayaks should never be rested right side up on land without some precaution to prevent damage to the rudder. Let the rudder hang over the end of the dock or place a block of foam under the boat to raise the stern up.
Boats must be wiped dry after use to prevent rot or water damage.
All equipment is to be put away neatly in its correct place.
Never leave boats unattended when not being stored in the club racks.

Boat Equipment
- With recreational canoes you will not need floorboards or back foot rests. You may however wish to explain the use of buns and blocks in protecting the kneeling knee.
- Some mini-kayaks come with a molded seat. However, some mini’s and slenders will require seats, footrests, wing nuts and clamps.
- The rudder is used to direct the kayak. The paddler steers by using their feet to move the rudder stick which is attached to the rudder by a wire.

Launching a Recreational Canoe
- Always use two people per canoe. When carrying the boat, have one standing at the stern, one at the bow. If your participants are relatively small, you should have four paddlers per canoe.
- Once at the dock, turn the canoe so that it is perpendicular to the dock.
- Have the participants place the canoe gently on the dock and change positions so that they are now facing each other on opposite sides of the canoe, holding the gunnels.
- The paddlers will now lower one end of the canoe into the water and hand walk the canoe into the water.

Launching a Kayak
- Always have two people carry a boat.
- One paddler holds the stern, the other the bow.
- Once at the dock, position the boat parallel to the edge of the dock.
- Hold the boat over the water, still supporting at the bow and stern.
- Lower the boat into the water being careful not to scratch it on the side.

Balance
- Balance is the foundation of good technique.
- Good balance translates directly to confidence in the boat and that leads to the ability to work on correct technique.
- Balance is always a factor for paddlers, from the beginner to the most advanced. A strong sense of balance becomes more and not less important as paddlers advance to racing.
- Good balance allows for a continuous and rhythmic stroke.
- It is a factor in a smooth boat run.
- It allows paddlers to deal with less than ideal water conditions.

Establishing Balance is your most important role as a CanoeKids Coach.
Teaching Feathering

The first step to teaching balance is to teach your participants how to feather.

The purpose of feathering is to provide stability in the boat. Feathering helps the paddler use the water to balance and keep the boat upright.

Feathering should be taught and practiced on the dock before the kids try it on the water.

Using terms such as “spreading peanut butter” or “icing a cake” to describe the planing motion of the paddle will make the explanation more understandable to the kids.

Use the “Dock Paddling – Feathering Stroke” activity to introduce this skill to your participants.

Teaching Balance

How do you teach balance? As a coach you need to be aware of the three key principles of balance:

- Width of your base of support
- Center of Gravity
- Dynamic Stability

1. **width of your base of support** – the wider the base, the more stable the object (think of standing on one foot versus standing with feet spread apart)

2. **center of gravity** – the lower the center of gravity the more stable the object (think of walking on stilts versus walking on the ground)

3. **dynamic stability** – objects in motion can have a greater sense of stability than when they are stationary (think of riding a bike).

You probably don’t need to explain all this to the kids, but your understanding of these three concepts will help you position and correct your kids when they are on the water.

The first place to start is with getting in and out of a boat and proper position once in the boat.
Once in their boats, have paddlers practice their balance using the feathering stroke and taking a few forward strokes.

As a coach, you may want to be in a position where you can hold their boats while they practice feathering and getting a feel for the boat.

As they get more confident, have them try drills such as holding their paddle over their head, javelin throwing their paddles and hand paddling to retrieve them, and eventually passing the paddles under their boats.

Never stop working on balance. Every session should always include something that directly improves balance and confidence in the boat.

### TEACHING POINTS

**Entering a Kayak.**

1. The paddler crouches on the dock beside the launched boat facing the same direction as the boat.
2. The closest hand holds the front of cockpit. The other hand remains on the dock for support.
3. The leg closest to the boat is placed in the center of the boat, approximately 30 cm in front of the seat.
4. Weight is shifted from the dock to the foot in the boat.
5. Carefully, the dock foot is placed in front of the boat foot in the cockpit.
6. With weight distributed over both feet and with one hand still on the cockpit and the other hand on the dock, the paddler gently sits down.

**Paddling Position – Kayak**

1. The paddler assumes the sitting position with legs together, knees bent at approximately 110 – 130 degrees (relaxed bend in legs), and feet are resting on the footrest.
2. Weight is evenly distributed over the seat.
3. The paddle is held in the correct grip, resting on the knees.
Once athletes are paddling, posture and positioning is something that should always be emphasize, early in the paddler’s career. Proper posture and positioning is crucial in developing technique, and is a foundation for proper technique.

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**TEACHING POINTS**

**Entering a Canoe**

1. There are two paddlers for each boat: a stern paddler and a bow paddler.
2. The stern paddler gets in first while the bow paddler remains on the dock and steadies boat.
3. The paddle is placed across the boat so that it rests on both sides of the gunwhales.
4. With both hands on the shaft of the paddle, the paddler slowly steps into center of boat, keeping weight low.
5. As soon as they are comfortably kneeling on both knees, the stern paddler will hold the dock to keep the boat steady for the bow paddler to follow the same procedure and get in the boat.
6. After both paddlers are comfortable in the canoe they may wish to assume the paddling racing position.

**Paddling Position – Canoe**

1. The knee of the paddling side rests on the bun or kneeling pad on the paddling side. A right paddler kneels on his/her right knee, and a left paddler kneels on his/her left knee.
2. The foot of the kneeling leg is positioned behind the knee, with the toes flexed to support the weight of the leg.
3. The non-kneeling knee is bent at approximately 95-120 degrees (in relaxed position).
4. The foot of the front leg is positioned so that the toes are pointed towards the paddling side (the foot is flat against the bottom of the boat).
5. The kneeling leg is placed on a slight cross angle to assist stability.
Positioning in Kayak: Posture

- Kayakers should be tall in the boat, elongating the spine as much as possible
- Sensation of lifting chest and rolling hips back behind the paddler to allow for maximum torso and core rotation
- Head should be vertical, with chin up and eyes focused forward
- Paddler should have slight forward lean of 10°-15° to help with effective loading of body weight onto paddle at catch and draw phase of stroke
Positioning and Posture in Kayak: Knee Angle

Bend of Knees:

- Using seat and footrest to adjust, paddlers should be positioned in boat so that knees are bent at an angle of 110° – 130°.
- Angle allows for effective leg drive through pressure on footrest, and movement on seat during catch and draw phase.
- Allows effective power transmission through loading the feet on the footrest.
Positioning in Canoe: 
Front or Support Leg Angle

Front Leg Position:
✓ Front or support leg angle under the knee at rest should be between 95° and 120°.
✓ Angle allows for:
  ✓ better flexibility in the hips
  ✓ better stability,
  ✓ proper knee angle of 90° at the set-up and catch to maximize hip rotation and prevent bouncing.
✓ This positioning in the boat should be taught as early as possible in the canoe athletes’ development

Feet & Leg Position:
✓ Front foot (toes) is slightly angled (15°-30°) off center towards paddling side
✓ Back leg is slightly angled to offside
Positioning in Canoe: Posture

- Sit up, kneel *tall* in the boat
- Head and shoulders should be extended upwards and hips pressed forward. Paddlers need to avoid hunching over, or letting hips shift backwards, or to one side or the other
- As paddlers develop, slight lean in posture should be developed
- Paddlers should avoid sitting up to 90° at exit or recovery. Keep the center of gravity moving in a forward motion
Propulsion

- Propulsion is all about moving the boat forward.
- There is really only one key thing that a Canoe Kids coach is concerned with actually creating – good posture.
- Teach your kids to sit up tall and at this stage of the game, let their natural body dynamics make the stroke happen. Don’t worry about the little things like hand position, or hip movement. However, focus on big body, gross motor movements (posture, rotation, etc).
- Canoe kids need to know the basics of how to move the paddle so that their boat will go forward and they need to start developing good paddling posture.
- The basics of paddling a boat are to sit up tall and reach forward to grab some water. Let the rest just happen. Don’t complicate things by talking about entry points, exit points or recovery time.
- Use the “Dock Paddling – Forward Stroke” activities for canoe and kayak to introduce these skills to your participants.

Steering

Once the kids have the boat moving forward, they need to be able to maneuver the boat in the direction in which they want to go.

Steering is about the ability to go in a straight line, but it also about going sideways, backwards and in a circle.

You will need to introduce the kayak rudder, the “J” stroke, the draw and the backwater stroke.

Use the specific “Dock Paddling” activities to introduce the “J” stroke, the draw stroke and the backwater stroke.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHING POINTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Using a Kayak Rudder</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The rudder is directed by applying pressure to the footboard stick which is attached to the rudder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Moving the stick to the right will turn the kayak to the right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moving the stick to the left will turn the kayak to the left.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

As a CanoeKids coach you are the most influential coach a paddler will ever have. You are setting the technical groundwork that will remain with the paddler the rest of their paddling life.
Your job is to introduce three of the fundamental technical components of paddling: BALANCE, PROPULSION and STEERING.

Make sure to involve your Head coach in your technical sessions. They can provide you with valuable insight and practical advice on teaching technique.

Use the following bank of activities to provide your participants with lots of opportunities to practice their new skills.

Remember -- keep it simple and HAVE FUN!
CANOEKIDS ACTIVITIES

Fun activities to help develop
BALANCE
PROPULSION
TECHNIQUE

OVER / UNDER

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner to Intermediate Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s,
Duration: 5-10 minutes
Purpose: To successfully pass the paddle under the boat from one side to the other.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Righting a capsized boat

Description
Participants pass their paddle under their boat and bring it up on the other side without tipping. Paddles is then passed back under the boat to the original side. Coach can encourage participants to keep track of number of successful passes before capsizing.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Pass your paddle under your boat to the other hand.
2. Think about maintaining your balance by ..... 
3. Pass the paddle back under your boat to the original hand.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
•
•

Safety Notes
EYES CLOSED

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, mini kayaks or slenders, paddles, PFD’s,
Duration: 5 – 10 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: To develop a “feel” for balance and movement by paddling a certain number of strokes with the eyes closed.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Awareness of motor movement

Description
Paddlers close their eyes and attempt to paddle a pre-determined number of strokes. This can be done on the dock or in the boats.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. On the dock, close your eyes and paddle 5 strokes.
2. Once everyone has tried that, pair up into crews of two.
3. The paddler who is not steering will close their eyes and paddle for 5-10 strokes.
4. After you have tried this a few times, come back to the dock and switch positions so the other paddler can try it too.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Try it in single boats once the paddler has lined themselves up for a clear run for 5 strokes.

Safety Notes
Make sure that crews don’t hit each other or other obstacles while their eyes are closed.
HAND PADDLING / SPEAR FISHING

For Ages: 7 – 12 years

Ability Level: Beginner to Advanced Canoe Kids

Equipment: Mini kayaks or slenders, paddles, PFD’s,

Duration: 5 – 10 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)

Purpose: To maintain balance while propelling the boats using hands instead of paddles.

What this activity develops
  ★ Balance in kayaks

Description
  Participants paddle their boats with their hands instead of their paddles.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
  1. Paddlers spread out facing away from each other.
  2. Pretend your paddle is a spear and throw it in front of you as far as you can.
  3. Using your hands, move your boat to your paddle and fish it out of the water.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
  • Incorporate this activity into a relay race or obstacle course.
  • Increase the distance the participants have to paddle.
  • Increase the complexity of the course to paddle (i.e. leave paddles on the dock and hand paddle around obstacles or through buoys).

Safety Notes
  Enthusiastic participants may throw their blades carelessly.
  Ensure that all paddlers are well spread out when their throw their paddles.
FOOTBATH

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, mini kayaks or slenders, paddles, PFD’s,
Duration: 5 – 10 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: To experience how a shift of weight affects balance by paddling with feet outside the boat.

What this activity develops
★ Balance

Description
Paddlers in kayaks paddle with both feet out of the cockpit and in the water – so they are taking a foot bath. Paddlers in canoes put only one foot out of the boat and in the water.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Kayak paddlers take both feet out of the cockpit and place one foot on either side of the boat so that your feet are in the water – taking a footbath.
2. Canoe paddlers can give their front foot a footbath by putting in the water on the non-paddling side of their boat.
3. Paddle to a designated spot and return.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
- Divide paddlers into teams of two and have footbath relay races.

Safety Notes
RIDING THE WAVES or WAVE RODEO

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, mini kayaks or slenders, paddles, PFD’s, Motorboat
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: Experience waves by paddling alongside a motorboat wake.

What this activity develops
- Balance
- Boat control in wave conditions.

Description
Participants align their boats parallel to motor boat wake and paddle through the waves as they follow the motor boat. Coach starts out directing the group in straight lines and large turns. As group becomes more comfortable with the waves, turns can become tighter and eventually circles. This exercise helps paddlers to think of waves as a source of fun and skill development instead of a source anxiety.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Line paddlers up so that they are on the outskirts of the motorboat wake and at least 15-20 feet behind the motorboat.
2. Play follow the leader with the motor boat as the leader.
3. Paddlers paddle as close to the “big” waves as possible.
4. Think of the waves as something to “ride” as though they were surfing or tubing.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
- Lead the group into tighter multiple circles which creates a bigger wake.
- Stage a WAVE RODEO where each paddler rides bigger and bigger waves until they get “thrown” – just like riding a steer or bucking bronco at the rodeo.

Safety Notes
Make sure that crews are safely positioned away from the motor.
Keep your eye on the participants as there may be some tipping as they practice on the waves. When crews tip, make it a fun event so that they stop thinking about tipping as something to be “feared”.
WAITER

For Ages: 7 – 12 years

Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids

Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, Cups (Styrofoam coffee cups work well for this), buckets

Duration: 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)

Purpose: As a team, to fill a bucket with water using only water contained in a cup on each participant’s boat’s bow.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Smooth boat run
★ Teamwork

Description
Each participant has a full cup of water placed on the bow of their boat. They must paddle a pre-determined distance where they will pour the remaining water in their cup into a bucket. Everyone works together to fill the bucket. Try to see how few trips paddlers need to make to fill the bucket (i.e., paddling controlled and keeping their cups as full as possible) versus how fast they can paddle on their way to fill the bucket. Which way fills the bucket fastest?

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Everyone needs to get a cup from the coach and fill it with water.
2. Carefully place the cup on the bow of your boat.
3. The goal is to paddle to the bucket carrying your water on your boat – just like a waiter.
4. Empty the water from your cup into the bucket.
5. Once your cup is empty, come back to start area and fill up your cup again.
6. Keep your cup as full as possible by keeping your boat as even as possible.
7. Rushing may get you to the bucket faster, but your cup may not be full when you get there!

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Divide paddlers into teams and have relay races using the cup of water as a “baton”.
• Paddlers must weave through a course of buoys or other obstacles with their cup of water.

Safety Notes
DOCK PADDLING – Canoe Forward Stroke

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner Canoe Kids
Equipment: Kneeling blocks, canoe paddles
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: To learn and practice the forward stroke for canoe

What this activity develops
★ Forward stroke skill used to propel boat forward in a generally straight line.
★ Basic canoe stroke from which modifications are made to control and steer boat

Description
Everyone finds a spot on the side of the dock with their kneeling block and appropriately sized paddle. Introduce forward stroke to participants by having them experiment and practice on the dock. This way they can focus on the stroke without worrying about balance. Start athlete on both knees until they feel comfortable on the dock. Allow paddlers to try this stroke on both sides while on the dock and let the paddler decide which knee is most comfortable (if you end up with too many rights or lefts, this is the time to switch them around). Emphasize comfort and confidence versus perfect technique. While on the dock, encourage all paddlers to stay in stroke (will be beneficial in the carry over to crew boats). Do not spend too much time on the dock.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Position yourself on the side of dock in a kneeling position with your paddle held in the correct grip.
2. Your top arm is at head height and your elbow has a slight bend – try to keep this bend for the duration of the stroke.
3. Reach out and “grab” the water in front of you by completely burying your paddle blade in the water.
4. Pull the paddle face towards you.
5. Once your paddle face reaches your hip, take the paddle out of the water.
6. Bring your paddle forward in the air to the starting position to complete one full stroke.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
- Move into boats and have them think about pulling the boat forward to the buried paddle instead of pulling the paddle back to the boat.
- As they become more comfortable with the exit, have them concentrate on sitting up tall and pulling the paddle out of the water in a smooth sideways motion.

Safety Notes
DOCK PADDLING – Kayak Forward Stroke

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner Canoe Kids
Equipment: kayak paddles
Duration: 5-10 minutes
Purpose: To learn and practice the forward stroke for kayak

What this activity develops
★ Forward stroke skill used to propel boat forward in a generally straight line.
★ A feel for the “twist”.

Description
Everyone spreads out and finds a spot on the dock with their kayak paddle. Introduce forward stroke to participants by having them experiment and practice the stroke in the air. The concept of “twist” should have been introduced when teaching the correct grip. The hand which actually twists the blade remains in a constant position with respect to the shaft, the shaft rotates within the opposite hand. To ensure this happens, paddlers should not hold the paddle in a “death grip”. If possible, have athletes, experience both left and right twists. Emphasize comfort and confidence versus perfect technique. Do not spend too much time on the dock, but make sure that participants are comfortable with the feel of the motion and the twist before moving into boats.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Sit up tall.
2. Hold your paddle in front of you at approximately eye height.
3. Reach out and “grab” the air/water in front of you by completely burying one of your paddle faces in the air/water. Your top arm should be bent in an angle like an “upside down L”.
4. Pull the paddle face towards you so that the “face is looking behind you”.
5. Once your paddle face reaches your hip, take the paddle out of the water.
6. Bring your paddle forward in the air to the starting position, ready to take a stroke on the other side.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Move into boats and have them think about pulling the boat forward to the buried paddle instead of pulling the paddle back to the boat.
• As they become more comfortable with the exit, have them concentrate on sitting up tall and moving the paddle in a rhythmic motion.

Safety Notes
DOCK PADDLING – Feathering Stroke

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner Canoe Kids
Equipment: Kayak and/or canoe paddles, dock
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: To learn the feathering stroke with a kayak and/or canoe paddle

What this activity develops
★ Feathering skill development
★ Working towards balance in the boat.

Description
Participants space themselves out along the side of the dock with a paddle to learn and practice the feathering stroke. Have each paddlers practice putting as much weight on the paddle as possible while feathering.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Position your paddle so that the face of the paddle (the scoop face on the kayak paddlers) is facing upwards and back edge of the paddle is flat on the water.
2. Move the paddle back and forth along the surface of the water as though you are spreading peanut butter or icing a cake.
3. Make sure that the paddle always stays above the water: don’t let the edge of the blade slide in.
4. Turn around and practice on the other side.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
★ Move into boats and see how high each paddler can count before falling in.

Safety Notes
Once moved into boats, make sure that water is depth is appropriate for tipping over and easily righting the boat.
Make sure that paddlers aren’t too close to the dock when they are in boats to ensure that paddles, boats and heads don’t connect with the dock when they tip.
DOCK PADDLING – “J” Stroke

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner Canoe Kids
Equipment: canoe paddles, blocks/buns, dock
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: To paddle a canoe in a straight line.

What this activity develops
★ Steering skills

Description
Participants space themselves out along the side of the dock with a paddle to learn and practice the “J” stroke. Participants will take a forward stroke. At the end of their stroke, while the paddle face is still fully submerged, the paddler will draw the tail of a “J” away from the boat with their paddler. The bottom of the J always goes away from the boat – so on the left side a backwards J is drawn. This action should move the boat’s bow in the direction of the J.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. When you take a forward stroke, the bow of the boat moves away from the paddle. If you kept paddling on the same side, you would end up paddling in circle. The “J” stroke will move the bow back in line so that you can paddle in a straight line.
2. Paddlers should position themselves on the side of the dock with their paddles.
3. Set up and begin a forward stroke by reaching out and grabbing the water in front of them with their paddle.
4. Just before the paddler reaches the end of their stroke they will draw the tail of the “J” in the water while the paddle face is still fully submerged.
5. To draw the J, the top hand’s thumb points down and the paddle blade pries away from the dock/boat.
6. If you were in the boat, the bow would now move back in line.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Move into boats and experiment by paddling in imaginary lanes.

Safety Notes
DOCK PADDLING – Draw Stroke

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner Canoe Kids
Equipment: kayak paddles, canoe paddles, blocks/buns, dock
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: To move the boat sideways in the water.

What this activity develops
★ Steering skills

Description
Participants space themselves out along the side of the dock with a paddle to learn and practice the draw stroke. Participants will extend the flat side of the blade parallel to the side of the dock and bury their blade in the water. The paddler will then pull (or draw) the water towards the dock. On the water this stroke will move the boat towards the side the paddler is paddling on.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Draw stroke is used to move boats sideways -- for docking, rafting up, or for moving sideways in the water.
2. Paddler reaches out beside their boat with the paddle’s face looking at the side of the boat.
3. Paddler draws the paddle back to the side of the boat – or paddler pulls the boat to the paddle.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
- Move into boats and experiment by moving the boat towards and away from the dock.

Safety Notes
DOCK PADDLING – Backwater Stroke / Check

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner Canoe Kids
Equipment: kayak paddles, canoe paddles, blocks/buns, dock
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: To move the boat backwards in the water and/or to stop the boat.

What this activity develops
★ Steering skills

Description
Participants space themselves out along the side of the dock with a paddle to learn and practice the backwater stroke. To go backwards, the paddler reaches to grab the water behind them and pulls the boat back to meet the paddle. The face of their paddle is looking forward. To stop or slow the boat the paddler buries the paddle face in the water just past their kneeling knee and presses against the water.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. The paddler places the paddle in the water behind their hip and in a pushing action of the bottom arm, moves the water towards the front of the boat.
2. The paddle face is then skimmed back over the surface of the water towards the stern to begin again.
3. Remember to keep the edge of the paddle blade above the water.
4. The check stroke is used for to slow or stop the boat.
5. The paddler buries the paddle face in the water (with the face looking forward) just past their kneeling knee and applies pressure against the water.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Move into boats and experiment by moving the boat towards and away from the dock.

Safety Notes
TARGET BALL

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner to Intermediate Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, enough Balls of various sizes for each paddler (volleyballs, beachballs, soccerballs, tennis balls, etc.)
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: To paddle to an object and touch it with the nose of the boat

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Steering

Description
Each participant has a ball the size of a soccer ball. The crew throws the ball as far ahead of them as possible. They then line up their boat and try to hit the “Target Ball” with the nose of their boat. Repeat as many times as desired.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Everyone needs a ball with them in their boat.
2. Once on the water, throw your ball as far ahead of you as possible.
3. Line up your boat with the ball and paddle towards it.
4. Try to hit the ball with the nose of your boat before you pick it up out of the water.
5. Once you have retrieved your ball, throw it again!

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Decrease the size of the ball – tennis balls.
• Turn the exercise into a race with the coach throwing the balls.
• Using a volleyball sized ball, place the ball in the water beside the boat. The crew must work together to push the ball to a target marker and back without the boat losing contact with the ball – requires lots of prying, drawing and communication.

Safety Notes
Try to avoid having the paddlers throw the balls at each other.
Make sure that nobody tries to retrieve a ball that has drifted into an unsafe area of water.
TREASURE HUNT

For Ages: 7 – 12 years

Ability Level: Intermediate Canoe Kids

Equipment: Rec Canoes, paddles, PFD’s, “treasures”,

Duration: 10 – 15 minutes

Purpose: To be the first team to solve the clues and collect the all treasure.

What this activity develops
★ Boat launching, docking, basic strokes, turns
★ Paddling in different wind conditions.
★ Team work

Description
The coach hides a series of small treasures in strategic places that will cause the students to paddle and find them. Treasures shouldn’t be placed more than 250m away from the dock. There should be enough treasures for each team. Coach forms teams by assigning four paddlers to each canoe. Clues are given out on the dock by the coach as each team completes a leg of the treasure search. To encourage docking and launching skills, the coach may want to stand back from the edge of the dock forcing a member of each team to get out of the boat to come and get the clues.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Each team has their own set of treasure that they have to find.
2. Coach has a series of clues to help each team find their treasure.
3. Everytime a treasure is found, teams come back to the dock for the next clue.
4. Work together as a team to solve the clue and then paddle to find the hidden treasure.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Increase the distance from the dock that treasures are hidden.
• Work in teams of two instead of four.
• Make the clues more challenging.

Safety Notes
The thrill of competition may cause teams to come into the dock the too quickly and / or rush their launches.
LEAP FROG

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s,
Duration: 10 – 30 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: To complete a longer paddle as team by taking turns setting the pace and leading the group.

What this activity develops
★ Aerobic conditioning
★ Steering.
★ Boat control

Description
Participants form a paddling chain by aligning their boats bow to stern in a straight line. The last boat in the chain must pass the other boats and assume the lead. As soon as one paddler reaches the front of the group, the next paddler must begin their journey to the front of the group.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Everyone form a chain by lining up one behind the other.
2. Your bow should be aligned with the stern of the boat in front of you.
3. The group is going to paddle a set distance or time by working together as team.
4. The paddler who is at the back of the chain must paddle to the front of the group to become the new leader.
5. As soon as a paddler reaches the front of the group, the paddler who is now at the back must paddle to the front to become the new leader.
6. Everyone will take a turn at leading the group. Work as team to encourage each other during your paddle to the front of the group.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Have paddlers weave through the boats on their journey to the front of the group
• Form two chains and have them compete against each other in a fun race.

Safety Notes
Keep an eye on paddlers to make sure they don’t get too competitive and overtire themselves too quickly.
If weather conditions change, or paddlers tire more quickly than anticipated, you may have to adjust your original time/distance goal.
RELAY RACES

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, Batons (you can use balloons, beach balls, cups, paddles, etc. Be creative!)
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: As a team, complete a relay race using various implements as creative batons.

What this activity develops
★ Teamwork
★ Propulsion
★ Steering

Description
Coach divides paddlers into teams of 3-5 evenly matched boats. Race distances can vary from 50m to 500m. Paddlers pass objects such as balloons, or balls to each other until everyone has had a turn. The course doesn’t have to be in a straight line but can include turns, docking and other skills the coach wishes to emphasize.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Within your team, split yourselves into two groups – Group A and Group B.
2. Group A is going to paddle to the other end of the course.
3. Group B is going to select a starter.
4. Each starter will be given a ball to put in their boat. Paddle to your teammates in Group A.
5. Once you are within a paddle’s length of your teammates’ boats, pass the ball to the next paddler. This paddler will paddle back and pass the ball their next teammate.
6. Once everyone on your team has paddled one length of the course with the ball you’re finished.
7. Practise paddling in a straight line to your teammates. Use your draw and check strokes to help you get in position to pass the ball.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
- Have the paddlers pass paddles, cups of liquid, or balls pushed by the boat’s bow.
- Have only one boat per team and use the boat as the baton. Paddlers can practise efficient docking and launching as they take their turns paddling.
- Have paddlers weave through a course of buoys.

Safety Notes
OBSTACLE COURSES

For Ages: 7 – 12 years

Ability Level: Beginner to Advanced Canoe Kids

Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, obstacles such as buoys, buckets, balls, etc.

Duration: 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)

Purpose: As a team, complete an obstacle course that incorporates as many paddling skills as possible.

What this activity develops
★ Teamwork
★ Propulsion
★ Steering

Description
Coach divides paddlers into teams of 3-5 evenly matched boats. Paddlers must complete a course of obstacles as a team. Obstacles can include docking, launching, drawing/prying the boat to a certain target, paddling a set distance through buoys, passing paddles under the boat, pushing a ball with the boat, switching boats etc. The coach can divide the teams so that only one member of each team does a particular skill or set it up like a relay race where each team member must overcome all obstacles.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Coach explains the obstacle course.
2. Each team assigns a team member to a particular obstacle.
3. When the coach shouts “go” the paddlers at the first obstacle will do their challenge.
4. The next challenge can’t be started until the previous one is completed.
5. Complete all the obstacles to finish the course.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Increase the challenge of the obstacles.
• Have the paddlers do the course as a relay race where every paddler must complete every obstacle.

Safety Notes
If including skills such as docking/launching be sure that the participants don’t harm themselves or their equipment in their haste to finish the task.
You may not wish to include carrying boats in the course as haste may cause participants to stumble and drop equipment.
MINI TRIATHLON

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini / Slender kayaks, soccer ball, hills (or other venue for running)
Duration: 30 minutes – 1.5 hours (pending desired length of each event)
Purpose: As a large group, complete the three events of the triathlon: paddle, soccer game, hill running.

What this activity develops
★ Teamwork
★ Propulsion
★ Steering
★ Aerobic fitness

Description
Coach divides paddlers into 2 evenly matched teams. Each team is then subdivided into crews of 2 or 4 to paddle in evenly matched boats (canoes and/or kayaks) for the first leg of the triathlon: paddle a 250 metres course that begins and ends near the dock. Once everyone has completed the paddle, the two teams play a short game of mini - soccer (or other team sport game). After the soccer game, the teams complete the third event which is to run up and down a hill once.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Coach explains the triathlon concept.
2. The object is not to go full-out, but to pace themselves throughout the events.
3. Once divided into their teams and crews, the paddlers will launch their boats and proceed to the start line.
4. When the coach shouts “go” the paddlers may begin the first event.
5. The coach will coordinate the start of each new event, the paddlers must wait for the coach before going to the next event.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Increase the length of the events: e.g. a 500 m paddle, a 20 minute soccer game and 2 sets of hills.
• Coach can assign a victory to a particular team by assigning points for finishing in first, second, etc. places in each event and tabulating all points at the end.

Safety Notes
Hydration may be a concern, so be sure that all participants have the opportunity to drink water in between events and after the triathlon.
SKILLS AND THRILLS DUATHALON

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini, Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, a hill or other course for running.
Duration: 20 – 45 minutes (pending length of events and ability of participants)
Purpose: Complete a course of paddling and running.

What this activity develops
★ Propulsion
★ Steering
★ Aerobic fitness

Description
In teams or as individuals, the participants will complete a multi-event activity that consists of paddling 100m, docking properly, run a hill (or other course) x2, then launching their boats again and paddling another 100m. Younger athletes will benefit from completing this event as a team of 3-4 paddling in recreational canoes.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Coach explains the event and the course for the paddling and running components.
2. Paddlers are divided into crews (teams) if competing as teams.
3. Participants begin the event already in their boats and should paddle to the start line.
4. When the coach shouts go, the paddlers will paddle to the dock, dock properly, do the running the course, come back to dock, launch their boats and paddle the 100 metres loop again.
5. Paddlers are finished when they have properly docked their boat after the second paddle.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Increase the length of the paddle and running portion.
• Paddling portions include having to weave through buoys.

Safety Notes
Make sure the participants don’t harm themselves or their equipment in their haste to dock and launch boats.
Hydration may a concern after this event, especially on a hot day.
FOX AND RABBIT

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini, Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, a whistle
Duration: 15 - 20 minutes (pending desired distance for paddle)
Purpose: To chase and catch a ‘rabbit’ paddler on the coach’s whistle command.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Propulsion
★ Steering

Description
A paddler (the fox) leaves the start area and paddles towards a designated spot. After a short time (10-20 seconds) the next paddler (the rabbit) paddles after the fox. When the coach blows the whistle, both paddlers turn around and the fox chases the rabbit back to the start and passes them if possible. You may wish to alter the game by having multiple foxes and rabbits at the same time.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Every paddler will have the opportunity to be the rabbit and the fox.
2. The coach says go, the fox starts paddling towards a designated spot.
3. The coach will tell the rabbit when to start paddling after the fox.
4. When the coach blows the whistle, both participants turn around and the fox chases the rabbit back to the coach and other paddlers.
5. If the fox passes the rabbit, the rabbit is caught
6. If the rabbit makes it back to the rabbit hutch (the rest of the paddlers), the rabbit is safe.
7. Play until everyone has had a turn to be a rabbit and a fox.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Increase the distance between the fox and rabbit at the beginning.
• Increase the paddling time before blowing the whistle.

Safety Notes
Make sure rabbits and foxes don’t ram the other rabbits in the rabbit hutch by accident!
KEEP AWAY / MONKEY IN THE MIDDLE

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, a waterproof ball
Duration: 10 - 15 minutes
Purpose: To keep the ball away from a designated paddler (monkey) by tossing it back and forth with paddles.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Steering

Description
Paddlers form a circle with one paddler in the middle (the monkey). The paddlers toss a waterproof ball such as a polo ball back and forth across the circle with their paddles. The designated ‘monkey’ tries to steal the ball. Paddlers will have to focus on keeping their balance as they toss the ball back and forth and also on steering skills to maneuver their boats to catch the ball.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Once paddlers are on the water, the Coach will pick the first monkey.
2. Paddlers form a large circle with the monkey in the middle of the circle.
3. Using paddles, toss the ball back and forth across the circle, trying to keep it away from the monkey.
4. Paddlers must toss the ball as soon as they have caught it.
5. Paddlers can not pass the ball to the paddlers on either side of them – the ball must always be tossed across the circle.
6. The monkey will try to steal the ball by scooping it out the air with their paddle, or retrieving a dropped ball before a paddler in the circle.
7. Once the monkey has stolen the ball, they will join the circle and the last paddler to have touched the ball before the monkey will be the new monkey.
8. Play until everyone has had a turn to be the monkey.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Instead of playing keep-away, pair paddlers up and have them paddle a designated distance while passing the ball back and forth with their paddles.

Safety Notes
Watch for “cannon” balls.
Don’t let the participants gang up on a particular monkey – you may have to intervene to keep the game fun and make sure everyone has a turn at being the monkey.
STOPS AND STARTS

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s, whistle
Duration: 10 - 15 minutes
Purpose: To paddle to a designated marker and back in a designated time frame.

What this activity develops
★ Propulsion
★ Check stroke

Description
On the single whistle command all paddlers will paddle towards a designated marker. On the double whistle command, all paddlers must stop paddling and apply a check stroke. Paddlers can only paddle forward after the coach has given the whistle command. Coach continues to blow whistle commands and paddlers keep starting and stopping until they have reached the designated marker.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Paddlers will paddle towards the designated marker everytime the coach blows the whistle once.
2. Paddlers must stop paddling and apply a check stroke everytime the coach blows the whistle twice.
3. Paddlers will try to get to the marker before the coach while obeying the stop and start commands.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Introduce a three whistle blow which means the paddlers have to turn around paddle in the opposite direction.

Safety Notes
### PAUSE PADDLE

**For Ages:** 7 – 12 years
**Ability Level:** Advanced Canoe Kids
**Equipment:** Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s
**Duration:** 10 - 15 minutes
**Purpose:** Paddle a designated distance while pausing 3-5 seconds to hold the paddle in the air between each stroke.

**What this activity develops**
- Balance

**Description**
Paddlers take a stroke and hold their paddle in the air for three to five seconds before taking the next stroke. This is a good exercise for team boats as it lays the foundation for teaching paddlers to stay in stroke.

**Key Instructions for Paddlers:**
1. Paddlers will paddle towards the designated marker and back.
2. After every stroke, hold your paddle in the air and count to three one-thousands (one one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand).
3. When your paddle is in the air, try to hold it still in the ready position – ready to take the next stroke.

**Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:**
- Increase the pause time.

**Safety Notes**
WIDE GRIP

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, Mini or Slender kayaks, paddles, PFD’s
Duration: 5 - 10 minutes
Purpose: Paddle while holding the paddle in as wide a grip as possible.

What this activity develops

★ Balance

Description

Paddlers place their hands on their paddle as far apart as possible. Keeping arms perfectly straight, paddlers paddle to a designated spot. Arms should never bend. This motion will cause paddlers to center their balance. It may also give paddlers a feel for natural rotation during the stroke. It is important to not give your paddlers too much think about by talking about rotation at this stage of their learning curve.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Paddlers will place their hands on their paddle as far apart as possible.
2. Keeping your arms perfectly straight, take 10 – 20 strokes.
3. After the 10-20 strokes, move your hands in slightly so that there is a tiny bit of bend in your arms.
4. Keep repeating until your arms are back to the correct position.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:

• Increase the number of strokes taken when in the wide grip.
• Keeping moving hands and see how narrow paddlers can make their grip.

Safety Notes
SIMON SAYS

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: ANY
Equipment: Kayaks / canoes, dragon boat, war canoe, pleasure canoe, PFDs
Duration: 5 - 10 minutes
Purpose: Develop balance, technical skills.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Propulsion
★ steering

Description
This game is played the same way it is played on land. Lead the students to mimic skills which you choose to demonstrate on the dock. Any boat can be used in this exercise.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Keep good posture
2. Keep head up.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
● Make skills or activities increasingly difficult.

Safety Notes
Canoe – Kayak Ballet

For Ages: 7 – 12 years, masters
Ability Level: ANY
Equipment: Kayaks / canoes, pleasure canoe, PFDs
Duration: 5 - 10 minutes
Purpose: Develop propulsion, steering skills.

What this activity develops
★ Balance
★ Propulsion
★ steering

Description
Set up 3 or more markers or buoys. Paddlers must try to paddle from buoy to buoy different ways: forwards, backwards, side ways, etc. Have fun with it and put it to music, and give marks for artistic impression! At the very end, paddlers can do a dismount (i.e. jump out of their boat).

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Keep good posture
2. Keep head up.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Make movements more difficult.

Safety Notes
Ensure life jackets are used
Ensure a safety boat is present
CANOE TAG

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to Advanced Canoe Kids
Equipment: Rec Canoes, paddles, PFD’s, a soft ball (beach ball or partially deflated volleyball)
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes (pending desired length of paddle)
Purpose: To avoid being tagged by the ball and becoming "it".

What this activity develops
- Propulsion
- Steering
- Teamwork

Description
Paddlers are divided into teams of three paddlers. Each team is assigned one boat. The bow and stern paddlers are responsible for directing the boat and the middle paddler is the ball controller when that team is "it". One team is declared “it” (coach can pick a number and team who guesses closest to the number can be "it"). The “it” team attempts to tag another crew by tagging another boat or crew member with the ball. When another crew is “tagged” they must retrieve the ball and take their turn being "it".

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Three paddlers per team. Bow and stern paddlers are responsible for directing the boat. Middle paddler is the ball controller when your team is "it".
2. “It” team is going to try and pass off the “it duty” by tagging another team with the ball.
3. If the ball hits another boat or crew member, that team is now “it” and they must retrieve ball to keep playing the game.
4. There are set boundaries and all canoes must stay in bounds. Canoes who go out of bounds will automatically become “it”.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
- Limit the distance that “it” is allowed to throw the ball. For example, the boats must be within 15 feet of each other before the ball can be thrown.
- Make the playing area smaller and make a “no throwing” rule.
- Use other objects: Rubber Chicken

Safety Notes
Make sure that boundaries are set up prior to the game and all canoes obey them.
Make it clear to paddlers that this is not an opportunity to “bean” the other team with the ball.
Tip-Tow-Turn

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Beginner to Intermediate Canoe Kids
Equipment: Kayaks, or canoe
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: To practice good safety practices with tipping, and emptying kayaks or canoe

What this activity develops
 ★ Propulsion
 ★ Steering

Description
Paddlers are divided into teams. Each team is assigned one boat. The first paddler starts from the dock / beach and paddles out to a specific point and tips their canoe or kayak, and tows it in. Once back at the beach or dock, the team empties the boat and the next team mate takes their turn.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Completely stop the canoe or kayak when they get to the point and turn around.
2. Make sure after the paddler tips that he / she immediately turns the boat over to an upright position.
3. Avoid the boat touching the dock when emptying, or using the dock as leverage.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Have the paddlers stop their boat, turn it around, and then tip.

Safety Notes
Make sure that the “towing distance” is reasonable.
Have a safety boat ready in case of emergency.
Kayak / Canoe Ultimate

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to advanced Canoe Kids/ U15s
Equipment: Kayaks, or canoe, ball, football, Frisbee, rubber chicken
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: Score as many points as possible by passing an object into the endzone.

What this activity develops
★ Propulsion
★ Steering
★ Balance

Description
Paddlers are divided into 2 teams. One team starts with the ball or object and must pass the ball to other teammates and try to complete a pass into the “endzone”. The endzone may be just beyond a buoy or marker in the water.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
1. Paddlers can not take more than 3 strokes before they must pass the ball, or rubber chicken
2. Paddlers may not use their paddles to steal the ball.
3. Avoid collisions by taking away “scrambles” for the ball.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• When a pass is missed, immediate turnover for the other team

Safety Notes
Life jackets.
Have a safety boat
Kayak / Canoe Polo or Basketball

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to advanced Canoe Kids/ bantams/ masters
Equipment: Kayaks, or canoe, ball, rubber chicken, football
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: Score as many points as possible as a team either in a basketball hoop or other net.

What this activity develops
★ Propulsion
★ Steering
★ Balance

Description
Paddlers are divided into 2 teams. One team starts with the ball or object and must pass the ball to other teammates and try to score on a net, or shoot a basket.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
• Paddlers can not take more than 3 strokes before they must pass the ball, or rubber chicken
• Paddlers may not use their paddles to steal the ball.
• Avoid collisions by taking away “scrambles” for the ball.

Increasing the challenge for older or more skilled paddlers:
• Paddlers must catch the ball, or it will be a turnover.

Safety Notes
Life jackets.
Have a motor boat ready for safety just in case
Scatterball / Pick-Up

For Ages: 7 – 12 years
Ability Level: Intermediate to advanced Canoe Kids/ bantams/ masters
Equipment: Kayaks, or canoe, balls, rubber chickens, football
Duration: 10 – 15 minutes
Purpose: Collect as many floating objects in the water as possible

What this activity develops
- Propulsion
- Steering
- Balance

Description
Paddlers are divided into 2 teams. Throw all the balls into the water, making sure they are well scattered in random directions and spread out enough so paddlers have room to maneuver and paddle. The object of the game is to have the paddlers or teams collect as many objects as possible either after a certain time, or after all of them have been collected.

Key Instructions for Paddlers:
- Spread out and keep their heads up.
- Paddlers must pick the balls or objects with their hands.
- Avoid collisions.

Safety Notes
- Life jackets.
- Have a motor boat ready for safety just in case.
Dryland Games and Warm-Up Activities

- TAG:
  - Freeze tag
  - Ants tag
  - Toilet tag
  - Partner tag
  - Rubber chicken tag
  - Sharks and seals
  - Octopus tag
- Bun ball
- Thief
- Obstacle course
- Scavenger hunt
- Speed ball
- Pylon craze
- 4 corner tag
- Mouse, mouse come out of your house
- Mouse tails
- Corner ball
- Group dynamic stretching
- Relay races
- Ultimate: football, ball, Frisbee, rubber chicken
- Ship / shore
- Indiana jones
Goal of the practice: ____________________________________________________________  DATE: ____________________________

Equipment needed: ____________________________________________________________________________

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<th>Description of Activity</th>
<th>Key Points</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
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2002 Technical Advisors for the Canoe Kids Project: Lesley Anne Schmidt, Marc Creamer, John Edwards


Coaching Manual Wascana Racing Canoe Club (1999). Club Personnel Committee and Troy Comeau, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada
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