

Derwent Hill Activity Sheet:
Neale's Mountain Survival Challenge!

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Do you like the sound of a night out in the wild and learning real survival skills?

The following has been taught to students on survival courses for many years. If, like Robinson Crusoe, you find yourself shipwrecked on a desert island or you just want to know how to deal with a pandemic slightly better then read on.

When we are faced with uncertainty it is easy to become panic stricken and confused. Following a **PLAN** can give us a guide and a routine. **PLAN** stands for:

Protection,

Location

Acquisition

Navigation

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Now, imagine you are stranded on a Desert Island, trapped in a massive forest, or lost in the Arctic. We need to survive! Let's put our **PLAN** into action by following the steps below:

1. Protection means shielding yourself from the elements. A place to keep you safe whilst you rest. It traps warm air to keep you warm when it's cold or shades you from the sun to keep you cool, and keeps you dry in the rain. The environment you are in will give you different resources for you to build a shelter. If you are in the arctic you could build an igloo or snow cave or if you were in a forest you could make a lean-to out of logs or branches.

Activity: Build a shelter in your garden or a room in your house. You could use cushions, blankets an old sheet or a sleeping bag (use your imagination!)

2. Location is about having the means to signal for help. Letting others know where you are. It also means finding out about where you are. Where is the best source of fresh water and food (kitchen) or where might I go if I must walk to help. We need to work out where we are and a way to signal for help.

Activity: Draw a map of the living room (or where you have set up your shelter) and then draw a map of the ground floor of your house. Remember to draw a key on the map (draw all the furniture as one colour for example and the windows as another). Try drawing it to scale; say 12 paces is the length of one wall could be 12 cm on your map. Now mark on your map where your base is.

So the grownups can find you, do you have a whistle and a torch or something similar to attract attention? Remember the international distress signal is 6 blasts on a whistle or 6 flashes on a torch, this is repeated until someone signals back.

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3. Acquisition means collecting food, water or resources that you need to survive. We can only survive for a short time without food and water. So where is the best place you can find some?

Activity: Use your map to navigate to the best hunting grounds (food) and fresh water supply (probably your kitchen!). As you navigate your way there make a note of how many double paces it is (count every time your right foot hits the ground). If you are forced to spend the night in your shelter you will need some bedding to keep you warm and some food to keep you going (night time snacks!)

4. Navigation is the point where we need to start thinking about moving towards safety. As you have started your map of the local area (the ground floor of your house), let's now work out where North is. If you have a compass then great, but if not, how can we work it out. Using the sun is one of the best methods of natural navigation. We know that, in the Northern Hemisphere, the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and that at approximately 12:00 mid-day it is in the south. If you stand with your back to the sun at mid-day you are facing roughly North. A more accurate method is to use something called the Shadow Stick Method. Follow the guidance below to learn how.

Activity: You will need to find a stick about a metre long, and a nice flat piece of ground which is outside and in direct sunlight. Poke your stick into the ground. The stick should now cast a shadow on the ground. Mark the tip of this shadow with a stone. Now leave the stick for a while, say one hour. Now mark the tip of the new shadow with another stone. If you draw a line between the two shadows, you will have a line that runs from west to east. You can then work out which direction North is. With north marked on your map, you can now orientate your map to North and everything should line up. Try setting your map each time you go into a new room and figure out which direction you are looking when you peer out of each window.

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A final Survival Challenge.

When heading back to safety you may have to cross some mountains. Possibly a mountain like the mighty Catbells. Catbells is 451 metres high. Could you climb Cat bells at home? Follow the instructions below:

1. Measure the vertical height of one of your steps on your stair case at home (ours are 18cm).
2. Then count the number of steps (we have 12).
3. Multiply the height of a step by the number of steps ($18 \times 12 = 216\text{cm}$ or 2.16 metres). This will give you the height of your staircase.
4. Divide the height of Catbells (451 metres) by the height of your stair case (2.16 metres).
5. For my staircase that should give me 209 ish. So, if I climb up and down my stairs 209 times, I will have ascended and descended the height of Catbells.

Once that is done, wow, you should be ready to put your feet up with a cuppa and tell everyone about you adventures.

Stay safe folks. Best wishes, Neale.

Remember when caught out in the wild **P.L.A.N.**