

Different Kinds of Hikes

Taking a hike could have many different purposes. When the den or pack is going on a hike, have something that the boys will observe. If the hike is the same every time, soon it will be boring. Here are some different ideas. You can cover the same ground if needed, but have a different purpose each time!

ABC Hike: Divide into groups which attempt to find natural objects beginning with each letter of the alphabet. The group finding the most wins.

A Wonder-Full Hike: At each destination point or rest stop, each person tells of the “most wonderful” thing he has seen. Stops can be as frequent as you desire.

Baby Hike: Look for nature babies—bird, fern, leaf.

Beach or Lake Hikes: Hike on the beach or lake shore to see nature at water’s edge. See the difference at the beach and lake.

Bird Watching Hike: Describe birds they see; size, coloring, beak type, where they are. Take a bird identification book or someone who knows birds. (See item at end of hike list for more information on bird watching.)

Blindfold Hike: Divide boys in pairs. Have one blindfolded. The other leads him a short distance, quietly and slowly. Encourage the blindfolded boy to listen, smell and feel the surroundings. Trade places.

Breakfast Hike: Reach the destination in time to see the sunrise, then cook breakfast.

Color Hike 1: Give each boy a list of colors to try and locate on the hike. The items can be collected or simply noted, depending on the area you are in.

Color Hike 2: Choose a color-like red. Walk only toward red objects for as long as you can. See if you can make it around your block.

Come to Your Senses Hike: Hike, stopping often to see, hear, feel, smell, and, with caution, taste things along the way. Feeling is a special delight. Touch the bark of trees, moss, flower petals. Sniff the air. Listen for special sounds. Document in a notebook, do the hike again, are the sounds and smells the same or different?

Craft Hike: Collect nature items to work with later in crafts projects. Rocks can be turned into animals, leaves can be used for splatter painting, dried weeds, flowers, pods, seeds and the like can be glued into nature pictures. (Check with the park first to see if you can take anything out of the area.)

Curiosity Hike: Find some odd or curious object along the way, such as bark, stone, stick, etc. By using your imagination, tell what the object represents.

Explore a Tree Hike: Blindfold the Cub Scouts, one at a time, and ask them to explore a tree. Ask them to think about how it feels, smells etc. Is the bark rough or smooth? Are the leaves damp or dry? What does it smell like? While one boy does this, the others observe, by sight, things about the tree such as color, height, etc. After all have explored let them compare the results. Help them identify the tree.

Exploring Hike: Try a zigzag hike. At the first crossroad turn right, at the second turn left, etc.

Get-together Hike: Two or more dens hike to a location for games, stunts and fun.

Historical Hike: To historical landmarks. Know the history of the spot before going.

Homes Hike: Look for nature's homes—spider webs, nests, holes, etc.

Indian Hike: Hike quietly, single file. Boys wear-headbands, learn an Indian dance, hear an Indian Story. Always look and listen.

Map Hike: Make a sketch of your route as you proceed.

Memory Hike: This game is played after a hike or a trip to the zoo or park. During the outing, tell the boys to observe everything very carefully so they can make a list of all that they have seen. Just after the outing, hand out paper and pencils and have the boys make their lists. See who was most observant.

Monogram Walk: On a hike have each boy see, hear, touch or smell objects that begin with the initials of her name. After the walk, have boys share what they found.

Nature Hikes: For observation, for purposes of setting out bird feeding stations, to protect rare wild plants by killing pests., to cut and clear trails, to remove dead trees, for listening.

Night Hikes: See nature at night, what different animals do you see. Look up and see the stars.

Obstacle Course Hike: Some boys have never climbed a tree, walked a log, gone through a fence, or chinned themselves on a tree branch. To give them this experience pick a trail which will provide something such an obstacle course. Don't destroy property or trespass.

Once Around the Block: Hikers go once around the block then their observations are tested. Who has seen the most round things? What kinds of trees were seen? What did you see that was orange? Etc.

One Hundred Inch Walk: Assign each group of two or three boys a plot of land about 100 inches square (10" x 10"). Have them spend at least 10 minutes doing an intensive exploration and writing down what they found in their 100" area. Try to pick an area that will have a variety of conditions (ant hill, plant variety, a tree, etc.)

Penny Hike: Start walking and at each corner flip a coin to see which way to go. Heads go right; tails, go left.

Pioneer Hikes: Carry no equipment. Improvise any equipment needed along the way and at the destination.

Puddle Hike: Hike in a gentle rain (or just after a rain) with the boys wearing appropriate rain gear. Note how animals and insects take cover from the elements.

Rain Hikes: Go when its raining, dressed in raincoats for observation of nature in the rain.

Rainbow Hike: Find and list as many colors in nature as possible. Especially good after a rain.

Sealed Orders Hike: Group lays trail using notes that give directions of how to go and what to do on the way.

Senses Walk: Listen your way around the block. Write down all the sounds you hear. Sniff your way around the block. Write down everything you smell.

Shadow Walk: Walk only in the shadows. This may require some jumping.

Sharing Walk: You will need a number of blindfolds. Divide boys into pairs. One person will wear the blindfold, the other will be the guide. Discuss safety rules. In silence, the guides take their partner on a local hike, hearing, smelling, feeling nature. After 5 minutes, switch. Have boys share after all have had a turn.

Sniff Hike: Mark a trail in advance by rubbing a cut onion on trees. The boys follow trail by sniffing the trees.

Snoop Hike: Explore a site. Be snoopy. Be aware. Collect seeds, weeds, etc.

Stop and Spot Hike: While hiking the leader stops and says, "I spot a _____," naming a familiar object. Everyone in the group who sees the object raises his hand. This is a good observation game.

Stop, Look, and Listen Hike: Hike 5 minutes (or a certain number steps). Stop and write down all that you see and hear. Make five stops.

String Hike: Follow a string, laid out in advance. Have nature objects along the way to identify.

Tracking and Trailing Hikes: One den stalks another.

Tracks or Signs Hike: Look for animal signs.

Treasure Hike: Trail is laid out with a treasure at end.

Tree Hike: Count the different kinds of trees in a given location.

Un-Nature Walk: Plant 15-20 man-made items along the trail (they could all be items relating to a theme). Have the boys work in pairs, leaving a few minutes between groups. The boys are not to disturb the items, just write down what they see.

Unusual Object Walk: Give each boy a bag to place an unusual object in during the walk. At the end, compare objects - anything that is the same as what someone else has is disqualified. The most unusual objects win!

Water Hike: Follow a stream or brook. Look for all sorts of water life such as 'skater' bugs, tadpoles, fish, etc.

Bird Watching Hike

Describe the birds seen; size, coloring, beak type,, and where they are. Take a bird identification book or someone who knows birds.

Rules for Bird Watching

1. Look at the bird, not the field guide. The book will still be there in a few minutes, but the bird will move.
2. Avoid brightly colored clothes. Many birds have poor color vision but they'll see high contrast clothing.
3. Be quiet.
4. Avoid sudden movements - move slowly and smoothly.
5. Get the sun at your back.
6. Wait for the flicker of motion, then look there.
7. Work the flocks - a bunch of white-crowned sparrows may have something else among them.
8. Follow your ears. One calling bird can lead you to a whole group.
9. Look all around you - overhead and on the ground, as well as in the trees and bushes.
10. Try "spishing". Small birds are attracted to small squeaky noises. Make noises by kissing the back of your hand or making a low whistled noise through your closed teeth. Or clench your teeth, open your lips, and whisper the word "spish".