



EduTrend Contents

W4C · ADVENTURE AND OUTDOOR SPORTS · PRIMARY

Shelter Builders

Design and build a shelter from natural materials

Ages 8–11

Level: Developing

60 minutes

Groups of 4–5 · up to 30

Activity 02

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 pupil worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 02 · AT A GLANCE

Shelter Builders

Pupils discuss what a shelter needs: protection from wind and rain, insulation from the ground and a strong frame. Teams sketch a design, build an A-frame or lean-to using fallen branches and a tarpaulin, test it with a water spray and then tidy the site.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- explain what a good shelter needs;
- plan a shelter design as a team;
- build a stable frame safely;
- test, evaluate and leave no trace.

KEY WORDS

shelter · frame · A-frame · lean-to ·
waterproof · insulation · teamwork
· leave no trace

CURRICULUM LINKS

PE: outdoor and adventurous
activity. Science: materials and
properties. D&T: structures.

1**PREPARE**

Kit, plan, safety

2**LEARN**

Skill or idea

3**EXPLORE**

Try it outdoors

4**CHALLENGE**

Solve a task

5**REFLECT**

What did we learn?

6**RESPECT**

Leave no trace

Materials (per team)

- Fallen branches and sticks collected from the site
- A small tarpaulin
- String or cord
- A spray bottle for testing
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Choose a safe wooded or green area with fallen deadwood.
- Check for hazards: holes, nettles, low branches.
- Prepare tarps and cord.
- Agree boundaries and signals.

SAFETY

Use only fallen deadwood; no cutting live trees.
Carry long sticks vertically. No climbing on
shelters. Wash hands after.

ACTIVITY 02 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Give a real brief, such as keeping a teddy dry, so teams have a clear test for success.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Hook	Brief: build a shelter to keep a teddy dry and warm.	<i>"What does a shelter need?"</i>
10–20 min Design	Teams sketch an A-frame or lean-to design.	<i>"How will your frame stand up?"</i>
20–45 min Build	Teams collect fallen wood and build.	<i>"Is the frame strong?"</i>
45–52 min Test	Spray water and check the teddy stays dry.	<i>"Where did water get in?"</i>
52–60 min Leave no trace	Dismantle and return materials; reflect.	<i>"Why leave the site as we found it?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Build a shelter that keeps a teddy dry in a spray test and has insulation from the ground, then leave no trace.

ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The outdoor know-how in brief

A good shelter blocks wind and rain, keeps you off the cold ground and is stable. Common designs include the A-frame, with a ridge pole supported at both ends, and the lean-to, with a pole resting against a tree or support. Triangles make frames strong.

Ground insulation, such as a layer of dry leaves or a mat, matters because the ground draws heat from the body. Outdoor users follow “leave no trace” principles so that natural places stay unspoiled, which means using only fallen materials and dismantling shelters after use.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Any sticks will do.” Strong, straight deadwood makes better frames.
- “A roof is enough.” Insulation from the ground matters too.
- “It is fine to leave shelters up.” We should leave no trace.

Adapting the activity

Support

Provide a pre-tied ridge line between two trees to drape the tarp over.

Stretch

Improve your shelter for wind by adding a windbreak and test again.

WORKSHEET 1

Shelter design

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Sketch your plan.

Design



Draw your shelter. Label frame, cover and insulation.

WORKSHEET 2

Testing

Record your tests.

Tests

Test	Result	Improvement
Stability		
Rain spray		
Ground insulation		

WORKSHEET 3

Team review

Reflect on teamwork.

Our best idea

How we left no trace

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight pupils; copy as needed.

Pupil	Explains shelter needs	Builds safely as a team	Tests and evaluates

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Shelter Builders is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Adventure and Outdoor Sports programme (primary, level: developing). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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