

Park Quest 2017



“Swamp Survival”

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How do you think you would fare in a survival situation? Could you build a shelter? Could you light a fire without matches? Could you forage for food and purify water? In the book *Hatchet*, the main character (Brian Robeson) does not have any luxury items, he did not have tarps and matches and camping supplies. He did not have any tools except his own two hands and a hatchet. If you were stranded in the wilderness how would you make sure that you ended up a survivor? We will use some of the lessons learned by Brian as we explore Pocomoke River State Park. Along the trails (land and water), stop at each

carsonite post and complete the activity listed.

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Activity #1: Before you leave.

1. Step #1 is to take inventory of your supplies. Everything you have is a potential survival tool. Take advantage of everything you have.

"It kept coming back to that. He had nothing. Well, almost nothing. As a matter of fact, he thought, I don't know what I've got or haven't got. Maybe I should try and figure out just how I stand." (Hatchet, Gary Paulsen)

2. Take a look inside your pack. List each thing in the pack in the space below. What potential do they have to help you survive? Is there something that will help with water? Fire? Food? Shelter? Do you have anything that you brought with you that might be useful? **Don't leave anything out and be creative!**

[illegible]



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Activity #2: Stop at the post with a 2 marked on it.

1. Learn to S.T.O.P.

“With his mind opened and thoughts happening it all tried to come in with a rush, all of what had occurred and he could not take it. The whole thing turned into a confused jumble that made no sense, so he fought it down and tried to take one thing at a time.”

(Hatchet, Gary Paulsen)

2. **Stop, Think, Observe, and Plan.** In a survival situation, hasty and poorly thought out actions may have negative consequences. In the book Brian learns that when he S.T.O.P.’s things go much smoother.
3. Your turn. You find yourself lost in the forest area that you now stand in. Night time is setting in and a storm is heading your way. You are not sure of the way back out and anticipate having to spend the night. You have already taken inventory of your bag. Now think, observe, and plan based on the area around you.
4. Using your field guides and colored pencils draw something you see and plan a use for it.

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Activity #3: Stop at the post with a 3 marked on it

1. Make a safe shelter. Most healthy adults can live 3 days without water and 3 weeks without food, but only 3 hours without adequate shelter.
2. *“Protect food and have a good shelter. Not just a shelter to keep the wind and rain out, but a shelter to protect, a shelter to make him safe.” (Hatchet)*
3. Look in your pack and the materials laying around and try to fashion a shelter to protect you from weather, insects, the sun, etc.
4. Draw a picture of your shelter below.

5. Now look at the directions for building different types of shelters located in your pack. How did you do? Take some time to S.T.O.P. Think about what you might

change. Observe things you might have used. Plan for what you might bring with you on outings to help with this.

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Activity #4: At the boat house.

1. Now it is time to explore Corker’s Creek and the Pocomoke River by boat. Your family may take out 2 self propelled boats (canoes or kayaks) free of charge. If you need additional vessels, they can be rented for a fee.
2. The most immediate survival need is air. Healthy adults can only survive for about 3 minutes without air. At this time, S.T.O.P. again and consider:
 - a. Think about what might interfere with your need for air. (for instance flipping a canoe.)
 - b. Observe the vessels in the water. How do they move? How do they seem to be the least steady? What do you need to do to stay in the vessel and afloat?
 - c. Plan: At this time, plan several things
 - i. How do I plan to stay safe while canoeing or kayaking:

- ii. Leave a float Plan with the boat house attendant that lets the park staff know which direction that you intend to go.

D. Please let the boat house attendant know if you need directions or rowing instructions. This is an important part of making a plan for a safe journey. You will be taking the Corker's Creek Trail.

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Activity #5: Stop at the post with a 5 marked on it.

1. Know where and how to get clean water.
2. *"It was water. But he did not know if he could drink it. Nobody ever told him if you could or could not drink lakes."* (Hatchet, Gary Paulsen)
3. Brian's question is one that most of us have. What water is safe to drink? The water of the Pocomoke River is brackish, which means it contains salt. Swamp water is stagnant and contains bacteria. So what can you do? Would you drink water from the river or the swamp?
4. S.T.O.P. at the post and make a plan with your family. How are you getting drinking water? **Think** about anything in your pack that might help as well as things around you.

Observe: what plants around you might be useful? Draw a picture of the plant and the part of the plant that you would use.

Plan: What would you bring along next time to help?

Now look at different water preparation methods in your pack. How did you do?

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Activity #6: Stop at the post with a 6 marked on it.

1. Find food. Healthy adults can live up to 3 weeks without food, however, it is an important part of survival for all living things.
2. *“He had learned the most important thing, the truly vital knowledge that drives all creatures in the forest-food is all. Food was simply everything. All things in the woods, from insects to fish to bears, were always, always looking for food-it was the great single driving influence in nature.”(Hatchet, Gary Paulsen)*
3. It’s time for some food fun:
 - a. Look around, what would you eat? Draw a picture below of your first and second choice. **Please do not eat anything as part of this activity.**
 - b. Now take a look in your field guide and make sure it is safe to eat.



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Bonus Quest: Stop at the pond

“He stood and walked from the water, still holding the fish and arrow and bow against the sky, seeing them as they fit his arms, as they were part of him. He had food.” (Hatchet, Gary Paulsen)

Welcome to the fishing Bonus Quest. At the last stop, we looked at some possible food sources. Now it's your turn to try and catch some. All freshwater fish in North America are edible. In the red box by the pond you will find fishing equipment and can purchase bait at the campground store. Have fun fishing. Check out the laminated sheets in the red box to see what you might be catching! Draw a picture below to share with nature center staff. **Remember you need a fishing license if you are over 15 years of age.** Draw a picture below of any fish you catch.

Great job! Hopefully you have learned some things about wilderness survival and enjoyed the River and Swamp at the same time. Please return all canoe and kayak equipment to the boathouse and return to the nature center to share your experience with staff and receive a stamp. Ask the nature center staff for additional material related to wilderness survival or borrow a copy of Hatchet to read.