Natural Energy in Wilderness

*Specialty Track 3*

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| **Author(s):** | Josh Lake |
| **summary:** | A Jewish nature hike and appreciation  - *Submitted by* *Josh Lake* |
| **Topic(s):** | Nature Hike |
| **Learning Objective:** | 1. Experience a little radical amazement. 2. Showcase tools and games that can be used on the trail. 3. Inspire wonder. 4. Glimpse secrets of nature and how we might use them. |
| **Audience:** | Any age group, up to 20 people, outdoor setting, on trail |
| **TIMING:** | 90 minutes |
| **AppendiCes:** | Heschel Quote, Dr. Janine Benyus quotes, Apple Tree’s Discovery Story |
| **Materials Needed:** | Nautilus Shell, apple, knife, oak gall |
| **Set-UP DETAILS:** | Outdoors along the trail. Preferably a trail you are familiar with. |

**Session Timeline & Outline:**

Share the objectives with Fellows.

**Introduction (10 minutes)**

Hand out 2” squares of different colored construction paper. Instruct Fellows/campers that they need to find 3 things in nature that are the same color as the construction paper. They have to be natural.

They need to write the answers on the paper. The person with the most unique color matches will get a prize. This goes along with *Pokiach Ivrim*, getting people to look carefully (open their eyes) at the world around them.

Plant these quotes among Fellows. Have them read it out as a special news bulletin!

Have one of the fellows read quote:

“Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement...get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed. - Abraham Joshua Heshel

“Learning about the natural world is one thing.

Learning from the natural world is something else entirely.”

* Dr. Janine Benyus: “Biomimicry's Surprising Lessons from Nature's Engineers” (TEDTalk)

**Oak Gall and Torah**

Here is a way that Jews have used bio mimicry. AMAZING!

This is what wasps have learned to do: they have learned to genetically manipulate a tree to grow a house/nursery around their babies!

Jews have derived Torah from this amazing interaction! Torah is *Eitz Chaim Hi!*

Now that you know about the oak gall, what can we learn from the oak gall?

What does it mean in Jewish terms? Learning about Torah is one thing; learning from Torah is something completely different. Share logic from *Bal Tashchit.*

**Bal Taschit (5 minutes)**

Deuteronomy 20:19

יט כִּי-תָצוּר אֶל-עִיר יָמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ לְתָפְשָׂהּ, לֹא-תַשְׁחִית אֶת-עֵצָהּ לִנְדֹּחַ עָלָיו גַּרְזֶן--כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכֵל, וְאֹתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת: כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה, לָבֹא מִפָּנֶיךָ בַּמָּצוֹר.

**19** When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by wielding an axe against them; for thou mayest eat of them, but thou shalt not cut them down; for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee?

**Start nature walk (20 minutes)**

Along trail, identify plants and animal tracks: white pine, oak (*Alonim*). Mullein, etc.

(Learn 3-4 plants on campground. Get an ID book. Don’t learn too much! Burn out!)

**Debris shelter for Barbie, along the trail (15 minutes)**

Debris shelters are one of the oldest types of shelters humans employ.

Build a debris shelter as an example. Place ridgepole on a tree. Put “ribs” off ridgepole to ground. Cover with leaves. This could save you/or your camper’s, lives. Story about Michigan students. Other types of structures in Judaism (Chupa, Sukkah, one of the original Jewish Survival Shelters, Mishkan, etc.)

**Camouflage: Play on trail in a SAFE area (15 minutes)**

* One person yells, “CAMOUFLAGE” as closes his/her eyes and count backward from 15 (15, 14 13…).
* Everyone else scatters and needs to camouflage (hide) themselves before the counter gets to 0.
* The counter opens her/his eyes and attempts to locate as many people as possible, but cannot move except to pivot on one foot (like in basketball).
* Everyone needs to be able to see the counter with at least 1 eye.
* After 2 minutes, the counter closes his/her eyes and counts down from 10 (10, 9, 8…).
* People need to move closer now, but be camouflaged before 0 is reached.
* Counter opens their eyes and tries to find people. After another 2 minutes counter screams, “THE CHASE IS ON!”
* Everyone else tries to tag the counters hand. First person to tag the counter’s hand wins game and gets to call camouflage next (they need to get permission for where and when to call it).

**Apple Trees Discovery (10 minutes)**

Take an apple on the hike.

Find a shady place to sit under a tree.

Read “The Apple Trees Discovery by Peninnah Schram.

At end, cut apple across midriff to expose the star.

**Bringing it back to camp (10 minutes)**

Hevruta up. Discuss Who, what, where, how to bring this program to your camp.

Design a program to take back to your camp.

**Wolf Howl! (5 minutes)**

The howl is our communal Amidah. It is better then any language because you can let your feelings come out and not be embarrassed because of the language. For feelings are meta linguistic!

*Lech lecha!*

Go forth and do good this summer!

**Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp:**