

Lighting the flame of curiosity

*Awaken people's curiosity.
It is enough to open minds – do not overload them.
Put there just a spark.
If there is some good flammable stuff it will catch fire.*
Anatole France

An Arbury Park camp is a relatively short, intense and powerful educational episode within a student's broader education and family experience. Arbury Park staff play a fundamental role in designing and managing the camp program to maximise the learning opportunities for students and staff. For most it will be a unique experience.

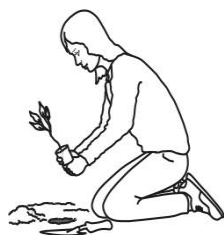
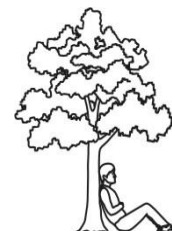
Effective learning in the outdoors is about making connections; connections between an individual learner's conceptual knowledge, connections and relationships between people, and connections between people and the natural world that supports all life.



Effective learning builds new knowledge and understandings in context. The natural world is a rich classroom, full of things to explore and discover. Effective outdoor teaching stimulates curiosity and guides learners to make their own discoveries, through direct experience, involving all the senses. Rather than random exciting events, effective teachers help to link the learning and 'teachable moments' so they become connected to a student's prior knowledge. Enduring memories arise from episodal learning that integrates a range of understandings and experiences.

Effective learning engages the emotions.

Increasingly, learners have limited personal experience with the natural world and may have some apprehensions. A sense of fun and enjoyment, linked to new knowledge, creates an holistic learning experience. Emotional responses often stay with the individual for many years, and can lead to significant changes in thinking, attitude and behaviours. The Outdoor classrooms provides many opportunities to inspire a sense of wonder and personal connection to the peace and beauty of the natural world.



Effective learning inspires learners to take personal and collective action. Changes in an individual's understandings and dispositions are a true test of effective learning. Inspiring teachers who 'walk their talk' and show their passion and concern for environmental stewardship can leave a deep impression on young learners. When students engage in meaningful practical activities, they develop skills and confidence for taking positive action.

Effective learning builds relationships and a sense of community.

A residential camp program provides opportunities to extend the values of community beyond the normal classroom setting. At Arbury Park, learners develop understandings and dispositions that are strengthened by living and learning together as curious, caring and community minded individuals. Small group activities, ranging from sharing equipment, to attempting complex team challenges, involve students learning together to achieve a common purpose. When teachers and peers acknowledge the contributions of others, learners develop confidence and self-esteem. Teachers have a responsibility to develop the positive relationships that create an effective learning community.

