

NATIONAL OUTDOOR LEARNING AWARD

What is the National Outdoor Learning Award (NOLA)?

NOLA is a nationally recognised award, which students achieve by participating in an outdoor program (created by Dr Hopper).

The Award can be used with any age group; any outdoor activity; over any length of time.

Every session ends with the completion of a self-reflection sheet, so participants chart their personal progress in 18 skills.



How we deliver NOLA

Our program is based on a survival theme, with students learning and applying skills for thriving in the outdoors.

- Can we light a fire with one hand?
- Can we build a reciprocal roof shelter?
- Can we identify 5 edible plants?



How do students benefit?

NOLA is fantastic for getting students outdoors - in nature – learning new skills.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of the program is the sense of belonging that comes with taking part. Students quickly bond during the team tasks. Their shared experience of overcoming new challenges - and mastering exciting skills - creates a joyful bond among them.

Duration

We suggest 7 sessions, over 7 weeks. 2hrs per session. This is flexible.

Participants

All young people will benefit, but impact will be especially significant for students with:

- low self-esteem
- disengaged at school
- poor social skills

Group size

Max group size is 8 students. It also works well in 1-to-1 sessions for students with more complex needs.



Program content

SESSION	QUESTION FOR LEARNING	SKILLS
1	How do we keep warm outdoors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fire lighting- Warm drink prep
2	How do we sleep outdoors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Knot tying- Shelter building
3	How do we safely drink outdoors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Water collection- Water filtration
4	How do we safely use tools outdoors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Whittling- Saw & hatchet use
5	How do we cook outdoors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fire maintenance- Bread making
6	How can we make crafts outdoors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Craft making- Weaving
7	How do we cook outdoors (advanced)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Foraging- Meal prep



Session content

Each session is directed by the Question for Learning, and the content adapted to the ability and interests of the group.

Example session:

ACTIVITY	AIM	PURPOSE
Icebreaker	Team must solve a challenge task.	Promote teamwork and problem solving.
Skill acquisition 1	Participants learn 3 different knots.	Promote learning and listening skills.
Skill mastery	Participants practise tying knots.	Promote confidence and self-efficacy.
Skill acquisition 2	Participants learn 2 types of shelters.	Promote learning and listening skills.
Skill mastery	Participants practise building shelters.	Promote creativity and leadership.
Packup	Leave no trace.	Promote care for the environment.
Reflection	Fill in the NOLA reflection booklet.	Reflect on the 18 skills.
Movement game	Raise the heart rate.	Promote mental and physical wellbeing.



Instructor

Charles Montier is the instructor for the program:

- Qualified secondary maths teacher (10 years teaching experience)
- Former Head of Adventure Learning
- Qualified Summer & Winter Mountain Leader
- Qualified Paddlesports Leader
- Level 3 Wild Passport Leader
- Senior Expedition Leader for the British Exploring Society (3 expeditions)
- 6 Amazon jungle expeditions
- First Aid trained, Enhanced DBS checked, Level 2 Safeguarding
- Founder of Oxford Adventure School

Cost

The cost of a 2hr session is £80.00 (that's £10/person, if group size of 8).

Cost includes:

Instructor; technical equipment; perishables (eg camp food); site specific risk assessment; NOLA packs and badges; session planning and monitoring forms; advice and assistance with the development of an outdoor learning area.



Health & Safety

School will receive: Risk Assessments, Behaviour Policy, Insurance doc, DBS doc, Safeguarding doc, First Aid cert.

Next steps

- School visit
 - Site specific risk assessment
 - Student consent forms and health forms
 - Program begins
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FAQs

Is the program flexible?

Absolutely. Duration of program and length of sessions can be adjusted.

Is group size flexible?

Absolutely. We suggest small groups, but this can depend on age of participants and objectives of the program.

Are staff needed?

No staff are needed for a group size up to 8 students. For larger groups, or for students with more complex needs, a staff member may be required.

What if it's raining or cold?

The instructor carries a large tarp shelter. Students should wear a suitable warm jacket. Sessions are active and hands-on.

How do we ensure safety?

The wellbeing of students is a number one priority. Every activity is risk assessed and carefully considered. For fires and tools, specific training is given to students and close supervision maintained. A strict ratio of instructor to active participants is maintained.

Can students repeat the program?

Absolutely. Students will greatly benefit from repeating the program, thus engraving positive benefits and promoting transfer into their lives. Sessions can be adapted to further challenge experienced participants.

What does the session planning sheet look like?

For every session, schools receive a session plan, so they can evidence the work being done.

Planning Sheet

DATE:	GROUP =	ACTIVITY: Shelter + slackline	INSTRUCTOR: Charles Montier	LOCATION: Lower School Site
Aim: To learn basic shelter building skills		Learning outcomes/objectives: 1. For children to set ground rules at start. 2. For children to work in small pairs to make shelters. 3. For children to have a go on the slack line building confidence and trust.		
Timings (mins)	Daily Plan/Tasks	Details		
0 – 10	Arrival	Group met in hub room by leader. Assess clothing and offer waterproofs, gloves and hats. Walk together to teaching space.		
10 – 25	Briefing, expectations, ground rules	Do a few ice breakers to get to know each other better and learn names. Brief group on plan for session in detail and give overview of rest of programme plans. Set ground rules as a group and state expectations for group/individual.		
25 – 85	Shelter	Introduce idea of shelter, covering basic principles, uses and designs in a group discussion. Demonstrate the quick release hitch and figure of eight and allow time for children to practice. Split into pairs to make their own shelters that will be tested with thrown water.		
85 – 105	Slack line	Slack line is already set up. Demonstrate how to use it and rules. Encourage all to have multiple goes, making it harder by using 1 hand/blindfolds. Facilitate some positive encouragement. Remove top rope and get them to try with a peer to help support them.		
105 – 120	Debrief and departure	Pack kit away and shelters down. Bring group back together and reflect on the session and walk back to hub.		
Notes: Fill up water containers at start of day. Encourage all to go to toilet at start of session.		Wet weather / extension activities: Play a few games or blindfold challenges. Put up large group tarp shelter before session.		
Equipment: First aid kit, water containers, tarps, big tarp, string, knife, rope, blind folds, biscuits, bells, water, slack line, flask, soap, sponge, washing up bowl, hand sanitiser, hand soap, hand washing station, blue paper towel, bin bag				
Health and Safety: Follow school policies and RA - In particular ensure regular hand washing and cleaning of kit at the end.				

What does the session monitoring form look like?

For every session, schools receive a monitoring form, so they can follow (and evidence) the progress being made by students, and how they are learning in sessions.

Tracking and Monitoring Form

Student names: LB, CC, CJ, SG, SV **Date:** _____

Daily performance indicators:

These are scored 0 (low) – 4 (high) and will be tracked each term.

Student	Behaviour	Effort	Engagement	Support for others
LB	3	3	4	3
CC	4	4	4	4
CJ	4	4	4	4
SG	3	3	3	4
SV	4	4	4	4

Comments:

LB: Excellent effort today. She was especially helpful with the pack up.

CC: He was positive throughout and especially enjoyed the boiling of water to make hot chocolate.

CJ: He was positive throughout and expressed great interest in further developing his wild camp cooking skills.

SG: He struggled to engage at first but soon settled and worked to achieve the session goals.

SV: She was quiet but seemed happy with the challenges. She struggled with maintaining her fire at first, but soon learnt to add more fuel to keep it going.

What does the NOLA self-reflection sheet look like?

NOLA allows students to reflect on their progress in 18 skills - and celebrate their successes.

The skills cover 6 core areas: Safety; learning; respect; yourself; others; the environment.

Upon completion of the program, students can see their progress in the 18 skills and they receive the NOLA pin badge.

Learning Outcomes **NOLA**
National Outdoor Learning Award

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	Safe	Respect	Learn
Yourself	I was prepared ○○○○	I shared my ideas ○○○○	I learnt new facts ○○○○
	I followed instructions ○○○○	I said what I'm good at ○○○○	I learnt new skills ○○○○
Others	I helped with kind words ○○○○	I listened to my friend's ideas ○○○○	I learnt to follow ○○○○
	I helped with kind actions ○○○○	I said what my friends are good at ○○○○	I learnt to lead ○○○○
The Environment	I used equipment safely ○○○○	I used equipment carefully ○○○○	I learnt the values ○○○○
	I used the environment safely ○○○○	I used the environment carefully ○○○○	I learnt to have fun ○○○○

