

Outdoor Skills Lesson Plan for
Fishing
PARTY Grant funded by Resource Enhancement and Protection
Conservation Education Program (REAP)
& Polk County Conservation



Goal: Participants will experience and gain a better knowledge of fishing

Objective:

1. Students will be able to name three common fish that live in Iowa waters
2. Students will know how to rig a pole for fishing with a bobber and worm
3. Students will be able tie a clinch knot

Materials: Pictures of common Iowa fish or fish mounts, basic tackle, fishing poles for each student, bait and knot tying boards

Season: All, but must be adapted for winter

Time: 45 minutes to 1 1/2 hours

Information

Regulations

- License required for everyone 16 and over
- Always ask the property owner for permission to fish
- Largemouth bass need to be a minimum of 15", longer in some areas, to keep. Show how long 15" is
- Do not litter

Identification – use mounts or pictures

- Channel Catfish - deeply forked tail, dark spots and barbels or whiskers on the face. Best time to fish for them is early morning or late at night
- Bullhead - round or square tail, barbels on face. Found in shallow quiet, weedy water
- Largemouth Bass - mouth extends past the eye, greenish body with light belly. Prefer warm water
- Crappie - small mouth and hump back appearance. Feed during the winter, a favorite for ice fishing
 - Black - dark spots on the sides. Prefer clean and slightly deeper water
 - White - 7 to 9 vertical dark bars on the side
- Bluegill - dark back with yellow or reddish-orange belly, vertical bars on sides and bright blue chin and gill covers. Found near weed beds
- Grass Carp - NO barbels around mouth. Used to control nuisance aquatic vegetation.

Baits and Lures – show how to bait a hook and discuss basic tackle

Baits

- Worms - sunfish, catfish, bass, and bluegills
- Minnows - crappie, bass, and catfish
- Leeches - catfish and bass
- Crayfish - catfish and smallmouth bass
- Stink bait - catfish and carp
- Dough bait - carp

Lures

- Jigs - bounced on bottom for game fish or suspended with a small bobber
- Plugs - some designed to float near the surface and others dive or sink and must be retrieved slowly
- Spoons - flattened metal made to wobble back and forth to look like a small fish. Different sizes for different size fish
- Spinners - Shiny colored to attract game fish and produce vibrations in water when retrieved. Use with swivel to prevent twisting
- Flies - made to look like insects or small fish and float on top of the water

Knot Tying

Show students how to tie a “clinch knot” and have them practice using the knot tying boards

Casting

Show students how to cast and have them practice using the casting plugs

Stress the importance of always looking before you cast

Tips

- To measure a fish, measure from tip of snout to the end of the tail with the mouth closed
- Tips on release:
 - Try to keep the fish in the water and release as fast as possible.
 - Don't hold fish by eye sockets, hold by lower jaw.
 - Gently remove hook with a needle-nose pliers.
 - If hook is deeply imbedded cut the line close to the fish's mouth.
 - To revive fish, hold upright and move back and forth in the water.

Keeping the Catch

- Keep in wire basket or string in cool water and in the shade.
- Ice down in cooler and remove internal organs.

Environmental Issues

- Watershed –introduce/review term
 - Water Quality
 - Pollution from soil erosion & chemicals
 - Improve buffer strips along waterways
- Litter
 - Recycling
 - Land pollution
- Fisheries management in Iowa waterways
 - Invasive species

Additional Resources

Polk County Conservation - www.leadingyououtdoors.org

11407 NW Jester Park Drive

Granger, IA 50109

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Iowa Department of Natural Resource - www.iowadnr.com

