

Grade 6 Informational

Get in Gear for Camping

Camping is one of the best ways to enjoy nature. Camping is fun because you can hear the sounds of animals in their own habitat and discover plants and trees that do not live in your residential area.

Initial Planning for a Camping Trip

Successful camping trips involve careful planning. First, you will need to decide who will go on your camping trip. You should never camp alone, so go with your family or a group supervised by an adult.

You will also need to decide where to camp. Most states have state parks with many campground choices. Check out your state park website to reserve a campsite.

Another important factor to consider is the weather. Consult a forecast for the area where you will camp and plan accordingly. Unexpected rain and thunderstorms can quickly ruin a camping trip. Appropriate clothing can save the day!

Gathering Supplies

Before you go camping, you will need to prepare a list of supplies that are necessary for a quality experience. For your first camping experience, select an easy-to-set-up tent. You won't have to spend much time putting the tent together, and it will provide shelter. You will also need a sleeping bag for each person. An air mattress can make sleeping on the ground more comfortable, so bring an air mattress if you have one.

You will need to bring a supply of food for meals and snacks. Use the Internet to find easy, no-cook meals or meals you can prepare over a campfire. Look for recipes that will suit your cooking abilities. Make a list of the foods needed to prepare the meals and snacks you have planned; then take a trip to the local grocery store to buy the ingredients.

Don't forget these additional supplies:

- a cooler with ice to keep your meat and vegetables fresh
- newspaper and matches to start a fire
- bug repellent to keep insects away
- plenty of water to satisfy your thirst
- a first-aid kit in case of an unexpected emergency

Setting up the Campsite

When you arrive at your campsite, conduct a quick check of the area. Look for level

ground with very few rocks where you can set up your tent. Make sure you have an open area for cooking that is away from trees or bushes. Begin to set up your campsite by pitching your tent, laying out your sleeping bags, inflating your air mattresses, and arranging your outdoor kitchen. To make sure animals cannot get to your food, keep it locked inside your vehicle unless you are cooking or eating.

One highlight of your trip may be a campfire. Under adult supervision, start your campfire with crumpled newspaper, add small twigs, and light with matches. Gradually add heavier wood to the fire, and continue to add wood to keep it burning. Never leave your fire unattended. Pour water over the fire before you go to bed to make sure it is completely out.

Enjoying the Experience

What will you do for fun while you camp? Hiking is an excellent choice. Parks often have prepared trails that will take you into the woods for short, medium, and long hikes. You may be able to listen to a naturalist talk about the animals in the park or hear about the night sky. Check with the park office for activities you may enjoy.

The best part of camping is being together in nature with no interruptions. You can play games or talk. You can take a walk or go swimming, if there is a lake or stream nearby. Whatever you do, enjoy your camping experience and bring back stories to share with your friends.

Grade 6 Narrative

Jumping to Conclusions

“Bart, are you playing a joke on me?” Liz asked her younger brother. She had searched everywhere for her favorite stuffed animal—a teddy bear she had treasured as a small child and which she had decided to donate to a charity collection. Bart sometimes played harmless practical jokes, and Liz wondered if he had hidden the toy.

“No, Liz, I did *not* hide your favorite stuffed animal—I don’t even know which animal is your favorite!” said Bart. “I know I sometimes play jokes on people, but you should not jump to conclusions.”

“I’m sorry, Bart. I know you would tell me if you had the toy,” said Liz. “I just wish that I could find it, because the charity collection is next week.” Liz sat dejectedly on the sofa, petting the family cat, Tiger—aptly named both for its coloring and its stripes.

Just then, Liz and Bart’s older brother Alex entered the room. “Has either of you seen my hockey sweatshirt?” he asked. “I’ve looked everywhere for it. I think I must have loaned it to Frank, and he neglected to return it.”

Frank was Alex’s good friend, and the boys frequently borrowed each other’s things. Frank was notoriously forgetful, so Alex often had to remind him that he had borrowed something. Alex called Frank to inquire whether his hockey sweatshirt was hanging in the closet at Frank’s house. When he ended the call, Alex looked rather surprised.

“Frank reminded me that he had returned my sweatshirt at the hockey game last week,” Alex explained. “He also asked if I would return the hockey stick I borrowed from him.”

“I know Frank is sometimes forgetful,” said Bart, “but you should not jump to conclusions.”

Later, Dad was searching for the case for his reading glasses. “I know it was on the table next to me when I was reading the newspaper after dinner,” he said. “Did you move it when you were tidying up the kitchen?” he asked Alex, whose turn it had been to clear away the dishes that evening.

“Dad, if I had moved your glasses case to clean the table, I would have put it back where you left it,” said Alex. “I’ll help you look for it.”

“I know Alex is a thorough cleaner, Dad, but you should not . . .” Bart did not finish his sentence.

Not only did the missing items remain unrecovered, but several other family belongings mysteriously disappeared over the next few days. Mom was certain she had put her purple sweater on a chair in the living room, but she could not find it when she was ready to go to work. She asked if Liz had borrowed the sweater.

“Mom, I would never borrow something of yours without asking permission,” Liz said.

“You’re right, Liz,” Mom said. “I just cannot imagine where my sweater could be. I’ve looked everywhere!”

Bart was intrigued by the mystery of the missing items. He could not explain what was going on, but he did not believe it was a coincidence that so many things had disappeared in a short time. He was annoyed when he couldn’t find his batting glove, which was always kept on a shelf in his room. With baseball tryouts just a few days away, Bart undertook an exhaustive search. In the back of the hall closet, Bart found his missing batting glove—and Liz’s teddy bear, Alex’s sweatshirt, Dad’s glasses case, and Mom’s purple sweater!

Bart summoned his family members and showed them the evidence. Although they were happy to have found their missing items, they wanted an explanation of how all these items could have turned up in the same place. Someone had to have put them there, and Bart was determined to find out who it was. He remembered the mini camcorder that his friend Tony had shown him. Tony, who planned to be a private investigator, had explained that it could be used to record everything that happened in a particular area. Tony pointed out that the camcorder’s miniature size made it easy to set up.

Bart borrowed the camcorder that evening and situated it so that it would keep a constant watch over the closet door in the hall. The next morning, Bart eagerly reviewed the recording to see if anything had taken place overnight. To his astonishment, his plan had worked.

Bart joined his family at the breakfast table and triumphantly showed what the mini camcorder had recorded. Everyone gasped and then laughed. The images revealed the identity of the joker—Tiger, the cat—dragging the teddy bear back into the closet.

“It looks like you were right, Bart,” said Dad. “We should not jump to conclusions!” said everyone together.