

SURVIVAL ISLAND: CAN YOU SURVIVE?

AGES

Children 8+ years

Teens/tweens

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Test your patrons' ability to survive on a deserted island! Adapt this program for any age group or runtime target by running fewer stations and/or modifying station activities. It would also make a fun kick-off party for summer programming, especially if you invite participants to wear costumes. Suggested runtime: 60–90 min.



Image source: Shutterstock

ADAPTATION:

For a passive program, display resources and create “Can You Survive?” cards depicting various scenarios. Patrons see the correct answers along with resources for each scenario.

TIP:

The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Game has lots of fun trivia questions about different survival scenarios. The board game could be played as part of the program, or ideas/questions for the program can be pulled from the game.

ADAPTATION:

For an online program, you can also have children build “I survived” catastrophes in Minecraft.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Station #1: Make Your Own Water Filter

Materials:

- Empty 2 liter soda bottles (1 per filter)
- Exacto knife
- Rubber bands
- Spoons
- Assortment of layering materials, such as rocks of various sizes, gravel, charcoal, sand, cotton balls, or clay
- Coffee filters, napkins, or socks

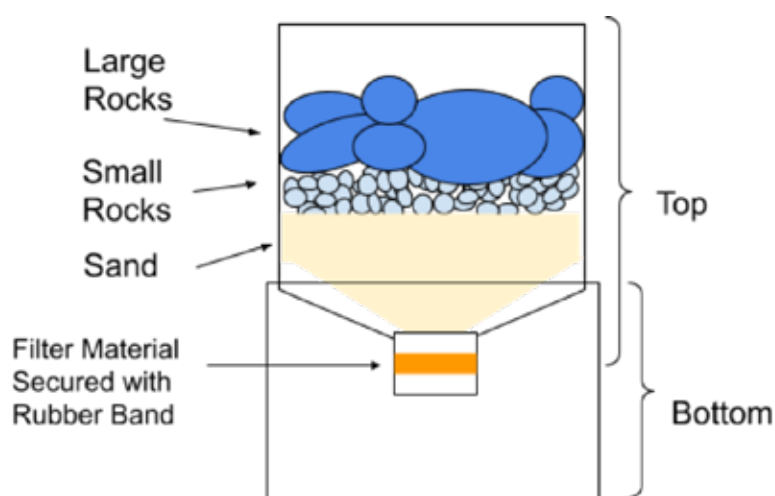


Image source: Christina Dorman of Maine State Library, Augusta, ME

Before the program, precut the soda bottles into two pieces. The cap section, or top of the bottle, should be shorter than the bottom section. Prepare the “dirty” water (with dirt and cooking oil) that participants will use to test their filters.

Assembly:

- Place top section upside down in the bottom section.
- Participants layer filter components into the upside down cap section.
- The finest layers (such as sand) should be at the bottom to catch the finest particulates. Larger materials are layered on top.
- Place filter or napkin around the bottom of the mouth of the bottle and secure it with a rubber band.
- Give them time to test their filters with the dirty water.

Station #2: Make a Friend

Materials:

- Small rubber balls or ping-pong balls
- Markers

Participants draw a friendly face for themselves (think Tom Hanks's Wilson volleyball.)



Image source: Shutterstock

Station #3: Build a Raft

Materials:

- Popsicle sticks or gathered sticks
- Yarn or string
- Large leaves (optional)
- Small items of different weights

Challenge participants to make a small raft from the gathered materials. Provide a tub or pool to test out their rafts. Try increasingly heavier objects on the rafts to see how much they can hold.



Image source: Shutterstock

Station #4: Build a Shelter

Materials:

- Recyclable materials
- Any craft materials
- Any blocks
- Lego minifigures
- Blankets and pillows (optional)

Challenge kids to build a shelter for Lego minifigures from recycled materials or blocks. Alternatively, they could make blanket forts.

Station #5: Send an SOS

See Lighthouse STEAM challenge for a Morse Code Printable. Cut a flashlight-sized hole from a cardboard box, behind which children can stand to send their SOS.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

A large space if you plan to run all the stations. Extra volunteers will be helpful.

RESOURCES

Web

“Make a Water Filter” from *National Geographic Kids*: <https://bit.ly/3urxh9I>

Resources for natural disasters/extreme weather from CDC:
<https://bit.ly/3fs1VeQ>

“How to Survive in Ocean/Open Water” from *Survive Nature*:
<https://bit.ly/2TrPmHX>

“Survival skills” from *Wikipedia*: <https://bit.ly/3ur9CGI>

Worst Case Scenario board game: <https://amzn.to/3p89V85>

Books

Non-fiction

I Survived (True Stories) (2013–2020) by Lauren Tarshis (children’s)

Adrift at Sea: A Vietnamese Boy’s Story of Survival (2016) by Marsha Skrypuch Tuan Ho and Brian Deines (children’s)

Fiction

Overboard! (Survivor Diaries) (2017) by Terry Lynn Johnson and Jani Orban (children’s)

The Adventures of John Blake (2017) by Philip Pullman and Fred Fordham (children’s)

The Living (2015) by Matt de la Peña (YA)