



## SHADY CREEK CLASS PLANNING SHEET

There are seven instructional periods at Shady Creek. One is scheduled by the Shady Creek staff and six are chosen by the teacher. Monday afternoon is used for an introductory discovery hike, but it can be designed to visit an area you might otherwise miss. Thursday afternoon is used for a student elective class and the Eco-kid presentation.

### WHEN CHOOSING YOUR SIX CLASSES PLEASE NOTE:

We strongly recommend that every teacher plan to take Birds, Creek Ecology, Communities, and Survival. We require that *all* teachers lead one class of their choice without the help of a Naturalist. During all other classes, a Naturalist will be scheduled to lead your class. For the time period when you are on your own, you can design your own class or learn to teach one of ours. All class periods are 2.5 hours long.

Although all of Shady Creek's classes actively involve students and integrate several learning styles, the focus of each class is different. Some focus primarily on science concepts, while others focus on developing sensory awareness, appreciation, and observation skills. Still other classes emphasize cooperation, self-confidence, and self-expression through writing and arts. When planning your week, try to create a balance between these varied approaches and a schedule that best fits the interests and dynamics of your class.

Please look the class list over carefully and refer to the attached Shady Creek Class Descriptions. Write in the six classes that you would like your class to take while at Shady Creek. Also be certain to indicate which class you will be teaching on your own without the help of a Naturalist. This sheet should be filled out before you meet with the Shady Creek Director and other teachers at the planning session.

**Teacher Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Number of Students:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CLASS NAME**

**WRITE YOUR CHOICES HERE**

Earth Processes	(Put an * next to the class you plan to teach without a naturalist)
Birds	1) _____
Forest Ecology	_____
Creek Ecology	2) _____
Survival	_____
Communities	3) _____
Gorking	_____
Silent Watch	4) _____
Tipi/Blindwalk	_____
Tipi/Forest Magic	5) _____
Tipi/Indian Room	_____
Teacher's Own Design	6) _____
	_____

# SHADY CREEK CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

**Survival** – A real favorite with kids, this class is designed to help students feel at ease in the wilderness, reduce fears, and promote self-confidence. Instruction is given in the basics of wilderness survival including; preparation, mental outlook, shelter, being rescued, water, fire and food. At the close of the class, students put their new information into action and build survival shelters..

**Birds** – This class does it all – scientific concepts and equipment, observation skills, appreciation, and self-expression through creative writing and art. Students study bird adaptations and identification then take binoculars and field guides to observe wild birds at the Bird Blinds. Students also visit our injured hawks, falcons, eagles, and owls at *The Raptor Center*. Birds are used as an ideal focal point to both develop appreciation of wildlife and teach the needs of all wildlife.

**Creek Study** – This class will examine what a watershed is and take a look at the Shady Creek watershed. There will be a in-depth, hands on portion of the class where students look for macro invertebrates in Shady Creek and perform experiments to determine the health of the creek. The above understanding will be demonstrated by student work, discussion during and after activities, and by group and individual verbal responses to specific questions such as “is the stream environment healthy? Why or why not?”

**Forest Ecology** – In this class students will learn not only about the ecology of this diverse habitat, but also explore their own relationship with the forest. In addition, students become empowered as teachers in this class, teaching each other about the ecology and wonder of the forest. This class can also easily incorporate a silent writing activity at any number of stops along the trail.

**Earth Processes** – This class is tightly correlated to the California State Standards for Earth Sciences. Like all activities at Shady Creek, this class is about making learning fun. Students will conduct exciting, hands-on experiments and have concepts like plate tectonics come alive when they explore the geology of Shady Creek.

**Tipi** – The tipi is an ideal place to set the stage for several other classes that focus on sensory awareness, appreciation, and Native Americans. A visit to the Tipi is a powerful experience where students may learn about tipi structure and function. They may also gain an appreciation for Native American symbolism, beliefs, and lifestyles. The tipi is usually combined with one of these three options:

**Blindwalk** – The tipi is used to set the tone and discuss increasing our use of senses to heighten awareness. Students then visit the forest where they are blindfolded and individually follow a rope discovering and experiencing the worlds of smell, touch, texture, sound, and their own feelings about “being blind.” This is a chance to explore the forest in a more intimate fashion.

**Forest Magic** – After or before the tipi, students are involved in several fun activities all designed to increase sensory awareness, imagination, and appreciation. These can include blindfold activities and often include creative writing and self-expression.

**Indian Room** – The entire class (including tipi visit) focuses on Native American culture and one’s relationship to the environment. Students learn native stories, legends, and games. Students also play several Maidu games, make friction fires, and explore other aspects of California Native American culture.

**Gorking** – A class filled with sensory awareness. Students will be challenged to use all of their senses to come to more fully appreciate the world around them. In the end students put all they have learned into practice as they put on blindfolds and individually follow a rope through the forest discovering the worlds of smell, touch, texture and feeling.

**Communities** – A series of fun activities and challenges that build cooperation and trust are used to increase each student’s feeling of self-worth, as well as their appreciation of others. Utilizing Shady Creek’s low ropes

course, this class strives to increase students' sense of community and cooperation, both within the classroom and beyond.

**Silent Watch** – Following a trail through the forest, students will culminate this class by sitting quietly beside Shady Creek. There they spend 30 minutes quietly observing and reflecting. Alone, and yet still safely supervised, students use writing and art to record their impressions. This is the only class at Shady Creek where students have the opportunity to be in a beautiful natural area, one-on-one with nature. Later, after everyone is re-gathered, students have the opportunity to share their feelings and observations with the rest of the class.

## EVENING PROGRAMS

*This year the Naturalist staff has planned the following evening programs. If your staff has arranged for something different or if you wish to change one of these nights, please share your thoughts during the planning session.*

**Monday Night - Stars and Owls:** This program is used as a fun way to prepare students for Night Hikes. After some fun songs, teachers perform a short play that introduces the students to constellations that they will see on their Night Hikes. Naturalists follow this up with a bat presentation that includes songs, humor, and fun. Students will also learn the calls, adaptations, and habitats of different owls. This program concludes with a quiet closing song.

**Tuesday Night - Night Hike:** Naturalists and teacher lead cabin groups into the night to discover the sights, sounds, and beauty of nature at night. Teachers are provided with a written and verbal inservice covering stars, night vision, and night hike games and activities. This program is typically a favorite with the students. If it is raining on Tuesday, we will postpone the Night Hike until Wednesday.

**Wednesday Night – Student Skit Night:** Utilizing a traditional campfire-type program, the Naturalists recruit students and cabin groups to share fun songs, skits, and stories. This fun-filled evening provides an opportunity for students to showcase their unique skills and to make presentations about their week at Shady Creek.

**Thursday Night – Fun Night:** This program is a combination of traditional dance, modern dance, and a few dances unique to Shady Creek. Naturalists lead this program and strive to create an atmosphere where all students are comfortable and are able to truly have fun.