

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH: IMPLICATIONS FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH AGE GROUP AGES 12 TO 14	TIPS FOR THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROCESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ready for in-depth, longer learning experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about physical development—sometimes practice excessive grooming behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Self-conscious—many need help overcoming inferiority complexes <input type="checkbox"/> Want to be liked by friends <input type="checkbox"/> Interested in activities involving boys and girls together <input type="checkbox"/> Interested in sports and active games <input type="checkbox"/> Like fan clubs—many have adult idols <input type="checkbox"/> Getting over the age of fantasy—beginning to think of what they will do when they grow up <input type="checkbox"/> Often unclear of needs and values <input type="checkbox"/> Desire independence—but want and need their parents’ help <input type="checkbox"/> Want to explore outside of their own community 	<p><u>Experience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Concentrate on developing individual skills—help learners compare skills to their own standards <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage learning experiences related to understanding self and getting along with others <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage active and fun learning experiences such as canoeing, hiking, and environmental stewardship—but not weighted toward physical prowess <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage learning experiences involving boys and girls—provide activities to be with the opposite sex in healthy ways such as planning groups, parties, fund raising activities, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide hands-on and skill-centered experiences in specific subject matter <input type="checkbox"/> Give learners a chance to choose when and if they are “on stage” <input type="checkbox"/> Allow chances for quiet time <input type="checkbox"/> Tasks can be more difficult and of longer duration—making a model, keeping a journal, etc.—allow for creativity! <input type="checkbox"/> During activities, ask questions to encourage predicting and problem solving such as “What if this doesn’t work? What could then happen?” <input type="checkbox"/> Help learners find necessary information and support activities <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage working with older teens and adults to complete learning experiences and apprenticing <input type="checkbox"/> Teen and adult leaders must be well-liked to be effective—teen leaders should be three or four years older than the learners and considerably more mature <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage deeper exploration of leadership roles—provide opportunities to practice leadership roles with coaching, and encourage keeping more detailed records of leadership experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage involvement in teen councils and planning boards <input type="checkbox"/> Involve the group in setting rules for the group or for the program <input type="checkbox"/> Provide realistic parameters—explain why they are necessary

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Do NOT use put-downs or “in-the-face” behaviors with this group <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid singling learners out in front of others either to commend or to criticize <input type="checkbox"/> Provide learning experiences outside of the community <p><u>Share</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to reflect on what they learned in the activities <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to share feelings about any relational interferences they encountered during the activities <input type="checkbox"/> Have learners prepare and give presentations on what they gained from or thought of the activities completed <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to share how their personal values interfaced with the decisions of the group <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to share any emotions they observed in the group <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to define their leadership style based on their performance in the activities completed <input type="checkbox"/> Based on observations of the activities completed, ask learners to state what they think would be an appropriate symbol for the group <p><u>Process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to explain the plan of action undertaken to complete the activities—or the steps involved in creating the resulting product <input type="checkbox"/> When activities result in a product, ask learners what could have been done to improve the product <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to share observations they made of how different group members went through the same experiences <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for learners to ask and question ways of doing things in the group <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities to explore the values and beliefs of the group—encourage them to articulate aspects of their group’s culture they can identify <input type="checkbox"/> Have learners articulate or demonstrate in a creative way how they benefit from their association with the group <input type="checkbox"/> Have learners list and examine varying points of view surfaced in the activities

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have learners describe ethical dilemmas they observed in the activities and how they were resolved <input type="checkbox"/> Pose abstract questions to help learners process realizations made during activities <input type="checkbox"/> Present similar scenarios, and ask learners to predict results <input type="checkbox"/> Provide honest information for the sexual issues and questions they have—listen to their fears and worries about their sexual development without judging or trivializing <input type="checkbox"/> Find time to talk with them individually to help them work through problems or to discuss personal issues <p><u>Generalize</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Present multiple alternatives in related situations, and ask learners to compare and choose the best possible option <input type="checkbox"/> As a result of the activities, ask learners to set long-term goals and to plan strategies for reaching those goals <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to construct simple budgets to reach stated goals <input type="checkbox"/> Assist learners in identifying ways they can practice assertiveness around the results of the activities completed <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to share, in detail, skills and education needed for related jobs <input type="checkbox"/> Ask learners to explain actions or decisions that took place in the activities related to healthy or safe living <p><u>Apply</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have learners keep a journal of personal decisions and changes they make related to the activities experienced <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage technological application of key concepts presented <input type="checkbox"/> Help learners identify and perform personal and group community contributions that meet special needs within their community <input type="checkbox"/> Relate activities completed to career choices <input type="checkbox"/> Have learners shadow experienced workers in related fields