



Experience
Learning
beyond the classroom

Introductory Letter and Packing List for Dorm-Based Courses

Dear Parents,

We are looking forward to your child's upcoming trip with *Experience Learning*! You can expect an outdoor learning experience that includes walking woodland trails to study local streams, forests, and the geology of WV's highest peak. In preparation for these activities, please read the following information carefully for guidance on packing for your child's visit. The key to a fantastic experience is coming prepared for a variety of weather conditions.

Although the weather on Spruce Knob is often sunny and warm, it is also sometimes rainy, snowy, windy, and cold. We have had snow as late as May and as early as September, and even in the summer months it can be surprisingly chilly or windy in the evenings. Therefore, arriving prepared is crucial. The list of recommended clothing is designed to function as a layering system and your child may wear single layers during the day but need some layers in the evenings or on cooler days. The best way to prepare your child is to be certain that they bring everything on the list unless it is marked optional. If the weather is forecasted to be very cold, it is a good idea to pack extra layers. Check www.weather.com for Circleville, WV to get a good idea of the forecasted weather, and keep in mind that we are typically a few degrees cooler up on the mountain than at the Circleville weather station.

Packing the right clothing is pretty straightforward. Choose clothing based on the idea that synthetics and wools will keep your child warm even when wet, while cotton tends to hold moisture and dirt. When wet, cotton jeans, sweatshirts, pants and socks are difficult to dry and rapidly draw body heat away rather than provide insulation. While cotton clothing is comfortable, wool, fleece, pile, and other synthetic- Under Armor-like shirts, pants and pullovers are more functional for our multi-day camping and outdoor activities. Anywhere you read wool in the following list a synthetic alternative is acceptable.

We highly encourage you to utilize things you or your child already own rather than purchasing new equipment. You may be surprised to find a lot of synthetic clothing in your own home! Most people have fleece, wool sweaters, nylon jogging pants, fleece hats, etc. If you find yourself in need, thrift stores are fantastic resources for inexpensive clothing. Larger chain stores also feature inexpensive synthetic clothing, particularly fleece.

We will return to a warm base camp in the evening, but we will be outside during most of the day. There is a good chance that your child may get wet at some point, whether due to rain, puddles, or streams. Please pack accordingly so your child will be comfortable no matter the conditions.

All technical equipment, bedding and meals are provided by *Experience Learning*. Food and snacks are not necessary. We ask that any food or snacks that are brought for the ride here are left on the bus or with a teacher to discourage extra trash and critters in the woods or at our buildings.

We look forward to your child's visit! Please call 304/567-2632 if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,
Experience Learning Staff

Packing list continued on next page



Residential Course Packing List

Gear:

- Small backpack (1). *To carry rain gear, extra layers, journal, and lunch during day trips.*
- 32-oz water bottle (1). *Reused Gatorade or water bottles work well. Please fill with water.*
- Heavy-duty garbage bags. (1). *These keep belongings dry and separate dirty/ wet clothing,*
- Flashlight/headlamp (1).
- Extra batteries (1).
- Journal or sketch pad (1).
- Pen and/or pencil. (1).

Clothes:

- Synthetic long underwear tops and bottoms (1 set). *Medium weight recommended.*
- Short & long sleeved T-shirts (2 ea.). *Synthetic rec.*
- Synthetic long sleeve shirt or light wool sweater (1).
- Shorts (1).
- Wool/synthetic pants

(1).

- Heavy wool sweater or synthetic jacket. (1).
- Light socks (3 pair).
- Warm wool or synthetic socks (2 pair).
- Warm hat (1).
- Sun visor/baseball hat (1)
- Gloves or mittens (1). *Thick and waterproof rec.*
- Rain suit (1 set). **Jacket and pants.** *Heavy-duty rubber/plastic is great, Gore-Tex is good. Ponchos are not adequate.*
- Hiking boots (1). *Leather boots are fine if broken in and comfortable. Rubberized boots are usually not comfortable for hiking.*
- Sneakers (1). *For wearing around camp. Please no sandals or open-toed shoes.*

Toiletries:

- Toothpaste and toothbrush, sunscreen, SPF rated lip balm. *Travel sized versions rec. Hand-washing soap provided.*

- Medications. *Medications will be administered by teacher, not TMI staff.*
- Shower gear: soap, shampoo, towel.

Optional Gear:

- Camera
- Binoculars

If Caving:

- Students will get very muddy and wet, so a synthetic under layer is very important, as is wearing clothes that can get very dirty.*
- Long underwear (1 set).
 - Old pants (1), *Wool/synthetic.*
 - Long sleeve shirt (1).
 - Fleece sweater (1).
 - Headlamp/flashlight (1).

DO NOT BRING (or leave on the bus):

- x Snacks/Food
- x Cellular Phones
- x Electronics
- x Money or other valuables