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Single projects

- Relatively safe
 - With reasonable expectations

Welcome to the Lower
Jungle Trail at Mountain
Lake Conservancy

Thirties lagues at the end of the local
parking bot on give from on the tab
conservancy

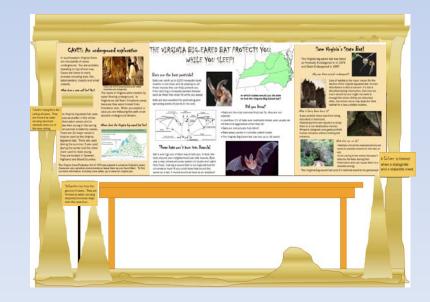
Thirties lagues at the end of the local
parking bot on give from on the tab
conservancy

The train of the local
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conservancy

Lower

Low

Potentially high payoff

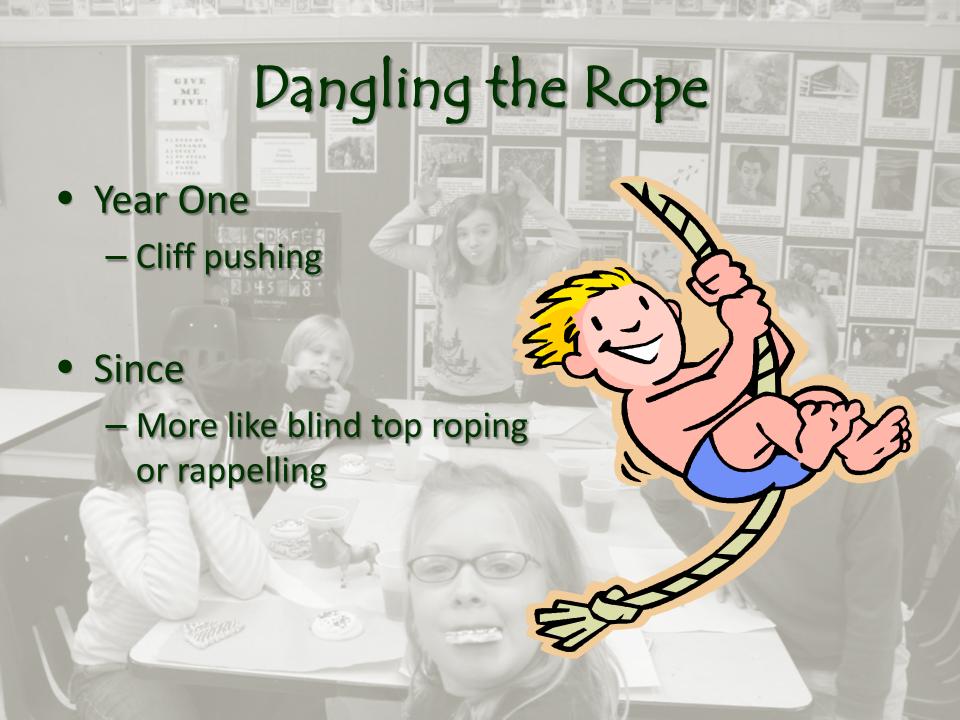




FOR 3524: Environmental Education Service Learning

Virginia Tech students provide weekly afterschool environmental education programs in partnership with 4-H to local elementary schools.

- Training in class management, environmental education, communications, social psychology, teaching and learning theory
- Certification in Project Learning Tree, Project WET, and others
- Students write reflective essays, participate in reflective discussion, develop environmental curricula, and craft their own teaching philosophies



Outcomes

- Standard evaluations (3 pt. scales)
 Self-assessed gains in . . .
 - Gains in knowledge, theories, etc.: 2.7
 - Problem solving abilities: 2.7
 - Appreciation of subject: 2.9
 - Effort required: 2.5
- All above average

Tailored evaluations

- 92% expressed a gain in confidence
- 96% thought more about the futures as a result of this class than other class
- 96% learned more about themselves
- 12% felt uncomfortable
 - Only variable that changed after first year (decline)

Year to year

- Less discomfort
- All other student outcomes similar
- Positive feedback from principals and parents

"My daughter Gwen LOVED the program . . . I think it was her favorite activity at school this year.

"[My daughter is] always so excited to tell me about the many different things she has learned from the activity. This program has exposed her to new things, that's always great. Thank you to all the individuals who were involved!

"I am writing to thank you for sending Meghan, Katie, and Cameron to Harding Avenue Elementary School this past semester . . .The students really learned a lot about the environment and had a great time."

The cliff strategy

"I personally like being thrown off a cliff and feel like too much guidance defeats the purpose of finding your place and role as a teacher through this experience."

"I think that I learned more from the cliff-dangling end of the spectrum. I would argue that you definitely provided us with tools . . . [course components listed] . . . I learned the most with the children teaching me and me learning on the job. It forced me to develop leadership skills and boosted my level of confidence — I can see the difference in how the kids related to me between now and the beginning of class."

"I would have liked more of a safety net at the beginning but overall I prefer the middle of the road approach. I would not want the teacher coming in everyday to watch over our class. Just supplying us with enough tools to help us develop our program . . ."

My personal reflections

- Give 'em "the Beta" and a safety net
 - Baseline content
 - Groups
- A little panic appears to be a good (or at least benign) thing
- Time and pedagogy
 - No more time commitment than a regular course
 - Discussion balances lecture
 - With specific context in mind, lessons are applied immediately

Students' parting thoughts

- "Every part of it [the class] was useful and great"
 - Junior Natural Resources Conservation major
- "Our learning was strongly based in the reality of the teaching world."
 - Sophomore Wildlife Science major
- "This was the best class I have taken while at Tech."
 - Junior Natural Resources Conservation major