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HITTING THE TRAIL: AN EXPLORATION OF AN OUTDOOR EDUCATIONAL
EXPERIENCE AT INTERMOUNTAIN WEST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

David N. Joy

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Education

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Logan, Utah

2020

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ABSTRACT

Hitting the Trail: An Exploration of an Outdoor Educational Experience at
Intermountain West Junior High School

by

David N. Joy, Doctor of Philosophy

Utah State University, 2020

Major Professor: Steven Camicia, Ph.D.
Department: Teacher Education and Leadership

Outdoor educational experiences are one of the ways that young people learn about and experience the benefits that are found spending time in nature. However, despite the benefits that outdoor educational experiences have to offer, many young people do not participate for one reason or another. These reasons are often rooted in issues of social injustice. This study adds to the literature in outdoor education related to how outdoor educational experiences effect the participants perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as what barriers may be keeping so many people from participating in these experiences. One junior high school in the intermountain west has been taking a group of eighth-grade students on a week-long camping trip for more than fifty years. There is a need to better understand how this trip effects the participants perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as why so many students at the school are not going on the trip. My

qualitative grounded theory study was conducted in two parts. In the first part, I examined how one year's trip (the Southern Utah Parks Trip) affected eight participating student's perceptions of the outdoors, as well as their perceptions and attitudes toward outdoor educational experiences. This was done through several methods of data collection, and that data was then coded using two phase coding outlined. In the second part of this study, I drew on my own experiences as a student participating in a camping trip at the same school in eighth-grade, as well as a teacher and trip leader several years later, through an autobiographical account, with the intent of better understanding the above-mentioned affects, as well as the barriers and constraints some students at the school run into that block their participation in this trip. This data was also coded as describe above. The result of this study was the emergence of several themes that ultimately led to theories that addressed the research questions of this study.

(389 pages)

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Hitting the Trail: An Exploration of an Outdoor Educational Experience at Intermountain
West Junior High School

David N. Joy

Outdoor educational experiences are one of the ways that young people learn about and experience the benefits that are found in the outdoors. However, despite the benefits that outdoor educational experiences have to offer, many young people do not participate for one reason or another. These reasons are often rooted in issues of social injustice. This study adds to about how outdoor educational experiences effect the perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as what may be keeping so many people from participating in these experiences. One junior high school in the intermountain west has been taking a group of eighth-grade students on a week-long camping trip for more than 50 years. There is a need to better understand how this trip effects the participants perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as why so many students at the school are not going on the trip. My study was conducted in two parts. In the first part, I examined how one year's trip (the Southern Utah Parks Trip) effected eight participating student's perceptions of the outdoors, as well as their perceptions and attitudes toward OEEs. This was done through several methods of data collection, and that data was then carefully analyzed for themes in the data. In the second part of this study, I drew on my own experiences as a student participating in a camping trip at the same school in eighth-

grade, as well as a teacher and trip leader several years later, through an autobiographical account, with the intent of better understanding the above-mentioned affects, as well as the barriers and constraints some students at the school run into that block their participation in this trip. This data was also analyzed in the same method. The result of this study was the emergence of several themes that ultimately led to two theories that addressed the research questions of this study. Those theories were: 1. that the Southern Utah Parks Trip, and other outdoor educational experiences have a positive impact on each participant's attitude toward and perception of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, helping to cause a connection to and a deeper understanding of nature, and 2. that there are several things keeping most of the students at Intermountain West Junior High School from participating the Southern Utah Parks Trip, and likely keeping other students at other schools from participating in outdoor educational experiences.

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David N. Joy

DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this to Leanne first, and Kadence, Shelby, and Lydia second. You have all sacrificed so much for me to get here, and I will never forget that. You have been my biggest support and my best cheerleaders throughout all of this. You stuck by me through the ups and downs of it all, and there is truthfully no way I could have done this without you. I am forever grateful and I love you all more than the universes.



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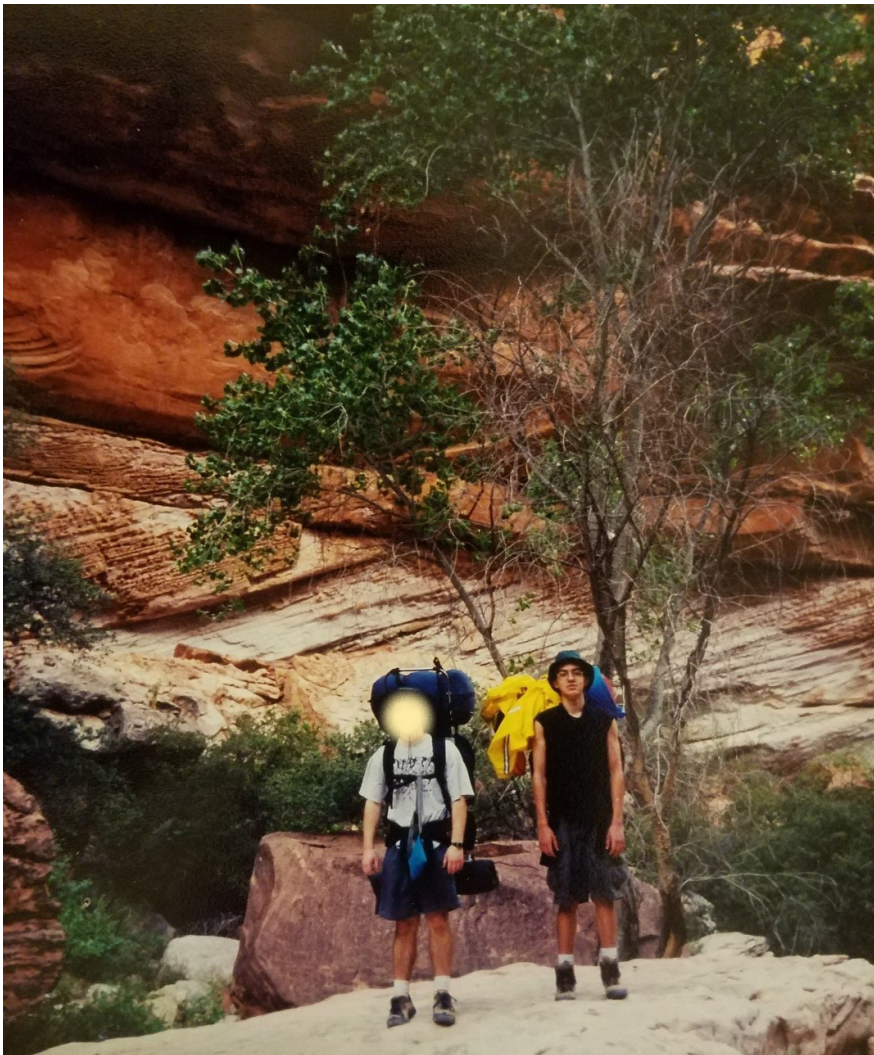
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“We often forget that WE ARE NATURE. Nature is not something separate from us. So when we say that we have lost our connection to nature, we have lost our connection to ourselves.” – Andy Goldsworthy (Andy Goldsworthy, n.d., para. 2)

Figure 1

The Author and Bart in Canyon on the Way to Supai



Note. Bart’s face (left) is covered to protect his anonymity. Photo taken in 1999 when we were in eighth grade.

As I hiked down the canyon in the cool air before the sun had peaked above the canyon wall, my pack was heavy on my back. Bart (a pseudonym), my best friend since elementary school, was walking not far off. As I looked all around, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. The layered red-rock walls, with the dark desert varnish running down the face. All I could think was "I can't believe I am seeing this in real life." This was the type of place I had seen while reading *Backpacker* magazine, dreaming of all the places I would go, and here I was, right in the middle of it. I could already feel an intense love for this place deep in the pit of my chest, and we hadn't even made it the ten miles to the campground in Supai.

I was fourteen years old, in eighth-grade, at Intermountain West Junior High (IWJH) and on a school sponsored backpacking trip into a branch of the Grand Canyon in Arizona, USA. Our group had driven down to the trail the two days before, staying the night before in a high school gym along the way. As we pulled into the parking lot of the trailhead, in the late afternoon, I was able to walk up to the rim of the canyon and look down into the Grand Canyon for the first time. It was breathtaking. I had never seen anything like it at all. I stood there for several minutes just taking it all in. We then slept that night there at Hualapai Hilltop, right near the trailhead, and started the ten-mile hike well before sunrise that next morning.

Now, there I was, several miles in, and still just as enthralled with everything I saw. I remember being completely blown-away by the beauty of my surroundings, and wanting to make sure that sometime in the future I got my dad and my brothers to come down here with me. They had to see it. I just knew they would love it. I did not want to

keep it to myself, I wanted to share it with them. I was not that far into the trip, and I already felt so connected to that place. It was almost a sacred feeling as I listened to gravel crunch under my feet and I looked all around me as I hiked toward the campground. I could smell the fresh, cool morning air, the kind that you can only get in a place like that. I was tired and sweaty, but I was already so in love with that place.

A few more miles down the trail, I finally reached the Supai village, late in the morning. The sun had come up a while before, and the air had quickly warmed up. Our worries about rain that day were all but gone. My shoulders ached, and I was ready to be done carrying my pack because of it, but more so, I was glad I had gotten to experience the wonder of that canyon. I had an incredible feeling of meeting a challenge, and the accomplishment that came with it because I had made the hike, and had done so in a good amount of time. The campground was still another two miles past the village, and so I walked straight on through and headed for our base camp. I will never forget the moment I came around the corner and saw Havasu Falls for the first time. I was dumbstruck. I just stood on the trail, looking down at a red rock ledge, surrounded by green cottonwood trees, and a beautiful ribbon of water falling into the most vivid turquoise pool I had ever seen. It sealed that place as a part of me. I was and will forever feel deeply connected to that place because of moments like that on that trip.

That trip was a major driving force directing my career path into teaching at IWJH, my hobbies and interests in the outdoors, and ultimately my decision to enter graduate school and conduct the study at the center of this dissertation. I gained so much from this backpacking experience, and I knew many others who had as well. All of this

led me to want more and more people to have moments like the ones described above, and I also know that it was with these benefits in mind, though not officially, that the original trip leaders at IWJH started the eighth-grade camping trip, fondly called “Havasupai” when I was a student. The name was changed to the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT) when I was a teacher at the school years later due to a change in location for the experience. The week-long outdoor educational experience (OEE) has been in place now for the eighth-grade students at IWJH for over 50 years.

As I stated above, participation in this OEE in my youth, and knowing the impact it had on my attitudes towards and perceptions of the outdoors and OEEs, I aimed with this study to see how a trip like this one, to a place the majority of the students had never visited before, might affect how each of them saw the area, and how they personally viewed learning in the outdoors in general; how did their experience on the trip affect what they thought of the outdoors in general and what did they think of going out and experiencing the outdoors in a learning setting. In addition to trying to understand how this experience influenced the perceptions and attitudes of the participants, I also wanted to know why the vast majority of the eighth-graders at the school were not going on the trip. As will be described below, the number of students attending the SUPT have fallen to a fraction of what they were just a few years ago. What were the reasons and barriers keeping them from having these experiences, and how can this trend be turned around in the future, making the group of participants more inclusive? Beyond improving the SUPT, this information might also be used to better other OEEs like it.

Intermountain West Junior High School Eighth Grade Trip

Over 5 decades ago there were two teachers at Intermountain West Middle School (IWMS), a shop teacher, Charles (a pseudonym), and a gym teacher, Margaret (also a pseudonym), who noticed a problem with the students at the school. (The school started as a sixth through eighth-grade middle school, and was changed to a seventh through ninth-grade junior high school in recent years.) They noticed that many of the students didn't want to work hard toward anything and were often getting into trouble. So, together, Charles and Margaret decided as to how they felt they could address the problems they were seeing in some of their students. The decision they came to was to take a group of those students on a backpacking trip to Supai in the Grand Canyon, Arizona, USA.

“The village of Supai is located deep within the Grand Canyon in the midst of unmatched natural beauty and a series of awe-inspiring blue-green waterfalls” (Havasupai Tourism Office, n.d.). It was after his own visit to this wonderful place that Charles knew that this would be where they would take their group of students with the aim of helping to teach them the value of hard work and making right choices, and that is what they did. For several years the group of students they took were those who were struggling, and it worked. According to Charles (Charles C., personal communication, October 15, 2018), they almost immediately saw a turn-around in the students they took on the trip. Because of this they decided to make it a yearly trip. Within a few years, word of how amazing the trip was and how beautiful Supai was, and the experience began to grow. They started allowing any student who met some minimal criteria, such as

good behavior in class and paying a fee that was a small fraction of the total cost of the trip to help with expenses, to go. The number of students going on the trip quickly climbed into the dozens, and a school tradition was born.

Each year, the trip would start long before anyone left for Supai. At the beginning of their eight-grade year, the students were called down to the auditorium, and Charles, Margaret, and several other teachers they had brought on to help, would introduce the trip, and then inform the students of all the requirements for going on the trip. They would continue this as often as they could in other assemblies and on morning announcements from August to December, continuing to advertise for and remind all the eighth-graders of what they needed to be doing to qualify to go. When those students returned from winter break, the trip leaders would begin to hold weekly early morning meetings every Friday, in which they would teach backpacking skills, camping skills, how to cook while on the trip, what was on the pack list and why it was on there, and a little about the Havasupai people and their culture, as well as any other information they felt necessary.

Another way in which the trip leaders felt that the students needed help preparing for the trip was in their physical conditioning. As was mentioned above, the hike into Supai is 10 miles long, while carrying all of your food and gear in a backpack. Therefore, there was an obvious need to make sure that each student was physically able to make it down to the campground safely. In order to do this, the trip leaders organized a series of hiking field trips throughout the year leading up to the trip. These hikes took place on popular hiking trails in the mountains near the school. The trails for these hikes were

chosen to measure how the students did over moderate distances, as well as on more strenuous hikes. How the students did on these hikes was a valuable metric for the trip leaders to judge how physically prepared the students were for the trip.

As the trip drew near each year, and the students had been learning these new skills and information, the leaders wanted to make sure that the students were prepared and able set up their camp and start their backpacking stoves. In order to assess this, the trip leaders got the group of participants together after school one day in May and held a “Mock Camp-out.” During the Mock Camp-out, the students gathered in the field behind the school, and were instructed to set up their tents and sleeping bags, and light their camp stove. This was all checked off by one of the trip leaders. When they had passed this off, they were then instructed to “break camp,” meaning take it all down, and put it all away properly. This again was checked off by one of the trip leaders, in order to make sure they were capable of doing it.

While the students were outside working on all of that, their parents and guardians were inside the school in a parent meeting. During the parent meeting other trip leaders would go over all the information about the trip, required equipment, and what to pack for food, all the things taught in the early morning meetings, in order to make sure parents were aware of what would happen on the trip, and what was needed to prepare. For the students, the Mock Camp-out was a very exciting time, because it was usually scheduled a week before the trip, and that made the trip feel very near. For the parents, it was their opportunity, to get all of the necessary information, and to get all of their questions answered.

I will pause here in my description of the Havasupai trip until Chapter V of this dissertation because it is there that I will begin an autobiographical account of my own experience as an eighth-grade student on this trip. I am not describing the trip further in general terms, because in describing the events of the actual trip, I will be speaking largely from my own personal experience, and each year the events of the actual trip would vary somewhat. While some of the parts of each trip were a common part of the experience (I will point these out in my personal account), others would vary based on which leaders went on the trip, and what lessons the leaders felt were important to teach the group of students going that year.

Rationale

My experience on the Havasupai trip forged in me a life-long connection to that area, and to learning in the outdoors, as I know it has done for many others who went on that trip throughout the years. Participants often describe experiences on trips like that as “one of the best” experiences of their lives (Kellert, 1998). I know it was for me, and because this trip had such a strong, positive impact on my attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, I wanted to continue to be a part of it. I therefore got my teaching degree, and through a series of very fortunate events, got my first teaching assignment as a science teacher at IWMS. I was so excited to have a chance to be part of the team of leaders that helped the students at the school to have the opportunity to experience Havasupai and gain the benefits that come from learning and being in the outdoors (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng &

Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998; Kellert et al., 2017).

After a year of working there, the school changed from a middle school, to a junior high (IWJH), and I became more and more involved with preparing the eighth-grade students to go on the Havasupai OEE. During this time, I also wanted to make the trip better and more effective at helping students to form a positive connection to that place and to the outdoor in general as well as learn the lessons we as leaders hoped they would. But in order to do that, I needed to know exactly what impacts the experience was having on the participants, and what it was about the experience that had caused those impacts. It was also during that time, especially as more and more years passed, and as the location of the OEE changed from Supai, Arizona to a tour of some of the national and state parks in Southern Utah, that I noticed that more and more of the eighth-grade students at IWJH were not going on the trip. I desperately wanted to know why they were not going. Were they choosing not to go for some reason? Or, was there some barrier or constraint getting in their way?

Because of the tremendously positive effect this experience had on me, I wanted to do what I could to make this experience available to as many students as possible. Looking at the demographic data of the participants in this study and comparing it to the school's demographic data for the eighth-grade class, it is obvious that not every group was represented. This is not surprising as a quick look at the literature shows that not every group is represented in outdoor education (Warren et. al, 2014). It is for this reason that I entered graduate school and conducted this study in order to add to the existing literature related to outdoor education and social justice. I aimed to provide some insight

into these questions, and ultimately, to make the Southern Utah Parks Trip (a pseudonym to protect the anonymity participants, as are all names throughout this dissertation) and other outdoor educational experiences (OEEs) better and more inclusive of all students.

In order to understand OEEs, we need to better understand where they fit in the field of education. Adkins and Simmons (2002) have shown that while outdoor education can be viewed as part of experiential education, place-based education, or environmental education, they all have their own separate definitions as well. OEEs usually do, but do not necessarily have to, incorporate all of those elements. They can take place in the outdoors and have experiential and place-based elements to them, but not always. They often will incorporate elements of environmental education as well, but that is certainly not a requirement either.

The OEEs described in this study does fit into each of those types of education, outdoor, experiential, place-based, and environmental. It takes place outside the majority of the time, with the only time indoors being in visitor's centers at several of the national and state parks we visited. The trip also has elements of experiential education as the participants are able to see and experience many of the things being taught on the trip first hand, often using several of their senses as they learn. This OEE also takes place at certain locations, those national parks, national monuments, and states parks, allowing it to fit into place-based education, and because of many of the topics taught on the trip being centered on our natural world and how to care for the environment, this trip has several elements of environmental education.

There are many benefits that can be gained from these types of outdoor learning

experiences. In their 2012 report, Charles and Wheeler summarized the literature pertaining to the benefits associated with children spending time outside. Those benefits fell under five general categories. Those categories were physical benefits, psychological benefits, social/behavioral benefits, academic benefits, and affective benefits. Those benefits included things like children having lower Body Mass Index scores, better attention spans, a feeling of connection to the places they spent time outside in, a desire to protect nature, and a better self-image, among many other things.

While there are many benefits to spending time outdoors and in nature, those benefits are not always available to everyone (Warren et al., 2014). There are many groups, such females, racial or ethnic minorities, or the differently abled, among others, that feel blocked from participation in outdoor activities (Ghimire et al., 2014). In their study, Ghimire et al. looked at how seventeen possible constraints effected those different groups. They found, as did others (Shores et al., 2007) that socioeconomic status (SES) and a lack of access to necessary resources, such as money, had the biggest impact on whether or not a person or group of people are kept from participating in outdoor activities.

After being a part of the yearly OEE at IWJH for so long, I wanted to know how the trip was impacting the participants attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. Just as concerning to me though, was the fact that very few students at the school were going on the trip each year. The number of participants had fallen from an average of fifty to sixty students each year, down to six students the year before this study took place. I desperately wanted to know why so few students were

going on the trip now. What was it that was keeping them away? It was my desire to know the impact of the trip, and the barriers keeping so many students from participating that lead to my conducting this study. With the new information added to the existing literature, we can continue to improve the SUTP at IWJH, as well as OEEs like it everywhere, and in turn move the field of outdoor education in a positive direction.

The Study

This study is an Institutional Review Board approved (see Appendix C) qualitative grounded theory study (Charmaz, 2014) based around two research questions: 1. How did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at IWJH perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in outdoor educational experiences? and 2. What were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience? I attempted to answer these questions by conducting this study in two parts.

Part 1

The purpose and focus of part one of this study was on the experiences of eight students who, with their parent or guardian, consented to participate, and who went on the SUPT the year this study was conducted. IWJH was a suburban junior high school that was largely lower middle class. It was somewhat diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, with the majority students at the school identified on their registration as Hispanic the year of this study. That same year, there were 261 eighth-grade students, and only ten students chose to and were able to go on the SUPT experience.

I started collecting data for the study by sending home a paper-based survey with the informed consent documents, and asked the parents/guardians to fill it out. This survey gave me a basic understanding how the group of students going on the SUPT compared demographically to the eighth-grade student body as a whole. It was quite easy to see that the group attending the SUPT were not demographically representative of eighth-grade class as a whole, showing the trip contained many of the types of equity issues often found in the literature related to such outdoor experiences (Warren et. al., 2014).

In the next step of data collection, each of the eight participants filled out an anonymous Qualtrics survey using laptops at the IWJH. The purpose of this survey was to ask participants questions related to their experiences in the outdoor and learning in the outdoors, as well as to establish their attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, prior to the trip. A few days after the pre-trip survey was administered, the trip began. As we traveled about, hiking, sightseeing, and learning, I collected field notes as a participant observer using a voice recorder when possible, and a notebook when a voice recorder would have been too distracting to the participants. Then, each night I journaled the day in detail in my field notebook in order to try and capture as much of the experience as possible. When the trip finished, we met together on the first school day back, and the students took another anonymous Qualtrics survey, again on school provided computers. The data from the post-trip survey was then compared to that data collected in the pre-trip survey. It was clear from this comparison that most participants had a positive perception of and attitudes toward the outdoors and

learning in the outdoors prior to the trip. It was also clear that the SUPT strengthened those positive attitudes and perceptions in every participant.

In the days following our return from the trip, the students were brought in and were first asked to draw a journey map (Meyer & Marx, 2014; Nyquist et al., 1999) that represented their experience on the SUPT and what it was like for them. After they had finished with their journey map, I conducted a semi-structured interview with each of them, starting with each participant explaining their journey maps to me, and then drawing from a bank of prepared questions, but also asking other questions to seek clarification as they came up. After all of the surveys, journey maps, and interviews, all audio recordings were transcribed, followed by all of this data being analyzed using the data analysis procedure, the two phased coding, of Charmaz (2014) and the constant comparative analysis steps described in Creswell and Poth (2013).

From all of this data, there were several themes that emerged, giving insight into what the SUPT was like for the participants, and how it affected their attitudes of and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, especially the areas in which the trip took place. There were also some themes that emerged from this data that began to offer some insight into what some of the reasons and barriers had kept the vast majority of eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT. All of these themes were then pared with the findings of part two of this study to better establish and support the results.

Part 2

The focus of part two of this study was my own autobiographical experience with

the yearly OEE at IWJH, both as an eighth-grade student, and later as a teacher and trip leader. I began to collect data for this part of the study by gathering together all materials I had that related to this OEE, including photographs I had taken on the trip and the activities leading up to the trip, a video made by Charles to commemorate the trip, and all the papers I had kept from both my time as a student and my time as a trip leader. I then journaled my experience with the trip in as much detail as I could remember, using cues from the photographs and other materials I had gathered.

After I had finished journaling my own experiences from start to finish, I began to analyze the data, again using the two phased coding, of Charmaz (2014) and the constant comparative analysis steps described in Creswell and Poth (2013). While there were no new themes that emerged from the data, several of the themes were evident in my own experience. This was especially true of the themes relating to the reasons and barriers that had kept so many of the participants from going on the trip. At this point, I then took all of the findings from both parts of this study and began to draw some conclusions based on the evidence from this study.

Conclusions

The first set of conclusions drawn from this study relate to the first research question; how did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at IWJH perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs? The conclusion that immediately came out from the data and themes of this study was that for the eight participants, the SUPT, and for me, the

Havasupai trip, had an unanimously overall positive impact on our attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. Each participant gave evidence toward how they had either changed their views of the outdoors from disliking them to liking them, or if they had enjoyed the outdoors prior to the trip, how their feelings had been strengthened by their experience on these OEEs.

Some of the major themes that had led to this conclusion were the participants having *a feeling of excitement* throughout the trip, *learning and being in a social setting*, *connecting with the scenery and views* of the places visited, *connecting with water* throughout the trip and *connecting with the geology and geological formations* found in the areas we went to. While there were many other themes that emerged, it seems as though these are the themes that came up most often from the participants responses, as well as in my own account. The other themes that emerged from the data, and further support this conclusion were: *connecting with plants*, *connecting with cultures of the past*, *connecting with animals*, *hands-on learning*, *learning about the outdoors and nature*, *being physically active in the outdoors*, and *learning outdoor skills*. All of this led up to the final theme that supports the above conclusion, the theme of *wanting to protect an area or resource*. Each of the participants in this study, myself included, showed a desire to protect the areas visited during their OEE, and also to protect the outdoors and nature in general. This connection and desire to protect these areas are strong evidence for the positive impact that the SUPT had on the participants attitudes toward and perceptions of being and learning in the outdoors.

The second conclusion drawn from the data in this study relate to the second

research question: What were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience? After having examined the data from the participants that related to any obstacles they had to overcome, things that they disliked about the trip, or things they heard from other students in regards to why they didn't go, as well as the things I had experienced as a student participant, or as a teacher and trip leader, the themes that emerged from the data continued to be strengthened. Those themes give evidence that there were several possible barriers contributing to the low participation numbers for the SUPT and preventing many of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating, and therefore receiving the benefits of this experience.

Of those themes, it seems that the main thing getting in the way of many of the students' participation in the SUPT was *a lack of access to the necessary supplies or experiences* needed to participate in the OEE. This could include lack of access to the funds needed for the trip, a lack of access to the gear needed, or a lack of access to the experiences in the outdoors that give the kind of knowledge and confidence to go on this type of experience. Other themes that gave insight into why so many of the students might not have gone on the trip were: *A feeling of nervousness or anticipation* before the trip which was common in nearly every participant that did go, including myself, having to meet with *challenging situations* such as strenuous hikes and difficult learning activities, *being comfortable in the outdoors* or not being comfortable in the outdoors, even if only a little, and *a feeling of burn-out or impatience* which showed up in most of the participants. Of course, there is the possibility and likelihood that many of the

students just did not want to participate, for some reason or another, including the possibility of a simple lack of interest in these types of activities.

These conclusions gave great insight into how the SUPT effected the attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as what some of the barriers were that could be the reason why many of the students at IWJH did not participate in the experience. This information could now contribute to the existing literature and can be used to improve the SUPT experience and other OEEs like it. This will be discussed further, along with other implications and areas of further research, in the final chapter of this dissertation. These were my ultimate goals when I set out on this journey that is documented in the rest of these pages.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Teaching children about the natural world should be treated as one of the most important events in their lives.” – Thomas Berry (Sandborn, 2018, para. 4)

Figure 2

The Students Looking at Lower Calf Creek Falls



As in any journey, it is good to know where you are going. In this chapter, I set a foundation of the knowledge and research that lead to this study. To do this, I will start by defining and examining the underpinnings of OEEs, and then position them in relation

to outdoor education, experiential education, environmental education, and place-based education (Association for Experiential Education, n.d.; Adkins & Simmons, 2002; Hammerman et al., 2001; Kellert, 1998; Kellert et. al., 2017; Kolb, 1999; Richardson & Simmons, 1996; Kolb, 1984; North American Association for Environmental Education [NAAEE], 2019; Newell, 2018; Sobel, 2004). By doing so, I aim to make it clear what constitutes an outdoor educational experience (OEE), and where in the field of education, both formal and informal, these experiences fit in. I use the term outdoor educational experience (OEEs), throughout this dissertation because I believe that it is an umbrella term that captures the essence of these programs as learning that takes place in and/or about the outside via experiences.

From there I lay out some of the many benefits found in the literature of spending time learning and being in the outdoors. From my review of the literature, I found that these benefits to time spent in the outdoors fall into one of five categories. These categories are physical benefits such as better balance and lower Body Mass Index measurements, psychological benefits like a better sense of wellbeing, social/behavioral benefits such as getting along better with others and working better in groups, academic benefits shown in better grades and better classroom behavior, and affective benefits like a better appreciation for nature and the outdoors and an improved sense of environmental stewardship (Bonney & Drury, 1992; Burdette & Whitaker, 2005; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Chawla, 2006; Hammerman et al., 2001, Lester & Maudsley, 2006; Louv, 2008). Along these same lines, I looked at the research involving participants perceptions of and attitudes towards the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, especially the locations the

participants spend time in (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Chawla, 2006; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998; Mueller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006).

Despite there being numerous benefits to time spent in the outdoors, and despite these benefits becoming more and more well-known (Louv, 2008), there are large discrepancies in who is getting outside (Lee et al., 2001; Shores et al., 2007; Warren et al., 2014). I end this review of the literature by outlining the research done that examines the issues of social justice surrounding outdoor education, as well as the barriers and constraints that are preventing so many from these experiences and the benefits that go along with them.

Humans and the outdoors, nature, are profoundly connected (Louv, 2008). We are part of nature, and we use nature for many purposes, from extraction of resources, to taking time to relax and recharge. Our first learning took place in the outdoors (Hammerman et al., 2001). There is much to be gained from time outdoors, whether it be recreationally (Burdette & Whitaker, 2005; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Chawla, 2006; Lester & Maudsley, 2006) or as a learning experience (Bonney & Drury, 1992; Burdette & Whitaker, 2005; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Hammerman et al., 2001, Louv, 2008) or healing one (Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Kuo, 2011; Townsend & Weerasuriya, 2010). OEEs, which can be loosely defined as learning in and about the outdoors, as well as time in the outdoors in general, have been shown to improve people physically (Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cooper et al., 2010; Fjørtoft, 2004; Gopinath et al., 2011; Kimbro et al., 2011; Page et al., 2010; Rose et al., 2008; Wolch et al., 2011), psychologically (Douglas,

2008; Faber Taylor & Kuo, 2011; Garst et al., 2001; Korpela et al., 2001; Louv, 2008; Thompson Coon et al., 2011; Wells & Evans, 2003), socially/behaviorally (Garst et al., 2001; Goodyear-Smith & Laidlaw, 1999; Hammerman et al., 2001; Little & Wyver, 2008; Taylor et al., 2002), academically (Bonney & Drury, 1992; Hammerman et al., 2001; Matsuoka, 2008; Wells, 2000), and affectively (Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Chawla, 2006; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998; Knapp & Poff, 2001; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells, & Lekies, 2006; Wray-Lake et al., 2010). The research has also shown that while the outdoors can benefit humans, we in turn will be more likely to take steps to benefit the environment because of our experiences in the outdoors, especially those that have a positive impact on our affect toward the outdoor and places we have experienced (Chawla, 2006).

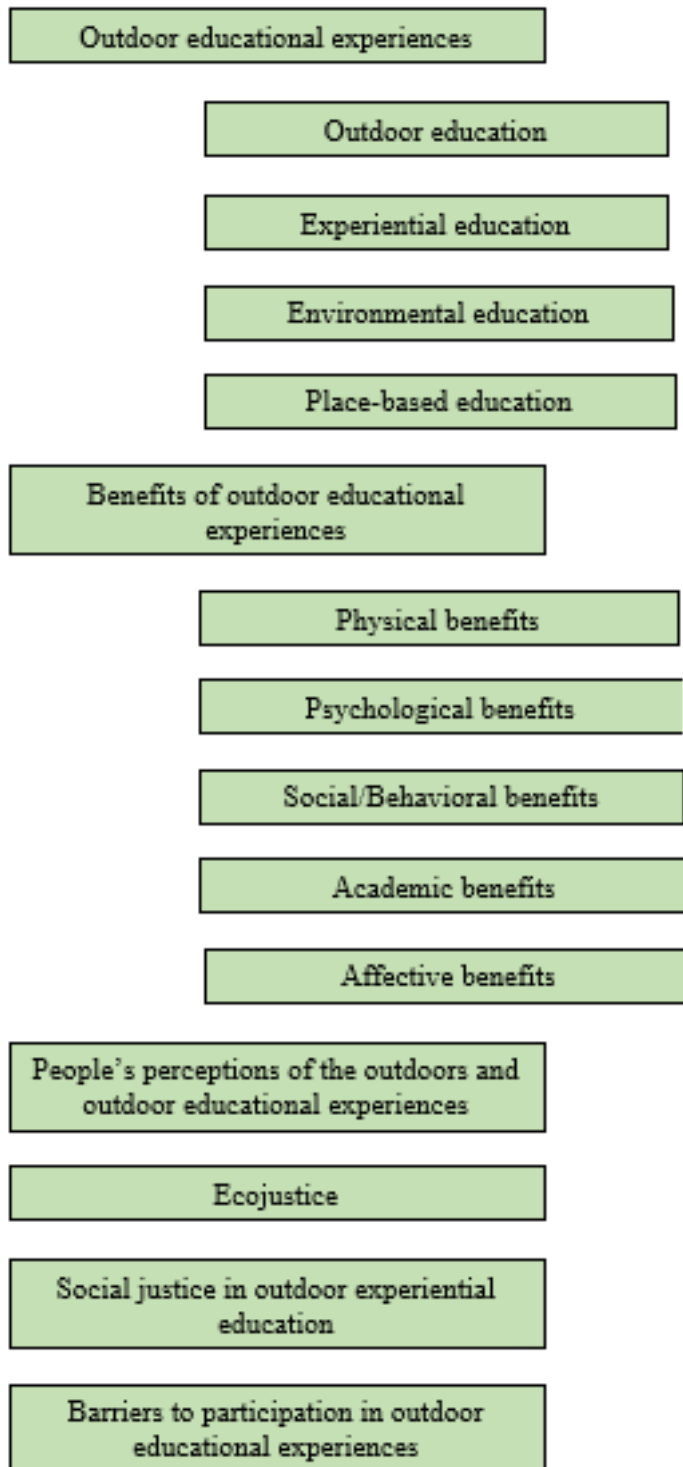
In addition to there being many areas in which time in the outdoors can have a positive impact on in our lives, there is also a lot to be said about the magnitude of that impact. For many, positive experiences in the outdoors can be life changing. The responses of many of the participants in the classic study conducted by Kellert (1998) support this claim. “An extraordinarily large population of respondents cited this relatively short, on average 3- to 4-week experience, as among the most worthwhile and influential occurrences in their life” (p. 32). However, these possibly life-changing experiences are not available to everyone equally (Warren, 2005; Warren et al., 2014). It is no secret that the fields of OEEs and outdoor recreation tend to be very white male dominated (Warren, 1998; Warren et al., 2014). This leaves large groups of under-represented populations that are not sharing in and possibly benefiting from these

experiences (Warren, 2005; Warren et al., 2014).

Ecojustice aims to address these issues by addressing the tensions found in a culture, the OEE and outdoor recreation culture, that often excludes many from those possible benefits that participation in the outdoors can afford (Bowers, 2001). Therefore, it is the work of those involved in ecojustice to try and address the barriers to participation that are keeping some from participating in these experiences and remedy these issues of social injustice found in OEEs and outdoor recreation, as well as numerous other areas involving social injustice and the environment (Bowers, 2001; Warren et al., 2014). Ecojustice does this in the area of outdoor education by trying to educate those involved as to what the barriers to participation in OEEs are, and how to break down and remove those barriers. A diagram of my conceptual framework is outlined in Figure 3.

Dissertation

The aim of this grounded theory study was to examine the perceptions of and the attitudes towards the outdoors and OEEs of the participants of a week-long camping OEE at one junior high school and the effect the experience had on those perceptions and attitudes. I also aimed to examine the reasons that the majority of the eighth-grade students at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH) did not participate in the school sponsored OEE, the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT). All of this was done with the hope that this knowledge could lead to more participation in this OEE and ultimately other OEEs like it. From increased participation in OEEs, it is also hoped that the

Figure 3*Conceptual Framework Diagram*

participants will develop a connectedness and affinity toward nature and the outdoors (Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006), especially the areas visited on this trip, and because of these connections it is hoped that participants will make choices that will help and benefit the environment and ultimately our Earth (Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006).

Teaching and learning in OEEs, or often just being in the outdoors, can be an effective and rewarding way for people to grow and develop in many areas. Time in the outdoors and in OEEs can lead to growth and development in several areas. These benefits fall into five distinct categories; physical benefits, psychological benefits, social/behavioral benefits, academic benefits, and affective benefits (Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Hammerman et al., 2001) will be discussed below.

However, this leads to a problem. Participation in SUPT has declined significantly, and not all of the groups found in the eighth-grade student population are represented in those who do participate in the SUPT. In a broader sense, this is an issue that is not unique to SUPT alone. Much of the field of outdoor experiential education has a problem with underrepresented groups in participation. As Warren (2005) puts it:

As an educational community, the outdoor experiential education field is affected by the social upheaval created by oppression and privilege. In the past, the innocent utopian vision of an outdoor course might have allowed a disconnection from prevailing social issues, but the scale of the present-day dialogue no longer allows complete disassociation. The knapsack has been wrenched open and its contents are falling out as the outdoor field can no longer remain distant from examining social justice concerns. (p. 90)

Issues of oppression, privilege, and inequality in OEE or any field must be addressed. All people should be able to have equal access to the benefits and wonders

that OEEs have to offer. In the following sections, I examine what outdoor education is, and what are the associated benefits with participation in OEEs. I will also look at how these benefits might affect a participant's perceptions of the outdoors and OEEs, and I will also look at eco/environmental justice and some of the issues of social justice in the outdoor education field, as well as some of the possible barriers to participation in OEEs. Here I will also highlight some of the research that has been done to illustrate progress toward addressing those issues of social justice in OEEs. In the table below, I outline the studies used to establish my theoretical framework. The Table 1 has been separated into categories that match the sections of this chapter to make it easier to understand and use.

Outdoor Educational Experiences

OEEs are often categorized as part of experiential education, outdoor education, environmental education, and/or place-based education. This is fitting as two of those categories are found directly in the name. However, the literature often uses any and all of these terms interchangeably (Adkins & Simmons, 2002). In order to better understand what is happening with the SUPT OEE at IWJH, it is helpful to better understand which category this OEE falls into, as well as others like it.

Outdoor Education

Adkins and Simmons (2002) point out, that each of these terms, outdoor education, experiential education, environmental education, and place-based education, has their own separate and distinct definitions. After citing several definitions of outdoor education, the authors summarize the definition of outdoor education as “a context for

Table 1*A Summary of Literature Used in This Study*

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Outdoor educational experiences		
Louv, 2008	A trade book outlining the need for children to get more experiences outside.	A summary of the body of research indicating that is necessary for children to have direct exposure to nature in order for healthy childhood development, as well as the physical and emotional health of people.
Hammerman et al., 2001	A textbook used for courses on teaching in the outdoors.	A textbook designed to teach students and teachers to become better acquainted with the outdoors as a place to teach. The authors outline a philosophy of outdoor education, techniques for teaching in the outdoors, specific projects that can be taught in the outdoors, and evaluation procedures.
Chawla, 2006	A comparison of interviews of 26 people in Norway, to those of 30 people in Kentucky. The study was conducted with a diverse group of people, in age, gender, and working class.	The author found that the two most significant factors contributing to an individual choosing to take action to benefit the environment are positive, direct experience in the outdoors, and being taken outdoors by a close, trusted mentor, like a parent or grandparent, or some other trusted guardian. She also adds documented support to the literature on the benefits of the outdoors, citing many additional benefits to spending time in the outdoor with regard to the areas of creativity, physical competence, social skills, environmental knowledge, and confidence.
Lester & Maudsley, 2006	A review of the literature on the topic of children's time playing in nature.	The authors collected and summarized the literature on the topic of children and their time playing in nature. They found several key findings related to the type of nature children are playing in, the values and benefits of letting children play in natural settings, children's access to natural play spaces, and supporting children's opportunities to play in natural spaces.
Burdette & Whitaker, 2005	A paper arguing for more unstructured outdoor free play for children, and focusing on their overall well-being instead of fitness level.	The authors aimed to show that unstructured outdoor play needs to be restored to the lives of children. The authors argue that the current emphasis on increasing physical activity might be more successful if the physical activity or exercise were promoted as playing and focused more on the well-being of the child.
Charles & Wheeler, 2012	An annotated bibliography of studies related to children's experiences of the outdoors and nature, and the benefits derived from those experiences.	The studies in this annotated bibliography are related to children's experiences of the outdoors and nature, and the benefits derived from those experiences. They were selected to highlight a variety of research in those areas, and the diversity of areas in which this research is taking.
Bonney & Drury, 1992	A textbook for instructors and students aimed at teaching the Wilderness Education Association curriculum.	The authors teach both instructors and students the WEA curriculum in self-contained lesson plans, as well as some teaching methods for successfully teaching in the backcountry.
Kuo, 2011	A report reviewing the benefits that contact with nature provides to our health.	The author shows that green environments are essential to human health. She reviews evidence from several studies that show the benefits to contact with nature are present in our social, psychological, and physical health.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Townsend & Weerasuriya, 2010	A literature review of the literature related to the links between mental health and well-being and contact with nature.	The authors show through their review of the literature that contact with nature, especially through green spaces ameliorates stress and benefits our mental health and well-being.
Adkins, & Simmons, 2002	An ERIC Digest outlining and summarizing definitions of outdoor education, experiential education, and environmental education.	In this article, the authors gathered different definitions of outdoor education, experiential education, and environmental education, and set about clarifying the differences between each discipline. They also then synthesize this information into a concise definition for each.
Richardson, & Simmons, 1996	An ERIC Digest designed to guide professional development to enhance the value of teachers who lead outdoor learning experiences.	The authors begin by describing the literature that has had a major influence on the standards of competence in outdoor education. They then outline the skills outdoor education leaders need in order to be effective based on the NAAEE standards.
Association for Experiential Education (AEE), n.d.	A webpage that describes experiential education, and what its principles of practice are.	After describing what experiential education is according to the AEE's definition, this webpage then lists the 12 principles of practice for experiential education.
Kellert, 1998	A survey of 429 participants before, immediately after, and 6 months after participation in an OFE program ran by the Student Conservation Association, the National Outdoor Leadership School, or Outward Bound.	The author found that 72% of participants rated the experiences as "one of the best" in their lives" (pg. 18). The participants in this study reported a positive impact on their personal, intellectual, and spiritual development. The author also found pronounced results in the participants experiencing enhanced self-esteem, self-confidence, independence, autonomy, and initiative.
Kellert et al., 2017	A large-scale study conducted using three different research methods: 15 focus groups with 119 adults from several states, an online survey of 10,156 adults all across the United States, and interviews of 771 children ages 8 to 12 years-old and an online survey of one of each of their parents. All of this was done in an attempt to better understand and foster American's relationship with Nature.	The authors studied nearly 12,000 people, and from this they came to eight major findings. "1. Americans face a significant gap between their interests in nature and their efforts, abilities, and opportunities to pursue those interest, 2. Experiences in nature are deeply social, 3. Adults and children differ in where they locate unforgettable, authentic nature, 4. Access to nature is as much about the quality of places as their quantity, 5. Americans value nature in remarkably broad, diverse ways, 6. Americans support nature-related programming, funding, and conservation, 7. Americans' relationship with nature is complex and nuanced, and 8. Americans perceive tremendous benefit from experiences in nature (para. 2)."
AEE, 2019	Foundational Guiding Principles	The Association of Experiential Education (AEE) has outlined twelve foundational principles that guide and inform many outdoor educational experiences. Those twelve principles are presented here.
Kolb 1984	This article develops experiential learning theory	In this article, Kolb (1984) outlines a four-stage cycle for experiential education. Those stages are: (a) begin with a concrete experience, (b) involve active reflection, (c) move into conceptualization of the experience, and (d) end with application and reengagement with what was learned. This process began the establishment of experiential learning theory.
NAAEE, 2019	This article outlines the Guidelines for Excellence in Environmental Education	The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) has developed a series of guidelines, covering all aspects of environmental education from design to implementation. These guidelines provide a framework and establish a set of standards to help both formal and informal educators to increase the quality and effectiveness of their environmental educational experiences.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Sobel, 2004	This article provides a definition of place-based education	Sobel (2004) defines place-based education as “the process of using the...community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts...across the curriculum” (p. 6). He points out that place-based education often emphasizes the hands-on and real-world learning that is such a big part of experiential education. He also lists several areas he has found in which place-based education benefits the learner.
Newell, 2018	An autoethnographic study of the author’s experience creating and running, and eventually leaving, a sixth-grade integrated outdoor experiential learning program in a public middle school	The author found that the participants described that outdoor field experiences “improved such things as their attitude toward school, their overall confidence, rostered relationships, established a strong classroom community, and boosted their academic performance (p. iv).” The author also showed that there was a positive impact on the participants reading and writing skills. These impacts were shown to be lasting.
Cheng & Monroe, 2012	Created an index to measure a child’s connection to nature, and then used it to study 1,500 fourth-grade students through a survey.	The authors found that there were four main dimensions to a child’s connection to nature. Those four dimensions are 1. enjoyment of nature, 2. empathy for creatures, 3. sense of oneness and 4. Sense of responsibility. They also found that the strongest factor in predicting a child’s interest in participating in nature-based activities was their level of connection to nature. The things that were most connected to a child’s interest in performing environmentally friendly behaviors were, again, the child’s connection to nature, as well as previous experience with nature, and perceived family value toward nature.
Ballantyne & Packer, 2002	A survey of children aged 8 to 17 years-old. The survey looked at the students’ perceptions, expectations of, and experiences during five different kinds of OEEs.	The authors found Students want to be able to learn in the outdoors. They also found that OEEs encourage students to think about their environmental attitudes and behaviors, which, as shown above, are one of the benefits experiences in the outdoors provide. They not only found that learning in natural environments are attractive to students, and that it has an important impact on their attitudes toward the environment, but that it also has an impact on their desire to look after the environment and their personal behavior in nature, as well as their household environmental practices. The free-choice learning environment often found in OEEs, such as botanical gardens, national parks, science centers, zoos, and other informal learning experiences, is closely linked to participants’ intrinsic motivation for going to these places.
Thompson et al., 2008	Two survey-based projects of 798 adults. The authors used those surveys to look at how people use natural spaces near their homes. The authors also looked at those people’s attitudes toward those natural spaces.	The authors found that people who had frequent experiences in the outdoors as a child and those whose homes were closer to natural spaces were more likely to visit those types of places again as an adult. They also found that the more frequently a person had outdoor experiences as a child, the more likely they are to have a positive attitude toward those spaces, and the more comfortable they are visiting those outdoor spaces alone.
Wells & Lekies, 2006	The authors interviewed approximately 2,000 adults aged 18 to 90 years-old in an attempt to examine the connection between childhood involvement with nature and adult environmentalism.	The authors found that participation in “wild” (camping, hiking, playing in natural areas) and “domesticated” (gardening, picking flowers) experiences in the outdoors as a child had a positive impact on the persons pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. They did find that the “wild” experiences had a stronger influence in these areas than did the “domesticated” ones.
Muller et al., 2009	A survey of 400 student in German and Lithuanian high schools. The surveys asked about the participants emotional affinity towards nature, awareness of environmental risks, current contact with nature, and willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors.	The authors found that children’s emotional affinity towards nature was a significant predictor of that child’s willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors. They also found in this study that children’s contact with nature only had an indirect relationship with their willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors. This indirect relationship formed when the participant to first develop an affinity towards the place they had contact with, and then developed more of a commitment to pro-environmental behaviors.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Laresse-Casanova, 2011	A program analysis of the Utah Master Naturalist Program- Watersheds module.	The author found that the results of the assessment and evaluation of this program showed that amateur naturalists learned more and consistently evaluated the program more positively than professional naturalists.
UNESCO, 1976	The Belgrade Charter	The Belgrade Charter was the outcome of the International Workshop on Environmental Education, and sets up the goals, objectives, and guiding principles of environmental education.
Benefits of Outdoor Educational Experiences (<i>Physical Benefits</i>)		
Charles & Wheeler, 2012	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 27	
Kimbrow et al., 2011	This study consisted of a longitudinal study of 1,800 5-10 year-old children. The authors looked at the link between outdoor play and TV watching compared to BMI measurements.	The authors found that those children who played outdoors had lower body mass index (BMI) numbers than those children who watched more TV
Wolch et al., 2011	This study consisted of a survey of 3,000 children aged 9-10 years-old. It was a longitudinal study over an 8-year period. The authors were looking at proximity to outdoor recreation sites had an impact on childhood obesity.	The authors found that children with better access to parks and other outdoor recreational programs had a reduced risk of being overweight or obese at the age of eighteen, as measured by the participants BMIs.
Cooper, et al., 2010	The authors used GPS units to record the outdoor location of more than 1,000 11-year-old children, and then compared that information with data from accelerometers measuring the child's physical activity.	The authors found that children spent an average of 42 minutes outside after school each day. They also found that physical activity was 2-3 times higher outdoors than it was indoors.
Page et al., 2010	The authors used data from a large study involving 1,300 children ages 10 to 11 years-old. They used surveys to ask about outdoor play, exercise, and travel from home to school.	The authors found that children who have increased levels of independent mobility, meaning they have more choice in where they go and what they do when they are outside, as opposed to a parent or guardian planning it all out for them, participate in a more varied list of physical activities.
Gopinath et al., 2011	Study of digital photographs of the eyes of 1,500 6-year-old children, measuring retinal vessel diameter. Compared to parental surveys looking at children's physical activity and sedentary behaviors.	The authors found that children who spent more time in outdoor sporting activities, and less time indoors watching television had better retinal microvascular structure. These results are significant because retinal arteriolar narrowing could possibly indicate future cardiovascular disease.
Rose et al., 2008	1,765 6-year-olds and 2,367 12-year-olds were given a comprehensive eye exam. Compared to participant or parental (of the younger participants) looking at activities throughout the week	The authors found that while there was no relationship between the prevalence of myopia (nearsightedness) and activity in the 6-year-old participants, they did find that higher levels of time spent outdoors were associated with a lower prevalence of myopia in 12-year-olds. It is their belief that the light intensity found outside as opposed to inside, may have an effect on the developing eye.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Fjørtoft, 2004	46 kindergarten children allowed to play in a nearby forest for 1 to 2 hours per day. Compared to 29 kindergarten children allowed to play on a more traditional playground setting. The children's motor fitness was measured at the start of the study and nine months later.	The author found that those who were allowed to play in the natural area showed improvement in all motor abilities except flexibility. The group of children that played on the more traditional playground setting only showed improvement in 3 of 9 motor tests.
Kuo, 2011	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 27	
Townsend & Weerasuriya, 2010	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 28	
Benefits of Outdoor Educational Experiences (<i>Psychological Benefits</i>)		
Douglas, 2008	The authors presentation that addresses the psychological and mental health benefits from nature and urban greenspace.	The author shows that there is clear evidence in several sectors of society that there are positive benefits for mental health and well-being benefits gained from both passive and active involvement with natural areas in cities and towns.
Thompson Coon et al., 2011	The authors conducted a systematic review of studies looking to compare exercise indoors to exercise outdoors in a natural environment and the resulting health benefits.	The authors found that when compared to exercise indoors, exercising outdoors, in a natural environment was associated with positive engagement, a greater feeling of revitalization, increased energy, and decreases in anger, depression, tension, and confusion.
Wells & Evans, 2003	This study was conducted by collecting data on the psychological well-being of 337 rural children in grades 3 through 5 and comparing it to the amount of nature near their residence.	The authors found that rural children with something as simple as just a physical view of nature helped to reduce the stress levels of highly stressed children. They also found that the more access those children had to natural areas, the more positive the result.
Faber Taylor, & Kuo, 2011	An internet survey was filled out by parents of children aged 5 to 18 years-old who were diagnose with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The survey looked at where the children most often spent time playing.	The authors the children who regularly played in green play settings, defined by numerous trees and plants and a more natural setting, had milder ADHD symptoms than the children who most often played in outdoor built play settings, like a playground, or those who played indoors. They also found that family income and the child's gender did not have an impact on the results.
Korpela et al., 2001	A qualitative study of 199 university students. The students were given a survey looking at how they feel about their favorite places, and places that they deemed as unpleasant.	The authors were interested in whether the place attachment related to their favorite places and unpleasant places as described in their questionnaires involved restorative experiences, and had an effect on self-regulation. They found that natural settings were predominant among favorite places, and underrepresented among those described as unpleasant. When they explored the feelings associated with those favorite places, they found that relaxation, calmness, comfortableness, happiness, enjoyment, excitement, forgetting worries, and reflection were the most common feelings connected to those favorite places.

(*table continues*)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Garst et al., 2001	58 participants from a range of ethnic groups. Both male and female. Aged 10 to 17 years-old. Mixed method approach using pre and post survey, participant observations, leader journaling, and immediate and extended post-trip interviews.	The authors found that participation in an OEE and a positive impact on improving the participants self-perception. After participating in an OEE, the respondents reported a more positive view of themselves at a significant rate. They also found that participation in OEEs helped students to improve social acceptance and behavioral conduct immediately after the experience. Their data also suggests that some of the improved behavioral conduct may have remained four months after the participants experience.
Holland et al., 2018	The authors conducted a systematic review of the literature on the outcomes of wildland recreational participation related to psychological, social, and educational outcomes.	They found "overwhelmingly positive results" that suggest that participation in outdoor, wildland recreation is beneficial in many psychological, social, and educational ways. The authors identified the following eleven, largely positive, outcome categories: personal development, pro-social behavior, mental restoration, environmental stewardship, new perspectives, outdoor recreation interests and skills, academic interest and performance, spirituality, place attachment, desired lifestyle change, and physical health and well-being.
Thomson et al., 2018	The authors conducted a systematic literature review of outcomes of wildland recreational participation related to physical and mental health outcomes.	They found that there were several factors that influenced the benefits of participation in wildland recreational activities, including the physical setting/ natural environment, the focus on recreational activity, and the social aspects of these experiences.
Benefits of Outdoor Educational Experiences (<i>Social/Behavioral Benefits</i>)		
Hammerman et al., 2001	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 27	
Garst et al., 2001	See Psychological Benefits Section p. 32	
Little & Wyver, 2008	A review of the available literature on outdoor play and how it applies to healthy risk-taking behaviors in children.	In searching and reviewing the authors found several benefits. They point out that risky play opportunities are a possible way to introduce excitement and challenge in a way that allows children to test their skills and try new activities. From this, children are able to have a chance to master new skills and gain a sense of accomplishment. They can further encourage them to try new and challenging tasks and situations.
Stine, 1997	Research on playground design in several countries.	The author found that outdoor school environments in Japan and England are useful and safe, but also contribute to learning and play, more so than the outdoor school spaces in the United States. "By taking risks, by facing a challenge, we learn about our competence and our limitations. Trying to exist in a world without some measure of risk is not only impossible but inhibits our lives and the child's need for challenge" (pg. 29).
Goodyear-Smith & Laidlaw, 1999	An article that argues for monitored risk taking for children.	The authors argue that it is neither desirable or feasible to protect children from all risk. They argue that children need to learn to handle risk. They found that allowing children to take calculated risks enhances their physical and psychological well-being and development, and that risk taking has been positively related to self-confidence and creative ability.
Taylor et al., 2002	This study looked at 169 children were tested in measures of self-discipline. These tests were then compared to how the parents of the children rated the level of nature near their homes.	The authors found that nature near the homes of these children was be strongly linked to better concentration, impulse inhibition, and delay of gratification, especially in their female participants. For boys, the authors theorize that it is likely that they boys experience the same benefits, but that the nature that provides the effect is farther from their homes, where they are more likely to be found interacting with it.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Benefits of Outdoor Educational Experiences (<i>Academic Benefits</i>)		
Hammerman et al., 2001	See Outdoor Educational Experience Section p. 27	
Bonney & Drury, 1992	See Outdoor Educational Experience Section p. 27	
Wells, 2000	17 children in a range of all ages. All from low SES households. A survey that looked at how moving to a new home and the level of nature and “greenness” the children were exposed to pre and post move, effected their ability to focus their attention, as well as measures of their cognitive ability.	The author found that participation in an OEE is not a prerequisite for positive effects on a person’s cognitive abilities from exposure to nature. She found that when there are natural elements in the home environment, it can have a profound effect on children’s ability to focus, as well as on their cognitive functioning.
Matsuoka, 2008	Examined 101 high school campuses in southeastern Michigan, looking at student access to views of nature, primarily through the types of windows in the building and the school’s policy on eating lunch in the outdoors, and how that effected student’s academic achievement and behavior.	The author found that the characteristics of the school that increased access to views of nature, such as larger window, or a policy allowing students to eat lunch outside or off campus, was significantly associated with higher student achievement and better behavior in the schools. This improved academic performance was shown through a number of different ways, such as higher achievement on standardized tests, higher graduation rates, and a greater percentage of students planning to attend college, as well as fewer reports of criminal behavior.
Benefits of Outdoor Educational Experiences (<i>Affective Benefits</i>)		
Knapp & Poff, 2001	This study used qualitative measures and looked at 24 fourth-graders on a field trip to a US Forest Service site.	The authors found that participation in outdoor learning and OEEs can lead students to have a more positive affect toward an area in which they participated in an outdoor learning experience
Charles, & Wheeler, 2012	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 27	
Wray-Lake, Flanagan, & Osgood, 2010	Looked at 10,000 adolescent’s response data from 1976 to 2005 on the Monitoring the Future survey a survey given annually to high school seniors in the United States.	The authors found that young people in the early 1990s showed an increase in a range of indicators measuring environmental concern, but this was followed by declines in the same measures for the remaining time studied. The authors note that some of the declining indicators are particularly concerning, namely personal responsibility for the environment, conservation behaviors, and the belief that resources are scarce. They also found from the survey responses that respondents tend to assign responsibility for the environment to the government and consumers, rather than taking some of that responsibility themselves.
Kellert, 1998	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 28	
Cheng & Monroe, 2012	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 29	

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Muller et al., 2009	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 29	
Chawla, 2006	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 27	
Thompson et al., 2008	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 29	
Wells, & Lekies, 2006	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 29	
Students Perceptions of the Outdoors and Outdoor Educational Experiences		
Ballantyne & Parker, 2002	See <i>Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 29</i>	
OTEC, 2007	A webpage giving information on informal (free-choice) education	Gives a definition of free-choice learning as “that learning which most typically occurs while people visit museums or other cultural institutions, watch television, read a newspaper, talk with friends, attend a play, or surf the Internet”
Ballantyne, Fien, & Packer, 2001a	This study looked at 6 environmental education programs with 284 students grades 5 through 12, using surveys and interviews.	The author discovered and outline key features that should be included in environmental education programs to encourage and empower students to bring about environmental changes in their homes and in their communities.
Ballantyne, Fien, & Packer, 2001b	This article describes a case study of the impact of 2 school environmental education programs from the perspectives of the students, teachers, and parents. 152 students, 3 teachers, and 62 parents participated.	The authors found that both school programs were successful at engaging students in thinking about and learning about environmental issues. They also make recommendations regarding key features that they feel need to be included in school environmental education programs in order to maximize the student learning outcomes.
Ballantyne & Uzzell, 1994	This article is a critical examination of the relationship between informal environmental interpretive experiences and formal environmental education.	The authors outline the similarities and differences between informal environmental interpretive experiences and formal environmental education, and then draw implications for the use of interpretive experiences in the environmental education school curriculum. They then develop The Informal Environmental Learning Checklist to aid teachers in evaluation of learning experiences.
Lai, 1999	This article is a case study of tenth grade students and their field work as an experiential activity.	The author found that the learning experiences were better than their teachers expected after they participated in their field trip. The authors also show that field trips had relative freedom as a learning environment in which the students were more proactive, and the teacher-student rapport improved.
Ecojustice		
Bowers, 2001	A textbook on ecojustice and education	The author defines ecojustice, and then establishes the theory and its parts. He also establishes elements and practice of an ecojustice curriculum.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Warren et al., 2014	This article is a state of knowledge review of the literature on social and environmental justice.	The authors critique outdoor experiential education for its social injustices. They then establish that not everyone is on equal grounds when it comes to outdoor educational activities, identify gaps in the literature, and offer recommendations for moving toward social justice.
Mohai et al., 2009	This article is a review of the literature on climate justice in the United States.	The authors examine and critique the literature on climate justice in the United States and how environmental injustice is measured and documented.
Muller, 2009	A critique of Bowers, (2001).	The author argues for the position of approaching ecojustice from an ecological crisis standpoint. He also states that the main focus of ecojustice "is developing an understanding of the tensions between cultures (i.e. intergenerational knowledges and skills, beliefs and values, expectations and narratives) and the needs of the Earth's ecosystems" (p. 1033).
Energy Justice Network, 1996	The "Principles of Environmental Justice: Preamble" that establishes <i>The First Nation of People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit</i> list 17 principles of ecojustice.	This preamble establishes a list of 17 principles of ecojustice as outlined by The First Nation of People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit in 1996. Four of those principles have direct implications in outdoor educational experiences (OEEs).
Social Justice and Outdoor Education		
Young, 1990	A book on social justice and groups and their identity in political life.	The author outlines issues in social justice and politics in detail. She states that social justice is "the elimination of institutionalized domination and oppression [and] any aspect of social organization and practice relevant to domination and oppression," (p. 5).
Kalert, 2018	An article analyzing the literature on social justice in K-12 outdoor experiential education programs.	The author found that scholars in the outdoor education field seem to have found agreement that if OEEs and outdoor education are to be a successful and respected form of education, "leaders must confront the obstacles to equality and equity, and work to actively interrupt systems of oppression that are rooted in our culture, historical, and societal values (pg. 2)." He also points out that leaders and researchers in the field of outdoor education need to confront issues of social justice by adopting a more expansive lens of who belongs, and to examine all areas of social privilege, "such as race/ethnicity, culture, gender and gender identity, age, ability, and religion, as well as socioeconomic status" (p. 10). He goes on to point out that these changes need to take place at the institutional level in order to ensure that issues related to social justice are eliminated, rather than only temporarily addressed.
Frazer, 2009	This article is a review of the literature on social justice in outdoor education studies. The author used a grounded theory methodology.	The author found an absence of research on social justice-oriented teaching perspectives and practices in college faculty in outdoor education studies. He also found five primary beliefs about the place of social justice held by outdoor education studies faculty with a commitment to social justice.
Gruenewald, 2003	An article arguing for a conscious synthesis of a critical pedagogy of place.	The author argues that place-based learning, a type of experiential learning that is often found in outdoor educational experiences, is needed "so that the education of citizens might have some direct bearing on the well-being of the social and ecological places people actually inhabit" (pg. 3). He goes further to argue that critical pedagogies are needed "to challenge the assumptions, practices, and outcomes taken for granted in dominant culture and in conventional education" (pg. 3).

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Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Kirby & McKenna, 1989	A book that discusses the issues that emerged within social science research.	The authors establish that the assumptions, practices, and outcomes of the dominant culture in the fields of outdoor education and outdoor recreation have led to the exclusion of members of oppressed groups and must be addressed. "We live in a world in which knowledge is used to maintain oppressive relations. Information is interpreted and organized in such a way that the views of a small group of people are presented as objective knowledge, as "The Truth" (p. 67)."
Warren, 2002	A content analysis of 4 influential college textbooks used for many outdoor education "foundations" courses.	The author uncovered no attention to social justice or diversity issues. The author points out there are issues with social injustices throughout this outdoor culture. It might be found in gender and racial discrepancies in participation levels, or perhaps social or economic barriers.
Gilbertson et al., 2006	A textbook used in outdoor education courses.	The authors show students how to teach in the outdoors, using physical, cognitive, and affective methods. They apply educational theories, and provide information and tools for teaching in the outdoors.
Freire, 2005	A book establishing critical pedagogy.	The author establishes critical pedagogy, and proposes a new relationship between teacher, student, and society. He argues that learners should be co-creators of knowledge.
Tyson, 2014	A guidebook to using Critical Theory in research.	The author teaches researchers to use contemporary critical theory in their research. She also gives an in-depth coverage of the most common approaches to literary analysis.
Ballantyne & Packer, 2002	See Outdoor Educational Experiences Section p. 29	
Garst et al., 2001	See Psychological Benefits Section p. 32	
Knapp & Poff, 2001	See Affective Benefits Section p. 33	
Warren et al., 2014	See Ecojustice Section p. 35	
Warren, 2005	This article is an examination of the influences promoting social justice in outdoor experiential education.	The author examines the philosophical foundations of OEEs in light of Dewey and Hahn, and analyzes the historical evolution of social justice activism in the OEE community. She then establishes that the research on social justice in OEEs has largely focused on three areas; gender, class, and race.
Barriers to Participation in Outdoor Educational Experiences		
Schwartz & Corkey, 2011	This article is about a mixed method approach using surveys and focus groups of 318 university students.	The authors found that the main barriers to participation of female students and students of color in outdoor programs were socialization/subcultural, economic/access, and other discriminatory barriers. To counteract those barriers, the authors suggest that programs use targeted outreach to recruit participants, carefully design programs that are tailored for women and students of color and change the focus of current outdoor programs from adventure and challenge focused, which appeals mainly to White males, to more social, relationship building, and appreciating and learning about nature, which seems to appeal more to women and students of color.

(table continues)

Literature citation	Brief summary of the study (study design, description of participants, setting, etc.)	Main findings of the study
Lee et al., 2001	A telephone survey of 3,000 people in Texas asking them about perceived constraints to their outdoor recreation rates.	The authors suggest that socio-economic status (SES) could be a barrier because the level of income and involvement in outdoor recreation is possibly an access issue. The rates of participation varied directly with both the cost and physical availability of outdoor resources. The higher the cost, or the further away the outdoor recreation or learning opportunity, the more likely a lower income person or family would be blocked from participating in that opportunity. They also examine several other perceived constraints to outdoor recreation rates compared to different demographic groups.
Shores et al., 2007	A re-examination of the study done by Lee et al., 2001 using different statistical analysis and focusing on intersectionality.	They found that constraints to outdoor recreation for people of color included a fear of crime, perceived discrimination, and the sanctioning of activities as acceptable by peers and families associated with participation in outdoor recreation.
Ghimire et al., 2014	This article used a national survey to analyze if ethnic minorities and marginalized groups perceived more constraints to outdoor recreation than their counterparts.	The author found that ethnic minorities, and many marginalized groups perceived constraints to their participation in outdoor recreational activities more than their White, urban dwelling, male, younger counterparts.
Warren et al., 2014	See Ecojustice Section p. 35	
Warren, 2005	See Social Justice and Outdoor Education Section p. 38	
Warren, 1998	This article is a paper calling for race, gender, and class sensitive facilitation in outdoor experiential education	The author establishes the need for OEEs to become more inclusive of different social groups. She critically examines the philosophies of facilitation of OEEs at that time, and calls on leaders to improve and provide for race, gender, and class sensitive facilitation in outdoor experiential education.

learning” (p. 2). This suggests that many areas of education, whether formal or informal, can be taught in the outdoors (Richardson & Simmons, 1996). It could be something as simple as a math teacher helping students calculate the height of a tree on the school grounds using trigonometry and then using that data to monitor the growth of a tree, on up to a residential outdoor summer camp in which learners spend much of their time in the outdoors learning for days or even weeks. One of the reasons that outdoor education is so powerful is that it lends itself so easily to direct experiences for the learners (Hammerman et al., 2001). Those direct experiences are the foundation of experiential education.

Experiential Education

In a similar manner to the definition of outdoor education, Adkins and Simmons (2002) cited several other authors definitions of experiential education before summarizing those definitions, “experiential education is a ‘process’ or ‘method’ that can be used to teach (p. 3). The authors (Adkins & Simmons, 2002) also make a point to state that unlike outdoor education, a learner in an experiential educational setting is not required to be outdoors. The only requirement is an emphasis on the role of experience in the learning process (Kolb, 1999). A more in-depth definition of experiential education is given by the) as a “philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people’s capacity to contribute to their communities” (AEE, n.d.).

Many OEEs, whether found in a formal or informal setting, are focused on

providing learners with a chance to have that direct experience and focused reflection, often by taking those learners outdoors, in a real-world setting. Some of the examples of OEE programs, both formal and informal, that do just that can be found with programs offered through The Teton Science School (tetonscience.org), The Aldo Leopold Nature Center (aldoleopoldnaturecenter.org), National Outdoor Leadership School (nols.edu), the Boy Scouts of America (scouting.org), the Girl Scouts of America (girlscouts.org), or even on interpretative signs and trail guides found on many trails and in state and national parks, and numerous other local nature centers offering a wide variety of place-based, experiential OEEs which can easily be found by city and state with a quick search (bestnaturecenter.com). When people attend a place like The Teton Science School, or participate in the Boy and Girl Scouts of America, or any other of the numerous OEE programs, they are often in a certain outdoor location, where they are taught lessons and skills in-context, with hands on experiences. This direct experience is what makes programs and experiences like this so powerful (AEE, n.d.).

Whether it is taking a group of students to a local river to test the water quality themselves, or participating in a course at any of the five places the Teton Science School teaches courses, or going to a local nature center with your family or with your school, or spending some time in a cemetery with a group to reflect on some of the historical figures that were prominent in the area, many OEEs adhere to the philosophy and principles of experiential education. That is why experience is part of the term outdoor education *experiences*. Those foundational principles that guide experiential education, and inform many OEEs, as defined by the AEE (n.d.) are as follows.

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis.
- Experiences are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for results.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.
- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully, and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.
- The results of the learning are personal and form the basis for future experience and learning.
- Relationships are developed and nurtured: learner to self, learner to others, and learner to the world at large.
- The educator and learner may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking, and uncertainty, because the outcomes of experience cannot totally be predicted.
- Opportunities are nurtured for learners and educators to explore and examine their own values.
- The educator's primary roles include setting suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.
- The educator recognizes and encourages spontaneous opportunities for learning.
- Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgements, and pre-conceptions, and how these influence the learner.
- The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes. (AEE, n.d., para. 4)

Experiential educators and the disciplines and settings in which experiential education appears are many and varied, including teachers, camp counselors, environmental educators, outdoor and adventure education, place-based education, and

environmental education (AEE, n.d.). With the development of the experiential learning theory, Kolb (1984) outlined a four-stage cycle for experiential education, which are often used to guide those who are attempting to teach using experiential education, like in an OEE setting. The stages are, (a) begin with a concrete experience, (b) involve active reflection, (c) move into conceptualization of the experience, and (d) end with application and reengagement with what was learned. By using the four phases developed by Kolb, an OEE can be a more valuable educational experience, like the OEEs found in the Utah Master Naturalist Program (Larese-Casanova, 2011).

The Utah Master Naturalist Program is a four-part experiential education program aimed at adult learners offered through Utah State University Extension that teaches participants about the three main biomes found in Utah, as well as the night sky. Topics covered in the courses are the geology, the flora, and the fauna contained in each part, as well as a focus on how participants might aid in the conservation of those biomes. Using the four stages of experiential education helps OEEs to attain the learning goals set up by the instructor, and helps to make sure the experience doesn't just become a trip outside, though, as will be shown later, that can still have a number of benefits. It doesn't matter what the content of the OEE is, be it environmental education or science or literature or art or any other content area, use of a framework like the four stages outlined by Kolb (1984), or the Guidelines for Excellence in Environmental Education (NAAEE, 2019), which will be discussed below, can be a foundation for stronger OEEs (AEE, n.d.).

Environmental Education

Environmental education is the third term that is examined and defined by Adkins

and Simmons (2002). After summarizing the history of environmental education, the authors point out that the widely accepted goal, from which one can extrapolate a definition, of environmental education comes from The Belgrade Charter (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] 1976). It says:

The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones. (p. 2)

While much of the teaching, both formal and informal, that goes into environmental education is done outdoors, making it part of outdoor education, it is not a requirement. Nothing in The Belgrade Charter (UNESCO, 1976) says, or even suggests, that environmental education must be done outdoors. However, when paired with ideas like outdoor education, experiential education, and place-based education, it does seem as though it may be best for the learner if it is taught outdoors, on location, through direct experience.

The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) has developed a series of guidelines, covering all aspects of environmental education from design to implementation in their publication *Guidelines for Excellence: Best Practice in EE Series* (NAAEE, 2019). These guidelines provide a framework and establish a set of standards to help both formal and informal educators to increase the quality and effectiveness of their environmental educational experiences. The Guidelines for Excellence were developed by a diverse team of professionals and were subject to a substantial review. The Guidelines are set up in a way that informs those using them of

what standard a learner should achieve when they finish the fourth-grade, when they finish the eighth-grade, and when they graduate high school.

The Guidelines for Excellence in Environmental Education are designed to:

- assist in the development and implementation of environmental education materials;
- improve nonformal environmental education programs;
- guide formal educators in concepts and materials needed in curricula to foster environmentally literate learners; and
- shape the professional development of educators (NAAEE, 2019, para. 4)

The principles of experiential education (Kolb, 1984), and the *Guidelines for Excellence* (NAAEE, 2019) in environmental education, can be used along with content to create OEEs in the places that are being learned about for a more effective learning experience (Sobel, 2004). This idea of teaching in the places being studied, or place-based education, and the benefits that come from that, continue to strengthen the argument for the use of more OEEs.

Place-Based Education

Place-based education is another term that is often associated with outdoor education, experiential education, and environmental education. This is because the ideas and principles of each are harmonious and complementary. Sobel (2004) defines place-based education as “the process of using the...community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts...across the curriculum” (p. 6). Sobel also points out that place-based education often emphasizes the hands-on and real-world learning that is such a big part of experiential education, which is supported elsewhere in the literature (Newell,

2018). Sobel also lists several areas he has found in which place-based education benefits the learner. He states, “this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students’ appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens” (p. 6). While it is not a requirement that all OEEs be place-based, it is these benefits, as well as others, that motivate many who are in charge of OEEs to take learners on location, and allow them to experience the place, outdoors, in a hands-on fashion.

This research will focus on all of the above terms. That is why the term outdoor educational experiences or OEEs has been chosen as the term I will use to describe the type of experiences that the SUPT falls into. It is an umbrella term that captures and includes the ideas, themes, and principles of outdoor education, experiential education, environmental education, and place-based education. OEEs take place in the outdoors and focus on the direct experiences of the learners. Because it often, though not always, takes learners to a new and wonderful environment, it is easy to see how place-based and environmental education fit in. All of which is ultimately for the benefit of the learner.

Benefits of Outdoor Educational Experiences

OEEs are one of the most common forms of experiential learning. Hammerman et al. (2001) write, “Long before schools, textbooks, or professional educators ever existed, learning by direct experience was the customary means of passing on the essentials of human culture from one generation to the next” (p. 1). Concepts like ecology, geology,

art, astronomy, cultural studies, and many others, are often taught in context during an OEE. This may be done through programs such as those mentioned above, like the Teton Science School, The Boy and Girls Scouts of America, Master Naturalist Courses (Larese-Casanova, 2011), by going to state or national parks, or at the numerous nature and environmental centers scattered all across many states and countries. In these areas and programs, and numerous others like them, students are able to discover real-world examples, practice making decisions, and problem solving in context (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002). These experiences are able to provide many benefits (Kuo, 2011), physically, psychologically, socially/behaviorally, academically, and affectively. Often, the participants in OEEs experience benefits from several of those areas in the same experience (Holland et al., 2018; Thomsen et al., 2018). Each of these areas that participants in OEEs might benefit from are explored further in the following sections.

Physical Benefits

There are numerous benefits afforded to the physical well-being of those that participate in OEEs or outdoor recreational activities (Charles & Wheeler, 2012). For example, Kimbro et al. (2011) found in their longitudinal study of the well-being of 1,800 5-year-old children that those who played outdoors had lower body mass index (BMI) numbers than those children who watched more TV. These results supported an earlier study by Wolch et al. (2011). The authors found by surveying 3,000 children, aged 9-10, and measuring their height and weight on an annual basis over an 8-year period that children with better access to parks and other outdoor recreational programs had a reduced risk of being overweight or obese at the age of eighteen, as measured by the

participants BMIs (Wolch et al., 2011).

A possible reason that children who spend more time outdoors, especially if they live in close proximity to a park or other outdoor recreational activities (Kimbrow et al., 2011; Wolch et al., 2011) tend to have healthier BMIs could be because children who spend more time outdoors tend to be more physically active (Cooper et al., 2010). This is further supported by the work of Page et al. (2010), who found that children who have increased levels of independent mobility, meaning they have more choice in where they go and what they do when they are outside, as opposed to a parent or guardian planning it all out for them, participate in a more varied list of physical activities.

Increased physical activity and lower BMIs are not the only physical benefits to participation in outdoor activities. Gopinath et al. (2011) studied digital photographs of the eyes of 1,500 6-year-old children, measuring the retinal vessel diameter. They then paired these measures of the children's retinal microvascular structure with surveys the children's parents filled out regarding the children's physical activity and sedentary behaviors. The authors found that children who spent more time in outdoor sporting activities, and less time indoors watching television had better retinal microvascular structure. These results are significant because retinal arteriolar narrowing could possibly indicate future cardiovascular disease (Gopinath et al., 2011). This gives one strong reason to try to increase the amount of time children spend actively outdoors and decrease the time children spend in front of a screen.

In a separate study, authors Rose et al. (2008) gave 1,765 6-year-olds and 2,367 12-year-olds a comprehensive eye exam, as well as had the participants (or the parents of

the younger participants) complete questionnaires about their activities throughout the week. They found that while there was no relationship between the prevalence of myopia (nearsightedness) and activity in the 6-year-old participants, they did find that higher levels of time spent outdoors were associated with a lower prevalence of myopia in 12-year-olds. It is their belief that the light intensity found outside as opposed to inside, may have an effect on the developing eye. But BMI and eye development are not the only physical aspects that benefit from time in the outdoors. Fjørtoft (2004) found that when 46 kindergarten children were allowed to play in a nearby forest for one to two hours per day, as opposed to a group of 29 kindergarten children that were allowed to play on a more traditional playground setting, that those who were allowed to play in the natural area showed improvement in all motor abilities except flexibility. The group of children that played on the more traditional playground setting only showed improvement in three of nine motor tests. While the research cited in this section is not a comprehensive list of the physical benefits that time in the outdoors can offer, it does begin to make the case for it, and as shown below, physical improvement is not the only area that time in the outdoors and in OEEs has to offer.

Psychological Benefits

As the researcher Douglas (2008) put it, there is “clear evidence that among many sectors of society there are positive benefits for mental health and well-being to be gained from both active and passive involvement with natural areas” (p. 20). One piece of research that supports this idea was from Thompson Coon et al. (2011), who found that when compared to exercise indoors, exercising outdoors, in a natural environment was

associated with positive engagement, a greater feeling of revitalization, increased energy, and decreases in anger, depression, tension, and confusion. In a separate study Wells and Evans (2003) found that rural children with something as simple as just a physical view of nature helped to reduce the stress levels of highly stressed children. They also found that the more access those children had to natural areas, the more positive the result.

There is also an increasing number of studies that show that time spent in the outdoors can have a positive impact on the symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (Louv, 2008). In one such study Faber Taylor and Kuo (2011) used an internet survey that was filled out by parents of 5- to 18-year-old children who were diagnosed with ADHD. In the survey the researchers looked at where the children most often spent time playing, and found that the children who regularly played in green play settings, defined by numerous trees and plants and a more natural setting, had milder ADHD symptoms than the children who most often played in outdoor built play settings, like a playground, or those who played indoors. They also found that family income and the child's gender did not have an impact on the results.

In a qualitative study involving 199 university students Korpela et al. (2001) surveyed participants about how they feel about their favorite places, and places that they deemed as unpleasant. They were interested in whether the place attachment related to their favorite places and unpleasant places as described in their questionnaires involved restorative experiences, and had an effect on self-regulation. They found that natural settings were predominant among favorite places, and underrepresented among those

described as unpleasant. When they explored the feelings associated with those favorite places, they found that relaxation, calmness, comfortableness, happiness, enjoyment, excitement, forgetting worries, and reflection were the most common feelings connected to those favorite places. This finding lends further support to the idea that time in a natural setting can be a restorative experience. These results are complimentary to those found by Garst et al. (2001) who found that participation in an OEE had a positive impact on improving the participants self-perception. After participating in an OEE, the respondents reported a more positive view of themselves at a significant rate.

In a systematic review of the literature on participation in wildland recreational activities, many of which are found in OEEs, Holland et al. (2018) found “overwhelmingly positive results” (p. 218) that ultimately suggest that participation in outdoor, wildland recreation is beneficial in many psychological, social, and academic ways. From their review, the authors identified the eleven, largely positive, outcome categories: personal development, pro-social behavior, mental restoration, environmental stewardship, new perspectives, outdoor recreation interests and skills, academic interest and performance, spirituality, place attachment, desired lifestyle change, and physical health and well-being.

In a separate systematic review of the literature on wildland recreational activities, Thomsen et al. (2018) found that there were several factors that influenced the benefits of participating in the outdoors, including the physical setting/ natural environment, the focus on recreational activity, and the social aspects of these experiences. These results show that participation in outdoor activities can benefit participants in several areas and

ways, as will continue to be shown below.

Social/Behavioral Benefits

One of the strong points of learning in an OEE is that students can also learn team and community skills, responsibility, and independence, all in addition to the content that was presented to them (Hammerman et al., 2001). In their study mentioned briefly above, Garst et al. (2001) used a mixture of methods such as: pre and post surveys, participant observations, leader journaling, and immediate and extended post-trip interviews. By examining the data on their 58 participants from a range of ethnic groups, both male and female, and ages ten to seventeen, they found that participation in OEEs helped students to improve social acceptance and behavioral conduct immediately after the experience. Their data also suggests that some of the improved behavioral conduct may have remained four months after the participants experience.

Another behavioral benefit found in the literature is that of healthy risk-taking (Little & Wyver, 2008). Little and Wyver reviewed the available literature on outdoor play and how it applies to healthy risk-taking behaviors in children. In their searching and reviewing they found several benefits. One of those benefits comes from Stine (1997), who said, “By taking risks, by facing a challenge, we learn about our competence and our limitations. Trying to exist in a world without some measure of risk is not only impossible but inhibits our lives and the child’s need for challenge” (p. 29). Little and Wyver also point out that risky play opportunities are a possible way to introduce excitement and challenge in a way that allows children to test their skills and try new activities. From this, children are able to have a chance to master new skills and gain a

sense of accomplishment. They can further encourage them to try new and challenging tasks and situations. From all of this, risk taking has been positively related to self-confidence and creative ability (Goodyear-Smith & Laidlaw, 1999), adding to the list of psychological benefits listed above.

In a study of 169 children, Taylor et al. (2002) examined how access to nature affected measures of self-discipline. For this study, the measures of self-discipline the research focused on were concentration, inhibition of initial impulses, and delay of gratification. They did this by running various research supported tests used to assess each of the three measures of self-discipline. They then compared those results to how the children's parents rated the level of nature near their homes. From this data, the authors found that nature near the homes of these children could be strongly linked to better concentration, impulse inhibition, and delay of gratification, especially in their female participants. For boys, the authors theorize that it is likely that they boys experience the same benefits, but that the nature that provides the effect is farther from their homes, where they are more likely to be found interacting with it.

Academic Benefits

When students are able to learn in a real-world, hands-on atmosphere, they are often the one in control of their learning, setting many of their own goals and objectives (Hammerman et al., 2001). In a well-run OEE program, students also have the opportunity for making discoveries and then using those discoveries in a problem-solving situation (Bonney & Drury, 1992). However, participation in an OEE is not a prerequisite for positive effects on a person's cognitive abilities from exposure to nature. Wells

(2000) found this in her examination of the amount of nature children were exposed to pre and post moving to a new home. In her research, Wells looked at 17 children, in a range of ages, all in low SES households, and how moving to a new home, and the level of nature and “greenness” the children were exposed to pre and post move, effected their ability to focus their attention, as well as measures of their cognitive ability. Her results suggest that when there are natural elements in the home environment, it can have a profound effect on children’s ability to focus, as well as on their cognitive functioning.

Matsuoka (2008) found a similar result when he looked at 101 high school campuses in southeastern Michigan. Matsuoka was examining student access to views of nature, primarily through the types of windows in the building and the school’s policy on eating lunch in the outdoors, and how that effected student’s academic achievement and behavior. He found that the characteristics of the school that increased access to views of nature, such as larger window, or a policy allowing students to eat lunch outside or off campus, was significantly associated with higher student achievement and better behavior in the schools. This improved academic performance was shown through a number of different ways, such as higher achievement on standardized tests, higher graduation rates, and a greater percentage of students planning to attend college, as well as fewer reports of criminal behavior.

Another area of academic benefit that can be found from participation in OEES is the ability to connect the OEE to different state and national curriculum standards, such as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) (nextgenscience.org) or the Utah Science with Engineering Education (SEEd) standards (schools.utah.gov/curr/science).

By adding the element of teaching the curriculum that was already planned in the outdoors, whether it is science or art or reading or math or language art or any other curriculum, in an outdoor setting, teachers are given another possible resource to help their students to better learn and grasp the concepts being taught. This gives teachers an opportunity to add the benefits that outdoor experiences provide to the learning that was already likely to take place, as well as the elements of learning about the outdoors and all that comes along with it through direct experience.

Affective Benefits

The many studies above give credence to the known benefits of outdoor learning experiences as being physical, psychological, social/behavioral, and academic. As also stated briefly above, participation in outdoor learning and OEEs can lead students to have a more positive affect toward an area in which they participated in an outdoor learning experience (Knapp & Poff, 2001). To all of these listed benefits there needs to be another added, that of the affective benefit, the positive impacts on participants perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and OEEs. Affective benefits are one of the most foundational benefits to participation in OEEs, in that other benefits seem to stem from it. Once a participant gains affinity for the outdoors, they are more likely to care about the outdoors, and go outside more often, leading to the various benefits described above (Charles & Wheeler, 2012).

A concerning piece of research related to this idea comes from Wray-Lake et al. (2010). These authors looked at the response data from nearly 10,000 adolescents from the years 1976 to 2005 on the Monitoring the Future survey, a survey given annually to

high school seniors in the U.S. In their examination, they found that young people in the early 1990s showed an increase in a range of indicators measuring environmental concern, but this was followed by declines in the same measures for the remaining time studied. The authors note that some of the declining indicators are particularly concerning, namely personal responsibility for the environment, conservation behaviors, and the belief that resources are scarce. They also found from the survey responses that respondents tend to assign responsibility for the environment to the government and consumers, rather than taking some of that responsibility themselves. These findings, along with the other research showing that time in the outdoors can address these issues, added to all the other added benefits listed, lends support to the idea that more children need to be spending time outdoors.

One of the pieces of evidence that stands out in the literature is the classic study by Kellert (1998) mentioned in the introduction of this chapter. In this study, the author surveyed 429 participants before, immediately after, and 6 months after participation in an OEE program ran by the Student Conservation Association, the National Outdoor Leadership School, or Outward Bound. He found that 72% of participants rated the experiences as “‘one of the best’ in their lives” (p. 18). Kellert then provides a sample of some of the things the participants reported in regards to how the trip affected them, many of which show a positive impact on the participants psychologically.

- On a personal level, it helped me to believe that if there is anything I really want to do in life, I have the ability to do it. All, I have to do is look deep inside myself and I can find a way (p. 19).
- The program helped me realize who I was and how I fit into the world around me. This realization affects every decision I make in my life (p. 20).

- It gave me an unbelievable confidence in myself. I found a beauty, strength, and an inner peace that I never knew was present (p. 20).
- I learned the most I ever learned, the most about life, myself, and skills I still use every day (p. 20).

These responses help to support the idea that time spent learning in the outdoors can help to connect us to the outdoors in a very powerful and meaningful way.

Cheng and Monroe (2012) attempted to better understand this connection to nature by creating an index to measure a child's connection to nature, and then used it to study 1,500 fourth-grade students. They found in their study that there were four main dimensions to a child's connection to nature. Those four dimensions are (1) enjoyment of nature, (2) empathy for creatures, (3) sense of oneness, and (4) sense of responsibility. They also found that the strongest factor in predicting a child's interest in participating in nature-based activities was their level of connection to nature. The things that were most connected to a child's interest in performing environmentally friendly behaviors were, again, the child's connection to nature, as well as previous experience with nature, and perceived family value toward nature.

This research supported an earlier study by Mueller et al. (2009) which found that children's emotional affinity towards nature was a significant predictor of that child's willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors. Their study consisted of surveying 400 students in German and Lithuanian high schools, asking about the participants emotional affinity towards nature, awareness of environmental risks, current contact with nature, and willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors. In addition to a children's emotional affinity towards nature being a significant predictor of that child's willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors, they also found in this

study that children's contact with nature only had an indirect relationship with their willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors. This indirect relationship formed when the participant first developed an affinity towards the place they had contact with, and then developed more of a commitment to pro-environmental behaviors.

There are several studies in the literature that point to experiences in the outdoors as a child leading to more concern for and action in support of the environment later in life (Chawla, 2006; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006). In her research, Chawla (2006) found that the two most significant factors contributing to an individual choosing to take action to benefit the environment are positive, direct experience in the outdoors, and being taken outdoors by a close, trusted mentor, like a parent or grandparent, or some other trusted guardian. She goes on to say,

The very fact that a parent or grandparent chose to take the child with them to a place where they themselves found fascination and pleasure, to share what engaged them there, suggests not only care for the natural world, but, equally, care for the child. (p. 74)

In her research Chawla (2006) also adds documented support to the literature on the benefits of the outdoors, citing many additional benefits to spending time in the outdoors with regard to the areas of creativity, physical competence, social skills, environmental knowledge, and confidence, further supporting the research cited in the above sections.

Both Thompson et al. (2008) and Wells and Lekies (2006) looked at the effect childhood experiences had on adult environmental attitudes and behaviors by surveying hundreds of people. Thompson et al. found that people who had frequent experiences in the outdoors as a child and those whose homes were closer to natural spaces were more likely to visit those types of places again as an adult. They also found that the more

frequently a person had outdoor experiences as a child, the more likely they are to have a positive attitude toward those spaces, and the more comfortable they are visiting those outdoor spaces alone. Wells and Lekies also found participation in “wild” (camping, hiking, playing in natural areas) and “domesticated” (gardening, picking flowers) experiences in the outdoors as a child had a positive impact on the persons pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors. They did find that the “wild” experiences had a stronger influence in these areas than did the “domesticated” ones. All of these studies mentioned above show the significant and varied benefits that have been demonstrated through many studies. These benefits are why more children need the opportunity to participate in OEEs. Another part of increasing participation though lies in the perception’s students have of the outdoors and OEEs. They are not going to participate in them if they don’t see them as a positive and valuable experience.

Students’ Perceptions of the Outdoors and Outdoor Educational Experiences

Students want to be able to learn in the outdoors (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002). Not only this, but as Ballantyne and Packer found, OEEs encourage students to think about their environmental attitudes and behaviors, which, as shown above, are one of the benefits experiences in the outdoors provide. By studying a large group of students, ages eight to seventeen, and using a questionnaire method to ask the students about their perceptions, expectations of, and experiences during five different kinds of OEEs, Ballantyne and Packer had several findings. They not only found that learning in natural

environments are attractive to students, and that it has an important impact on their attitudes toward the environment, but that it also has an impact on their desire to look after the environment and their personal behavior in nature, as well as their household environmental practices. The free-choice learning environment often found in OEEs, such as botanical gardens, national parks, science centers, zoos, and other informal learning experiences, is closely linked to participants' intrinsic motivation for going to these places. Free-choice learning is "that learning which most typically occurs while people visit museums or other cultural institutions, watch television, read a newspaper, talk with friends, attend a play, or surf the Internet" (Oregon Technology in Education Council [OTEC], 2007). This makes it important for us to better understand the motivational factors like free-choice learning environments, and any others, that influence the perceptions and attitudes toward an outdoor location or outdoor educational experience.

In other studies, Ballantyne et al. (2001a, 2001b) discovered that engaging students in an OEE that allowed them to see environmental problems and the impacts of these problems on wildlife, ecosystems, and human beings was one of the most effective ways at reaching students with an environmental message. Getting students out into nature and allowing them to see and experience things first-hand while participating in an OEE, helps students apply the theories that they are learning in class in an authentic context. This leads to some of the benefits described above, such as discovering real world examples, practice making decisions, and solving problems in context. It also allows students to see things from a new perspective and engage with issues in that

environment in an emotional way (Ballantyne et al., 2001b; Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Ballantyne & Uzzell, 1994; Lai, 1999). However, if students are prevented from participation in OEEs, for one reason or another, they may miss out on some of the experiences and benefits that participation in outdoor experiences can provide. The barriers to participation that are causing some students to miss out on these opportunities are an issue that must be addressed.

Ecojustice

Humans have often found themselves at odds with each other, and with the environment to which we are intimately connected. We cannot sustain this course forever. “The increase in world population coupled with a decline in major life-sustaining ecosystems is leading to a further degradation of the environment and worsening the plight of already marginalized cultural groups” (Bowers, 2001, p. 181). Something must be done to address the social justice issues that are found in so many aspects of OEEs and outdoor recreation. As Warren et al. (2014) put it in their state of knowledge review while citing Mohai et al. (2009), “Any discussion of social justice in OEE must include environmental justice because, as some authors assert, the most pressing and basic environmental issue is social inequality” (p. 94). Ecojustice is an emerging perspective that may help to address the social injustices that are found in the outdoors and outdoor education. According to Mueller (2009), the main focus of ecojustice “is developing an understanding of the tensions between cultures (i.e. intergenerational knowledges and skills, beliefs and values, expectations and narratives) and the needs of the Earth’s

ecosystems” (p. 1033). *The First Nation of People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit* (Energy Justice Network, 1996) lists seventeen principles of ecojustice in the “Principles of Environmental Justice: Preamble.” Those seventeen principles in the preamble have served as a defining document for the growing environmental and ecojustice movement. Four of those seventeen principles, numbered below as they are in the preamble, have direct implications in OEEs. Those four principles are as follows.

1. Environmental justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.
12. Environmental justice affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing fair access for all to the full range of resources.
16. Environmental justice calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.
17. Environmental justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth’s resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and re-prioritize our lifestyles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations. (Energy Justice Network, 1996, pp. 209-211)

By examining the tensions between culture and the environment, we may find that the cultural narratives embedded in OEEs may unintentionally perpetuate how students frame their relationships with others and nature (Mueller, 2009). Often these relationships are framed in a way that is imbalanced and unjust. This presents the need to examine these relationships and find the social injustices that are in outdoor education, so that we might begin to reform the field and start to provide a means of access and a level playing field for all.

Social Justice in Outdoor Experiential Education

These imbalanced relationships and their elimination are the main focus of social justice. Social justice, “the elimination of institutionalized domination and oppression [and] any aspect of social organization and practice relevant to domination and oppression” (Young, 1990, p. 5) is attempting to address the prevailing problems in every educational setting. Because of this institutionalized domination and oppression, educators in both the formal and informal setting need to be made aware, and work to address these imbalances. In a literature analysis of K-12 OEE programs in the U.S., Kalert (2018) found that scholars in the outdoor education field seem to have found agreement that if OEEs and outdoor education are to be a successful and respected form of education, “leaders must confront the obstacles to equality and equity, and work to actively interrupt systems of oppression that are rooted in our culture, historical, and societal values” (p. 2).

Educators, again both formal and informal, are in a position that affords them the ability to do the work by taking steps toward inclusion, equity, and fairness in the distribution of resources and the benefits accorded, and in the distribution of opportunities in helping their students reach their fullest potential as human beings (Frazer, 2009). OEEs are one such area in which issues of social justice are beginning to be addressed, though it is an effort in the early stages. Even though issues related to gender, race, and class have started to be examined, the field of social justice in OEEs as a whole has a long way to go. These issues need to be critically examined, better understood, and reformed. As Kalert (2018) points out, there is an apparent need found in

the literature on social justice and OEEs for more scholarship and research on how to “train better leaders in the field, design more equitable curriculums, and create more inclusive programs” (p. 9). In order to do this effectively, Kalert points out that leaders and researchers in the field of outdoor education need to confront issues of social justice by adopting a more expansive lens of who belongs, and to examine all areas of social privilege, “such as race/ethnicity, culture, gender and gender identity, age, ability, and religion, as well as socioeconomic status” (p. 10). He goes on to point out that these changes need to take place at the institutional level in order to ensure that issues related to social justice are eliminated, rather than only temporarily addressed. These leaders need to do more than just recognize the need to be inclusive, and instead allow the basic concepts and practices of outdoor education to be reshaped by a wide variety of narratives and cultures (Kalert, 2018).

Gruenewald (2003) argues that place-based learning, a type of experiential learning that is often found in OEEs, is needed “so that the education of citizens might have some direct bearing on the well-being of the social and ecological places people actually inhabit” (p. 3). He goes further to argue that critical pedagogies are needed “to challenge the assumptions, practices, and outcomes taken for granted in dominant culture and in conventional education” (p. 3). Most anyone who has participated in the outdoors and OEEs has likely noticed and felt the culture that surrounds these kinds of activities. But as Warren (2002) points out, there are issues with social injustices throughout this outdoor culture. It might be found in gender and racial discrepancies in participation levels, or perhaps social or economic barriers. Not everyone is on equal grounds when it

comes to outdoor educational activities (Warren et al., 2014).

The assumptions, practices, and outcomes of the dominant culture in the fields of outdoor education and outdoor recreation have led to the exclusion of members of oppressed groups (Kirby & McKenna, 1989) and must be addressed. “We live in a world in which knowledge is used to maintain oppressive relations. Information is interpreted and organized in such a way that the views of a small group of people are presented as objective knowledge, as “The Truth”” (Kirby & McKenna, 1989, p. 67). A great example of this is found in the content analysis of four influential college textbooks used for many outdoor education “foundations” courses, done by Warren (2002). In this content analysis, she uncovered no attention to social justice or diversity issues. This illustrates that in the field of outdoor education, not everyone’s voice is part of the conversation.

Work such Warren’s (2002) has led to slow, incremental change in the area of social justice and outdoor education, with increasing research being conducted and published (Gilbertson et al., 2006). This work has allowed those working in outdoor educational research to begin to redress the negative impacts had on those who are marginalized, namely women, the poor, working class, people of color, migrants, English Language Learners, the differently-abled, LGBTQ+ people, and religious minorities (Frazer, 2009).

This being said, the work is only in its beginning stages of moving toward equality and justice. There is still a long way to go. Most of the research on social justice in OEEs has focused on three areas; gender, class, and race (Warren, 2005). The other areas of concern listed above, have little to no research done to address the issues faced

by those outside the dominant culture in an OEE setting. More research, such as this study, needs to be done to examine how issues related to social justice effect the OEEs students have access to, how often they are using those resources, and what they are gaining from these experiences. From there, we can work to improve access to and inclusion in OEE resources for everyone. In order to do this though, the barriers that are blocking some from participation must be addressed. This makes critical theory the best framework for studying these issues of social injustice.

Critical theory examines inequalities, like those found in outdoor education and OEEs, from different perspectives as they relate to power relations. It not only can “show us our world and ourselves through new and valuable lenses but also can strengthen our ability to think logically, creatively, and with a good deal of insight” (Tyson, 2014, p. 2). For the study I describe in this dissertation, those perspectives will be from the various student’s points of view, in their own words. If we are to understand the experience of OEEs, what is working, what isn’t working, what is motivating some students to participate, or what is keeping others from participating, we need to look at it from the various perspectives of the students. We must give them a chance to have their voices heard. As Freire (2005) put it, “One cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people” (p. 95)

Social justice is “the elimination of institutionalized domination and oppression [and] any aspect of social organization and practice relevant to domination and oppression” (Young, 1990, p. 5). Issues with social justice are a prevailing problem in

every educational setting, including that of OEEs. Because of this institutionalized domination and oppression, educators in both the formal and informal setting need to be made aware of, and work to address, these imbalances. This is the work of critical approaches to education, including outdoor education. We need to critically examine all the parts of OEEs and how participants view the outdoors and OEEs, especially what is keeping many from participating in these experiences. From there we can begin to address the social injustices we find in outdoor education experiences, and make them more accessible to everyone.

Barriers to Participation in Outdoor Educational Experiences

As I discussed in the beginning of this chapter, there are many social injustices to be found in OEEs. One of these is an inequality in the diversity of those who participate in many of those OEEs (Schwartz & Corkery, 2011). Based upon surveys and focus groups, in a mixed methods approach, Schwartz and Corkery found several barriers to participation of female students and students of color in outdoor programs were socialization/subcultural, economic/access, and other discriminatory barriers. Of the barriers they found, the costs involved, and a lack of positive role models representing those in marginalized groups were found to be the main barriers to participation.

In order to counteract those barriers, the authors suggest that programs use targeted outreach to recruit participants, carefully design programs that are tailored for women and students of color and change the focus of current outdoor programs from adventure and challenge focused, which appeals mainly to White males, to more social,

relationship building, and appreciating and learning about nature, which seems to appeal more to women and students of color (Schwartz & Corkery, 2011). Lee et al. (2001) suggested that socioeconomic status (SES) could be a barrier because the level of income and involvement in outdoor recreation is possibly an access issue. In their study, they interviewed 3,000 people in the state of Texas, asking them about perceived constraints to their outdoor recreation rates. The rates of participation varied directly with both the cost and physical availability of outdoor resources. The higher the cost, or the further away the outdoor recreation or learning opportunity, the more likely a lower income person or family would be blocked from participating in that opportunity. “A low income...keeps many people from being able to allocate the necessary financial resources that are required for participation in some kinds of outdoor recreation (Lee et al., 2001, p. 429).

Low income could also explain some of the discrepancy in the participation rate of race and ethnicity, as they are historically marginalized groups, and therefore more likely to be in a lower SES (Lee et al., 2001). In fact, income was a stronger predictor of constraints to outdoor recreation rates than sex, age, race, and level of education (Shores et al., 2007). In a re-examination of the study done by Lee et al., Shores et al. (2007) also cited that constraints to outdoor recreation for people of color included a fear of crime, perceived discrimination, and the sanctioning of activities as acceptable by peers and families associated with participation in outdoor recreation.

In their study on the perceived constraints to outdoor recreation and different groups, Ghimire et al. (2014) examined seventeen different possible constraints in three

different groups. Those three groups and their related constraints were:

- Structural constraints
 - Not enough time (because of my job and long hours of work; because of family, childcare, or other in-the-home obligations; or because of voluntary work or other outside obligations);
 - Not enough money
 - Poorly maintained activity areas
 - Inadequate information on places to do activities
 - Inadequate transportation
 - Crowded activity areas
 - Inadequate facilities in activity areas
 - Pollution problems in activity areas
- Intrapersonal constraints
 - Personal safety problems in activity areas
 - Outdoor pests
 - Feel unwelcome or uncomfortable at many outdoor recreation areas
 - Language barriers, can't understand the language
 - Feel afraid in forest or other natural settings
 - Physically limiting condition
 - Personal health reasons
- Interpersonal constraints
 - No companion, no one to do activities with
 - Disability in household member (Ghimire et al., 2014, p. 57)

This list gives a great deal of insight into what could be some of the reasons that many people, especially marginalized groups, are not getting outside and participating in outdoor recreational activities, and possibly OEEs as well. Ghimire et al. (2014) found using nationwide data that many people in the United States feel constrained by the above factors while participating in outdoor recreation. They also found that there is a significant gap among Americans in terms of outdoor recreations rates and ethnicity, residency location (urban, suburban, rural), gender, and age, further supporting that there are issues with social injustice and access to the necessary resources needed to participate

in learning and playing in the outdoors (Ghimire et al., 2014).

By addressing these barriers keeping people, especially marginalized groups, from participating in OEEs and outdoor recreation, we can provide more access to the outdoors, and the benefits that come along with that access, to more people. This increased participation will likely have a positive impact on those participants' perceptions and attitudes toward nature and OEEs, which will hopefully increase those participants' desire to preserve our outdoor resources. More access to OEEs will likely lead to more people experiencing the benefits that come from that participation, leading to more people gaining an appreciation for and a desire to protect the outdoors, and hopefully an increase in positive, pro-environmental behaviors.

It was my aim in this grounded theory study to examine the week-long SUPT camping OEE with the eighth-grade students at IWJH, examining in the first stage how the experience changed student perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and participation in OEEs, as well as begin to look at what some of the constraints and barriers those students had to overcome in order to go on the trip. I had hoped in the second stage of this study to focus on the students who did not participate in SUPT and what reasons or barriers had kept them from participating. I attempted to study the reasons that most of the students did not participate, and what those students felt could have been done to possibly address those reasons that they did not participate. However, I was unable, to recruit enough of the students from the vast majority of eighth-graders who did not attend this trip to participate. I, therefore, turned to my own autobiographical experiences as an eighth-grade student at IWJH and as a teacher and trip leader for the

SUPT to address the question of what was keeping most of the students at the school from going on the trip.

Summary

In having summarized the research related to OEEs, how they affect participants perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, the numerous benefits related to participation in them, and what from a social justice standpoint is keeping many from participating in OEEs above, I have shown that there is more information needed in these areas to increase participation and inclusivity in outdoor education. It is because of this need for more information on how to improve the impact of OEEs, as well as improve access to and equality in OEEs for everyone that I studied the SUPT program. This study gave me a chance to get first-hand knowledge about a long-running OEE that has seen a shift toward less and less participation. I was able to begin to see how this program impacted the participants views of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as begin to understand why so many in the school who could have gone on the trip did not go. With the data gained from this study it is my aim that the SUPT, and OEEs in general can become much more inclusive of everyone and become better at having a positive impact on those that do participate.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

“Pure logical thinking cannot yield us any knowledge of the empirical world; all knowledge of reality starts from experience and ends in it.” – Albert Einstein (p. 18)

Figure 4

The Group Hiking into Lower Calf Creek Falls



As Creswell and Poth (2013) points out “the intent of a grounded theory study is to move beyond description and to generate or discover a theory, a unified theoretical explanation for a process or action” (p. 83). It was my intent with the first part of this

grounded theory research to develop such a theory that explained how this OEE affected the participants perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and OEEs. I also intended to begin to address what barriers those who had participated in the SUPT had to address and overcome in order to be able to participate in the OEE, using this information to begin to answer my second research question.

It was my intent with the second part of this grounded theory research to develop a theory which may explain the possible reasons and or barriers were that keeping the vast majority of eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in this OEE, and to see what those students felt could have been done to make it more likely that they could have and would have participated in the SUPT. When there were not enough participants for this section, I wrote an autobiographical account of all of my experiences with the SUPT. I then used that data to develop a theory of why so many students did not participate in the OEE, and what barriers need to be overcome in order to increase participation and to make the program more equitable.

Positionality

As I stated in Chapter I, I participated in the OEE that is at the center of this research as an eighth-grade student at Intermountain West Junior High. Though we traveled to Havasupai, Arizona when I went on the OEE as a student, and even though some of the learning activities and lessons have changed over the years, there is much about the experience that remains the same. It is no understatement to say that this experience early on had a life-changing impact on me. It was during that first trip that I

absolutely fell in love with the Havasupai area, with the idea of learning in the outdoors, and with this OEE program. I went on to become a secondary science teacher with the hope that I would one day teach at IWJH and again be part of this trip, helping more students to have the kind of experience I had. It just so happened that my first teaching position ended up being at IWJH, and I was immediately able to begin helping to prepare the students to participate in this OEE. I was able to help by doing things like teaching them the principles of leave no trace, and taking them on hiking field trips on local trails to work on their physical conditioning and to assess if they were prepared for the trip. In total, I taught at IWJH for seven years, including the year of this study, and I helped every year to get students ready to participate in this program. Last year, due to some unforeseen events and faculty members leaving the program and the school, I was placed in the leadership position of this trip. For me, it was actually a dream come true. I felt deeply, and still do, that every eighth-grade student should have an OEE similar to the one I had, and the one I was able to study in this research.

It is because of my obvious bias in favor of the SUPT that I need to state my positionality, as I have begun to above. I am a middle-class, able bodied, college educated, White, middle-aged, straight, Christian, cis-male. I am very aware that I am very privileged in my station in life. In addition to participation in the SUPT trip as both a student and a teacher, I have also participated in OEEs through my formal schooling, the Boy Scouts of America, and family experiences, both growing up, and currently with my own family. In the recent past, I also lived in the IWJH surrounding community for several years.

The community that consists of those in the area around the school, including those within the school's boundaries, and within the school itself, are somewhat diverse in regard to race, class, and ethnicity. Because of this, there are many different experiences of life within that same geographical area, many I do not understand because of my positionality and privilege. I am invested in the school and the surrounding community. These OEEs were highly influential in my growth and development, both as a youth and as an adult, and because of this I want to know why it is that some students who live and grow up in this same community are not afforded the same opportunities of these experiences. I love this OEE and I want to see it succeed and continue to regain the momentum that it has lost. I want to see a much more diverse and larger group of students participate and benefit from this program each year. And I want to see it become a more valuable and effective learning experience for all who participate in it.

This is what lead me to this research. How do I get as many students as I can, from a diversity of experiences and positionalities to participate in this OEE? How do I make it more effective for those that do participate? In order to address these questions, I first had to address the questions of what impact does this OEE have on the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, and what is it that is keeping so many of the eighth-graders at IWJH from going on the trip. This gave way to my research questions that I present below. In order to answer these questions, I thought it would be best to let those students who are part of the program respond in their own voices. I decided that a qualitative, grounded theory study would be the best approach in my attempt to better understand the experiences of these students and to

answer these questions because grounded theory studies are “a qualitative research design in which the inquirer generates a general explanation (a theory) of...an interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants” (Creswell & Poth, 2013, p. 83). There is much that can be learned by this idea of examining the experiences of each other. “All genuine learning comes through experience” (John Dewey Quotes, n.d., para. 1). One example of this kind of genuine learning came years after witnessing the northern lights in New England, Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

Here came the other night an Aurora so wonderful a curtain of red and blue and silver glory that in any other nation it would have moved the awe and words of men...with the profoundest sentiments of religion and love, and we all saw it with cold, arithmetical eyes, we knew how many colours shone, how many degrees it extended, how many hours it lasted, and of this heavenly flower we beheld nothing more. (Emerson, 1911, p. 252)

The point Emerson was trying to make is clear. When we only view the world through a quantitative lens, we risk missing out on a deeper beauty and essence of our experiences, and, as is pointed out in the quote from Albert Einstein (2011, p. 18) at the beginning of this chapter, it is our experiences that grant us knowledge. It is with this in mind that I chose to study the experiences of those who have participated in the SUPT in a qualitative manner so that I could better grasp what these experiences meant to the participants and see what they have to tell us, and what theories, grounded in this data, can be developed to better this OEE and others like it.

Research Questions

The questions that I aimed to answer with this grounded theory study were as follows.

1. How did participation in the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT) outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH) perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs?
2. What were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience?

Research Purpose

By asking these questions, I aimed to gain insight into which students at IWJH participated in OEEs, and which students did not and why. I know from my experience there as a teacher for several years, and attending as a student, that not every student has the opportunity or the desire to participate in OEEs such as the SUPT. I wanted to know why it was that some students chose not to, or were blocked from participation, from the perspective of those actual students. What was it that was keeping them from going?

I was also aiming to better understand what they had gained from these experiences, again from the perspectives of the students who were able to participate. In this I was focused on the changes to the students' perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and OEEs. There is still much to be known about how OEEs like the SUPT affect a participants' perceptions and attitudes, as well as what reasons and barriers kept so many of the students from participating at all. There are so many benefits that can be gained from an experience like the SUPT (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998; Kellert et al., 2017), and yet, only a small number of the 261 eighth-graders participated. Looking at the demographic data of the participants in this study and comparing it to the school's demographic data for the

eighth-grade class, and it is obvious that not every group was represented, just as not every group is represented in outdoor education (Warren, 2014). It is for this reason that I conducted this study in order to add to the existing literature related to outdoor education and social justice. With new information added to the existing literature, we can continue to improve the field in a positive direction.

Because of my participation as a student in this school sponsored trip, and the effect it had in my life, as stated above, I wanted to closely examine the SUPT and gain insight from the perspectives and positions of the eighth-grade students who were enrolled at IWJH at the time of the study, and who participated in the experience. I wanted to see the experience had a similar effect on them, and to see how the student's perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and participating in OEEs might have changed. I also wanted to look at what motivated those students to go on the SUPT, and what barriers they had to overcome in order to go on the trip. For the second phase of this research, I wanted to study what the barriers were that are keeping most of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT. Was it by choice that they did not participate, or was something outside of their realm of influence blocking them from going on this trip? Despite repeated attempts to recruit participants for this section of the study, I was not able to get enough participants to have meaningful data. I, therefore, had to find some other way to address the second research question and give voice to what might have kept so many students from participating in the SUPT. I did this by analyzing my own experiences with the OEE at IWJH, both as a student and as a teacher and trip leader, and all I had learned from these experiences over the years. This will be discussed

in more depth later in this chapter, as well as later in this dissertation.

Research Design

This research was set up and run as a grounded theory study of an outdoor educational experience at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH). In order to gain the best understanding of how this experience affected the participants, as well as what it was that kept so many of the potential student at IWJH from going, I felt a grounded theory methodology would be the best design as reflected in how Charmaz (2014) describes the it.

Whatever constitutes our data...we bring an open mind to what is happening, so that we can learn about the worlds and people we study. Grounded theory leads us to attend to what we hear, see, and sense while gathering data. As grounded theorists, we start with data. We construct these data throughout observations, interactions, and materials that we gather about the topic or setting. We study empirical events and experiences and pursue our hunches and potential analytic ideas about them. (p. 3)

It was with these ideas in mind that I designed this study in the ways that I describe in this chapter. I first looked at a small group of the eighth-grade students from this school and who went on the week-long OEE trip called the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT). I anonymously surveyed the group pre-trip, as well as had them fill out an anonymous survey post-trip. I also had them draw a journey map (Meyer & Marx, 2014; Nyquist et al., 1999) representing their experiences preparing for and participating in the SUPT upon our return from the OEE, and then interviewed them around the same time in order to gain a better understanding of how the trip affected their perceptions and attitudes of the outdoors and OEEs. These data were then analyzed using the constant comparative

method, the “process of taking information from data collected and comparing it to emerging categories” (Creswell & Poth, 2013, p. 86) used in a grounded theory methodology as described in Charmaz (2014) and Creswell and Poth (2013).

This all began with initial coding to generate broad themes. As Charmaz (2014) puts it, “During initial coding we study fragments of data...closely for their analytic import (p. 109). I then moving on to focused coding to identify a core phenomenon. Here Charmaz tells us, “While engaging in focused coding, we typically concentrate on what we define as the most useful initial codes and then test them against extensive data (p. 138).” By following this procedure of initial coding and focused coding, and constantly comparing the analysis against itself, I was able to find the emergent themes that arose from the data. I then was able to move on to the final step of developing propositions that defined the theories I aimed to define with this study (Charmaz, 2014).

In a second stage of this study I had intended to examine a much larger group of the eighth-grade students at IWJH that did not go on the SUPT. In order to do this, I began by attempting to recruit as many participants as I could so that I would be able to survey as many as possible. I had hoped to survey around 100 to 150 participants, followed by selecting a purposive sample of ten participants who wanted to go on the SUPT but were unable to due to some reason or other barrier keeping them from it. It was then my plan to interview those ten participants in order to develop a theory as to why so many were unable to participate in the OEE, despite a desire to do so. The focus of the surveys in this section would have been to gain a better understanding of what the reasons were that kept the majority of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from

participating in the SUPT, while the interviews were to have focused on further developing a theory to explain the reasons and barriers that prevented so many from participation in this OEE in much more depth.

Quite unexpectedly, I was only able to get two students who consented, and who's parent or guardian had consented, to complete the survey, and the subsequent interview. Because this was a much lower response rate than expected, and because this is not enough data to be effective at addressing my research questions, I decided that it could not be used as a valid data set. I then reexamined the data that I did have, and decided that an autobiographical account from my point of view as both a student who has participated in this OEE program many years before, and as a teacher and leader who has helped several groups of students at IWJH to go on this trip, would be an appropriate and effective method of addressing and answering my research questions.

Using techniques often found in autoethnographic research (Adams et al., 2017; Ellis et al., 2011; Jones & Adams, 2010; Wall, 2006), I began the autobiographical account of all of my experiences with this OEE by sitting down and journaling my memories as both a student and then as a teacher and trip leader. As I journaled, I would look at photographs taken while on or while helping with the trips I have been a part of. I was using these photographs to help spark my memories of all the experiences I have had as a part of this program. After I had finished journaling my various experiences, I used that data to begin to summarize my experiences, looking for the main themes as I wrote. I paid especially close attention to events and themes that gave insight into what I had seen and heard as to why some of my friends or past students did not participate in the SUPT.

I also paid attention to the things in my memories that gave insight into how these experiences in the outdoors and on the SUPT affected their perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and OEEs. I could then use that data to further address my research questions. With this data, I was able to use all of those themes to place my experiences in what I perceive to be the overall culture of the SUPT OEE.

The grounded theory developed by this research provides a theoretical framework (Creswell & Poth, 2013) for looking at student's perceptions and attitudes about this OEE and the reasons and barriers that are keeping so many students at IWJH from participating in the program. By focusing on the positive aspects of the SUPT, as well as addressing the known constraints to participation found in this research, this general framework can then be used to improve the overall experience for those who do participate in future SUPTs and other OEEs like it. It can also be used to begin to remove the barriers that are keeping so many from going on the trip, increasing participation, and making it more inclusive and equitable for those at IWJH. Furthermore, this framework can then be used to further the overall research in the areas of outdoor education and social justice related to OEEs like the SUPT, helping to progress the work of providing better access to these types of experiences for everyone.

Research Settings

IWJH is a suburban junior high school in the Intermountain West, located less than 2 miles from the foothills of a prominent mountain range, and only a few miles more from many trailheads that allow access to several forms of outdoor recreation such as

hiking, mountain biking, trail running, rock climbing, and cross-country skiing, as well as a substantial river system for things like kayaking and fishing, among other activities. There are several ponds with activities similar to those of the river, and if you travel a little further, numerous other possible outdoor experiences including lakes and ski/snowboard resorts.

In addition to this, the school takes a group of eighth-grade students on the SUPT, a week-long outdoor educational experience to several locations in Southern Utah, such as Bryce Canyon National Park, Escalante Petrified Forest State Park, Grand Staircase National Monument, Anasazi State Park, and Capitol Reef National Park. Prior to the trip, participating students are taught all of the skills they will need to be safe and successful during the experience. The reason I point all of this out is to establish that the students attending this school are living in a city that is well known for its use of the outdoors for both learning and recreation. As stated above, many of the students have access to and are able to use these OEE resources. On the other hand, many students are not able to have these same experiences, due to something blocking access for them for reasons such as a lack of resources or perhaps a lack of interest. All of this information leads to this study being conducted as a grounded theory study, as outlined by Charmaz (2014) and Creswell and Poth (2013).

Descriptions of Each Hike

Below I describe each hike we went on during the SUPT. I have included a picture of each area (see Figures 5-10) and given a description of the physical geography

of each hike, as well as the weather conditions, and some of the behaviors and reactions of those in the group, both participants and leaders. I have done this in order to paint a more accurate picture of what each experience was like for our group, and to help you, the reader, feel as though you were a part of it, if only for a moment. My descriptions of each of these hikes here will begin to create a context for the next chapters of this dissertation, and help the reader to begin to better understand what each of the eight student participants experienced in these research settings.

Rim Trail/Queen's Garden Trail in Bryce Canyon National Park

Figure 5

“Thor’s Hammer” Hoodoo from the Rim Trail in Bryce Canyon National Park



We arrived at Bryce Canyon National Park late in the afternoon of our first day, after several hours of traveling. After a quick stop at the visitor's center to check trail conditions and explore the center a bit, we took the shuttle to several of the scenic outlooks. We stopped at a couple of different points and explored those a bit, taking it all in, and taking a lot of pictures. We then started our hike for the day at Sunset Point on the Rim Trail. It was a warm spring day, though there were several storm clouds moving in that we were watching quite closely. The scattered cloud cover helped to cool things off for us a little as we started our hike. From Sunset Point we walked along the Rim Trail to Sunrise Point.

It is a fairly flat section of trail that is about 0.5 mile from Sunset Point to Sunrise Point. It felt great to get out of the vehicles and stretch our legs, and the views of the canyon from there were amazing. This section of trail, as the name suggests, follows along the rim of Bryce Canyon, overlooking the vast expanse of layered red and orange hued sandstone and the geological formations found there, like hoodoos and the smaller canyons. As we hiked along, the students were practically running from point to point, taking more pictures, and naming each ground squirrel we saw along the way.

Once we reached Sunrise Point, we rested for a bit, got a drink from our water, and then dropped into the Bryce Amphitheater along the Queen's Garden Trail. As we did so, the leaders in the group were keeping an eye on some of the dark rain clouds moving in because it looked as though a possible storm was moving our way quite quickly. The last thing we wanted was for our group to be caught in a storm unprepared.

On the Queen's Garden Trail, a 0.9-mile-long meandering trail that drops

relatively steeply down (357 feet decline in elevation) into the canyon, you are almost immediately passing between, beneath, and sometimes through the orange and red layered hoodoos, with the sand of the trail crunching under foot, until you reach a section of the canyon floor. Once we reached the floor of the canyon, we hiked a little further on the Queen's Garden Trail to the Queen Victoria hoodoo, where the students were able to sit and rest, grab a snack and a drink, and then we turned around and hiked back out of the amphitheater using the Queen's Garden Trail again. It is a moderately steep and strenuous hike out, but due to the nature of the area, the views are different as you hike out because you are looking at all of the geologic formations from a different angle, making the hike out a whole new experience. Our group got quite spread out at this point, with some of the students able to go rather quickly, while others had a harder time.

Once everyone made it out of the amphitheater, we briefly rested again at Sunrise Point to catch our breath and to make sure everyone was getting enough water. It was apparent that a few of the students had really struggled with that hike, but they were all but one of them excited they had gone on it and thought it was well worth the effort. The one student struggled with the hike out so much so that they didn't enjoy the experience that much, but thought the area was amazing and loved the views. We then began our hike back along the Rim Trail back toward Sunset Point, where we ended the hike, for a total of 2.8 miles hiked, and loaded on the bus to finish our drive to Escalante Petrified Forest State Park, where we were to spend several nights on this trip.

**Petrified Forest Trail/ Trail of Sleeping Rainbows
Trail in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park**

Figure 6

The Sunset at Our Camp in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park



On the second morning of our trip, we woke up, ate breakfast, and then spent some time debriefing as a group about the day before, especially our time in Bryce Canyon National Park. After all of this, we walked through a rather sunny campground, with the occasional cloud to shade us, to the trailhead for the Petrified Forest Trail and the connected Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows. It was already quite warm, and we were excited to get started. At the trailhead is a 50-foot-long petrified tree log that visitors are

able to walk all the way around and look at. We were also greeted with several little lizards scurrying about. After we examined the petrified log a bit, and after chasing a couple of the lizards, we grabbed several copies of the interpretive guides that are available for these trails. These interpretive guides give information about points of interest that are marked by numbers on the trails. These types of interpretive guides help you to find things to look at that you might have overlooked or missed, and they give meaning to what you are seeing as you hike along paths like these two trails.

The first part of the Petrified Forest Trail climbs up some moderately steep switchbacks through a little ravine, gaining about 250 feet in a relatively short distance. Even with the partial cloud cover, it got to be pretty hot and sunny as we made our way to the top of the plateau. Once we were on top, the trail leveled out, and we were surrounded by numerous species of wildflowers, piñon pine and juniper trees, and so much of the multi-colored petrified wood that gives the area its name. As we hiked along the trail, we excitedly stopped to examine the different plants and flowers and samples of petrified wood. It was clear that the students were excited about all they were able to see. We also had a great view of the surrounding landscape of rolling tan sandstone dunes frozen in time. After about a half of a mile along the trail, there is the fork that leads to either the connected Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows or continues along the rest of the Petrified Forest Trail loop. Here, we rested for a few minutes, allowing everyone to catch up, and making sure everyone got a good drink of water.

We had decided to take the group on the Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows before we started the hike that morning, so we turned and headed down that trail. The trail gets

its name from accounts that the Fremont Native Americans in the area called it that due to the arching layers of multi-colored sandstone that can be easily seen all around you from the top of the plateau. The first part of this second trail is still level for a few hundred feet, and then drops into another narrow ravine on the far side of the plateau. It is a rather steep decline, about 200 feet in a little over a quarter of a mile. It is a more shaded section to hike, but it was still quite sunny and warm, with fewer and fewer clouds to help cool us off. All around us there was more and more samples of the multicolored petrified wood, many of which were quite large in that section of the of the trail.

At the halfway point of the Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows is a small cliff. Here we stopped to rest again, and to get a small snack and make sure everyone had plenty of water and that they were actually drinking it. After sitting for a bit in the shade of the juniper trees, we took a couple of group pictures, and then hiked back up the other side of the ravine. It was again a moderately steep incline, but we were able to do it without too much trouble. Those of us who made it to the top of the plateau first were able to spend some time examining the wildflowers growing there, and the various pieces of petrified wood strewn about. By the time all of the group reached the top, we were all pretty hot and ready to go swimming in the lake. We took the second half of the Petrified Forest loop, looking still at the wildflowers along the way, especially the flowering yucca plants, but moving along more quickly than we had before. There was finally a little breeze that cooled us a little. As we came down the first ravine we had hiked up earlier that morning, we could see the lake, and with most of the clouds gone at this point, and the May sun shining brightly, we were all excited to get back to camp, eat a quick lunch, and go

swimming in Wide Hollow Reservoir right there in camp. It was a perfect way to end a great hike.

Lower Calf Creek Falls Trail in Grand Staircase- Escalante National Monument

Figure 7

The Group Playing in and Resting at Lower Calf Creek Falls



Note. Faces are covered to protect their anonymity.

On the third day of our trip, we got a much later start than we would have liked due to a struggling camp stove and a very slow cooking breakfast. By the time we got to the trailhead for Lower Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase/Escalante National

Monument, and payed the fees to park for the day, it was late morning, very sunny, and quite hot. It was hot enough that our party was quite subdued and quiet, but excited to hike the 5.5-mile round-trip trail so that we could see the falls. We were surrounded on all sides by tan, brown, and red layered cliffs. The trail is well-worn, well-traveled, and sandy running through a canyon cut out long ago by the river running through the bottom. At first, there was only prickly pear cactus and a few Gambel oak and cottonwood trees. There was not much shade at all to protect us from the sun, and the air was rather still with no breeze to help cool us.

As we hiked on up the trail, there were several interpretive stops along the way. We stopped and looked at things like petroglyphs of three figures on the canyon wall across the river, or at an ancient granary site high on a cliff above us. We also got closer to the river and the willows that grow near it. There still was not much shade, and no clouds to block the sun, so our group was hot and tired after only a mile or so. To add to the frustration, many in the group were starting to fall behind. We then ended up taking a wrong turn up a side canyon, and did not realize it for about a hundred yards. Luckily, our group did not get separated. We quickly got back on the right track, continuing to stop and learn at the interpretive spots, and also stop often for water and to allow those who were struggling to catch up. The trail was very sandy, and the sun was bright and hot that day, and between the two, it seemed to be draining the energy out of our little group.

A little more than another mile down the trail, and we started to find some relief. A few clouds rolled in and started to offer us some shade, and a soft breeze began to cool us off. There also began to be more and more trees as the trail moved closer to the river.

We even begin to notice the birds were singing more. As soon as the group began to cool off, our energy levels picked up along with the mood of the group. We continued up the trail, winding through the canyon, into more and more trees, occasionally stopping at the interpretive spots to learn more about the area. Suddenly, we came around a bend in the canyon, and there above the treetops, you could see the top of Lower Calf Creek falls. We all stopped in wonder, and most of us took out our cameras to capture the moment.

We hurried the last bit of the trail into the shady grove of trees growing at the base of the falls. Just past the trees there is a sandy beach, cool with the spray of the falls and towering 130 feet before us was Lower Calf Creek falls, and the pool that it spills into. The cliffs all around the area have beautiful hanging gardens of wildflowers, and the cold water of the falls creates a strong breeze all around us. The students even find a few caterpillars to play with as we sit beneath the falls.

After spending plenty of time cooling off, and playing in the pools, as well as eating a bit to refuel our return trip, we headed back down the trail toward the trailhead. It was still quite sunny, with only a little breeze and a few clouds, and the group was still quite tired, but in much better spirits. We stopped several times along the way back to let the stragglers catch up, to rest, or to get a drink of water. We got back to the trailhead late in the afternoon, tired and hungry, but still very excited from the days adventure.

Upper Calf Creek Falls Trail in Grand Staircase/ Escalante National Monument

On the day we were set to hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls (see Figure 8) in Grand Staircase/ Escalante National Monument we woke up early and broke camp at Escalante

Figure 8*The Group Playing in the Pools at the Top of Upper Calf Creek Falls*

Note. Faces covered to protect their anonymity.

Petrified Forest State Park, and stopped at the trailhead for the hike on our way to our new camp location in Capitol Reef National Park. Not all of the vehicles got to the trailhead at the same time, and the students were rather restless and somewhat nervous about the hike. This was largely because we had warned them that it was going to be the most strenuous of the hikes we did on trip. As we waited in the sandy parking lot for the last of the vehicles, they drew with sticks in the red-brown sand, and played with the darkling beetles that crawled by. It was a slightly windy and very sunny day and we were

paying a lot of attention to weather as we knew the day could possibly turn stormy. But there seemed to be no sign of bad conditions, so we chose to continue with the hike. We were surrounded by juniper trees that caught the wind and made a soft whistling noise, and the wind brought a very welcome cooling in the bright sun as we waited to start.

After the last truck pulling all of our gear found the turnoff and pulled into the parking lot, we filled our water bottles and started down the trail. Immediately the students were in awe at how steep the trail was, and many commented on how hard it would be to hike back out when we were done. They were still very excited to go despite this. The trail is a 2.1-mile hike out to the falls and back, with the first half on sandstone marked by rock cairns, and the second half on red sandy soil. From the trailhead to the base of the falls is about a 600-foot decline in elevation, and since it is an out and back trail, you eventually have to turn around and hike back up about 600 feet in a little over a mile, so it is quite a challenging hike. The challenge of it is why we as trip leadership selected it for late in the week. We wanted the students to see that they were capable of completing something this difficult.

Most of the students had never hiked on a trail that was only marked by cairns, so they were excitedly nervous to try and find their way across the rock, with the help of one of the adult chaperones leading the way. A cairn is a small pile of rocks, balanced one on top of the other used to mark a trail on solid rock when a clear path cannot be easily seen. Right from the top of the trail the views of the tan, red, and orange layered sandstone valley, dotted with juniper trees on top, and cottonwood and willow trees along the bottom, were breathtaking. Several of the students stopped to take pictures, and began to

notice the igneous rocks and iron accretions that were scattered on and throughout the sandstone on the sides of the trail. As we began to see the falls, and headed down the last stretch of the trail toward the pool at the bottom, we had been previously warned by the leader of another outdoor education program to be on the lookout for poison ivy, and sure enough, we found it. It was the largest patch of poison ivy I had seen to that point in my life, and for many of the students it was the first time they had seen it at all. They were in quite a state of wonder, and for some a state of nervousness, at their first known encounter with a dangerous plant.

The bowl in the canyon at the bottom of Upper Calf Creek Falls is not as welcoming as the one found at the bottom of Lower Calf Creek Falls. It was narrower, and quite muddy, and there really isn't a beach to set down yourself or your stuff. The wind had died down, or was blocked by the canyon walls, and it was much hotter in the sun without it, even with the few clouds occasionally giving us shade. We all kind of clumped together on a small patch of dry land to look at the falls, but it was obvious that the students were less than impressed, and that they didn't think the hike down in, or the soon to be hike back out, were worth what they were seeing. As we were getting ready to start the hike back out, we noticed an endangered boreal toad in the water. We were able to gently catch it, and show it to the students, before letting it safely swim away into the pool.

As we climbed out of lower part of the canyon, one of the other leaders noticed a trail that lead to the top of Upper Calf Creek Falls. As a group, we decided to explore it further. As we reached the top of the falls, we could see the creek running along the tan

sandstone, dropping in smaller falls from pool to pool in deep green water. Some of the pools appeared to be bottomless and this fascinated our group. The students were much more impressed with the top of Upper Calf Creek Falls, especially since most of them had never been to the top of a waterfall. We were able walk up the creek exploring it quite a way up, and then walked back to sit for a bit in the sun, enjoying the warmth of the sandstone by the pool at the top of the falls.

The trail back is a moderate incline for the first half, but it is sandy and has iron accretions scattered throughout, making for a bit of a difficult walk. We stopped a few times for drinks of water, or to catch our breath and rest our calves. We also began to notice that one student in particular was struggling with the heat more than the others. Our group leaders, especially the former paramedic, decided to keep an eye on her in case of heat stroke. In the end, she was fine, but you could tell that like her peers, the hike out was more of a challenge than they were used to.

This was especially true for the last leg of the trail, in which it steeply climbs up the sandstone. The sun was still out, with no trees to shade us, and it would only hide behind clouds for a second or two. Add to this the wind was back, though not as strongly as before. Here our group really spread out, with some students running up the last bit, and some of them having to stop and rest after only a few steps. For this relatively short section of trail, it was apparent that many of the students were not enjoying themselves very much.

Once we were back in the sandy red parking lot, standing in the sparse shade of the junipers, most of the students spoke very positively of the hike, especially the area at

the top of the waterfall. They did not like the base of the falls very much because it was muddy, and they did not have a place to sit and rest, or to get in the water and play very easily. They also did not enjoy the last climb of the trail, but we already knew that one. But, for the most part, they thought it was a really enjoyable hike and were glad they had done it. A few of them even talked about the challenge of the trail and how they were impressed they had completed it.

Anasazi State Park

Figure 9

Ancestral Puebloan Ruins Found in Anasazi State Park



Note. Picture taken from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anasazi_Indian_State_Park.jpg

We had only planned to eat our sack lunches on the lawn of Anasazi State Park, and then drive on to Capitol Reef National Park because a storm was moving in, and we wanted to beat the cold and possible snow that was moving toward us. But as we were exploring the gift shop for a moment after lunch, the park ranger told us they would waive the entrance fee for our group if we wanted to do the short hike around the ruins located in the park. We graciously accepted, and headed out to see what was in the park.

By this point in the day it was quite cloudy and cold, and it had begun to lightly rain on and off as we walked along the short trail. The students loved exploring the mud home from the early White settlers of the area, running from room to room, and pretending it was their home, claiming which room would have been their own. We moved down the trail quickly due to the cold and rain, and stopped at the other two sites containing the foundations and homes of the Ancestral Puebloans that lived in the area so long before. The students really seemed to take in how difficult it would have been to live in that area, and in those small homes, taking a few pictures to capture the moment. After staying for a moment, we walked back out, loaded into the warm vehicles, and drove on to Capitol Reef National Park.

Hickman Bridge Trail in Capitol Reef National Park

We woke early the last morning of our trip, and after a hurried breakfast and a quick learning activity, plus a last stop at the visitor's center, and a stop to explore and learn about a petroglyph panel, we headed for the trail head of the Hickman Bridge (see Figure 10) hike. We found parking spots in the already crowded lot, and it was pretty

apparent that many of the students were tired and burned out before we started the hike. They were all pretty subdued, but still wanted to go on the hike when we asked them. So, we started up the trail in the late morning sun. That day the warmth of the sun was welcome because the night had been so cold. The air was still, and the trail was well kept, and easy to walk along.

Figure 10

Hickman Bridge in Capitol Reef National Park



The hike is 1.7 miles out to the natural bridge and back. It is a moderately strenuous hike, with a somewhat steep climb at first, that mostly levels out rather quickly. All around you on the trail are towering rock formations, and the trail offered a great

view of Capitol Dome, one of the more famous formations in the park. Sound echoes easily in the canyon the trail goes into, and the students had quite a bit of fun with this. Our group moved pretty quickly on this hike, not stopping at most of the interpretive spots on the map provided at the start of the hike. It seemed that they were excited to see the bridge, but also wanted to be done with hiking.

Many of the students, and the adults for that matter, noticed all the different colors of wildflowers that dotted the tan rock and sand surrounding the trail. Several of us would stop and take pictures of the bright blues and oranges, among other colors, that contrasted so well with the earth tones of the rock. When we got to Hickman Bridge, the students were very excited. We decided to sit for a moment in the shade of the arching stone, eat a quick snack, and admire the scene before us. We were reluctant to get up from the spot, both because of the beauty of the area, and because we were so tired from the trip's adventures. But, as we followed the loop under the arch and around the rock, back to the trail, the group seemed to be in very high spirits. That mood seemed to follow us all the way back, even when we had the students stop at the much smaller Nels Johnson Bridge to take a quick group picture. From there, we finished the hike in a short amount of time, and not long after, loaded into our vehicles and headed toward the end of our trip.

Description of Each Camp

Camp at Escalante Petrified Forest State Park

Our campsite in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park (see Figure 11) was our home away from home for three of our four nights of the trip. We stayed in the group

Figure 11

Our Group Sitting Under Our Campsite's Pavilion



Note. Faces covered to protect anonymity.

site, which is located at the back of the campground, as far from the entrance to the park as you can get. The group site is set off, by itself, a little way from all of the other sites, and only a few yards away from the shores of Wide Hollow Reservoir. We had a large pavilion at the center of camp, which is where we met up each day to learn and debrief the events of the day before, and cooked, and ate, and hung out. Surrounding the pavilion were juniper trees, rocks, sand, and the steep side of the plateau that the Petrified Forest hike is located on. Connected to the site was a parking lot meant for the group site, in which we had set up the gear trailer, and all of the adult's vehicles.

When we arrived that first evening, the students ran about, trying to find the best spot of ground to set up their tents. After each group had set theirs up, they began to explore the area around our campsite, and found a dirt road that ran alongside the reservoir, or "the lake" as they all called it. Many times during our stay there, if the students had a few minutes of down time, like when others were getting ready or we were cooking, they would often go walking down that road, taking the opportunity to socialize outside of adult earshot. That being said, they were never out of the adult's line of sight. Right next to the pavilion was our campsite's fire pit, where most nights, we would light a fire, and many in the group would gather to roast marshmallows, eat s'mores, and talk until it was time for bed.

As was mentioned above, the pavilion was used for most of our gatherings during that part of the trip. Each day, the adults would cook at one end, and they lay out the food on some of the tables. The students and then adults would get their food and eat at the other tables under the roof. When we met each morning, the adults would often stand off

to the side, and the students would sit together at three or four of the tables, and listen as we taught lessons, held discussions, or debriefed what they had learned during the trip up to that point. There were also times, such as the petroglyph assignment (see Appendix G) in which the students drew their own petroglyph that they would put on a canyon wall for everyone to see if they had been part of the Fremont people, that the entire learning activity took place under the pavilion's roof. It was here that we also had the field guides and bug jars laid out for the students to use whenever they wanted to.

A couple of the nights we stayed in Escalante, we would move the cooking equipment to the side, and string up a slackline between two of the posts of the pavilion. A slackline is a strip of nylon webbing with loops at the end, that is then strung up between to solid points, and tightened like a tight-rope. A person then walks across it exactly like a tight-rope, trying to maintain their balance as they go from one post to the other. The students would sit on one of the tables in a line, waiting for their turn, encouraging each other, and sometimes teasing the person who was attempting to walk the slackline. When that person fell off, the next person was up, and they would all move the line down the tables. They were quite excited with this activity, and often would play on the slackline until it was time to take it down for bed.

Camp at Capitol Reef National Park

As we pulled into the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef National Park (see Figure 12) for our final night of the trip, one of the first things we all noticed was a deer walking right alongside our vehicles as we drove in. Later, the next morning, we woke to dozens of deer walking through the campground, not seeming to be bothered by the

people there at all. This was an exciting event for all of our group—students and adults alike.

Figure 12

A Section of Capitol Reef National Park from the Visitor's Center Near Our Campsite



Our campsites were in one of three loops of sites throughout the Fruita Campground. Because we were late reserving a spot, our three campsites were not together, so instead, we picked the most central one as our basecamp, and all gathered there anytime we met together. Each campsite had a picnic table and a firepit, as well as fields of grass to set up our tents. The Fruita Campground is full of grass, and trees, and paved parking spots for each site. The campground itself is right next to an orchard of

fruit trees on one side, and an outdoor amphitheater on another side.

Not far from the campground is the Fremont River, with a walkway next to it leading to the visitor's center. On the evening of our only night in Capitol Reef, we started to walk down the path to go to the visitor's center, but realized it had closed. So, instead, we went back to camp for a bit to cook dinner in the fire pits and eat it sitting at the picnic table. When this was finished, we went as a group to the amphitheater to listen to a park ranger teach about mountain lions and their place in the park. At the end of the lesson, it was quite cold, and late, so we got into our tents, climbed into our sleeping bags, and went to sleep.

The next morning, after watching the deer wander through the camp closer than most of us had ever been to deer, we gathered together at our basecamp, and debriefed the trip so far. After we finished discussing what we had learned and done on the trip to that point, and after laying out our plans for that day, we began the beaded bracelet learning activity (see Appendix G). In that learning activity the students took the beads we had given them throughout the trip each time we completed a learning activity or a hike, and tied them into a bracelet as a way to remember all the individual parts of the trip. Shortly after we got everyone started on the bracelets, we broke camp, loaded the trailer, and left for home.

Participants

The neighborhood surrounding IWJH is predominantly lower-middle class and suburban. For the academic year in which this research took place IWJH had a total

student population of approximately 829 students. The school serves seventh, eighth, and ninth-grades, with approximately a third of the total population in each grade level, 31.5% being in the eighth-grade that year. The participants for this study were taken from that group of eighth-grade students. The school population was fairly evenly split that year between female students at 48.5% and male students at 51.5%. Racially the school population that year was 34.7% White, 1.9% multiple race, 1.3% Black, 0.7% Native American or Alaskan Native, 0.5% Asian, and <1% of the school population is Pacific Islander. Of all of those groups 60.7% also identified as Hispanic. IWJH had 100% of the population that qualified for free school lunch, which is representative of the low socio-economic status of the school's population. In the school population, 18.9% of the students were English Language Learners, 13.1% had an IEP, representing different ability levels, and 4.0% of the students at IWJH were known to be homeless that year. This demographic information gives some idea of the culture of the school, as well as challenges relating to social justice that may have been present at this school.

As mentioned previously, I asked for volunteers from the group of students who went on the SUPT in order to have participants with which I could complete the first stage of this study. I aimed to have 10 volunteers from this group, which would account for all of the students who went on the trip, but two students returned informed consent documents that denied consent to participate. I was able to get eight participants for this portion of this study and all participants in this section of the study completed all parts of the research. This gave me an 80% participation rate for the first section of the study. Even with the relatively low number of participants in this part of the study, being a

qualitative study, I was able to gather rich data, and from this group, answer some of my research questions. I understand that a low number of participants could be a limitation on the generalizability of this part of the study, but I hope that the findings and theory that I generate will add the literature and transfer to similar programs.

For the second stage of this study, I had planned to start by surveying as many of the eighth-grade students who did not go on the SUPT as possible. When proposing this study, I estimated that I would receive approximately 150 responses to the surveys, or roughly half of the eighth-grade class. I had estimated such a high response rate because I thought that most students would be willing to participate, as well as many students would simply turn in their informed consent documents because they were given a “lunch-time fast pass,” a piece of paper that allows the student and a friend to move to the front of the lunch line, as an incentive, regardless of participation in the study. These surveys would have given me preliminary data on what kept so many students from participating in the OEE. Using the survey, I would also have asked for further volunteers, aiming for ten participants, who were willing to be interviewed in order to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons and barriers keeping them from participating. I would have also asked those ten selected students to describe how they felt any identified barriers might have been overcome in order to allow their voices on the subject to be heard.

As stated previously though, the response rate to this section was far too low to give meaningful data that could be used to address my research questions. Therefore, in place of the surveys and interviews of the large group of eighth-grade students at IWJH, I

moved to the next best option available to me. That option was for me to write down my own autobiographical experience as stated above. As is also stated above, I believe that this is a strong data set because of my proximity to and integration in this program, as a student, a teacher, and a trip leader at the school.

With an 80% response rate, I believe there is enough data to complete the first stage of the study, as the data collected was qualitative, and quite detailed. A limitation to the first stage of the study is the participation rate for the SUPT overall is quite low as there were 261 students in the eighth grade at IWJH that year, and only ten participated in the experience.

The demographic data of those eight participants presented here was collected using a short, six question paper survey attached to the informed consent document (see Appendix D). The survey had strict instructions for it to be answered by the parent or guardian in order to follow appropriate research practices. The students were also informed during recruiting that the survey was to be filled out by their parent or guardian, and not by them. As stated in the previous chapter, the purpose of collecting demographic data was in order to allow for a comparison of those who participated in the SUPT to the overall eighth-grade class to see if it was a representative group who attended the trip.

Five of those eight students who consented to participate were identified as female by their parent or guardian, and the remaining three were identified as male. Three of the participants were 13 years old at the time of the study, one male and two female, and the remaining 5 were 14 years old. All eight of the participants' races were identified as White by their parent or guardian, with no other race being identified. All eight

participants' parents or guardians identified English as their first language, and seven of the eight marked that there are no other languages being spoken in the home. The eighth participant's parent or guardian did not respond to that question. Only six of the eight participant's parents or guardians chose to disclose their house-hold income with the other two leaving that question blank. Of the six responses, two marked the \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year category, two marked the \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year category, one marked the \$75,000 to \$100,000 per year category, and finally, one marked the \$100,000 to \$150,000 per year category. This shows that there was some variation in self-reported house-hold incomes, with the majority of the participants falling between \$25,000 and \$75,000.

In looking at the demographic data it was interesting to note that the sample for this study matched what is found in the literature in many ways (Warren, 2005), but did not fit as well in other ways. An example of how this data was similar to what is often found in the literature can be seen in the fact that 100% of those participants who responded identified as White. Outdoor education, as has been mentioned in a previous chapter, is a predominantly White field (Frazer, 2009; Warren, 2005). Another way in which the demographics of the participants are similar to what is reported in the literature (Frazer, 2009) is in the area of socioeconomic status. The majority of those who responded to the household income question selected a response that is classified as middle class or higher by the Pew Institute Center (2018) as salaries from \$45,200 to \$135,600.

It is also interesting to note how the demographic data departs from the literature.

Warren (2005) and others (Frazer, 2009) inform us that the field of outdoor education is a substantially male dominated field. The SUPT that took place during this study was, as stated above, mostly female students who participated at 63% of participants. It must be noted that this result comes from a small sample size, and this pattern may or may not hold up if the sample size was increased.

As was pointed out in Chapter III of this dissertation, most of IWJH did not fit the same demographic profile that the eight participants in this study did. The majority of the student body was lower-middle class, and 60.7% identified as Hispanic, as opposed to the 100% of the participants that responded identifying as White and middle to upper-middle class. All of the participants who responded said English was the primary, and most often only language spoken in the home, as opposed to 18.9% of IWJH classified as English Language Learners, and no data on exactly how many come from a home in which English is the second language spoken in the home. Looking at this information, it is easy to see that the eight participants of this study do not form a group that is representative of the student body as a whole.

Data Collection

Table 2 outlines the data I collected for this study. I have separated the table into the different parts of this study. I included the section I intended to use with those who were not able to go on the trip, but with which I was not able to get enough participants to assist with understanding all of the parts of the study.

I began the first stage of my data collection in this grounded theory study by

Table 2

Data Collection Summary

Data source	Amount	Duration	Purpose	Time Frame
Participants who did go on the Southern Utah Parks Trip				
Two pre-surveys; one given with Informed Consent documents, and an anonymous one given through Qualtrics	8 students who went on the SUPT. 5 females and 3 males.	1 time- 10 to 15 min	Gathered demographic information, information about prior OEE experience, and students' perceptions of the outdoor and OEEs, and views on nature and the environment	Middle of May 2019
Field Notes	Taken throughout the SUPT both written as well as spoken into a voice recorder and later transcribed.	Duration of the 5-day trip	Gathered data on the students' experiences as I witnessed them on the SUPT.	May 14 th to May 19 th 2019
Anonymous Qualtrics post-trip survey	8 students who went on the SUPT trip.	1 time each - 15 min	Allowed students to tell about their experience in an anonymous way in order to address the conflict of my being their teacher as well as my personal bias in favor of the trip.	End of May 2019
Journey maps post OEE (see Appendix H)	8 students who went on the SUPT trip.	1 time each - 15 min	Used to represent the students' experiences and closely examine the SUPT and allow for a physical artifact to be available for reference during the semi-structured interview	End of May 2019
Semistructured interview post OEE (see Appendix H)	8 students who went on the SUPT trip.	1 time each- 15 to 30 min	Used to ensure interpretation of journey map was accurate, as well as allow students to talk about the OEE in order to better understand how it affected their perceptions and attitudes of the outdoors and OEEs	End of May 2019

(table continues)

Data source	Amount	Duration	Purpose	Time Frame
Participants who did not go on the Southern Utah Parks Trip				
Survey	2 students who did not participate in the SUPT	1 time- 10 min	To get demographic information, information on prior OEEs, views on nature and the environment, and most importantly, to begin gaining insights into why most students did not participate in the SUPT	End of May 2019
Semi-structured interview (see Appendix H)	2 students who did not participate in the SUPT	1 time each- 15 to 20 min	To go into more depth as to why they did not participate in the SUPT, and what specifically kept them from going, and how those barriers could have been overcome if possible	End of May 2019
Autobiographical account written by the author				
The authors written account of experiences on the SUPT as both a student and as a teacher/trip leader	The authors written account covering experiences both as a student and as a teacher/trip leader	1 time over several days of writing	Provide a first-hand account of what this experience was like, and how it affects a person's perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and OEEs. Also, to provide an account of what it was like to prepare for and take students on the SUPT, as well as what has possibly kept so many from going on the trip, as witnessed firsthand and as told to the author by students, parents, past participants, and colleagues.	November and December of 2019

giving those participants who went on the SUPT, and who volunteered to be part of the study, a survey (see Appendix D) attached to the informed consent documents for their parents or guardians to fill out. The intention of this short survey was to obtain some of the students' basic demographic information. That demographic information was used to establish who it was that went on the trip and was then compared to the demographic data from IWJH pertaining to the eighth-grade class. This was done in order to attempt to establish any social injustices that might have taken place in who was included on the trip and who was excluded for some reason or another. As mentioned before, I offered an incentive of a lunch time "fast pass," which allowed the student to go to the front of the lunch line in order to try and get as much participation as possible. This was given to any of the students who returned their informed consent. The information collected from that demographic survey, and the comparison to the demographics of the school can be seen above in this chapter.

Once all of the informed consents (see Appendices A and B) were collected and sorted into two groups, those who were going on the trip and those who were not, I found which had chosen to participate and I asked them to fill out a Qualtrics pretrip survey (see Appendix E). This was done in order to get information on prior OEEs that participants have been a part of as well as information on their initial attitudes and perceptions of the outdoors and OEEs. All of the information obtained through these pretrip surveys was used to establish a baseline measurement of the participants' attitudes and perceptions of the outdoors and OEEs before the students went on the SUPT. This allowed for comparisons to the post-trip survey data that was collected using a Qualtrics anonymous

survey (see Appendix F) shortly after returning from the trip (within two weeks of our return). From that, I was able to determine how participation in the SUPT had affected the student's perceptions of the outdoors, especially the locations that we visited on the trip, and their perceptions and attitudes toward OEEs in general.

While we were on the trip, I also began collecting field notes of the experience as a participant observer. I did this to gain a better understanding of how the SUPT affected students and their perceptions and attitudes toward the trip and the areas that we visited on the trip by documenting and citing specific events from the experience. I also used this opportunity to observe the participants and take notes on how the experience affected their perceptions of OEEs in general, again with specific examples. I was focused on looking for instances and listening for comments from the participants that were about the SUPT areas, or about the trip itself, and how and what they felt about each. In addition to this I was also listening for any information related to the participants' motivation for attending the SUPT, on things they had to overcome in order to go on the trip. I also paid close attention to any comments or discussions on the part of the participants related to how they felt about the outdoors or nature in general, or any experiences they related that may give clues to how they felt about them.

Upon our return from the trip, I gave the volunteer participants the anonymous Qualtrics post-trip survey previously mentioned, with questions that focused on the student's perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and OEEs, especially toward the areas we visited on the trip. It is because I was a teacher at IWJH at the time of the research, and because of my personal bias in favor of this trip, that the pre and post-trip

surveys needed to be anonymous. I had assisted many times in the recruitment of participants for the SUPT, and often talked to the eighth-grade students at the school about my own experience on this trip in a very positive way. Because of all of this I worried that students would not have felt that they can be critical of the program if that was how they felt. The purpose of this survey was to allow the students to have a chance to say how they felt about the SUPT in an open and honest way, without fear of upsetting me as their teacher and as someone who is immensely fond of this experience, as well as examine the effect of the trip on the participants perspectives and attitudes about the outdoors and OEEs, especially the SUPT, as previously stated.

The final set of data I collected in first stage of this study was a set of journey maps (Meyer & Marx, 2014; Nyquist et al., 1999), which were paired with semistructured interviews of those students who had volunteered in the survey portion of the study. The journey maps provided the participants with an opportunity to represent their experience in a visual format that I, as a researcher, was able to examine to help me gain a better understanding of how this OEE affected the students and their perceptions and attitudes toward OEEs and the outdoors. Special attention was given to how it affected their feelings and ideas about the specific areas we went to on this trip. These journey maps were also available during the semi-structured interviews for students to use as a reference when they answered the interview questions. I feel that the participants were more likely to open up about their experience and their perceptions and motivations because they had something to talk about (their maps) rather than the focus of the interview being directly on themselves. The purpose of these semistructured interviews

was to gain a deeper understanding of what this experience was like for the participants in their own words. I started by asking them to explain their journey map and then asked exploratory questions to look into their journey map, and what the experience of the SUPT meant to them, further. I also asked them questions about how they felt about the outdoors and nature, as well as learning in the outdoors. I also asked about specific places and parts of the SUPT. I finally asked questions about the role of people in taking care of nature and its resources in order to better explore how the trip affected their feelings and ideas towards the outdoors and the places we visited on our trip.

For the second stage of this study, I had planned to focus on the eighth-grade students at IWJH who did not participate in the SUPT. I would have started by surveying as many of those eighth-grade students who did not participate in the OEE as I possibly could. In order to try and get as many participants as possible from this group, I again offered the incentive of a lunch time “fast pass” which allowed the student to go to the front of the lunch line with a friend to all of the students who returned their Informed Consent documents, regardless of whether they participated in the study or not.

The focus of that survey would have been to gather demographic data, and to gain some insight into what past OEEs these students had participated in. This demographic data would have been compared to the demographic data of the school, focusing on the eighth-grade class, to see what groups are being excluded from the SUPT. This would have allowed us to better understand the barriers keeping those who wanted to go and why so many were not going on the trip, and work to eliminating anything that was causing exclusion. The survey would have also contained questions that looked at these

student's perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors as well as learning and participating in OEEs. There would also have been questions directed at asking this group directly what their reason for not going on the SUPT was, and what barriers to participation got in their way.

In an attempt to identify and better understand what these barriers were for the majority of the eighth-grade students at IWJH on a deeper level, and in those students' own words, as what students think could have been done to overcome them, I sought ten volunteers from the group of those who did not attend the SUPT, interviewing them in a semi-structured interview, with the intent of uncovering more about what kept them from going and why it was a problem, as well as what they felt could have been done to clear the way for their participation.

However, as stated several times previously, I was not able to get enough participants to generate meaningful data in the second section of this research study. With such a low number of participants, only the two students who did not go on the SUPT, I could not have gathered meaningful data that would have helped to answer my research questions. I therefore had to choose another way to address those questions, and chose to not use the data gathered from those two students. I instead decided it would be informative to use my own experiences as a student and a teacher at IWJH, gathered over several years. To do this, I decided to write an autobiographical account, using techniques gathered from autoethnography (Adams et al., 2017; Ellis et al., 2011; Jones & Adams, 2010; Wall, 2006). My proximity to both groups of students, those who went on the SUPT and those who did not, in addition to my experiences and proximity to the trip

position me in a way that allows for me to provide valid and meaningful data (Adams et al., 2017; Ellis et al., 2011; Jones & Adams, 2010; Wall, 2006). It must be stated that in using my own account as data source carries with it an implicit bias. As stated above, I have a deep positive propensity for the OEE at IWJH and for learning in the outdoors in general. It stands to reason that not all participants feel the same as I do about their experience on the OEE. But without their direct experiences as data, I can currently only account for my own experience as a participant and trip leader. Therefore, I took care as I analyzed my own account to keep as much objectivity as I possibly could, understanding that the end result will be shown through my own biased lens. That being said, I do not feel that my bias invalidates these results, and there is much to be gained from them.

I started my autobiographical account by collecting pictures and documents from my times as a student and as a teacher at IWJH. I used these as tools to help me remember my experiences on the SUPT. I then journaled my experiences as I remembered them, starting with entering IWJH as a sixth-grade student and first hearing about the SUP, on up to the time of writing this as I am still very invested in this program, and hope to use the knowledge gained through this study to improve the program for all involved, as well as improve participation rates and inclusivity of the program. Once I had finished journaling my experiences, I went back over my notes, memoing (Charmaz, 2014) as I went, and looking for themes related to my two research questions.

I then used those themes to guide my written autobiographical account of my time with the SUPT program that is included throughout this dissertation. The data gained

from this autobiographical account of my experiences allowed me to further answer my two research questions as I had aimed for it to do. This was especially true pertaining to what I perceive to be the reasons and barriers preventing the majority of eighth-grade students at IWJH from going on the trip.

All of these data were then examined, and analyzed, looking for patterns and trends that helped me to better understand how an OEE like the SUPT affected students' perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and OEEs like this trip, including their motivation for going, together with what kept most of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from going on the trip. With that data, we can, again, better understand how to make a trip like this more inclusive for all students. We can remove the barriers to participation for this trip, and use that information for other similar OEEs, making the benefits that these experiences can possibly provide, as outlined in the previous chapter, more available to everyone.

Data Analysis Procedures

In order to effectively meet the goals of this study the data analysis needed to be done carefully and thoroughly. To do so I used the two phases of coding, initial coding and focused coding, as put forth by Charmaz, (2014) and I used the constant comparative steps outlined in Creswell and Poth (2013) to analyze the data which is presented in the table above. Once I had obtained all of the data, (the demographic surveys, the pre and post-trip survey data, the field notes, the journey maps, and the interview transcripts from all parts of this study, as well as my own autobiographical account,) I assigned

pseudonyms to all of the student participants, and then transcribed all of the audio recordings. Upon completing this, I then organized and began to analyze and make sense of the data through initial coding (Charmaz, 2014), in which I looked for basic patterns in the responses from the participants or myself, and then labeled and defined those patterns through my initial codes. I also used memoing at every step of analysis to help me to establish my initial codes, and begin to identify my focused codes for the next steps of my data analysis (Charmaz, 2014). From that coding, I began axial coding to move toward the core phenomenon. I then went back to the data and created categories around these phenomena. I then used the final step of selective coding to develop propositions that interrelate the categories to form a theory to explain the student's perceptions and attitudes of OEEs following the trip, as well as a theory that explains barriers that kept most of the students from participating in the OEE. It was by following these steps for all of my data analysis, I was able to complete a more accurate and robust data analysis.

Because children were the main subjects of this study, and they divulged personal opinions and information, I took the utmost care to treat them and their responses responsibly and ethically. I did all I could to protect their anonymity and the information they gave me throughout the research process. Immediately after transcription was completed all audio files were destroyed. All written transcripts and survey responses had pseudonyms assigned to student participants, and were stored on the secure cloud Box, and all files were password protected. I also offered for the students to see the final analysis of their part of the study to ensure they felt they were fairly represented, though none of them decided to do so.

Care also needed to be taken to be aware of my subjective lenses throughout this research. Because of my privileged positionality and my love of the outdoors, outdoor education, and school sponsored OEEs, I needed to make sure that I represented the data gathered from others as objectively as I could. Care also needed to be taken to not allow my different lenses and position to cloud my analysis and get in the way of telling the other participants story as accurately as possible.

Validity

By using multiple sources of data for my analysis, namely anonymous Qualtrics pre- and post-trip surveys, field notes, journey maps, semi-structured interviews shortly after the OEE, and my own autobiographical account, I was able to triangulate my findings, making them as robust as possible (Creswell & Poth, 2013). Also, positioning myself from the start by way of my positionality statement allowed for a clarifying of my researcher bias (Creswell & Poth, 2013). Finally, to further validate my findings, I used the criteria presented in Creswell and Poth (2013) for assessing a good grounded theory study. This helped me to ensure the final product was completed and of a higher quality.

Limitations

The main limitation of this study was the narrow range of participants because I selected only volunteer participants from the 10 students at IWJH who participated in the SUPT experience. This meant that the participants in this study were not a representative sample of the student body, and therefore, the findings have limited generalizability. As

Chametzky (2013) points out that with the conceptualizing of theory in grounded theory, and the “grab” that should be there, meaning the attention-grabbing nature of the study, a certain amount of generalizability and transferability is appropriate and present. Selecting my participants on a volunteer basis created a selection bias but avoided my bias as a researcher in the selection of participants. Also, this nonrepresentative sample is one of the issues I aimed to address with this research. It in itself is a major part of the problem. The knowledge gained from this study can be used to increase the participation rate of the SUPT, and ultimately make it more diverse and a more representative group.

CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS—STUDENT EXPERIENCES

“I think that it’s a really cool place and that more people, like for this trip, should be able to go down and see it all.” – Rachel (A participant who went on the trip)

Figure 13

Bryce Canyon National Park



Often when we are hiking along a trail, we find things we have never noticed before, especially if we take the time to stop, and look closely. In this study, I have looked closely at the experiences of the eight participants who attended the Southern Utah Parks Trip, as well as at my own experiences as an eighth-grade participant several years ago, and more recently as a teacher and trip leader at Intermountain West Junior High School. The things I have learned from this are presented in this chapter, as well as the next.

The findings in this chapter are presented in two sections. The first section will start by listing and briefly describing the themes that emerged from an analysis of the data in this study, followed by the findings that emerged from the anonymous pre and post trip survey given to those same participants. This information begins to offer some answers to both of my research questions. (1) How did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at IWJH perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs? (2) What are the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT?

The second section will look at the themes and patterns that developed from an analysis of my interviews of each participant, their journey maps, and field notes collected by me during the trip. All of this information will continue to contribute to the answering of the two research questions mentioned above, as well as elsewhere in this report. From these answers, I will develop a theory grounded in the data to explain how this trip effects participants perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs, as well as the reasons and barriers that kept most eight-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT. These theories and the information that supports them can then be used to improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of the SUPT, as well as other OEEs like it.

Themes Discovered in the Study

In examining the data gathered for this study, both from the student participants and from my own account, several themes quickly emerged. Those themes are listed and

briefly discussed here. A more in depth look at these themes and how they relate to the different experiences of the students is in this chapter, as well as for myself in the following chapter. The emergent themes are described below.

- *A feeling of excitement (in general or toward an activity)*—As I coded the interview transcripts and my field notes, excitement was one of most commonly used words to describe what was happening on the experience (Dillon et al., 2005; Kellert et al., 2017).
- *Learning and being in a social setting*—The socialization that occurred on the trip was often cited by the participants as being one of the best parts of the SUPT (Garst et al., 2001).
- *Connecting with the scenery or views of the scenery*—The participants often talked about the scenery, the views, or took countless pictures to remember the things they saw (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).
- *Connecting with water*—Whether it was swimming in Wide Hollow Reservoir in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park, or hiking to Lower and Upper Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument, water left a lasting imprint on most of the participants in this study (Nichols, 2014).
- *Connecting with plants*—Each day the participants were excited to learn to identify a new native plant species each day, especially the “butterscotch trees” (ponderosa pines) (Bullock, 1994).
- *Connecting with geology and geological formations*—The participants often commented on the different geology that was so prevalent in the areas we visited, such as the hoodoos in Bryce Canyon National Park, or the petrified wood samples found throughout Escalante Petrified Forest State Park (Ford, 2003).
- *Connecting with cultures of the past*—The participants seemed to be fascinated by the different petroglyphs and ruins we saw throughout the trip, some even bought souvenirs showing them, or included them in their journey maps (Smith et al., 1997).
- *Connecting with animals*—The participants were quite excited anytime they saw an animal like the ground squirrels in Bryce Canyon National Park or the lizards in Escalante State Park, often giving each one they found a name (Bullock, 1994).

- *A feeling of wanting to protect an area or resource*—Along with the connections the participants made with the areas we visited usually came a desire to protect and preserve more natural areas (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Müller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006).
- *Hands-on learning*—Several of the participants mentioned that they learn better when they are able to actually experience and manipulate the things they are learning about in a hands-on way (AEE, n.d.).
- *Learning about the outdoors and nature*—All of the participants enjoyed learning in and about the outdoors for the vast majority of the trip. They also often stated that they just liked being in the outdoors (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002).
- *Being physically active in the outdoors*—Several of the participants enjoyed being able to be out and physically active, as opposed to sitting at a desk in a classroom (Cooper et al., 2010; Page et al., 2010).
- *Learning outdoor skills*—Some of the participants really caught hold of the outdoor skills taught on this trip, like the principle of Leave No Trace, or basic camping skills.
- *Being comfortable in the outdoors*—One of the main things that came up when the participants were asked what they didn't like about learning in the outdoors related to issues of physical comfort (Givoni et al., 2003).
- *A feeling of burn-out or impatience*—At the beginning of the OEE there were a few times that I noted the participants were impatient to get started with something. As the week went on, it seemed that for some a feeling of being burnt out and tired happened more and more often (Campbell, n.d.).
- *A feeling of nervousness or anticipation*—From talking with the participants and looking at their journey maps, it seemed that the predominate feeling prior to the trip was that of being nervous in anticipation of what was to come (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016).
- *Meeting with challenging situations*—There a few things the students saw as a challenge in the trip, such as our hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls. Their reactions to that challenge varied (Little & Wyver, 2008).
- *Lack of access to supplies or experience*—One of the things that continued to come up was a lack of access to the necessary supplies, or not knowing something in order to get ready to go on the trip. In this would be included a lack of access to the necessary funds to go on the trip (Green et al., 2009;

Shores et al., 2007).

In what follows in this chapter, I will provide a summary of the participants responses to the pre and post Qualtrics survey, as well as their journey maps and a summary of their responses to our interviews and my field notes taken during the trip. I have included the participants responses as they were given to me, without editing them, in an attempt to better catch the voices of each participant. I will also point out how each of the themes listed above emerged from that data.

Anonymous Pre- and Post-Trip Survey Data

Prior to going on the SUPT, all eight participants who had consented to participate answered eighteen questions on an anonymous survey using Qualtrics on a set of school laptops (see Appendix E). Later, upon returning from the trip, those same eight students answered another survey using Qualtrics on a set of school laptops, this time containing fourteen questions (see Appendix F). There is a set of three questions that were on both surveys so that general responses could be compared pre and post trip, to see if the trip had any effect on the participants responses. The remaining questions aimed to analyze the participants perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors and nature, as well as learning in the outdoors.

Pre-Trip Survey Responses

The first question on the pre-trip survey asked the participants to select how often they participate in activities outdoors. Fifty percent of the participants indicated that they participate in outdoor activities every day, 37.5% indicated a couple times a week, and

12.5% indicated once a week. This suggests that the majority of the participants who went on this OEE were already participating in outdoor activities quite often. This is not what is normally found in the research. As was mentioned in Chapter II, children ages 8 to 12 years old spend in average of 6.58 hours a week outside compared to an average of 15.92 hours a week watching TV or playing on a computer, including their phones (Kellert et al., 2017). Rideout and Robb (2019) found that number to be much higher, with tweens using screens an average of 4 hours and 44 minutes a day, and teens using them 7 hour and 22 hours a day, not including time using a screen to do homework.

The survey then asked the participants to write in what they do when they are outside. Five of the eight participants responded that they are participating in some sort of sporting activity when they are outside, such as “softball, soccer,” “practice baseball,” or “sports.” Four of the eight mentioned biking, and two of them mentioned skateboarding. Of the eight responses, two of them responded with outdoor activities that are related to the type of things that are done on the trip. One wrote “camping,” and the other wrote “Every once in a while, we’ll go to [the] park or a hike.” I found it interesting to note that few of the participants wrote anything related to outdoor independent free play. This fits with what has been shown in the literature (Kellert et al., 2017).

I then asked the participants through the survey how many field trips they remember attending from preschool to eighth grade. Their responses were as follows: Three of them selected 3-4 field trips, two selected 1-2 field trips, 1 selected 5-6 field trips, 1 selected 7-8 field trips, and finally, 1 selected 8+ field trips. I then asked through

the survey how many of those field trips took place in the outdoors, which led to the following responses: Four selected 1-2 of the trips, two selected 0 of the trips, and two selected 5-6 of the trips. This data suggests that most of the participants had attended at least one outdoor field trip prior to going on the SUPT, though that was not the predominate type of field trip they had gone on. This suggests that the schools these participants have attended have opted for indoor field trips more often than outdoor ones (Nadelson & Jordan, 2012). This could be a way in which schools could assist in getting students outdoors more often by choosing field trips that have an outdoor component.

I wanted to know what the participants found to be memorable about those few outdoor field trips they had participated in, so I asked them “What do you remember most about those outdoor field trips and activities?” Three of them responded with some form of “It was fun.” One responded with “Mainly camping out at a scout camp or a backyard” Another responded with “My friends, some cool activities.” The last three responses were, “Just playing outside,” “Mainly walking,” and “the zoo.” Their responses to this question added support to some of the themes that emerged from the data, such as *being in a social setting, learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), and *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005).

I then wanted to see what the participants remembered learning from their participation in these outdoor school field trips, so I posed the question to them through the survey, and here are their responses, “Buddy system,” “Some survival skills and how to do some things for merit badges/rank advancements,” “Some things about nature most of the time,” “The origin of these places and what it was like a long time ago. How rocks

are formed and eroded and make formations,” “School stuff, sometimes it was fun,” “To have fun,” “walk around,” and finally “Not really anything.” The participants responses here again relate to many of the themes that emerged from this study. Those themes are *learning about the outdoors and outdoor skills*, and *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005).

I then wanted to know what outdoor learning activities the participants were part of outside of school. They responded with, “Dinosaur Museum,” “BSA/Boy Scouts,” “Some hikes and bike trails, some camping like Great Basin, or Valley of Fire, or at my family cabin,” “Camping, bike riding,” “Every year we go camping in Idaho and up in the mountains,” “Field day,” “Sports, softball, soccer,” and finally, “The nature.” It caught my attention here that many of the responses had to do with “camping” and “hiking” in some form, including “BSA/Boy Scouts,” as opposed to the earlier question about how they spend their time outside. Sports and being physically active in the outdoors were also apparent in several responses. This ties into the emergent theme of *being physically active in the outdoors* (Cooper et al., 2010; Page et al., 2010).

I then looked to see what things they recalled learning from those outdoor activities that were not part of an outdoor school field trip. The respondents reported things like, “How things happen and the history of them,” “Good survival skills,” “How to do an assortment of things like cooking and planning to putting up a tent and how to make knots,” “I learned how to fish, how caves are formed, how to catch a frog,” “That they are fun, and I enjoy going outside and having fun,” “How to be respectful to nature,” “That it’s fun to play outside,” and “What goes on in nature.” Many of the responses

were related to themes of *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) and *learning outdoor skills*. Examples of this would be “Good survival skills,” “how to fish,” “how to catch a frog,” “cooking and planning,” “how to put up a tent,” “how to make knots,” and “how to be respectful to nature.” Some of the responses fell under the theme of *learning about the outdoors and nature*. Those responses were “how things happen and the history of them” (based on the context I took this to mean natural geological formations), “how caves are formed,” and “what goes on in nature.” The last of the responses fell under the theme of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), especially toward playing in the outdoors. All of the participants’ responses were positive toward the outdoor and learning in the outdoors. This gave a good baseline for where the students’ attitudes and perspectives of the outdoors were prior to the SUPT.

From these questions, I then wanted to know how the students felt about the outdoors and nature, as well as going outdoors or being in the outdoors. Overwhelmingly the participants responded positively toward the outdoors and being in the outdoors, with some form of “I love the outdoors” being the most common response. Others responded with things like “I love it and I am concerned for its health,” “They are very important and we should respect them and care for them,” and “I enjoy and feel calmed sometimes.” These data show that all of the participants strongly enjoyed the outdoors prior to the trip. This also could show a bias in who is and who is not participating. It would be unlikely that someone who did not already enjoy the outdoors would choose to participate in the SUPT.

In the next set of questions, I tried to better understand if the participants enjoyed participating in outdoor activities like hiking, and if they enjoyed outdoor learning activities, like field trips to the zoo. The eight responses to the question of if the participants liked participating in outdoor activities was, again, completely positive, with responses like “I love going on hikes and being out in nature because it’s always something I’ve loved,” “I really do. It’s fun and it’s good [exercise] instead of sitting on a couch,” and “Yes, because we get to go outside and enjoy nature and have fun.” The responses to the question about if they enjoy outdoor learning activities did not get positive responses from all of the participants. While most answered some form of “Yes, I love going to those things,” two of the participants responded in the negative with “Sometimes, I don’t like the zoo that much,” and “I don’t enjoy seeing animals caged up, it’s not natural or humane.” I thought it was interesting that many of the responses for this question focused on a field trip to the zoo. In the future, I would remove that part of the question as I feel it guided the students into too narrow of a focus.

I wanted to see how the participants felt about stewardship toward nature and the outdoors, so I asked them if they felt it was people’s responsibility to take care of nature and the outdoors, as well as how they felt nature and the outdoors should be used. All eight participants responded that they felt it was people’s responsibility to care for nature and the outdoors. “Yes, we live in the outdoors,” “We should always take care of nature,” “Yes we are the people that do it,” “People have a huge responsibility because we effect it a lot,” “Yes because if you don't you won't have it,” “Because we don't have a planet b,” “Yes, because it came before us and helps to sustain life and it can teach us about our

past,” and “Yes we should preserve it.” As for the other question, how nature and the outdoors should be used, most of the responses had something to do with responsibly. One student did not answer, and one response was unintelligible. “Good,” “it should be used like we never there,” “Used carefully,” “with caution,” “It should be used to preserve itself,” and “Like they should be used respectfully and for the betterment of the planet.”

I wanted to know what the students’ favorite and least favorite part of learning in the outdoors was prior to the trip. I received a variety of responses to both questions. When answering what the participants’ favorite parts of learning the outdoors were, I received the following responses: “It’s all just fun,” “It’s all just fun,” “Hiking,” “Just being outside,” “Learning about the animals,” “My favorite part is seeing cool things so I know it’s real,” “Getting dirty and enjoying nature,” and “Animals.” The answers for what their least favorite part of learning in the outdoors were also quite varied. “The weather,” “I don’t know,” “Nothing,” “Bugs,” “Being sunburn,” “I’m allergic to mosquito bites,” “When the weather doesn’t make it easy on you learning and having fun,” and “The dirt.” Many of the responses to each of these questions showed up later in our interviews, supporting that this really was how the participants felt, as well as supporting some of the emergent themes of this study, such as *connecting to animals* (Bullock, 1994), *connecting with the outdoors and nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), *a feeling of excitement for the outdoors and nature* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), and *comfort in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003).

The final two questions I asked each of the participants through the pre-trip survey was if they felt that those who participate in outdoor activities are like them, and if those who participated in the SUPT are like them. Once again, nearly all of the participants answered in the affirmative. Most were a simple “Yes.” Others went into a little more detail, such as “Yeah, it’s always good to have fun with friends instead of wandering alone,” “Because we all enjoy nature and having fun in nature together,” “Yes because I am awesome,” “Yea kinda,” “Yes I’ve been friends with them for a long time,” “Yes because we like the outdoors,” “Yeah but I stand out a little because my friend decided not to go so I hope I can make more friends,” “Because we enjoy hiking and camping,” and “Yes [outdoors] people.” It is not surprising that the responses from the students were all quite similar seeing the participants were all demographically similar and there was relatively little diversity in the group. To these participants, the outdoor culture seems to be what they connected these questions to.

Post-Trip Survey Responses

Once we had returned from the trip, and gotten back to IWJH, I asked the participants to go on a school provided computer and take the anonymous post-trip survey. The first question on that survey asked the participants again how they felt about the outdoor before going on the SUPT. The majority of the responses were positive, with some actually addressing the SUPT in their response, such as “I loved being outdoor before the Escalante trip,” “I thought this trip was so much fun,” “I love going outside and going on hikes,” “I enjoyed the outdoors and wanted to keep it as close to being natural as possible,” “It was a cool hike,” and “not as strong.” The other two responses

were not as positive. They were “nerves and excited,” and “I hated hiking and I was concerned about global warming. I would rather stay indoors than go explore and learn about our environment cause there's little I can do to help any way.” The response relating to nerves and excited fit in with the emergent themes of *a feeling of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) and *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), both of which turned out to be some of the more common themes that arose from the data. The other comment related to staying indoors rather than going outside due to a feeling of helplessness related to the theme of *a feeling of wanting to protect nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006).

The survey then asked the participants if they felt it was people’s responsibilities to take care of nature and the outdoors, and to provide a reasoning for their response. As in the pre-trip survey, all of the respondents answered in the affirmative, but this time, their answers seemed to carry a stronger conviction with them. “Yes we live in nature,” “Yes we need to keep it nice,” “I do because we are the ones who are in the outdoors and we are the ones who ruin the outdoors,” “100% peoples responsibility because as humans we have to help protect the land,” “Yes it is our responsibility to take care of nature,” “Yes, because it helps us so we should help it,” “Yes because if we don't future generation will not be able to see and enjoy what we got to see. And be able to understand how we felt when we first got to see it,” and “Yes there is no planet b. this is our planet and it’s the only one we've got. We need to nurture it for the future.” These responses provide strong evidence for the participants *forming a connection with the*

areas we visited (Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), and *having a desire to protect those areas* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006), two of the main themes that emerged from the data in this study.

Following this question, the survey asked the participants how they felt nature and the outdoors should be used as it had done in the pre-trip survey. This time, the answers the respondents gave were much clearer, and again, had much more conviction behind them. “It should be preserved,” “We should treat it better,” “It should be used wise fully and carefully but they are our resources and they're our only resources which could run out,” “It should be used with respect an enjoyed and not seen as something that does not matter because all of those animals and plants would not survive if we treated it like it does not matter,” “I feel they should be respected and cared for,” “We should use the outdoors very nicely,” “It should be used to enjoy but not disturbed,” and “I feel like nature and outdoors should be used as a learning tool, yes people use nature as fun which is fine but a lot of people litter and cause pollution which ruins our environment.” While the student’s included ideas that nature can be used for recreation and learning as we had done on the SUPT, their responses to this question *contain a clear desire to protect what they had seen* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006) throughout.

The next question I asked the participants through the survey was if their participation in the SUPT had changed their perceptions of the outdoors and being in the outdoors. Their responses were mixed between the trip not changing their feelings,

meaning they still feel positively about the outdoors, and yes, it did change their feelings. For those that it did change their feelings, their responses were as follows: “They stayed the same except for wanting to protect the outdoors even more,” “I was not nervous but still really excited,” “Yes,” and “Yes, I love hiking and exploring. I also love learning now and I love being outdoors.” Barring the simple “Yes” for which there is no other information, and therefore no way to know exactly in what way their feelings have changed, the other responses show changes in the direction of even more positive feelings toward spending time in the outdoors.

The next question on the survey asked the participants what their favorite part of the SUPT was, and why it was their favorite. Most of the participants did not give an explanation, but simply stated their favorite part. Three of the eight gave a little more insight with an explanation of their answer. The responses were “My favorite part of the trip was swimming at the lake and the Bridge hike because it was so pretty, and left the end of the trip on my favorite hike!” “My favorite part of the trip was lower calf creek. It was my favorite because we got to see some petroglyphs and playing in the water was fun,” “My favorite part is spending time with my friends and going to the lake because we played a lot of fun games there,” “I would say that my favorite part was the [upper] calf creek falls because when we got to the pools at the top of the waterfall it was nice relaxing and we got to explore a little bit,” “The hikes and food,” two that said “Bryce Canyon, the view you get from the top is amazing” and “Bryce canyon was so beautiful.” The last participant responded:

To be honest my favorite part of the Escalante trip was when we played on the dock with each other and we got to know each other and it was so fun and very

beautiful at the sunset. All of my friends are so nice and so fun. We were such a family and we all had an amazing time together.

Several of the themes that arose in this study were evident in the participants responses. Those themes were *a connection to water* (Nichols, 2014), *a connection to geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003), *a connection to past cultures* (Smith et al., 1997), and *being and learning in a social environment* (Garst et al., 2001).

As a follow up to that question, I asked the participants what their least favorite part of the SUPT was. Their responses varied and were as follows: “My least favorite part about this trip was the driving to each park. I didn't like the driving because I don't like to sit in a car for a couple hours” “Upper calf Creek. It was cool, I am glad I got to see it. But I feel like we could of went to a way cooler hike instead,” “Upper calf creek falls hike, and the coldness,” “People that were annoying, and the spiders” “I didn't really have a least favorite part,” “I'm not really sure there was a part about the Escalante trip that I didn't like,”

My least favorite part of the trip was when we moved to a new campsite and there wasn't the long road that went to the middle of nowhere we would walk down as a group for fun or the lake we would play in. This new campsite wasn't a good rough'n it campsite. It looked like a park, it was literally a orchard! Also, we were all split up because the group site was taken so we had to walk a distance to see each other also there was no privacy from other campers in the trees and grass.

There was one response, “Spending time with my friends hiking and the lake” which was nearly word for word what they wrote for their favorite part of the SUPT. Therefore, it would seem likely they misread the question, though it is possible, yet unlikely, that “Spending time with my friends hiking and the lake” was both their favorite and least favorite part of the experience.

As I had done in the pre-trip survey, I asked the participants if they felt their culture was represented on the SUPT, and if they felt included while participating in the experience. All but one participant responded that they did feel that their culture was represented and that they felt included. They responded “I felt included in the trip and I did feel the culture,” “Yes and yes to being included,” “Yes because I had a lot of friends that went on the trip,” “Yes I did feel included on the trip because we got talk with each other and have fun together,” “I feel like my culture was well represented, mainly because I am an outdoors person,” “I felt included. I don't see why I wouldn't of,” and “I felt very included with all the fun we had teasing each other and such. They teased me because of someone I liked but I don't mind, turns out he likes me back.”

I do feel that because all of the participants were part of the traditionally dominant White culture, they may have misunderstood, or misinterpreted this question. As one participant put it above, “I felt included. I don't see why I wouldn't of.” Being a part of that dominant culture, most of these students have probably not ever had to think about whether or not their culture has fair representation. Inclusion could have been seen as a separate matter to the participants, though it was not intended to be. The two questions that followed explored this idea of culture and inclusion a bit further.

The first of the two questions asked the participants if they felt like those who participate in outdoor activities were like them, as well as the reasoning behind their response. There was a range in how the participants answered. There were the affirmative answers, like “Yes because they all enjoyed the hikes like I did,” “I feel like everyone is me because I get along with them really well,” “Yes kinda because we have something in

common,” “Yes,” “Because we enjoy nature and learning about it” Then there were those that answered no in some form, “No not really,”

No I think some of them where there for the wrong reasons. They were too busy rushing through the hike not taking in the view, or they were upset because they did not want to hike. They just wanted to sleep

There was also a response that was rather unsure, “Sure I guess, we like to be outside? I’m unsure.”

The second of the two inclusion questions focused on if the participants felt that the other people who participated in the SUPT were like them, and what their reasoning was for their response. For this question there was a more split range in what the students answered, with some saying the other participants were like them, “Yeah because we all had to have good grades and do a lot of preparations so we know each other well,” “Yes,” and “They are all people that get along with everyone.” Some of the participants responded that the other participants were not like them, “No not everyone,” “No because all of them were shy and quiet,” “No they were there for the wrong reasons.” As with the other question above, some that were unsure, “Sort of because I have mixed likes but for the most part yes,” and “Yes and no because we have something in common.” From these two questions, it is clear that these students, being part of the dominant culture, are not thinking in terms of demographic information in their responses, but are rather thinking in terms of interests and hobbies and things like that. They have not yet had to examine any of the contents of their “invisible knapsacks” (McIntosh, 1988).

I then wanted to know how the participants felt about the SUPT experience overall, and received an overwhelmingly set of positive responses for this survey

question. “Yes because I got to spend a whole week with my friends and got excused from school,” “Yes, it was fun to go camping with your friends and learn about new things,” “Yes,” “Yes it was the best,” “Yes I did because I got to see the places and cool things there,” “Yes because we had fun, got see cool places, and we got to know each other more,” “Yes it is a trip that I enjoyed and will remember mostly because of the hikes and the teachers that went,” and “The Escalante trip is the best memory I have ever. It was so fun hiking and playing with my friends and getting to know people better there, especially the one I love.” It is abundantly clear from the participants responses that this is some of the strongest evidence that the SUPT had a positive impact on the students and their attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. The themes of *learning in the outdoors, a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) and *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) also had strong evidence in these responses.

To explore this deeper, I asked the participants through the survey if they themselves would go back down to the areas we visited on the SUPT along with their reasoning, and in a separate questions if they would tell their friends to go to the places we visited on the SUPT, along with their reasoning for their response. For the first question, asking if they themselves would go back, it was again a unanimously positive response. “Yes I think my siblings would love the places went to,” “I would go back to all of them because it’s was cool to learn about new places,” “I would I want to go on more hikes and travel more,” “Yes because I enjoyed it and I feel like some day when I have kids that they would enjoy it to,” “I would back to all of them. Probably to re-live

the experience,” “Yes I would to take a longer look at them cause on Escalante we barely had time to go really in depth and they all looked so cool,” “Yes all of them they were cool,” and “YES! it was amazing.” Here again we see strong evidence for the theme of *connecting with nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and the places we visited. I found it interesting to note that many of them brought up who they would want to share this experience with, even before they saw the next question. This is something I found in my own experience on my trip at IWJH. As I pointed out in the introduction chapter, as I hiked through the canyon, I couldn’t help but think of wanting to share that experience with my dad and brothers. These responses also add to the strong evidence that this trip had a very positive impact on the attitudes and perceptions of the participants.

In the responses to that second question, asking if they would suggest that their friends go on the SUPT, the responses were again very positive, except for one participant who responded that they might not. “I guess maybe, it’s not very cool to be suggesting national parks and hike rather than [the local amusement park] and ‘more fun’ stuff like that but all my friends are nice.” It is worth noting that this participant felt that it would be uncool to suggest that her friend go to national parks or hiking as they are not as fun as the local amusement park and not as fun as other things. As for the other responses, the positive responses, they were as follows: “Yes it’s a pretty area and was really fun,” “Yes I would to see the beautiful things there,” “Yes because they would probably enjoy it as well if they are the people that enjoy nature,” “Yes because they don’t understand how I feel about it in until they see it with their own eyes,” “Yes,” “Yes

it was the best,” and “yes I would because most of my friends wanted to go they just couldn't afford it, I would tell them to go so they can learn what I did down there.”

The fact that most of the participants would suggest that others go on the trip is more evidence that of the positive impact this experience had on their attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. The reasons many of the participants gave were quite telling of the level of impact this experience had on them, such as “I would tell them to go so they can learn what I did down there” and “They don't understand how I feel about it in until they see it with their own eyes.” There is also some insight into what kept some of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from going on the SUPT in the explanation of one student, “yes I would because most of my friends wanted to go, they just couldn't afford it.” This informs us that, as the research suggests, the cost of these type of OEEs can be prohibitive to many who are not part of the dominant class. This became one of the strongest of the emergent themes, *lack of access to supplies and equipment* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007), including money, that helped to answer the second research question of this study, namely what the barriers were that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience.

The last thing addressed from the survey was what the participants felt could be done to improve the SUPT. Their answers were quite varied, “I think this trip needed to be more organized,” “Picking a better time for the weather,” “Keeping the trail more clean and take care of it more,” “I'm not sure because other than leaving early it was perfect,” “Maybe let the parents know more about the food and hikes before they go on

the trip,” “More bacon,” “Put swimming suit on the packing list, reserve camping spots early on. Idk it was pretty great for me,” and “Advertise it more.” All of these responses provide valuable information as to how the SUPT and other OEEs like it can be improved. This idea will be discussed further in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Having gathered some information on how the participants felt about the SUPT, I then wanted to know how the participants felt about the outdoors and nature in general, after having returned from the trip. As with the pre-trip survey, all of the participants responded in a very positive way about how they felt, however, it did seem as though the responses were stronger than they were in the pre-trip survey. The responses were “happy,” “I liked it,” “I love it,” “I like the outdoors and nature and feel like they should be protected and learned about,” “I love the outdoors and exploring nature,” “I love being in the outdoors and seeing nature,” and “I love being outdoors and I am very concerned for nature's health with global warming and all.” Their responses here add evidence to the emergence of two themes: *a connection to a place and nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and *a desire to protect those areas that we visited on the trip* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006). It also helps to establish that the SUPT was a positive influence on the attitudes toward and perspectives of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors for the participants. This will be further supported in my interviews with the participants and the field notes that I collected on the trip. Both of which are discussed here.

In the following sections I will describe each of the eight participant's experiences

as they told them to me in their interviews and journey maps. I will also highlight how the participants' responses give evidence for each of the themes briefly described above. I will then summarize each of the themes, how it affected the participants attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, and what it means for the SUPT and other OEEs like in final chapter of this dissertation. I will also give suggestions as to how the SUPT and other OEEs can improve their effectiveness in impacting the attitudes and perceptions of participants in a positive way, as well as addressing the barriers and constraints that might prevent students from participating in these activities. I will also offer suggestions for further research.

Participants' Experiences

Mollie's Experience

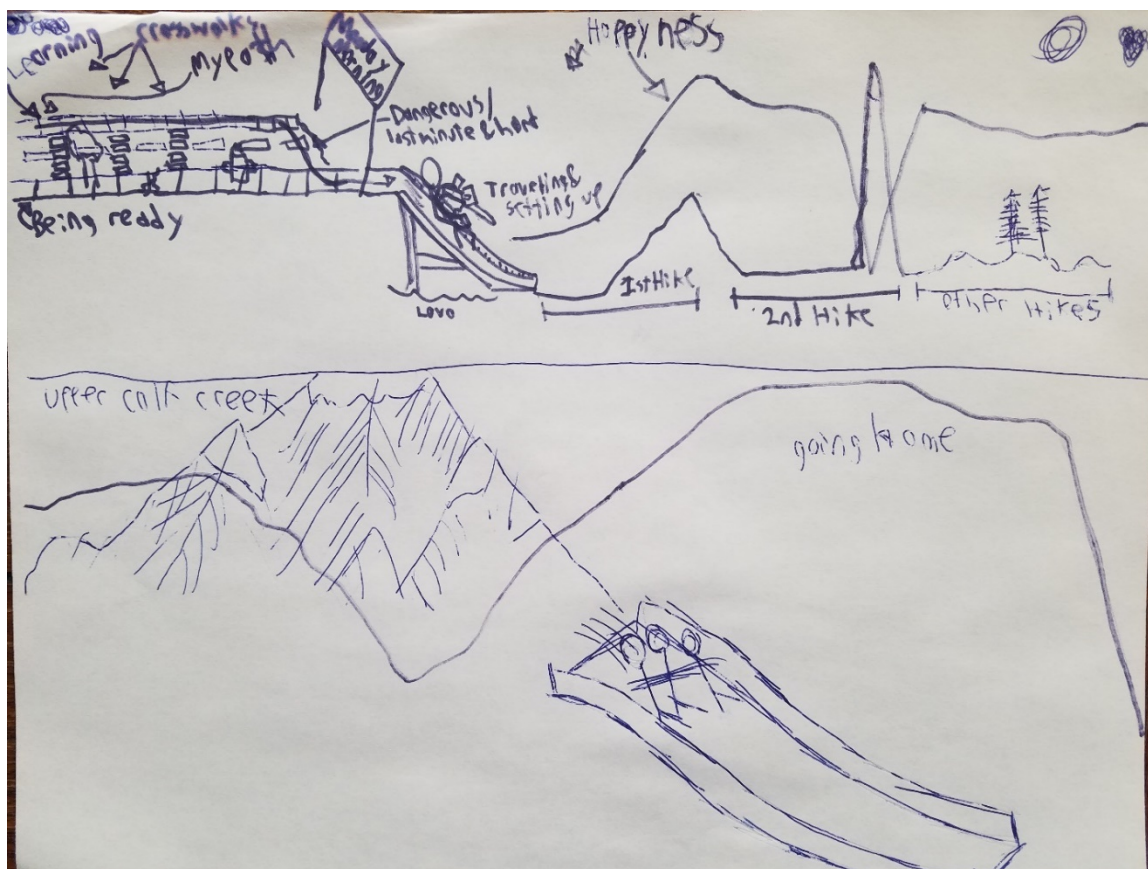
I learned so much in a little amount of time, and I didn't feel rushed at all, unlike how I do at school. – Mollie

Mollie was a quiet and somewhat shy, studious girl. She did not say much until you were able to gain her trust. Once you had gained it though, she liked to talk and discuss things at length. Fortunately, this was the case when we talked during our interview. Prior to my interview with Mollie, I examined her journey map, as I did with all of the participants journey maps (Marquez et al., 2015). As I examined Mollie's map, I noticed right away that there was a lot of detail. She had drawn a road, that stopped and changed into a more mountainous and natural scene. I also noticed another line that was drawn over the mountains and valleys of her map. It was labeled "Happyness" and often followed the mountains, and sometimes was directly inverse of them. I also noticed that

Mollie had taken great care to make “Upper Calf Creek” stand out as a foreboding mountain. Even without talking to Mollie about her journey map, this made sense to me as she struggled quite a bit on that hike. Overall, it seemed that Mollie ended the SUPT much happier than she was at the start. These observations bore out when Mollie told me about her journey map (see Figure 14) in our interview. I began each of my interviews with the participants in this study by asking the students to tell me about their journey maps and what they were trying to show with them. Mollie had drawn one of the most detailed journey maps of all eight participants.

Figure 14

Mollie's Journey Map



She also described her journey map to me in quite a bit of detail. It did surprise me though that she described it as an “amazing journey map” and she downplayed it, saying “Well, I don’t know. I drew it really quickly” while giving off an air of uncertainty or a lack of confidence. She then went into describing her journey map and what she had drawn. Her journey map was drawn, as described above, with two different sidewalks, one that represented her learning about the trip, and what it would take to go on the trip, and the other her preparedness, or “being ready.” She included multiple different crosswalks across the road, between the sidewalks, to represent conflicts and worries she had, like, “the first one, your food might get bad because you can’t get food really really early on” or “I kept forgetting about it [getting ready for the trip], just being so used to the learning sidewalk.” She said this caused her to have to rush getting ready the night before the trip, shown by the “Monday morning” finish line at the end of the road. These *feelings of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) prior to the experience were a very common theme among nearly all of the participants (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016). Based on the responses from the surveys and the interviews, this is due largely to a lack of experience in this type of an OEE.

She then showed our actual leaving for the trip as a slide, “cause it was easy just sitting in the car, but I’m holding all of my stuff, and it’s easy to lose something in the lava because you might drop it while going down the slide.” The fact that she used lava to represent the bad things that could happen on the trip was telling of how nervous she actually was. At the bottom of the slide that represented traveling to our destination, she then began to show the hikes and how she felt about the hikes, using two separate lines.

One line represents the difficulty of the hike, the other line represents her “Happyness” during that hike. She told me that the reason her happiness dropped on the first two hikes was because she felt the group rushed to be done at the end of the hike. “And then we ran home through, I swear we ran, we always ran back from it, and it drives me crazy.”

While we didn’t actually run, she was annoyed because she is someone who like to take her time, and take it all in, and the group often hurried along, especially toward the end of a hike.

On the lower half of her journey map, she has drawn a large and ominous mountain to represent how difficult the Upper Calf Creek Falls hike was for her. As the mountain peaks, her happiness line dips quite low. “I was just a little annoyed, and I wasn’t thinking about my friends, or how amazing this place was, I was just thinking ‘Get to the end of this.’ So, my plummet of happiness was because of that.” The last thing she had represented on her journey map was another slide, representing how easy the rest of the trip, and the travel home was, as well as her relief at not losing any of her things on the trip.

This is going home. It’s a big slide, ‘cause I won’t lose all my stuff then. And I’m with all my friends, ‘cuase I made so many friends on the trip and I really enjoyed all the people there. It was so fun. We were such a big family at the end.

At the very end however, her happiness drops very quickly. This was showing how she felt upon arriving back at home, and the trip coming to an end. “Actually, when I got home, I did cry a little bit” The theme of *being and learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) was something that showed up often with Mollie and many of the other participants. In fact, it was one of the most prominent themes that emerged from the data.

It also stood out to me that Mollie again showed in her journey map, and a little in her interview, being worried about losing her things, or her food going bad before the trip. This seemed to really bother her, and at the end of the trip, when neither of those things had happened, she seemed quite relieved. She mentioned:

I had to get a lot of stuff prepared, and I had to buy a lot of stuff with my mom, because we've never really been outdoorsy and, like I bought new hiking shoes and I had to break them in

which hints at why she might have been so concerned with keeping track of her possessions during the trip. This theme of *lacking access to some of the necessary supplies and equipment* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007) for this trip is something that showed up several times in my interviews with the participants in this OEE, as well as through my own experiences as a teacher and trip leader, which will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter. This lends support to the idea that a lack of access to equipment and supplies, or the money to purchase those items, could be a substantial barrier to participation in the SUPT for many of the eighth-grade students at IWJH. This will be addressed in depth later in this chapter, as well as in the next (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007).

During our interview Mollie also expressed some worry about not being able to make it physically on the hikes we would be going on during the trip. This was interesting to me because of all the participants that went, she had quite a bit of experience in the outdoors with her family. They had gone to and hiked in several locations such as Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, Zions National Park, and Valley of Fire State Park. Even with so much experience traveling with her family, she had not

yet gone to any of the places we visited on this trip, other than a quick stop to Bryce

Canyon National Park on a family trip. She said:

I have actually been there once before, but that was just on our way back from a camping trip that my family had. And that was from Valley of Fire. We had stopped at Bryce Canyon for like an hour, and we just walked along the front rim.

Beyond that, she did not know much about the areas we visited on this trip.

Prior to the SUPT, she said the thing she was most looking forward to was “a certain person” which, judging by her tone and the fact that she blushed as she said this, I took to mean another participant with which she had a crush on. I then asked if she looked forward to anything else about the trip, to which she responded “going outside, and meeting other people as well. Like getting to know Diane and Jane and John and people like that.” Mollie’s response here continued to support the theme of *learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) as one of the major parts of this OEE.

She also mentioned wanting to learn more about the outdoors and wanting to see “great views” in another part of our interview. She was excited to participate in this trip because:

the great views, and I never really known anything about it. And it was really popular, I guess. Because a lot of people talk about it. And I’ve never seen it before, so I was excited to see especially the views and the rock formations.

Connecting with scenery (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and *connecting with geology and geographical formations* (Ford, 2003) were other themes that continued to show up all during the trip. For many of the participants this was a major part of their participation in this OEE, either prior to the trip as something they anticipated, or after the trip as something they

brought up in our interviews, or in the number of pictures they took on the trip. In the ways the participants talked about the scenic views in conjunction with how often they took pictures, I found this to be one of the ways that the participants expressed their connection to the places we visited on the trip (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

As I mentioned above, Mollie is a somewhat shy person. She seemed to have started out the trip on the outside of the group but was quickly brought in to be a part of it. She confirmed this when I asked her if she always felt like she was part of the group on the trip and she answered:

The first part I felt a little alone, and shy, because...I was supposed to go with [an eighth-grade student at IWJH that did not go on the trip], but [she] decided not to go, because of a bit of drama. And so I felt a little bit alone, so I first started hanging out with [a student who did go on the trip, but did not participate in the study] because I knew her from guitar [class]. And then, after a while, I hung out with [a different student who went on the trip but did not participate in the study] and John and Jane and Diane and that was really fun.

I found it interesting that she was looking forward to getting to know her peers better. It seems she was successful at this based on observations of the trip that were recorded in my field notes like:

At dinner the whole group is sitting together at one table, except for Mollie because she is at her own table drawing and covering it so that no one can see what she draws. The group invites her over, but she doesn't move, and refuses, so John moves over next to her. Then Ted, and finally Louis move over by her. They all talk together. (Journal Entry, May 14th)

Observations like these add continuous support to the theme of *social learning* (Garst et al., 2001) on the SUPT.

To add further evidence to this theme of *learning in a social setting* (Garst et al.,

2001) and the impact it had on Mollie and the other participants, Mollie told me, “We were such a big family at the end.” Another participant, Rachel, also brought this up in her interview when she responded to the question about what she thinks she will remember most about this trip. Rachel told me “Probably all the friendships and like how we were kind of like a family as Mollie put it.” These quotes and the observations of how well and often the group worked together and discussed the things we were learning about, along with numerous others discussed throughout this chapter led me to the conclusion that learning in a social setting may be one part of why the SUPT, and other OEEs like it, are so successful at helping participants to experience the area and make a memorable connection (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

Something else that I found to be interesting, and frankly surprising was the fact that Mollie hated hiking prior to this trip. Her and I were talking as we hiked back from Hickman Bridge in Capitol Reef National Park, and she said to me, “We’re so lucky. I’ve learned so much on this trip. I even like hiking. I used to hate it. My mom even asked, ‘Are you sure you want to go?’” Up until that point, Mollie had seemed as though she had always enjoyed hiking. She had struggled on the Upper Calf Creek Falls hike, but she still seemed to enjoy it quite a bit. Her dislike of hiking prior to the trip, and her transformation into loving to hike came up again in our interview after the trip had taken place.

Well, before I went on this trip, ...well I HATED hiking, but now I LOVE hiking. It feels good to do something other than sit in front of a TV. I like doing stuff now, like out in the outdoors, ‘cause it’s really fun.

This response gave further evidence to the theme of *being active in the outdoors*, a theme that Mollie returned to later.

When I asked her what it was about the trip that had caused such a change from hating to hike into loving to hike, she responded:

‘Cause if the trip was just a bunch of hikes without the views, and the special, like, scene at the end...because we always had that with, like the falls and the Petrified Forest...that really helped bribe the hike for me. And so, I got used to hiking, and now I just love it.

It was having something we were aiming for, something that we were hiking to, that helped her to enjoy the hikes that we went on, as opposed to just hiking without some sort of scenery or target in mind. This adds support to the theme of *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), as well as giving another suggestion of how to improve the SUPT and other OEEs. The more scenic views that can be included, as well as hikes with a target destination, such as a natural bridge or waterfall, may help participants to be more excited and more likely to connect with the area (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

In the interview, I asked Mollie, and each of the other participants in turn, about each of the different areas that we went to during the trip, and what her opinion was of each. We started with our first area in Bryce Canyon National park, starting at the visitor’s center, and then by walking along the Rim Trail, and then down into Bryce Amphitheater using the Queen’s Garden Trail, as described in the previous chapter. Mollie told me that this was one of her favorite hikes “because we got to go down into the amphitheater” which she had not be able to do on her previous visit because

it was during winter, so we could see all the snow on the hoodoos, but we couldn't go down into the amphitheater 'cause all the hikes were closed, and it'd be so cool to go in and out of that place.

Being able to go down into the Bryce Amphitheater was something she had wanted to do, and "I had really a lot of fun with that." Her response made sense in the context of the theme of *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and added support for this being one of the major factors helping the participants form a connection with the places we visited.

When I asked her about our time in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park and especially on the Petrified Forest Trail and the Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows, she talked about really enjoying it because she was able to see so much petrified wood, and in so many varieties.

I've seen petrified wood before, at Valley of Fire, there's one tree, and I thought that that was really cool. So, to see a petrified forest was absolutely amazing. Because...and they were so colorful too. The one at Valley of Fire was just orange and brown. But the ones there were pink and white and purple and green and orange and yellow and red. It was beautiful.

Mollie's fondness for the petrified wood was one example of how the participants *connected with the geology and geological formations* of the area (Ford, 2003). These connections turned out to be one of the stronger themes in this study.

Mollie really liked our time in the Lower Calf Creek Falls area in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument because of the views, and "it was a long hike as well, which was a little annoying, but I enjoyed it because I like to take time with things to really let it sink in, you know." This idea matched with what she had drawn and explained in her journey map, as well as the fact that I often noted in my field notes that

she was usually found at the end of the group on the trails, taking her time, not rushing on the hikes. This theme of *connecting with the scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), and taking it in, is as can be seen already, one that often came up often. Mollie also remarked that she like the actual falls on the hike because

it was shady and I really enjoyed that, because we got to hear the birds chirp and the water go through the river and that was really nice. And then the falls, it was really fun to go step in the water. And yeah, I had a lot of fun there.

Mollie's response here brought up two of the other themes often found in the participants responses, such as *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014), and *a feeling of excitement for the outdoors and nature* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005). I was surprised by how often the subject of water and the participants connecting with it, came up in the participants responses. Whether it was Wide Hallow Reservoir in Escalante State park, or the Lower and Upper Calf Creek Falls.

The hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was, as mentioned above, very difficult for Mollie, and somewhat of a low point in her happiness on this trip. "It was a really hard hike, and then at the end, I just didn't like it as much." This, along with her description and drawing on her journey map, gave evidence as to why this hike was not as enjoyable for her. We were, in fact, worried about Mollie's health on the hike out of Upper Calf Creek Falls, which I included a note in my field notes that read, "We worry about Mollie with heat stroke (Journal Entry, May 16th)." She ended up being fine after we gave her some water to help cool her off and rehydrate, but she definitely struggled and the heat took a toll on her. She did have a

positive note about Upper Calf Creek Falls towards the end of this section of our interview though. She said, “But I guess it was really cool to see what happened at the top of a waterfall, how it forms different puddles and goes from puddle to puddle” showing that this was not a completely negative experience for her, and adding further support for the theme of *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014) on this trip.

The themes of *learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *connection to scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) showed up again when I asked Mollie about our time in Capitol Reef National Park and our hike to Hickman Bridge. She said,

Hickman Bridge I really enjoyed, and I really tried to enjoy the fullness of it, ‘cause it was our last hike, and that made me really sad. But I spent a lot of time with my friends there, and we were all talking, and we were having fun, and the views were beautiful, it reminded me of this one place at Valley of Fire and Checker Board Mesa, I guess, at Zions. And when we got to the bridge, it was so big, and really cool, because you could hear the echo there. And I really liked that.

Both of these themes played a major role in how this trip effected Mollie’s, and several other participants, perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002).

When I asked her if she liked learning in the outdoors, Mollie responded,

Yeah. Before this trip I thought it would be hard to learn to identify species or stuff, but it was really fun, and you made it really fun, and not boring, and you did it at a good pace too, ‘cause I learned so much in a little amount of time, and I didn’t feel rushed at all, unlike how I do at school. And so, I got to identify so many new species of plants and I got so excited when I got to first identify one on my own. The Stork’s Bill, which was the purple flower that grew all over there.

Mollie really worked hard to learn the material presented in each lesson, and to then use it on her own, as demonstrated in her excitement over identifying a type of wildflower on

her own time, by herself, using only the field guides available to all of the participants. She also told me that on this trip, she liked that, “we got to do stuff, it was kind of hands on, we got to go explore, and it was really fun.” A couple of the participants had mentioned this idea of how learning on the SUPT was different from the more traditional learning environment of learning at school (AEE, n.d.). Mollie’s focus on the *hands-on learning* (AEE, n.d.) nature of outdoor learning was a theme that showed up in other participants responses, but the idea of the pace of learning was not as common. Both of these aspects can inform not just OEEs like the SUPT, but learning in all situations.

Mollie’s response when asked what she didn’t like about learning in the outdoors was, “Um, that’s hard to say. The sun, I guess. ‘Cause whenever you’re learning outdoors, the sun’s always there and you have to put sunscreen on, I guess.” Something causing discomfort, like too much sun or bugs, was the main response to not only Mollie’s, but most of the other participants when I asked this question. This theme of *comfort in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003) is another area that informs us how we can improve the SUPT and other OEEs. Mollie’s hesitation in answering this question suggested to me that learning outside was an overall positive experience for her. This idea was further supported when I asked her if she would go on another trip like this if she had the chance. She responded with, “Absolutely! It’s just so fun getting to know new people and going to hike and be healthy and go see amazing stuff.”

Add to this her overall opinion of the area.

I love it because I can identify so many different plants and different rocks and I want to go down there again sometime and go see it, like look more in depth to it because we only really had a day to go to each place and learn about it. So, I wanna really spend more time looking at the views down there.

It continues to help us understand just how positive this experience was for her. In end, she was quite sad the trip was over. “We were about to leave and the trip would be over. Actually, when I got home, I did cry a little bit.” In these responses, Mollie also hit on a number of the themes found in this research, such as *connecting to plants* (Bullock, 1994), *connecting to geological features* (Ford, 2003), *being physically active in the outdoors* (Cooper et al., 2010; Page et al., 2010), and *learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001). All of this gives a deeper understanding of the positive impact this OEE has had on Mollie’s perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors.

One thing that Mollie took away from the trip was an increased concern for global climate change. *A desire to protect the areas we visited* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006) was another of the themes that emerged from this study. This protective feeling is evident of a deep connection to nature that can lead to positive changes in environmental behavior. This was shown in Mollie as she took some action to address this concern after returning from the trip.

Well, before [the trip] I was really concerned for, like, global warming, but I didn’t think I could do anything about it, because, like, I’m just one person. But now, I’m even more concerned. I’ve got my family to switch from regular milk to almond milk, which is, like, a big thing because [our family], we really love our milk. But I got them to switch to almond milk because nature doesn’t need as many cows right now and their farts are putting lots of methane, I think, into the atmosphere, which is really bad.

While this quote shows some limitations to Mollie’s fundamental understanding of how cows are contributing to global climate change, it more importantly shows that because of this trip, she felt empowered to take action, and encourage her family to take action, to

protect the things she saw on this trip, and our Earth as a whole.

At the end of this experience, the thing that Mollie said she would remember most from this experience was, “There’s a lot of water there, and I didn’t realize how much water there could be in a desert. And I remember really enjoying the moisture, especially at Lower Calf Creek.” It is interesting that the theme of *making a connection to water* (Nichols, 2014) shows up here as the thing that Mollie anticipates she will remember the most. In fact, several of the participants noted some sort of natural water feature as the thing that they will remember most about this OEE. This could help in the planning of the SUPT and OEEs like it. IF there is some way to incorporate a body of water, a reservoir, waterfall, or river, it could help the participants to make a stronger connection to the places they are visiting (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), which carries the benefits described in the previous chapter.

When I asked Mollie if she had taken a lot of photographs to document and remember her experiences on the trip, she responded in a way that reinforced her image of being shy, and somewhat outside of the group at first, but then lead into how this OEE had affected her perceptions of the outdoors.

The first time I, the first hike I took a couple pictures, ‘cause that’s when my phone was alive, and then after a while, my phone died, and I was too shy to ask someone where the chargers would be. Then, I didn’t care because sometimes you just don’t worry about taking pictures and you need to be in the moment. Take in the view.

While I viewed the participants taking many pictures as a sign of their connection to the places we visited, and wanting to remember that connection, I do not feel that Mollie’s

view here meant she was any less connected. In fact, I feel the opposite is true. She was no longer concerned with making sure she had a picture of each area, but rather focused on being in the moment, and fully connecting and enjoying her experience in these extraordinary locations. This is something that all of us who facilitate this OEE hope each of our participants reach during the trip.

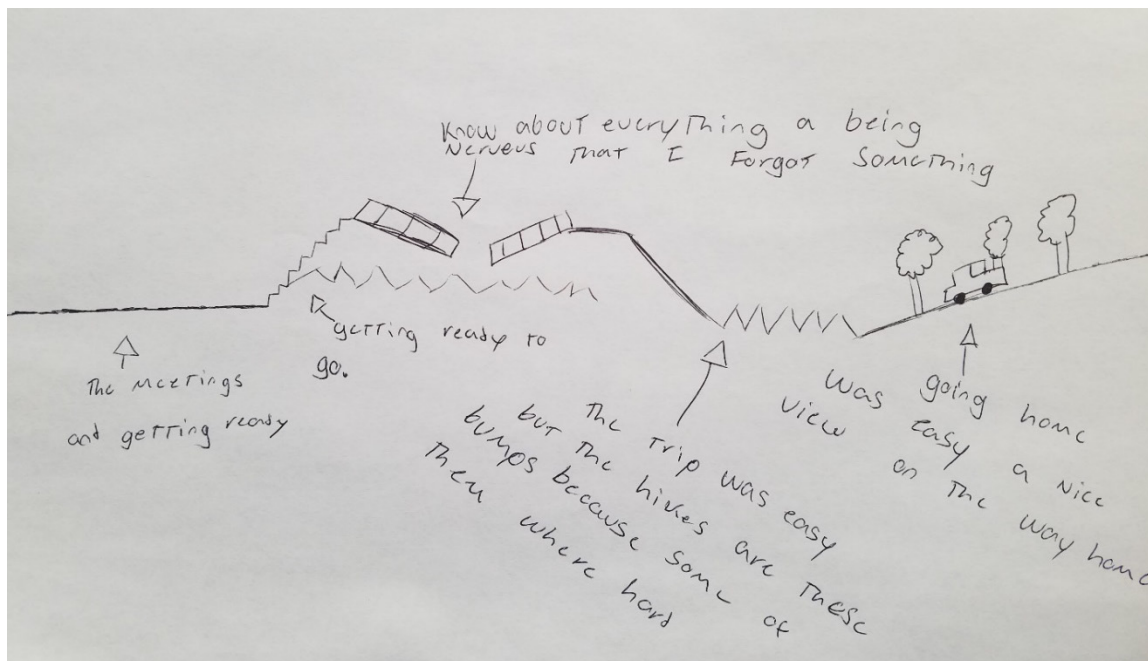
Jane's Experience

You physically get to see it and it's, like...you don't have to be told, you can actually touch it, feel it, see it. – Jane

As we begin to look into Jane's experience on the SUPT, a good place to start, as with the other participants, is to look at each of their journey maps (see Figures 15-21 at the start of each participants section).

Figure 15

Jane's Journey Map



Jane was an athletic, quiet, and somewhat shy, girl. When she was around friends, or her father, who went on the trip as a chaperone, she opened up a bit more, but still remained one of the quieter members of a group. She was on several different sports teams at IWJH, and many of her friends came from those teams. She was reserved, but very cooperative during our interview. She seemed quite excited to talk about her experience on the trip. She began by describing the flat line at the start of her journey map as the preparation meetings, and getting ready for the trip, indicating that they were “easy, simple,” but also hinting that they might not have been interesting. I think this ease was largely due to her prior experiences in the outdoors with her family.

She then drew her “getting ready to go” as an uphill and jagged line, suggesting that it was a struggle for her. At the top of this jagged uphill section, she drew a broken bridge. She labeled it “know about everything [and] being nervous that I forgot something.” When I asked her about this in our interview, she said, “The bridges is kind of the places where I got lost, so I was kind of stuck some places, about the food and what we’re doing on the trip and stuff.” When I asked her to explain what she had meant by this, she responded that it was hard to get ready for the trip because she felt she didn’t know enough about how to prepare for the trip, “like the food was kind of a problem because we didn’t know if we needed to bring food or not.” This confusion about whether or not the participants, as well as chaperones, needed to bring food was due to the changing of facilitators and policy at the last minute, as was described before this section. It is clear from Jane’s journey map and comments though, that this was not clear to her, and was a point of stress. On another level though, this feeling of inadequacy could be a

barrier to some of the eighth-grade students at IWJH. Many of them lack the access to experiences and knowledge to be confident in this area, and that may make them feel like this trip is out of reach for them, despite the teachers and leaders at the school usually being willing to help participants get prepared.

Jane, like Mollie, was also nervous about forgetting something she would need for the trip. “I was nervous about the things I had to bring and getting nervous about the things I might forget.” But her nerves did not get in the way of her excitement for the trip and “Going down there, because I haven’t been down there before. And it was something new.” It seems that many of the participants shared the theme of her *feeling of nervousness or anticipation* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) for this trip as they prepared to go.

When I asked her what obstacles she had to overcome to go on this trip, she responded with, “Not really anything. Nothing I can think of.” It is interesting to note that she did not consider her nerves as an obstacle to her going on this trip, and that she didn’t feel like there was anything that got in her way of participating in the SUPT. It will be shown that this lack of substantial barriers or constraints was consistent for the majority of the students who participated in this OEE. Based on their reported demographic information, this is quite consistent with what is found in the literature (Warren, 2005). Middle-class White people, like the participants in this study, tend to have fewer constraints to their participating in outdoor activities.

Jane went on to draw the trip as a level line, but very jagged, more so than the line representing getting ready for the trip. Her label for this line informed me that she

thought the trip was overall easy, but some of the hikes were hard. “Some of the hikes were harder than the others. Like Bryce Canyon was a pretty steep hike. And Upper Calf Creek.” She ended her journey map with a car driving past trees and a label that tells us that she thought the way home was easy, with “a nice view.” Jane’s comments on the scenery, even through to the end of the OEE, on the drive home, add evidence to the theme of *connecting with the scenery and views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) found in the areas we visited.

Prior to the SUPT, Jane enjoyed the outdoors quite a bit, “We go camping a lot. And I play a lot of sports, so I love playing outside.” She prefers outdoor field trips to indoor ones. “I loved doing those more than the inside ones.” Despite her love for outdoor field trips, she could only remember a school trip to a local amusement park when I asked her what other outdoor field trips she had been on. After participating in this outdoor experience, she still feels very much the same about the outdoors and OEEs, meaning that the trip did not diminish her love of or concern for the outdoors, nature, and learning in the outdoors, if anything, it had a positive impact strengthening her perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors.

When I asked her what she most looked forward to about the trip, she said, “The hiking. Yeah, I was really excited to go on the hikes.” She was nervous that she would not be able to do some of the hikes because they might be too difficult. This was before she even knew which hikes we were going to be going on, and she was more than capable on each of the hikes we participated on in this trip, though, as mentioned above with her journey map, some were difficult for her as will be seen throughout this chapter. A lack

of experience, or in Jane's case, a perceived lack of experience was a theme that was evident in several of the participants, whether from their own admission or my observations and notes.

From her responses it seems that Jane's view of nature and the outdoors focused on our efforts to protect them. "I like nature. I think the National parks are very important, and how we're taking care of it [is important too]. So other generations can enjoy it." When I asked her if she thinks that we as humans are doing a good job of protecting nature and the outdoors, she answered simply, "Yeah" in a tone that suggests that she feels that we really are doing well. Her response here gave more support to the theme of *a desire to protect an area* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006). It seems that for Jane, as well as the other participants, that after they have seen a place first hand, after experiencing it, they connect with it so deeply that they want others to have the opportunity to do the same, and they want the area to be protected so they can revisit them later.

Jane's main motivation for participating in the SUPT fit another theme *enjoyment of the outdoors*. She said her main motivation was "the outdoors. Because I love being outside. I love the view of it. I love the colors. I just love that area." Prior to the trip, she had not been on an OEE like this one, nor had she been down to these areas, as far as she could remember. Her knowledge of the area before the trip came from her experiences at school. "I knew about the red rock and stuff. And I knew how it was formed." It is interesting to note that during this portion of our interview, she did not include her topic of her research paper for the trip, which was the mammals that can be found in Southern

Utah as part of the things she knew about the area before the trip. In fact, only one participant mentioned their prior research as information they knew about the area before they went on the trip. Most of the participants had completed their research before we left. It is interesting to note that this more traditional type of school assignment did not come to mind for most of the participants.

During our interview, I asked Jane about each of the different areas and hikes we had gone to and, as I did with Mollie and all of the participants, recorded their perceptions of each area. For Jane, Bryce Canyon National Park and the Rim Trail/Queen's Garden Trail hike was her favorite. "I loved the view of it. I loved being at the top and being able to oversee all of it." Her love of the scenery and views further supported and solidified the theme of *connecting with scenery and views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) as one of the strongest factors influencing the participants perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors. As will be discussed in a later chapter, this information could be instrumental in the improvement of the SUPT and other OEEs.

While on this hike, after we had climbed the steep trail back out of the Bryce Amphitheater, we sat on the rocks in the very warm air, under the overcast sky, and we took a few minutes to rest and get a drink of water. Several of the participants were talking among themselves, and I noted in my field notes that one participant, John, who will be discussed later in this chapter, said, "That's a good hike. That's kind of embarrassing. Only .8 of a mile [for that part of the trail]. But it was straight up (Journal Entry, May 13th)." He was referencing how difficult it had been for so many of the

participants, many of whom, adults and teens alike, were red-faced, sweaty, and quite winded. But Jane took a different, more positive outlook of being able to hike that section of the trail. She said, “I feel accomplished.” This shows that despite it being difficult for her, as she explained in her journey map, she felt she had met the challenge, and gained something, that it was a positive experience. While there was a definite theme in the responses of participants in the form of *meeting with a challenging situation* (Little & Wyver, 2008), especially in response to the Upper Calf Creek Falls hike, not all participants voiced a feeling of accomplishment like Jane did. Instead, some just viewed it as a difficult, and even unpleasant experience, as will be shown later in this chapter.

When I asked her about her perceptions of Escalante Petrified Forest State Park and the Petrified Forest Trail/ Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows, she said, “That was cool. I enjoyed learning about how the wood was formed. And all the plants near there.” Her enjoyment of learning about the formation of petrified wood and plants, especially the trees and wildflowers of the area, lend support to the themes of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), *connection to geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003), and *a connection to plants* (Bullock, 1994). Later in our interview, I asked her specifically about how she felt about learning in the outdoors. She responded with, “I just...I just love nature. I love learning about it.” I asked her what makes it different from learning in the classroom, to which she replied, “Because you physically get to see it and you don’t have to be told, you can actually touch it, feel it, see it.” Her response fit neatly in support of the themes of *hands on learning* (AEE, n.d.). It also points out that Jane noticed that the

way she was learning on the SUPT was different than the way she was often being taught in a traditional classroom, something that is often cited in the literature on outdoor education (Hammerman et al., 2001). When I asked her what her least favorite thing about learning in the outdoors was, her answer was simple and direct, “Nothing.”

The hike to Lower Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument was her favorite hike out of the two waterfalls. “The falls was amazing when you got down there, and it appeared out of the forest.” Here she is referencing a part of the trail just before you get to the actual Lower Calf Creek Falls. As we were hiking along the trail through the canyon, we came around a corner, and there was a stand of trees surrounded by the canyon walls, and right in the middle of it, towering above the trees was Lower Calf Creek Falls. All of us seemed to be awestruck, and I took note that Jane stopped for quite some time taking pictures of the scene she described here as her favorite part of that location. Her response, along with my corresponding field notes, give even more evidence supporting the themes of *connecting with scenes and views*, and *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014).

Upper Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument did not have the same effect on her. “The falls wasn’t that fun.... It was just nowhere to go. And, yeah, there was nothing really down there to see.” It is interesting to note that she either was not interested in or did not remember some of the things that we saw at the bottom of Upper Calf Creek falls, such as the poison ivy and the Boreal Toad we caught. With her affection for and appreciation of the outdoors and nature shown in other parts of the interview and in my observations of her, I would venture to guess that she had just

forgotten about those things. Regardless of this though, those experiences did not make a strong enough impression on her mind to be brought up in that moment.

The hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls was not a completely negative experience for her. “When we went to the top part and saw like the little falls running through it, that was cool. I liked seeing how the falls, how they run into the actual waterfall, the full waterfall.” Here she is talking about our experience of hiking to the area above Upper Calf Creek Falls and looking at all of the smaller waterfalls and pools described before, that lead up to the much bigger Upper Calf Creek Falls. It seems that the vast majority of the participants had a similar experience to Jane’s for this part of the trip. They did not like the bottom of the waterfall as much, with all its mud, and the poison ivy, but really enjoyed the area at the top of the waterfall and walking back along the Calf Creek and seeing how it fed into the waterfall, further adding to the theme of the participants *making a connection with water* (Nichols, 2014).

Jane explained to me that the hike to Hickman Bridge in Capitol Reef National Park had a similar affect as seeing Lower Calf Creek Falls for the first time. “Oh, that was...I...I loved seeing how nature forms itself, and how, yeah. I can’t really explain it, but...Just like walking and turning that corner and just seeing this huge bridge that was formed by nature.” It was moments like this that are telling of how Jane’s feelings and perceptions of these areas and this OEE were affected by this OEE.

I really love them, and I want to go back. I liked the hikes. I enjoyed the view. And you kind of...can’t...the pictures, it doesn’t do it justice for seeing how amazing it really is when you’re up there.

It also shows that once again, the theme of *connecting with scenes and views*, as well as

connecting with geology and geological formations show up (Ford, 2003).

At the end of our interview, Jane said she would go on another trip like this if she had the chance, which fits with what she had previously told me, and what I had seen during our experience. One of the things I took note of in my field notes with many of the students, but especially Jane, was how excited they were to learn new things, and that many of them took so many photographs while on this trip. Both of these were especially true for Jane.

For example, on the last night of the trip, after we had attended a presentation on mountain lions by one of the park rangers in Capitol Reef National Park, I wrote:

Jane went up on stage and helped show how high a mountain lion can jump and how far a mountain lion can jump with the park ranger, holding a long measuring tape. She got a sticker for it, and she actually was really excited about it, and she was excited she got called up...Most of the kids walked back [to camp when it was done]. Jane and another student went up and felt the mountain lion pelt that she, the ranger, had and looked at the [mountain lion] skull. Then we went back, and Jane stayed up talking to her dad and telling her dad about it and all the things she learned. Then she talked about how many pictures she had taken. Everybody else just...kind of went to bed.

When I asked her how many pictures she had taken, she said it was, “Probably like around 500.” This section of notes, along with things gathered in my interviews with the students strengthens the themes of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), and *connecting with the scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) as shown by so many pictures being taken. All of this seems to point to an overall connection for Jane to the places we visited.

The thing that Jane told me she would remember most about the experience was

“Just going on it with everyone. The people I went with.” Prior to the trip, she felt like she was socially included in school, and she was even friends with some of the other participants. I asked her if she had made any new friends on the trip, and she said she had, “like Louis, Mollie, and Ted. I didn’t really talk to them before.” It is data like this that supports another two of the main themes I found all throughout this research, and those are *learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002). Many of the participants, Mollie and Jane, as well as most of those yet to be discussed, noted at some point something positive about the social nature of this experience. This is something that very much stood out to me as well all throughout the experience.

John’s Experience

It was honestly more fun than I thought it would be. – John

John was a social and charming boy, though during our interview together, he kept most of his answers rather succinct. He often liked to find the easiest and quickest way to get things done, and our interview seemed to be no exception. In most situations, John was able to move rather freely between social groups, and likes attention, and likes to make people laugh, occasionally at other people’s expense. He really seemed to enjoy the trip, and seemed to be interested in many of the learning activities and hikes that we went on, so I was surprised to find out when I interviewed him, that he originally did not want to go on the trip at all, but rather, his mom made him go.

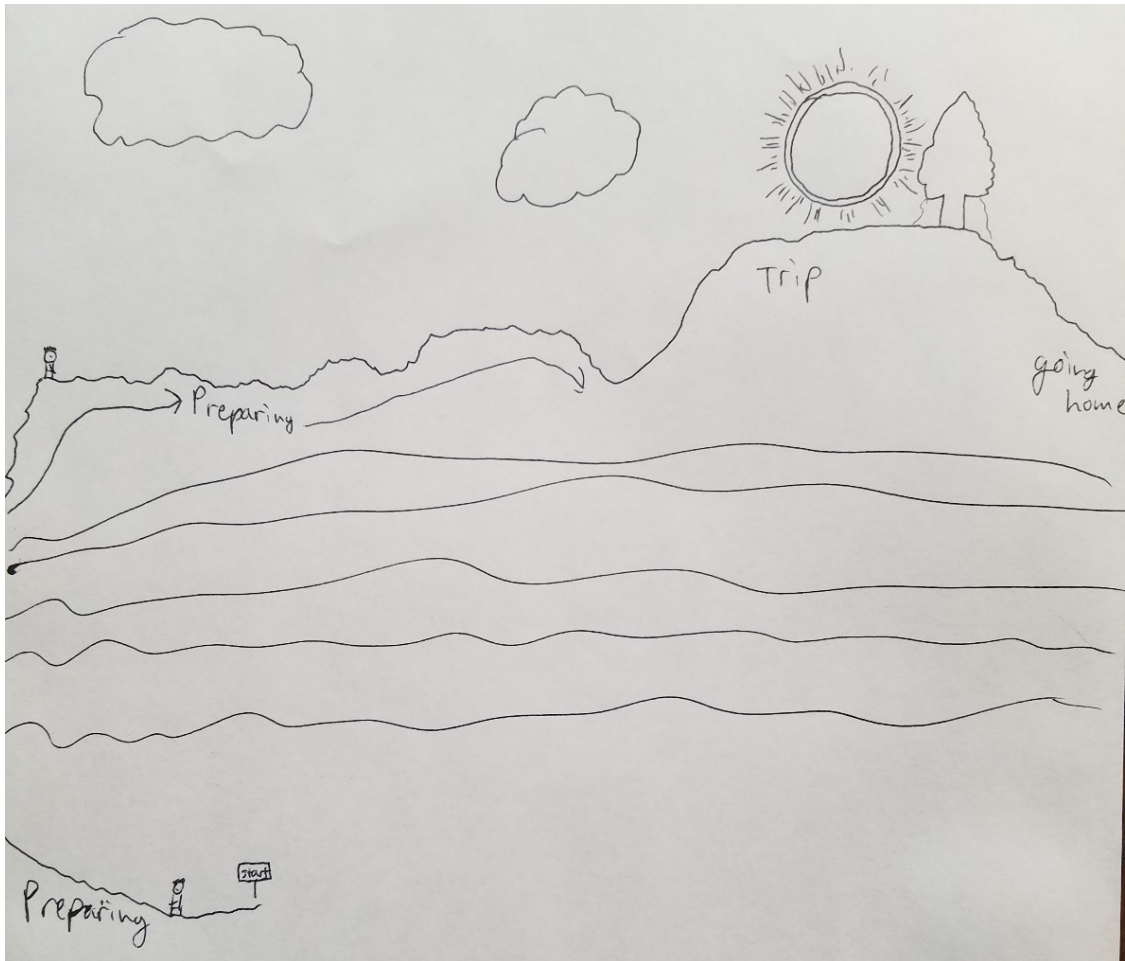
As I had done with all of the participants, we started the interview by having John explain his journey map to me. He explained that all of the lines from the starting point,

crossing back and forth from the bottom of the page toward the top, where it becomes a rugged mountain were all preparing for the trip.

So, uh, you're just going through and preparing, you have to go through all this part. And finally get here and you're still preparing. Just having to know what to do, what to get, what you should think about for it, the trip.

Figure 16

John's Journey Map



Getting ready for the trip was a long, mostly easy endeavor, but toward the end he had a harder time, hence the peaks and valleys. This *feeling of nervousness or*

anticipation (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) seemed to be a common theme for many of the students. As the trip got closer, getting ready became more of a challenge, whether it was from finding all of their gear, waiting until the last minute, or just the nerves associated with leaving. This idea that preparing for the trip could be challenging in many ways also could inform us of where some constraints to participation may lie. Most of the participants cite the pre-trip as causing them to feel nervous, which is of course natural. However, it is possible that many who would have wanted to go on the SUPT were not able to because the feeling was overwhelming. Or, perhaps they were blocked at the pre-trip stage because they were unable to find the gear they needed, or get their grades up, or maybe they were inexperienced in some way and didn't know where to go for help with these barriers (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007).

John then quickly moved into the part of his journey map representing the trip, and going home at the end. "And then you get to the trip and it's just a nice long thing. It's good, and it's got shade. And then going home is just quick and easy." This is all represented by the top section of his journey map, where he drew a flat mountain top, with the sun and a shady tree, followed by a gentle slope downhill. This, along with his description, lets us know that overall, he enjoyed the trip, that it was a pleasant experience for him, but that it was also easy for him to go home at the end. It was his emphasis on how long it seemed to take for him to prepare for the trip suggested that he did not enjoy that part of the experience, especially compared to the actual trip.

When I asked him if he liked the trip, he said, "It was fun." I asked him what was fun about the trip, and he said, "Just all the hikes. They were all cool." This answer made

sense to me, as I had noted several times in my field notes during the trip that he seemed to be enjoying the hikes. One example was, “After returning to the trail head for the Lower Calf Creek Falls hike, John came over to me and commented, ‘This is such a cool area.’ (Journal Entry, May 15th)” Another example was after the participants had returned from walking around the lake on a trail they often would hike if they had a moment of down time, John was eager to try something new. “John came back from the hike around the lake after the others and said, ‘We should find another trail. We’re so familiar with that one.’” It seemed as though John was excited to explore and experience new areas he hadn’t yet seen. It also was apparent from his excitement that he had connected with the areas we had visited so far.

I then asked him how he felt prior to going on the trip, and his answer surprised me. “I was honestly contemplating about going, ‘cause, you know, hikes suck most of the time.” As I had previously mentioned, I had not expected this answer from him at all. Up until our last day on the trip, at which point John and several of the other participants seemed burnt out, I would never have questioned if he was enjoying himself or not, or if he even liked hiking. I asked him what it was about hiking that he did not like, to which he replied, “Just the hard, steep parts.” At this point in our interview, I was concerned that I misinterpreted him in my observations during the experience, so I asked him what he thought about it after he had gone on the trip, and his answer was more in line with what I saw on the trip. “It was honestly more fun than I thought it would be.” It was here in John’s responses, as well as other places in our interview, that we can see just how much of a positive impact that the SUPT had on John’s perceptions of and attitudes

towards the outdoors. He went from not wanting to even go on the trip, and not enjoying hikes, to being very excited about finding new hikes and thinking that the experience was fun. This also gave support to the strong theme of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005).

I asked him if he liked being in the outdoors in general, almost expecting him to say that he did not. He instead replied, "I like being outside, 'cause, you know, I like doing sports and stuff like that. But if it's just like hiking and just stuff like that, I don't really like it as much." I decided to try and clarify this a little more and asked him if he liked going to parks, and going camping, to which he both replied that he did. I then asked if it was just hiking that he did not like, and he paused, and then simply said, "Yeah." It was made fairly clear to the participants that this OEE would consist of several hikes, some of them quite difficult, so I was curious what he was looking forward to about the trip before he went, and he said, "Honestly, I don't know. 'Cause it wasn't something I was thinking I was actually going to do." Again, I was rather surprised by his answer, so I asked him what had motivated him to go on the trip. He said, "My mom. She wanted me to go because she's gone with every other kid that she's had." John's lack of interest in participating in the SUPT is indicative of one of the main constraints facing this OEE and others like it. If students aren't interested in attending, whether due to not knowing enough about the experience to get excited, or just not being interesting in going, it is very unlikely they would put in the effort necessary to participate in the experience. It is also worth noting that without the pressure to go coming from his mom, John most likely would not have gone on the trip. If students don't have someone at

home encouraging and helping them to attend the SUPT, it can be a substantial barrier to their participation.

Between the long lines representing getting ready on his journey map, and his responses indicating that he really had not wanted to go on the trip, but instead was made to go by his mother, who also attended as a chaperone, I wondered if there was something about the trip that worried or concerned him. He responded, “Um, not really anything. I mean, there’s nothing to worry about, unless you’re dumb.” Here I took “dumb” to mean unprepared, or not careful, which I thought was interesting that he would consider using such a negative term, when he himself had run out of water on the Lower Calf Creek Falls hike, and another parent chaperone had to filter water from the creek to refill his hydration bladder. His response, and later his insufficient water does fit in with the theme of *a feeling of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) about getting ready for the trip, even if he responded that he himself didn’t have to worry about it.

I then asked John what he had to overcome in order to be able to go on the trip. He responded, “Well...I didn’t have to overcome anything but doing better with like hiking and stuff like that” meaning that he went out into the mountains several times with his mom to hike in order to be better physically prepared for the hikes that we would be going on during the experience. This idea that he would need to work on his physical conditioning prior to the trip brings to light another possible barrier to participation that some of the participants may face. If they are out of shape or feel that they are not physically ready for the trip, they are not likely to go.

Prior to going on this trip, John had not been down to the areas we were going to

visit, and he did not know much about the area either. In fact, we learned the evening that the students presented their research projects as we sat at the picnic tables in the windy and cooling off Capital Reef National Park that he, and another participant, Ted, had not ever completed their research projects. Having these research projects done was supposed to be a requirement for participation in this OEE, but because of the chaos of the last-minute changes in leadership, their unpreparedness was able to slip by unnoticed until that last night.

In a later question in the interview, I asked John if he was excited to go and visit the areas we were going to be seeing and staying at, and he answered “Yeah.” Since that may go against what he had previously told me, I wonder if perhaps he was just telling me what he thought I wanted to hear, or perhaps he was actually excited to visit the locations, but not excited to go on the actual trip or go hiking. When I sought to clarify this a little, I asked him what he was most excited about seeing on the trip. His response was, “Just seeing all the cool stuff that the areas would have.” I then asked him if there was something in particular that he was excited to see, to which he responded, “Uh...the petrified wood.” It is interesting that it was the geology of the area that had held some interest for John prior to the trip. When I asked him what he thought of the area now that he has been on the trip; “I think that it’s a really good area to go to, that honestly would be fun to go to again.”

John’s favorite place we went to was Bryce Canyon National Park because of, “all the cool rock formations they had.” He went on to say that the rocks were his favorite part of the Rim Trail/Queen’s Garden Trail in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park as

well. John's interest in the rock formations in Bryce Canyon and the petrified wood in Escalante show that he had formed *a connection to the geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003) of the areas we visited on the SUPT, one of the more prevalent themes found in this study.

John made sure as he was talking to me to clarify that while Bryce Canyon National Park was his favorite place, Escalante Petrified Forest State Park was his favorite place that we camped at. When I asked him why he like Escalante State Park so much, he said, "I don't know. It was just a really nice spot to camp." I then wondered if he had felt the same way about the Petrified Forest Trail/ Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows hike as he did our campsite, so I asked him what he thought about that particular hike. He said, "That one was pretty cool. 'Cause, you know, we got to see a bunch of different petrified wood, and stuff like that." It seems as though having different geological features, such as the hoodoos of Bryce Canyon National Park, or the petrified wood of Escalante State Park, helped to make hiking interesting and more enjoyable for John. The hike to Hickman Bridge in Capitol Reef National Park seemed to follow this as well. John said of the hike, "That one was really cool because you got to see that cool arch formation." This theme of *connecting with geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003) meant having some sort of an interesting feature on the hike helping to make it a more enjoyable and positive experience for Johan, and seemed to be something that helped some of the other participants as well. (Ford, 2003).

The theme of *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014) showed up and influenced John's perceptions of both of the hikes to Lower and Upper Calf Creek Falls in Grand

Staircase-Escalante National Monument. For both locations, his favorite part was the actual waterfalls, though, he had to really consider the question when I asked him what he liked about the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls. “Uh, that’s a good question. Uh...Probably the falls.” This response made sense in light of his response to an earlier question, when I had just found out that he did not like hiking, especially when the hikes were difficult. I asked him if any of the hikes were as bad as he expected, “Only one of them was. Calf Creek. Upper. Just because of all the steepness going up.” Here again the theme of *meeting with a challenging situation* is apparent (Little & Wyver, 2008). But rather than making John feel as though he had accomplished something, it instead seemed to cause the entire experience of that hike to not be that enjoyable for him.

I wanted to know if because he did not like hiking, and did not like the hike to Upper Calf Creek falls, if he would go on the hike again. He answered rather hesitantly, “Um...probably,” and I wasn’t fully convinced. He did like hiking to the top of the falls and looking around because “It was just a lot nicer.” But he was really bothered by the poison ivy at the bottom of the falls. I found this interesting because I observed him and Ted at the poison ivy near the bottom of the falls and I noted:

They [the participants] were nervous about the poison ivy, but thought it was really cool when they saw it. I don’t think many of them have ever seen poison ivy. Ted and John started making bets as we got ready to leave the base of the falls about how much [money they would give each other] to touch it. John’s mom stepped in and stopped that. (Journal Entry, May 16th)

I am quite sure that neither of them were actually going to touch it, and it really did not seem like the poison ivy bothered him all that much at that time. Clearly the poison ivy, along with the difficulty of the hike, left a rather negative impression of this area on John

though.

The only thing that bothered John about the hike to Lower Calf Creek Falls was, “It wasn’t too hard or anything. It just took a lot of people a long time. And we stopped like 15 times.” This only seemed to be a minor annoyance to him though. On the drive back from the Lower Calf Creek Falls trailhead, I was seated in the back of a minivan with John, Ted, Louis, and a few other participants. As we drove down the road with the windows down, trying to cool off, and surrounded by rolling tan and red sandstone hills, looking at all of the wildflowers blooming in the desert, John looked at me and said, “That was a really nice hike. It was SO pretty.” This elicited quite a response from the other boys. They all excitedly started exclaiming how pretty it was and how great it was. This supports the theme that John, as well as the other male participants in the van had formed a connection to this area, specifically the Lower Calf Creek Falls area, but I suspect far more than that, through the *scenery and views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), and the *water* (Nichols, 2014) because they had been able to actually be there and experience it.

I asked John what he thought about outdoor field trips before he participated in the SUPT, and he told me, “I really hadn’t ever done any besides this one.” I then asked him how he felt now that he had gone on this one, and he responded very positively. “I encourage people to go. It was actually really fun.” I asked him what he would want perspective participants to know about the experience, and he said, “Just how fun it would be, like, to go on the hikes where you get to stop [and learn] and stuff like that.” His enjoyment learning on the trip and desire to let others know about it bring up the

themes of *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) and *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001).

I then asked him if he enjoyed learning in the outdoors, but he said that he only kind of did. I asked him why it was only kind of, and what he did not like about it, and he told me, “I don’t know, it’s the outdoors.” He just was not a big fan of being outside. This was once again surprising to in that all of my observations of John throughout the trip led me to believe that he was enjoying the experience and the learning that went with it.

I wanted to better understand why, especially since it seemed like he was enjoying himself the majority of the trip, and he explained that it was because of, “The sun and the heat a lot of the times.” Several of the participants gave responses to the question of what they didn’t like about learning in the outdoors that related to the theme of *being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003) in that there was some aspect of learning in the outdoors that made them uncomfortable, such as the weather, or bugs like mosquitos. This information can be very useful as we look to improve the SUPT and other OEEs. I then asked John if there was a part of learning in the outdoors that he did like, and he said, “Usually just stuff like rock formations. I like learning about that, how it works” by which I think he meant how it forms. A response that further supported the theme of participants forming a *connection to the geology and geological formations* of the area (Ford, 2003).

In order to better understand what John’s perceptions of the outdoors and nature were after he had gone on the trip, I asked him how he felt about nature and how people interact with nature. He thought a moment, and then responded, “I think we really need to

do better in nature, ‘cause you know, that’s important to our lives.” By “do better,” he had meant, “Not litter, and stuff like that. Not ruin the environment.” I was then curious what he meant by “ruin the environment,” so I again asked for clarification. He said, “Just by going where they shouldn’t. Or throwing stuff around. Putting garbage everywhere.” Here was another instance of the theme of participants *desiring to protect the areas we visited* being supported by their responses (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). Prior to going on the trip, and several times throughout, our group of participants were taught and reminded about the principals of Leave No Trace (Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, n.d.), which seem to encompass the ideas John had for how we can better take care of the outdoors and nature. This all showed that John seemed to have internalized some of the basics of the things taught on the subject during the experience, and contributed to his desire to protect the places we went (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

In the end of our interview, I asked John what he thought he would remember most about his experience on the SUPT. He told me, “Probably, Escalante.” I was curious why he thought he would remember Escalante Petrified Forest State Park the most, so I asked him for a little more detail about his answer, and he added, “Just the cool stuff on the inside of that building [the visitor’s center], or on the hike and stuff like that.” It was really interesting that he decided to include the park’s visitor’s center in what he thought he would remember most about the area because it is a rather small building with only a few things on display. But as he told me this, I remembered that he was quite interested

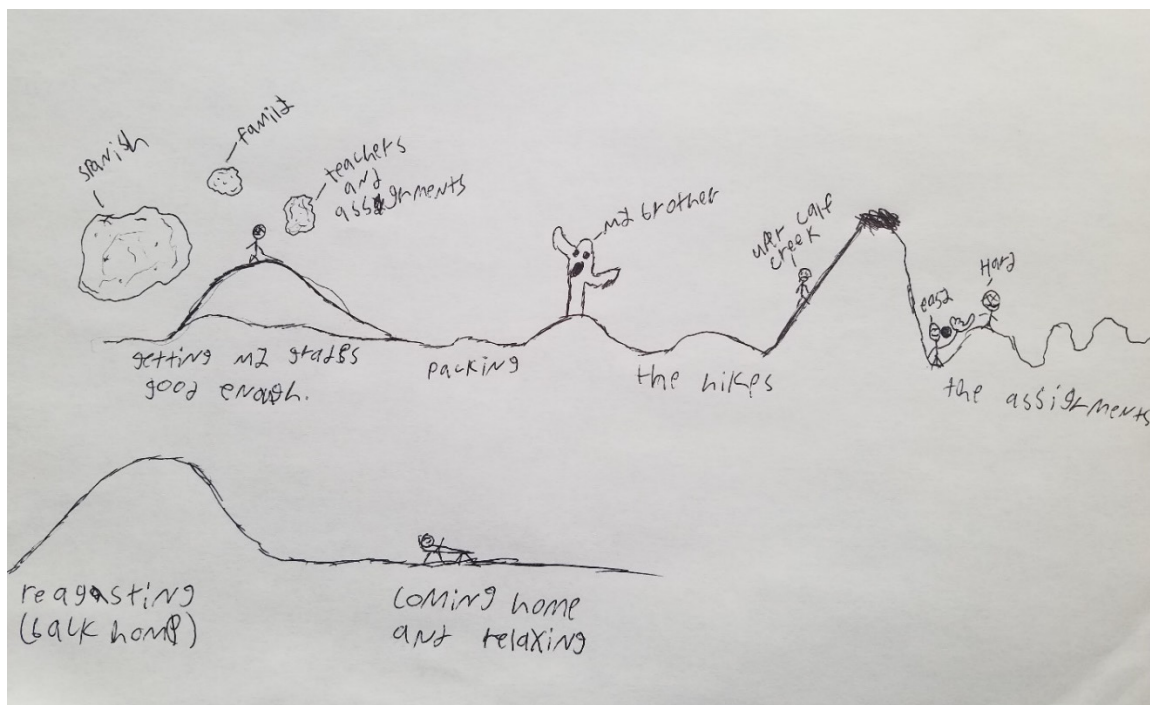
in the information found in there as well as the things displayed at the park. It was also interesting that he would include the hike in Escalante State Park. His change in perception of hiking from not liking to hike, to one of the hikes being something he feels he will remember most about the experience, remember in a positive way, along with his positive feelings for most of the hikes and the areas we visited is quite telling of how this OEE seemed to affect his perceptions of and attitudes towards the outdoors, and learning in the outdoors.

Rachel's Experience

I think that it's a really cool place and that more people, like for this trip, should be able to go down and see it all. - Rachel

Figure 17

Rachel's Journey Map



Rachel was a bubbly and outgoing girl. She was a deep thinker, and she often seemed excited to learn new things. She easily made friends, and had a contagious smile. Though she spent most of the SUPT hanging out with her best friend Diane, she was also able to spend time with many of the participants on the trip.

Rachel started her journey map with an image of herself on top of a hill, and with large rocks falling down all around her. The rocks are meant to represent “teachers and assignments,” “family,” and the largest, her “Spanish” class. She explained, “First is getting my grades to the point where they were okay enough to go on [the trip]. My biggest one was just Spanish mainly. I struggle with that one the most.” Later in our interview, she explained a little more about why “family was one of the rocks on her journey map. “My dad tried to [find] out what was reasonable enough for me to go on the trip. For like, how much it was.” I asked her if by this she meant the amount of money required to go on the trip, the \$125 the students were supposed to contribute toward the cost of the trip. She said, “Yeah, like justifying why he should do that.” By which I took her to mean pay that much money. I asked her later in the interview if her dad had thought the money they had spent on the trip was worth it, and she said that he did.

Rachel and her father’s concern over whether or not the price of the trip was going to be worth it is indicative of one of the main barriers to the eighth-grade students’ participation in the SUPT at IWJH. For a low SES school, and \$125 is a lot of money to spend to send one student on a trip, especially if your family is struggling financially and you are not aware of all the trip has to offer. This idea of money constraining participation will be discussed in detail later in this dissertation.

Her journey map shows a relatively level section that she has labeled as “packing.” She described it as “Packing wasn’t very bad. We had like a few bumps because we had to get certain things. And we had to get stuff from family.” Here she meant she didn’t have all the supplies necessary to go on the trip, and so they had to reach out to others to get the gear she was lacking. This constraint of not having the supplies needed to go on a weeklong OEE could be one of the main barriers that keep so many of the students at IWJH. As was discussed in the Chapter II (Schwartz & Corkery, 2011), one of the main things constraining participation in OEEs was the costs involved. Between her father’s concern over the cost of the trip, and her lack of gear, it seems as though economic access was almost a barrier to Rachel’s participation in the SUPT. If other students at the school did not have access to family that could loan them the gear, and if they were unaware that the school had some gear that could be loaned out, this could have been the factor that kept them from going. As it was, through some effort, Rachel was able to get the necessary equipment by barrowing from her family, but with the schools overall SES, it is safe to suppose that many of the students at the school would not be able to find family or friends that had the equipment to borrow it from, and they would not be able to go out and just purchase it, like Mollie did with her hiking boots, as previously mentioned.

With the school being a Title 1 school, with a very high number of students on free or reduced lunch, and having listened to many students and faculty talk about the issues in participation for the trip, cost comes up quite often, as has been shown above. In fact, I feel that the cost of the trip, and the school falling short in helping the students

know that they will help to pay the fee, is one of, if not the biggest barrier to students at IWJH participation in the SUPT. Related to this would be the lack of access to the necessary gear needed for a trip like this.

If you or your family do not have the means to get it, or a place to borrow it from, it can become an insurmountable barrier for many of the students at the school. Add to this the fact that many of the students are like Rachel and struggle with their grades, and unlike her don't have the chance or help to catch them up, and we begin to gain a deeper understanding of a few of the possible reasons so many students might not have participated in the SUPT (Schwartz & Corkery, 2011). Rachel sharing the things that were an obstacle for herself, along with the obstacles the other participants faced, give credence to what some of the constraints and barriers the students at IWJH were up against when they considered participating in the SUPT. This knowledge, which will be discussed a little in the chapter, and more in the chapters to follow, will help to answer my second research question in this study.

In a later portion of her journey map, Rachel also included a cactus with a somewhat haunted face, that she labeled as "my brother." She explained, "I drew my brother on there because he was just annoying and wouldn't leave me alone the whole time about [the trip]." She brought her brother up again as we talked of her motivations for going on the trip.

One of my main reasons was to go camping with friends and also to learn about new things, learning about different places and what has been there in the past and what kind of caused and created all of it. And to get away from my brother.

It is interesting to note that Rachel wanted to "get away" from her brother, and for Terry,

one of the hard things for her to overcome was being away from her brother. This suggests that for some of these participants family could be, and most likely is, a part of their decision make process on whether or not a student will participate in the experience. However, this would need to be explored in more depth before any such claim could be made.

For now, the other main reasons that Rachel cited as her motivation for going on the trip, “To go camping with friends,” and “to learn about new things,” are both themes that have shown up in the experience of several of the SUPT participants’ experiences. *Learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001), and *learning in the outdoors* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) were two of the themes that came up most often with the participants, and therefore there is one of the main areas that should be looked at as having a positive impact on the participants perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. Rachel also told me, to add data to another common theme among the participants, that she was especially looking forward to learning about the geology of the area, like the canyons and the geological formations, which ties into the theme of *connection with geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003). Again, this is another area that offers answers to the first of my research questions, as well as may be an area that offers insights into how the SUPT and other OEEs might be improved.

There were multiple examples of the themes of *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *learning about the outdoors and nature* throughout the trip. Several of those examples involve Rachel in some way. I observed this several times

in my field notes. The first was very early the first day of our trip, as we drove to Bryce Canyon National Park. We had stopped to get fuel and eat in Beaver, Utah, and Rachel and Diane, who were already close friends prior to the trip, were hanging out together, eating their lunch in Dianne's father's car. I noted that the two girls seemed to always be together, even as simple as "Diane and Rachel sat and giggled in the driver and passenger seat of Diane's dad's car" (Journal Entry, May 13th). In fact, it was quite rare to find any of the participants by themselves at any point in the trip. It was quite apparent that the social aspect of this trip was very important to all of them.

A little while later in the day, when we were actually in Bryce Canyon National Park, exploring the visitor's center, the participants had an assignment to answer some questions that I had posed to them earlier in the day after we had gotten our gear ready in the parking lot. The questions were to help them to figure out what made Bryce Canyon famous, and what forces had formed it. I also had asked them to find one interesting fact that they could share with the group later. I noted that, "Most students looked for the answers, some saw some of the exhibits. A few went into the gift shop. Diane and Rachel were excited to tell me about the answers they found" (Journal Entry, May 13th). It was so energizing to see how excited they were to share what they had learned.

This carried over to the next day when we were debriefing as a group and discussing the day before. As we sat at the picnic tables under the pavilion, I noted that most of the participants were eager and excited to tell the group the interesting fact that they learned about Bryce Canyon National Park. I also noted that when one of the participants would share a fact that someone else was planning on sharing, they usually

could come up with another fact quite quickly. This was evidence that the students were learning as we went, and that they were retaining this information when they would bring up the things they learned, like their interesting facts, later in our interviews.

It was on the first day of the trip that I made a note to myself about noticing the themes of *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *learning about the outdoors and nature* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005). I wrote, “Being social is so important to them. None [of them] are really staying separate (Journal Entry, May 13th).” While Diane and Rachel were often working to learn the new material, they, and nearly all of the participants on the trip, also hung out together. They would talk about what they were learning, and rush to show each other things that they discovered, whether it was a cool fact in a visitor’s center, or a beautiful wildflower that they had just learned to identify. Rarely was a member of the group excluded, either by the group or by their own choice.

Coming back to Rachel’s journey map, I noticed that after drawing her brother as an obstacle on her journey map, Rachel then drew hills that represented the hikes that we went on during the SUPT, as well as the assignments that the participants were required to do on the trip. One of the hills she drew was much larger than the others and includes a stick-figure person drawn only half-way up the front side of the hill. Rachel then labeled this “Upper Calf Creek.” When I asked her about the hikes, especially Upper Calf Creek Falls, she said, “Most of them weren’t that bad. It was just Upper Calf Creek. That one I thought was the hardest, ‘cause the rock face that we had to walk on.” The idea that the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls was the most difficult part of the SUPT was something

that multiple participants brought up, and rightly so. This led to the emergence of the theme of *meeting with challenging situations* (Little & Wyver, 2008). Several of the participants described things like the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls as challenging. It was interesting to note that some, like Jane, viewed meeting that challenge as an accomplishment. While others, like Rachel and John, just seemed to view it as a difficult part of the trip.

As described earlier, it is a steep and challenging hike. However, it should be noted that while most of the participants found this to be the most difficult hike, several of them enjoyed it, and some, like Rachel and Ted, even claimed it as their favorite hike during the experience. While standing in the hot sun, catching our breath, stretching our tired legs, and dumping our daypacks in the trailer, I had somewhat jokingly asked the students if that hike was anyone's favorite, expecting an emphatic "NO!" from the group. I wrote in my field notes that, "Ted and Rachel raise hands that this was their favorite hike. Ted said, "I really liked the waterfalls" (Journal Entry, May 16th) (meaning the smaller waterfalls in the stream above Upper Calf Creek Falls). Here the *connection to water* (Nichols, 2014) for Ted was strong enough that he could, in the moment, look past the challenge of the hike. For Rachel, I suspect that she raised her hand in response because the hike was so challenging, and that she felt she had met the challenge well, adding to the theme of *meeting with challenging situations* (Little & Wyver, 2008).

After drawing the much larger hill for Upper Calf Creek Falls, Rachel then drew three smaller hills that she then labeled as "the assignments." There is a stick-figure person standing on top of the first "assignment" hill, and the person seems to be saying

“Hard.” This is in reference to how Rachel felt about the assignments we gave them during the trip. She said, “And then the assignments. Like some of them were really easy, and then some of them kind of got harder.” It was interesting to note that very few of the students other than Rachel had any mention of the assignments.

Based on my observations during the trip, I do not think this is due to a lack of effectiveness of the assignments. For example, when we were in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park, the students were working on the assignment in which they were to draw their own petroglyph of an idea or symbol of things that they thought would be an important message for people to see. As they worked, I wrote:

It seems like everyone was very excited about this assignment. And worked hard on it. But it's making fun of his peers. Louis analyzes the Lower Calf Creek petroglyph with another student and they go quite in depth. John, Mollie, and Ted really look at other people's petroglyphs. Diane, Terry, Jane, and Louis look at the one Rachel has brought over. They are all very engaged by this assignment. They are very excited about it as they try to figure out the Calf Creek petroglyph as well as each other's petroglyphs. Terry shows her petroglyphs to me. One is a family the other is a heart and says follow your heart next to it. Louis shows me his and it's a car with exhaust coming out and then a frowning face with an arrow pointing to the exhaust to depict the negative effects of car emissions. Jane shows hers off to another student. They discuss it. When most of the group is done, they get up and go for a walk by the lake. (Journal Entry, May 15th)

This quote from my field notes ties into the themes of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), *being and learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *connecting with cultures of the past* (Smith et al., 1997).

The last part of Rachel's journey map showed a large hill, that Rachel labeled “readjusting (back home),” followed by a level line, with a person reclined in a beach chair, which she labeled “coming home and relaxing.” She explained that the reason she drew the hill for returning home was due to the change in elevation affecting her in a

negative way, but once that passed, she was glad to be home and to relax. Her being glad to be home had less to do with her not enjoying the SUPT, as evidenced by how she described the majority of the experience during her interview, and more to do with the theme of *a feeling of burn out* (Campbell, n.d.) that many of the students experienced toward the trip. I think this also had a lot to do with Rachel not feeling well upon returning home. Given a bit of time to recover from being so worn out, I think she went back to an overwhelming positive perception of the SUPT.

After Rachel had finished explaining her journey map to me, I asked her if she liked the Upper Calf Creek Falls hike, despite having drawn it as such a huge obstacle on her journey map. I wanted to see if her response now, a few days after the trip, matched her response at the top of the trail head, right after we had finished the hike. She responded, “Yeah, once we actually go up there. It was really fun. I liked the top most, with the pools and everything. And just being able to sit down and relax.” She also mentioned that she liked it at the bottom of the falls, but not as much as at the top.

Wondering what it was that made a difference between the locations for her, I then asked Rachel what it was about the area at the bottom of the falls that she did not like as much as the area at the top of the falls. Her reason was, “It was kind of like...all...so you can’t really get down in the water without getting your shoes and stuff all muddy, and everything.” Not being able to get into and play in the water at Upper Calf Creek Falls seemed to be a common reason why many of the participants didn’t like the lower part of the falls as much as they did the area above Upper Calf Creek falls. This could be because the students were not able to *connect with water* (Nichols, 2014), a

common theme for many of the participants, as well as they were in other locations on the trip in which the students were able to get into the water and experience it first-hand. Rachel also went on to cite that the steepness of the trail, both going down and coming back up, was a reason why she didn't like the Upper Calf Creek Falls hike as much as the other. This comment brings up the theme of *meeting with challenging situations* (Little & Wyver, 2008) again.

I then asked Rachel how she felt about OEEs like this one before she went on this trip. "I was honestly really excited about this because I like being outdoors and so I thought this would be a good trip and my dad thought it would be a good experience for me to go on." She went on to tell me more about her love for the outdoors, especially her trips to Redfish, Idaho each summer. "There's a lake, and we can go mountain biking, and do a bunch of different hikes up there, and play in the lake." Here again, Rachel gives evidence for a *connection to water* (Nichols, 2014) having a lasting impact on an experience she had in the outdoors. This shows that these types of connections can have a positive effect on the perceptions of and attitudes towards the outdoors, helping to answer my first research question; How did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at IWJH perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs?

I then asked her about structured learning in the outdoors, and she said she liked it too. "It's that it's really different from the stuff that you would learn in school." By this, and considering other things that Rachel had said, I took this response to mean learning in the outdoors was different structurally from learning in a traditional classroom. This idea

was something that is cited often in the foundations of the literature on outdoor education. As Hammerman et al. (2001) point out, learning in the outdoors is fundamentally different from learning in a traditional classroom, and Rachel, as well as a few other participants, noticed this. Related to this, I also asked her what she didn't like about learning in the outdoors, to which she responded with "Bugs. Those get annoying." As mentioned previously in this chapter, *being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003) was a theme that came up several times in response to the question of what the participants liked least about learning in the outdoors.

This led into us talking about outdoor field trips and how Rachel felt about them. She was very positive when she answered that she liked them, though she didn't cite a specific example. Perhaps this means that the ones that she was able to participate in did not make much of an impression on her, or perhaps it means that she actually had very little experience with outdoor field trips.

This led me to ask her if her feelings about the outdoors and participating in trips like the SUPT had changed after having gone on the OEE. She said they had not, she had a very positive view of them before the trip, and that she was still excited about the idea of these types of experiences. "It didn't really change. I still thought it was really fun and a good experience." Her reasoning as to why it was a good experience was rather simple. "It was learning about outdoors and things that were in that area." *Learning about the outdoors and nature* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) was another of the themes that came up in many of the student's responses. As this kind of learning was one of the main points of the SUPT, it made sense and was good to see that this would be an

emergent theme. It was also good to hear that this was a positive and exciting experience for Rachel, and that her perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and learning in the outdoors remained positive after the experience.

One of the things that especially stood out to Rachel and made it such a “cool place” for her was “seeing the petroglyphs down” in the canyon on the way to Lower Calf Creek Falls, as well as the ones in Capital Reef National Park and the fact that for some of the glyphs “not even knowing what they’re supposed to mean.” This matches well with one of her motivations for going on the trip. As was pointed out earlier, Rachel was excited to go to this area of Utah too because she didn’t know much about it, especially the different cultures that were and are there, as well as the geological landscapes that make the area so famous. The petroglyphs made such an impression on Rachel that she bought a hat with an image of the petroglyph of three figures that can be found on the way to Lower Calf Creek Falls, and she was so excited to show us, giving further evidence to the theme of *connecting with cultures of the past* (Smith et al., 1997).

The hike to Lower Calf Creek Falls was Rachel’s favorite hike of the trip. When I asked her why she liked this hike the most she told me, “we actually got to the water, it was fun playing in it. And it was cool, like, just seeing the different stops and learning about different things that were there.” The stops she was referencing here are the interpretive spots, marked by numbered posts along the trail that correspond to numbers on a map you can get at the trailhead. Next to the numbers on the map there is a paragraph or two telling you what to look for, what it is, and why it is important. These interpretive guides can be a great way to supplement learning on any hike that has them.

Rachel's responses in this part of the interview connects to two of the themes already mentioned so far, *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014) and *learning about the outdoors and nature* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005).

Rachel actually liked all of the areas we visited and hikes we went on for the trip. As I asked her about each area during our interview, she had easy answers for what she thought of each, and they were all positive. For hikes like the one to Hickman Bridge, her answer was simply that she liked it, especially the bridge and other geological formations, which demonstrated the theme of *connecting with geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003).

For some of the other areas and hikes, Rachel's response was more detailed. Our time in Bryce Canyon National Park is a perfect example of this. What stood out in Rachel's mind was the incredible scenery. "I thought it was really cool and when we were up on the [rim of the canyon], it didn't look real. It looked super...like a picture, like a painting. It looked surreal and everything." She also commented on the hoodoos and how she likes "when we actually got down in there to see how big the [hoodoos] were. 'Cause from above, they look really small." Her affection for scenery and the geology of the area added to the established themes of *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and *connecting with geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003).

The thing that stood out to Rachel about Escalante Petrified Forest State Park and the Petrified Forest/Trail of the Sleeping Rainbow hike on the second day was the cryptobiotic soil crusts we saw around the trail. Cryptobiotic soil crusts are communities

of microscopic living organisms such as algae, cyanobacteria, and fungi that secrete a gelatinous material into the soil. This binds the soil particles into a hardened surface layer that protects the living organisms, as well as helps to protect the soil from erosion. Due to the slow growing nature of these crusts, often taking decades to regrow, it is important that we as humans do not disturb them in any way if possible. Because of the importance of these crusts to the environment we spent some time teaching the students to identify them, as well as how to not disturb them. Rachel found them to be fascinating. “I liked...the new soil, that takes ten years for it to rebuild itself. I really liked that [hike] a lot because we got to learn about different plants and things that have been there.” This part of the experience added to themes of *a feeling of excitement* (NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), *learning about the outdoors and nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), as well as *connecting to plants* (Bullock, 1994) and other living things. Learning about these crusts, and her excitement for it, shows that this part of the experience had a positive impact on Rachel’s perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors and nature.

After we had discussed how she had felt about each area we visited the conversation moved into what she thought about humans and their connection to nature and how humans interact with nature.

I think nature is a really cool thing and how people react with it is kind of...people take it for granted. A lot. People will go there and think it’s all cool and then there’s people that just want to destroy it to make other things for people, and just destroy the land.

Rachel’s response shows that she has a *feeling of wanting to protect an area or resource*, which was a theme that came up in the responses of several of the participants. As has

been pointed out in several studies (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), when students develop a connection to an outdoor area, they often feel a need to care for and protect that area. I think it is evident here with Rachel.

To test this, I asked Rachel what she thought of the areas we visited on the trip. She told me, “I think that it’s a really cool place and that more people, like for this trip, should be able to go down and see it all.” This kind of a response gave evidence of that strong personal connection (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). Related to this, I then wanted to know if she, like many of the other participants had taken pictures to remember the trip and the things that she had seen on the trip. She had taken around 200 pictures to remember the experience. I then asked her what it was she felt she would remember most about the trip, and she said, “Probably all the friendships and like how we were kind of like a family as Mollie put it.” This again supports the theme of the importance of *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) in the outdoors. The participants in the SUPT continually emphasized the social nature of this trip, which lends support to the idea that this theme is one that had a strong positive impact on the perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors.

Ted’s Experience

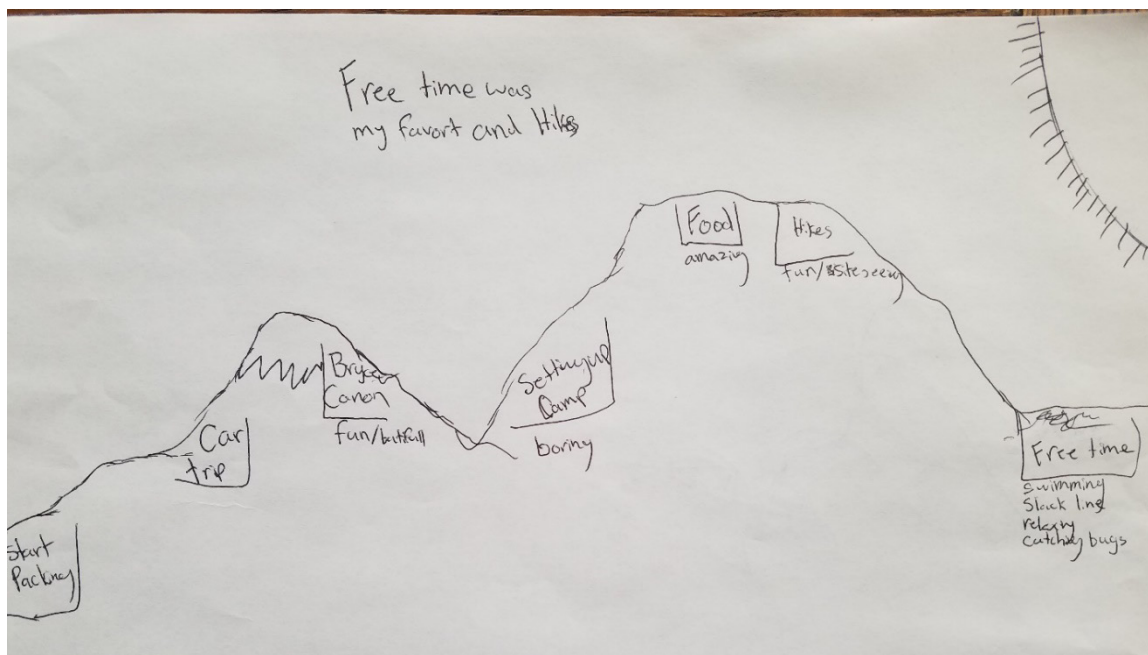
The hikes were really fun. And then the free time was the best part. – Ted

Of all of the participants, Ted stood out as one of the only participants that seemed to have moments where I could tell that he was not fully enjoying himself very

much during the SUPT. Ted was a quite boy, and liked to do his own thing. He tended to be easily distracted, and easily bored. He did okay in the traditional school learning environment, but usually had to work harder than many of his peers to get there. He was a very funny student, and made friends easily. On the trip, he had gotten along with most of his peers, most of the time. There were, however, times that he and another student would argue or exchange rude comments.

Figure 18

Ted's Journey Map



His main motivation for going, when I asked him, was his parents insisted he went because all of his other siblings had gone on the SUPT and had a good experience, and they wanted that for him. I was not completely surprised by this answer. At another point in the interview he countered this and said that he was excited to go, but in the

context of the moment, I think he was trying to tell me as a trip leader, what I wanted to hear. I think his reluctance to go on the trip was closer to how he was actually feeling about the trip. He did say that the thing he looked forward to the most was “probably...the places we were going” because he had never been there, and he did not know much about the area. I think that the theme of *a feeling of excitement* (NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) prior to the trip, along with that of *a feeling of nervousness or anticipation* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) was common for most of the participants, even if it was only a little excitement as it was for Ted.

In preparation for the SUPT, the only thing Ted told me he had to overcome in order to go was “I had to clean up my room, it was a mess, before I could go.” As was previously pointed out in Chapter II, this fits with the research (Warren, 2005). Ted is a white male likely growing up in a middle-class household based on the demographic data described above. There are not likely to be very many barriers to his participation in OEEs. This would not be the same case for the majority of the eighth-grade students at IWJH, which is why I need to look at what barriers and constraints those students faced that may have contributed to them not participating in the SUPT.

Ted was the type of person who did not love to have attention on himself, especially, it seemed, in an interview setting. Throughout the conversation, he really didn't say much, even when I would ask him to explain further or to give more details. Because of this, his responses were short, often just single word responses. As I continued the interview, I asked him to explain his journey map to me, as I had done with the other participants. I thought it was interesting that his journey map started out

immediately up a steep mountain, represented by the snow cap at the top. He explained in both the labels on his journey map and in his interview that this uphill was because packing and the drive to Bryce Canyon National Park were both “kind of boring ‘cause we didn’t do anything at all.” His answer here was one of the few responses that gave evidence of the theme of *a feeling of impatience or burn-out* (Campbell, n.d.). Where it was early in the trip, he clearly wasn’t burnt out, but I do feel he was impatient for the experience to get going. In fact, there were several times that I noted in my field notes that he seemed impatient for something to happen, adding more evidence to this theme.

This impatience showed up again for him when we got to Escalante Petrified Forest State Park campground. He told me that setting up camp was slow for him, but it picked up and was fun. He showed this on his journey map as another uphill side to an even taller mountain. This aligned with what I observed in my field notes as I commented on how reluctant Ted was to help his group to set up the tent. At the top of the second mountain on his journey map, Ted made sure to point out “The food was REALLY good so it went upwards.” He also labeled and talked about the fact that he enjoyed all of the hikes because “All the stuff you can see and learn, like the butterscotch trees. Ponderosas.”

In his short response here, Ted hit on a couple of the themes that emerged in this study. First, by “all the stuff you can see” I took that to mean *a connection with the scenery or views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). Another theme that this statement adds to is that of *connecting with plants* (Bullock, 1994). Ted was very excited about the fact that a

ponderosa pine tree can often have the fragrance of butterscotch or vanilla. After we had taught the students to identify ponderosas, and taught them that they smell that way, I noted in my field notes that Ted was one of the students that would stop each time we passed a ponderosa and smell the bark. Along with evidence of *a connection to plants* (Bullock, 1994) this gives evidence that Ted was excited, which *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) was possibly one of the main themes of this OEE, as the descriptive word I most often used in reference to how the students seemed to be feeling was “excited.” Our teaching the students in Bryce Canyon National Park about the fact that if you smell the bark of a ponderosa pine tree and them being able to do this was great evidence of the theme of *hands-on learning* (AEE, n.d.) that came up with several of the participants. It was quite clear that learning on location, and being able to experience what they were learning about had a strong positive impact on the participants.

Ted also made a point to tell me that he really enjoyed it in the amphitheater in Bryce Canyon National Park because “it looks super cool, like, how the way stuff formed there.” As can be seen on Ted’s journey map, he had actually put that all of the hikes were “fun/interesting.” This matched up with what he told me in his interview as we talked about each of the other hikes we had gone on during the SUPT. It also supported the themes of *connecting with scenery and views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) as well as *connecting with geology or geological features* (Ford, 2003).

In regard to Escalante Petrified Forest State Park and the Petrified Forest/Trail of

the Sleeping Rainbows hike Ted said, “it was nice to see all the petrified wood and stuff.” His favorite part on the Lower Calf Creek Falls hike was similar. “I like the petroglyphs a lot. They were cool. And then it was fun to get in the water.” His feelings about each of these two hikes fit into two separate themes, *connecting with geology and geological features* (Ford, 2003) and *connecting with cultures of the past* respectively (Smith et al., 1997). I was quite interested to find out that Ted’s favorite part of hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls was toward the end of the hike in, when we were near the falls “Because we got to see poison ivy, and that one toad. And then we got to go up above the waterfall.” As I had mentioned before, Ted was one of the few students who really seemed to enjoy the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls. His interest in the poison ivy and the Boreal toad gave further evidence to the themes of *connecting to plants* and *connecting to animals* (Bullock, 1994).

After some thought, and reexamining my field notes, it made sense that plants and animals stood out to Ted as one of his favorite parts of the trips was “catching bugs and ...identifying them, and seeing what they do.” There were several times throughout my field notes that I wrote down something about Ted catching spiders and other bugs and watching them for extended time periods, often using the field guides we had left out for the students to try and identify those bugs. One example was

As the evening comes on, the sun has cooled a bit. The breeze feels great. Ted has caught another spider, and fed a dead grasshopper to ants. John tells me about it in great detail. Another group sits on the tailgate of one of the trucks helping Ted to try and identify the spider using the field guides. Ted is very excited to tell people about it. Mollie reads the field guide entry out loud as they try to identify it. Ted and Jane feed the spider a flying insect of some kind. Mollie, Jane, Rachel, Ted, John, and Louis watch as the spider attacks and begins to eat the flying bug. As they watch this, Mollie and Rachel look up other bugs in the field guide. Ted tells

everyone where earwigs get their name. (Journal Entry, May 15th)

This again ties into the theme of *connecting to animals* (Bullock, 1994).

As we talked in his interview, I asked Ted what he thought about Capital Reef National Park and the hike to Hickman Bridge, and I was rather surprised to hear that he did not remember the hike, even after I reminded him about it. Later in the interview, I asked him which of the hikes was his least favorite. He responded after some thought that the hike to Hickman Bridge was his least favorite because he remembered so little of it. As I later analyzed his responses and my field notes, I realized that it did indeed fit that he would not remember much of this hike because he did not want to go on a hike that morning in the first place, and asked several times if we could just go back and head for home early.

I think this was in large part because he was reluctant to go on the SUPT in the first place, and he was visibly burnt out by that point in the trip. The theme of *a feeling of burn-out* (Campbell, n.d.) began to show up in the participants and in my observations a little with the hike to Lower Calf Creek Falls, but more so the next 2 days. The SUPT is a trip that is very busy, with a lot going on, so in a way, it makes sense that participants would begin to get tired toward the end. Another possible reason for the burn out on this trip could be a lack of physical conditioning and preparedness so much hiking, especially strenuous hikes like Upper Calf Creek Falls. Even though I observed many of the participants seeming to be burnt-out, the vast majority of them seemed to maintain that *feeling of excitement* (one of the other common themes) and all of them seemed to have strong overall positive experience on the SUPT (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon,

2005). The overall positive experience of the SUPT for all of the participants continued to answer my first research question of what impact this trip would have on the participants perceptions of and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors (Kellert et al., 2017).

After very briefly talking about the learning assignments we had given the students on the trip and finding out that Ted thought they were “kind of fun,” our conversation moved back to Ted’s experiences getting ready for the SUPT. Ted liked the outdoors before participating in the program, especially playing soccer and going “on a couple of hikes before” on some of the trail close to his home. He also told me that he likes nature because “it looks pretty.” However, he was not really looking forward to going on the trip, as previously mentioned. He thought “that it would be boring, and that we wouldn’t do a lot of stuff” on the trip. This idea came up again later in our conversation when I asked him what worried him most about going on the trip. He responded, “That we wouldn’t really do anything. That we’d just sit around all day.”

Ted’s responses to these questions fit with what I had heard from a teacher who had chaperoned previous years SUPTs, and a parent who had also chaperoned previous SUPTs. According to both of them, there was a lot of “down-time” or “rest-time” that many of the participants that year found boring. If those accounts are to be believed, and one of Ted’s siblings participated during that time period, his worries about being “bored” would be quite valid. Word-of-mouth reputation for this trip had always been one of the strongest recruiting tools available to this OEE until the last decade or so. I will discuss this idea of past student’s experiences and how they pass that along to other

students and parents affecting those who are about to go on the trip later in this and later chapters.

Ted did not say much when I tried to discuss humans and their interaction with nature with him. I asked what he thought about how humans treat nature and the outdoors, and he told me he thinks that people sometimes treat nature well, but they also need to “treat it nice...not litter.” I asked him if he wanted to explain a little more about what he meant by how people treat nature well, to which he shrugged, seeming uncomfortable, and said, “I don’t know.” I decided to shift gears and ask him instead about learning in the outdoors. While Ted’s response does show *a feeling of wanting to protect an area*, this theme was not as strongly present with Ted as it was with other students. While I do feel like the SUPT had an impact on Ted’s view of how these areas should be treated by humans, I do not think it was as strong of an impact for him as it was for other students.

I asked Ted if he liked learning in the outdoors, and he said that he did. I then asked him what it was about learning in the outdoors that he liked, and he gave a quick answer of “identifying the stuff,” which I took to mean from earlier in our conversation to mean the bugs and plants we saw on the trip. His enjoyment of identifying plants and animals, in this case the different bugs and spiders he caught throughout the trip, showed that he had *connected with plants and animals* (Bullock, 1994) to some extent on the trip. Both of these, as was already pointed out, were themes that fit strongly with Ted. I followed this up with asking him what part of learning in the outdoors he did not like, as I did with all of the participants. He sat for a few seconds, and shrugging, told me there

wasn't a part of learning in the outdoors that he did not like. I thought it was interesting that something like the presence of bugs could be a participant's least favorite part, like they were for Rachel and Louis, and yet be one of Ted's, favorite parts. This gave rise to an interesting intersection between the themes of *connecting with animals* (Bullock, 1994) and *being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003).

When I asked Ted about his opinion of outdoor field trips in general, his response focused again on the SUPT. "I knew they'd be fun cause that's what all of my siblings said. They just said like there was good food and stuff like that." This response gave me two impressions. One is that he probably did not have much experience other than this trip with outdoor learning and if he did, he did not remember it much, especially with the SUPT being so recent. The other was that his conflict in whether he was looking forward to going on the SUPT because it would be fun or not going, as he had mentioned at the first of our interview, may have been because he didn't want to go.

This could have been because he possibly had heard his siblings accounts of their trips being less than enjoyable, and his parents were making him go, or, as he said, his siblings tried to tell him the parts he was going to enjoy. Overall, based on most of his responses during our interview, and some my observations in my field notes, I don't think Ted was initially looking forward to the trip, and he burned out quickly, but I think overall, he had a positive experience on the trip. So, even in spite of it not being a completely positive experience for him, it can be seen that his perceptions and attitudes towards the outdoors and learning in the outdoors were strengthened, even if it was less so than with other participants.

I began to wrap up our interview by asking Ted if he would go on another trip like the SUPT. He said he would, explaining that it was fun because of “everything we did” while there. I wanted to know more about what he thought was fun, so I asked him what the best part of the experience was to him. He said, “The free time was the best part.” He liked the moments of free time they had, while meals were cooked, or when we got back from hikes before they got to swim, or playing on the slackline (a piece of nylon webbing stretched between two points and walked across like a tight-rope), relaxing, and catching bugs. It is also worth noting that he also wrote those as the ending of his journey map above. Ted’s answers here could be used to improve the SUPT and other OEEs, especially for those who reluctantly go on trips like these.

Ted did not take any pictures of the trip like the other students had, but he did get copies of around 100 pictures from Rachel. Wanting to have pictures to remember the experience, even if you didn’t take them, is still evidence of *a connection to scenery and view* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) that could be indicative of a connection to the areas we visited (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). I wanted to know what he thought he would remember most about the experience, and so I asked, to which he replied the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls. I asked him why that was his favorite, and after a few seconds, he responded, “It was cool how you can go to the waterfall, and then you can go back and then back further” meaning further back up the creek leading to the main falls. Here he once again adds to the theme of *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014), something that was mentioned by several of the participants in

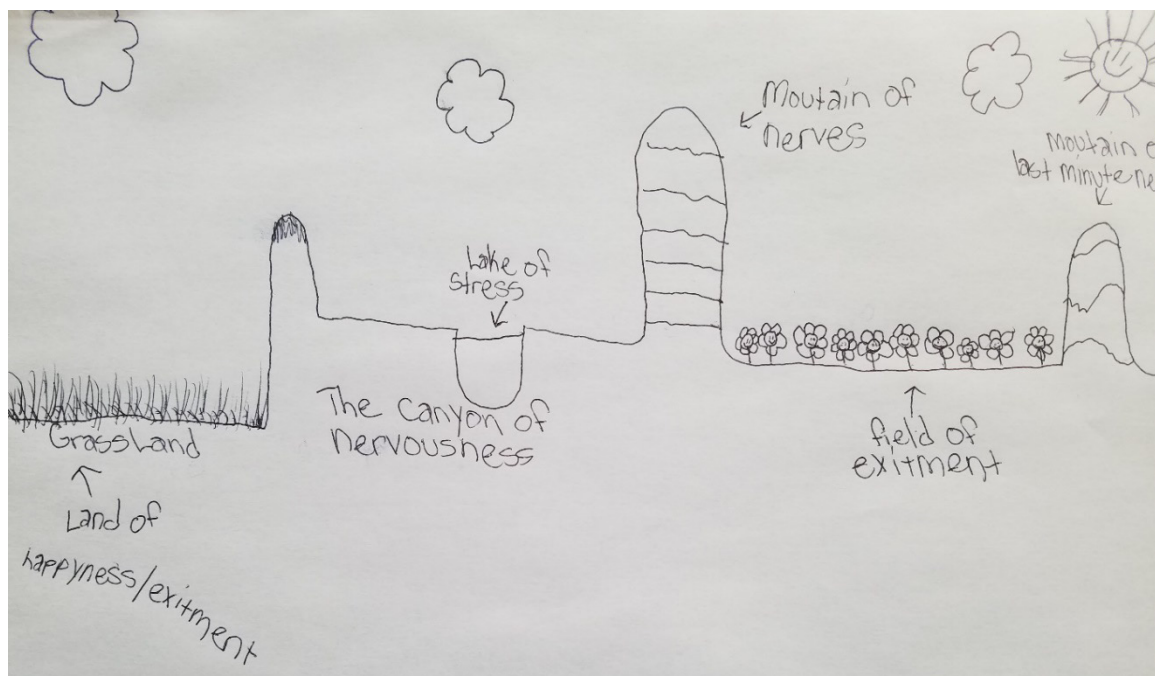
this study. With how different Ted's responses were compared to the other participants, I thought it was fitting that his favorite part was most of the participants least favorite part. He is his own person through and through.

Terry's Experience

It was really fun to learn about more stuff, because I didn't know a lot about nature before. – Terry

Figure 19

Terry's Journey Map



Terry was a bubbly girl, who, by her own account, did not always feel included at school. Because of this, she often sought positive attention from the adults at school. She was a very kind person, and worked hard at her studies. She was excited to go on the trip because she enjoyed “learning new things about nature that I didn't know before.” She

was also quick to add that she was nervous to go on the trip because she was not that close to anyone going on the trip. This was also a concern of mine as a leader of the OEE because I was not sure how well she would be included in the group. Fortunately, these concerns were not as big of an issue as I had feared, and as will be discussed later in this section, Terry was included in the group quite easily for the majority of the SUPT.

Terry and I actually started our interview as I had done with all of the eight participants, by me asking her to explain to me what was on her journey map. As can be seen above, her journey map had a lot of steep ups and downs, with a mix of excitement and nervousness and stress. She excitedly and quickly described it to me as:

At first I was super excited to go. And then I got a little nervous, 'cause I didn't really know anybody that was going. And then, I had a lot of stress from my dad, 'cause he said, 'you better get good on this. Meh meh meh.' And then I was nervous, and then I was good, and then it's the last-minute jitters. And then the trip was fun.

I asked her what her dad meant when he told her "You better get good on this," and she just shrugged and said he meant she needed to behave. In her quick description of her journey map, Terry brought to mind two of the emergent themes, *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) and *a feeling of nervousness and anticipation* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016). As mentioned above, this mix of excitement and anticipation seemed to be common among most of the participants, and as will be described in the next chapter, was exactly how I felt prior to going on my eighth-grade OEE at IWJH. As we look to improve the SUPT and other OEEs, we need to keep in mind that this is how potential participants feel, and work to build that excitement and lessen that nervousness where we can.

I then asked Terry what types of obstacles she had to overcome in order to go on the trip in order to get a sense, as I had done with all of the participants, what types of things could possibly be getting in the way of the students at IWJH participation in the SUPT (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007). Her answer was rather unique in comparison to the responses from the other participants. Her main obstacle came in the form of anxiety about leaving her family, specifically her brother. Though the object of her nervousness was somewhat unique, the *feeling of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) was a common theme among the participants. In order to overcome this anxiety, she called her mom every day of the trip and talked to her brother. As I analyzed this later, I realized that in Capital Reef National Park there is very limited cellular reception, which could have been an area of great stress for her and potentially other students who had been staying in contact with home, had we stayed in that park longer than just the one night.

Before the trip, Terry did not really know that schools did camping trips like this. But she looked forward to hiking in the area quite a bit in the weeks leading up to the trip, as we got them all prepared. She told me that her main motivation for going on the trip was me, as her teacher the year before, talking about the trip. “You talked about it a lot last year. Yeah, you talked about, ‘You guys better go on this trip.’” Based on my own experience as a student at IWJH, and in talking with others that went on the trip from my neighborhood, both of which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, people who have gone on this OEE and then telling other people about it seems to be one of the main motivating factors that helps future eighth-graders at the school to know that this

trip is worth the time and effort needed to go. Having taught at IWJH for several year, I have noticed that not as many people talk about the trip as they did when I was a student there, and when I first started teaching there. This decline in “word-of-mouth advertising” could be another of the possible reasons there has been so few students participating in the SUPT. It also helps to answer my second research question on what the barriers and constraints to participation there were (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007) for so many of the eighth-grade students at IWJH. It can also help to improve the SUPT and other OEEs like it.

Prior to the trip, Terry had a positive view of the outdoors as well, and told me about a few of the things she does outside.

I play softball so I'm outside a lot. And my brother likes to play tag in our front yard. So, it's really fun to just go outside. My grandma owns a cabin up in Deschene, so we do that all the time.

Based on the responses from the participants, the vast majority of them enjoyed the outdoors prior to the SUPT, and had at least some experience spending time in the outdoors in a camping environment. It is possible that a lack of access to experiences in the outdoors could be another reason that some of the students at IWJH did not participate in the SUPT. There were several examples of interactions with the eighth-grade students at the school that showed me as a teacher how little experience the students had in hiking and camping. These experiences will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Terry did not have a lot of experience with outdoor school field trips prior to the SUPT, which I found to be similar to the majority of the participants in the study. Instead,

the majority of her outdoor experiences were playing sports, or spending time outside with her family, occasionally doing things like camping or hiking. Like several of the other participants, the only outdoor field trip Terry could cite was a field trip the previous year to a local theme park that was an incentive the school gave for good academic performance and good behavior at school. On this field trip there were no learning objectives, the students simply got a day pass to ride the attractions in the park.

Therefore, this experience doesn't fall under the category of an OEE, but was more of a break from school that took place outside (Nadelson & Jordan, 2012). The only other outdoor field trip mentioned by the participants was a field trip to the zoo. This idea that the participants could only name a very limited number of school supported OEEs is an area that requires further research. Are schools not providing very many opportunities for OEEs, or are the OEEs not being retained and therefore not effective in their learning objectives?

From here, our conversation turned toward the SUPT, and what Terry thought of each of the areas we visited. Her first overall impressions of the areas were that they were "really pretty." Once again, this gave support to the theme *connecting with the scenery or views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) being one of the most common ways the students connected with the areas we visited. These connections are something that those of us who were running the trip hoped to accomplish because of the previously mentioned benefits that these connections can provide to participants (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

I asked Terry what she thought of each area more specifically, starting with our time in Bryce Canyon National Park. She said, quite hesitantly, “It was...fun. I wasn’t prepared to go uphill, but it was fun.” By this she meant the hike back out of the amphitheater toward the end of our time there. She had enjoyed the hike down in, and the time we spent down in the amphitheater, but she had struggled physically on the rather steep hike back out. It was interesting to note that even though Terry found this hike to be difficult, she still enjoyed it. This gave more evidence for the emergence of the theme of *meeting with a challenging situation* (Little & Wyver, 2008).

Before we had gone on the hike into the amphitheater in Bryce Canyon, as we were spending some time at each of the scenic viewpoints we visited, I noted in my field notes that Terry and the other students were excitedly going from spot to spot, exclaiming how beautiful the view was, and taking a lot of pictures. Their *feelings of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) and their *connection to the scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) were both themes that were clearly evident both as I observed them in the moment, as well as later as I analyzed the data.

As our conversation shifted toward the time we spent in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park, Terry was very excited to tell me that this was her favorite hike and place we spent time in. When I asked her why that was, she explained, “I just liked seeing the petrified wood, and how it’s all over.” I had noticed while we were on the Petrified Forest Trail/ Trail of Sleeping Rainbows that Terry was really interested by all of the different sizes, shapes, and colors of petrified wood that were around us. She had also gone with a

few of the other people in our group, including Diane, to a rock shop located near the park to purchase a piece of petrified wood as a souvenir. It seemed that Escalante Petrified Forest State Park was able to invoke a *connection to geology* (Ford, 2003) for many of the participants. This emergent theme made sense in light of the areas we visited on the SUPT as they are known for their geology and geological features.

It was on our hike to Lower Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument, when we were actually resting and playing at the base of the falls, that I felt Terry was really made to be welcomed into the group by her peers. She, Diane, and Rachel all played in the pools of the falls together. “That was one of my favorite hikes. I liked how it had a beach area, and then you can go in, and me and Diane went way too...” (laughing as she trailed off). She and Diane had gone into the water until they were in up to their arms. Rachel had gone in with them, but had stopped far short of going as deep as Diane and Terry. Diane and Rachel had gone in because she wanted to cool off. Terry followed more because the other two girls were letting her be a part of their group and she wanted to fit in, and I think she also liked getting attention from doing so. Both Diane and Terry struggled on the hike back out in wet clothes. But they were both pretty easy going about it because several of the adults had tried to warn them that would be the case. Terry’s excitement about being included by Diane and Rachel, and playing in the water, showed how important the themes *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014) were to participants like Terry.

Terry was part of the majority of the students whose least favorite hike was the

hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument. “I did not like the fact that there was poison ivy. Especially going down the trail where there was supposedly poison ivy. I liked the toad though.” The toad she is referring to is the boreal toad we found in the pool at the bottom of the falls, described in the previous chapter. As Terry mentioned here, and as I in my description of the hike, the poison ivy on the trail seemed to make some the participants nervous, though none more than Terry. This reaction gave support to the theme of *being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003) and its importance for the participants in this OEE. For many of participants, however, I think there was an excited and intrigue to see the famous plant in real-life for the first time, as judged by my observations of them as we stood looking at it at the bottom of the waterfall, adding to the themes of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) and *a connection to plants* (Bullock, 1994).

I asked Terry if there was any part of the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls than she liked, and she said,

It was a good area. It was fun to look at. But there wasn't just a lot of beach place, so you can't really...you could have gotten in if you wanted to but it would be muddy and no.

I also think that the hike out was very difficult for her, taking a lot of effort and time, and that this had an impact on her impression of the area. Here again, I think being able to be physically prepared for such strenuous hikes might have helped Terry, and some of the other participants, enjoy some of the areas more. This is information that can inform the improvement of the SUPT and other OEEs that might have challenging hikes or other physical activities.

As we finished up talking about her impressions of the areas we visited, Terry told me that the hike to Hickman Bridge in Capital Reef National Park was another one of her favorite things we did. The reasoning she gave me was, “It was a good hike. It was easier, and it was a good one to end with, ‘cause it was super fun, and super pretty.” This area came up again later when I asked her, toward the end of our conversation, what she thought she would remember the most from this experience. She said she would remember Hickman Bridge because “it was just super pretty. And it was my favorite.” Her affection toward the scenery was more support for the theme of *connection with the scenery and views* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and its importance in effecting the participants perceptions of and attitudes toward the areas we visited. She then went on to mention, as others did, swimming at the lake in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park because “It was just really fun to go swimming with a whole bunch of friends.” Her mention of swimming was more evidence of her *connection to water* (Nichols, 2014), and her mention of doing so with friends was evidence of importance of *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001), both of which were some of the more common themes mentioned by the participants, as has been shown.

Related to this, I asked Terry if she had always felt included on the trip, and she said that she had. I found this interesting because, as mentioned before, I noted in my field notes that there were several times when she seemed to be excluded from the group, either by herself, or by the others. I also had noticed there were a few times that one or two of the participants would make a rude comment to her, usually closely followed by

her returning a rude comment their way. Based on her responses, these things did not seem to cause her to feel like she was not included in the group, or possibly, she chose not to disclose this to me as her teacher and as a leader of the experience. She instead began to recount how the group had played “King of the Dock” as they swam in Wide Hallow Reservoir in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park. She thought it was especially funny how several of the students would just jump in before they were pushed off. Again, we see more evidence of the themes of *connecting to water* (Nichols, 2014) and *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001).

Terry’s favorite part of learning in the outdoors was “Because it’s more like, interaction. It’s not ‘here’s a picture.’ It’s...here. I have to touch it and feel it. I can’t just look at pictures.” By this she meant that it is better for her personal learning to be able to have hands-on experiences with the objects she is learning about, or to be in the actual places she is learning about, rather than just looking at pictures in a textbook or a slideshow. This theme of *hands-on learning* (AEE, n.d.) was something that, as has been shown, was important to several of the participants. The experiential learning that is often found on OEEs, like it was on the SUPT, is one of the more powerful benefits to this type of learning experience, and carries with it many of the benefits described in Chapter II. To have Terry and others bring it up as I talked with them shows that they realized its importance as well.

Terry’s least favorite part of learning in the outdoors were her seasonal allergies, which she said were at a high point during the trip. I again noticed that Terry’s response to this question fit with the responses of many of the participants as it related in some

way to the student being uncomfortable. This theme of *being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003) is very informative of an area in which, as stated above, the SUPT and other OEEs can be improved. It is apparent from the data that participants in this OEE expect a certain level of comfort, even in the outdoors. The reputation that camping can be uncomfortable, and the chances of that reputation being true, may also have been a deterrent for some of the students who did not participate in the SUPT. If they have in their mind that camping is uncomfortable, they might rule it out before even considering participation. How all of this might be used to help improve OEEs will be discussed in a later chapter.

Moving on from this, I asked Terry what else she liked about the SUPT, and she had a few ideas in response. She said one of the biggest things she liked was learning so much. She gave the example of learning that a ponderosa pine tree smells like butterscotch. In fact, she actually could not remember the name of the tree, but instead, like many of the students on the trip, just called it the butterscotch tree. It was clear that even though she could not remember the name of the tree, she had *learned about something in nature* and made *a connection to a plant* on this trip, two of the common themes found in the data.

I then asked Terry if the SUPT had affected her views of nature and the outdoors, and she said that her views were the same because “It was really fun to learn about more stuff, because I didn’t know a lot about nature before.” Based on her response, she had very positive views of nature and the outdoors prior to the trip, which seemed to have actually been strengthened if only a little, though Terry said they had remained the same.

I followed this up with a question of how she thought humans did in their interaction with nature. She thought about this for a moment, and then replied,

I think people should use nature as a learning tool, but you can go outside and have fun with it, just don't make the nature a disaster. A lot of people litter. And there's a lot of pollution, which causes a lot of stuff to happen.

Once again, Terry's response fit into an already quite established theme, *a feeling of wanting to protect the outdoors and nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006). It is interesting to note that Terry's idea of how nature should be "used" included both as a learning tool, and for recreational uses.

As we were ending the interview, I asked Terry if she had taken any pictures. This was, as mentioned above, a way in which an overall connection to the areas we visited was made manifest. The students took many pictures because they wanted to remember what they experienced on this trip, they wanted to capture it as best they could. Terry told me she had taken around 500 pictures on her phone. "Yeah. Snapping pictures everywhere I could. And then I edited a lot of them." She also told me she had begun to edit them on the drive home, and then almost immediately started scrapbooking those pictures in the following days, showing an increased level of connection through pictures of the trip.

The last question I asked Terry was if she would go on an OEE like the SUPT again. "I would probably go on a LOT more trips like this. This was so much fun. I liked swimming in the lake. The lake was really fun. And hiking with your friends was a lot of fun too." From this and her other responses, it is clear that the themes of *learning and*

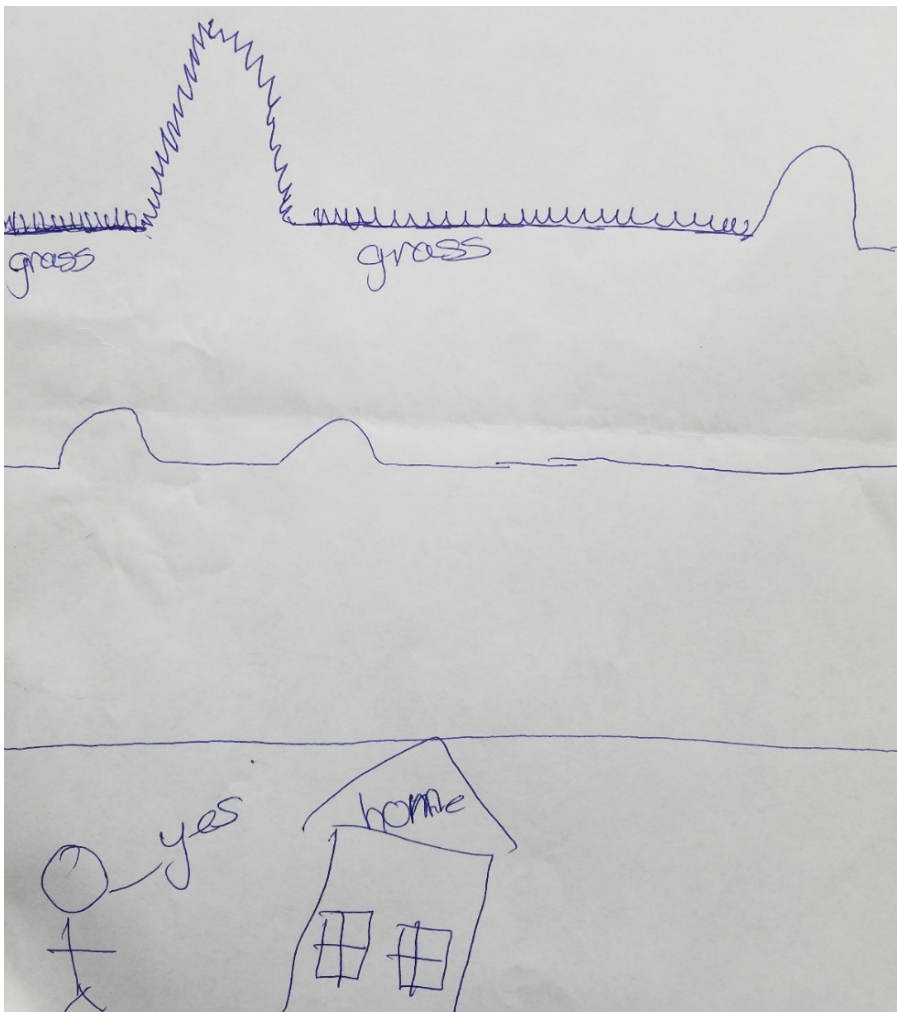
being in a social setting (Garst et al., 2001) and *a connection to water* (Nichols, 2014) were quite important to Terry. She then added as a last thought as we finished up, as though to re-emphasize it, “It’s fun to camp with your friends for a week. And you get out of school for a week.”

Diane’s Experience

I feel like nature should be treated like part of us, ‘cause we can’t really live without nature. – Diane

Figure 20

Diane’s Journey Map



Diane was a rather quiet, and somewhat shy girl. She was generally very happy, and laughed easily, especially when she was around Rachel. Prior to the trip, she was very excited to go on the SUPT, especially “to spend time with my...to go camping with friends.” She was already friends with several of the participants before this experience, but she also emphasized during our conversation that she had made new friends on the trip as well. Right from the beginning it was apparent that the theme of *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) was going to be very important to Diane.

I asked her if she was at all nervous to go on the SUPT, and she said she was fine, until she left packing until the last minute, and then she got nervous. She was quick to add that after she had packed, “it calmed right down.” As with the other students, the *nervous feeling* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) prior to the SUPT for Diane fit into the common theme. As was mentioned, this is valuable information for those who are taking students on this type of OEE to remember so that they can work to reduce these nerves and help the participants to feel more prepared, as well as possibly work to reduce the nerves and anxiety of perspective participants so that they feel more comfortable and so these feelings do not become an insurmountable barrier to their participation.

Looking back at Diane’s journey map, it turned out that the flat stretch, followed by the first hill, followed again by a calm flat section, was her feeling before, during, and after packing for the trip. This fit with how Diane had described her journey map to me. As can be seen in the image above, Diane did not label very much on her journey map. I therefore had to ask quite a few questions to help me understand what she was trying to

convey with her drawing. It turned out from her explanation that the second hill on her map was where she got the news on the car ride down to Bryce Canyon National Park at the start of the trip that “my cousin fell out a two-story window on the car ride there. So, it kind of like...was bumpy.” Her cousin was quite injured, but ended up recovering very well. The news of this, as could be expected, had a deep effect on Diane for the first few days of the trip, until she was confident that her cousin was going to be okay.

Diane explained the rest of her journey map rather quickly, starting with the two “bumps” in the middle of her journey map. They were representative of “the hikes, for sure, was bumpy. And then it kind of...and then I finally got my way home, and I was happy.” I was curious which two hikes she had drawn as bumps in the road, signifying that they were difficult or unenjoyable to her, though I was pretty sure I knew which hikes they were. They were, as I had suspected, the hike back up from the amphitheater on the Queen’s Garden Trail in Bryce Canyon National Park, and the hike back up from Upper Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase/Escalante National Park. “It was the...like...Bryce Canyon killed me. And then Calf Creek, I think it was higher? That was really hard to climb up.”

Diane really had a hard time with the elevation changes and the level of difficulty of both of those hikes, but especially in Bryce Canyon National Park. She mentioned the hike out of the amphitheater in Bryce Canyon again later in our conversation when I asked her what her least favorite area we visited was, citing this hike again because of how steep and difficult it was. I thought it was interesting that this part stuck out as her least favorite part because the hike out of Upper Calf Creek Falls was steeper and

arguably more difficult. Here again we see the theme of *meeting with a challenging situation* (Little & Wyver, 2008) taking form again, this time, as it was with some of the participants, as a negative experience.

After we finished talking about Diane's journey map, our conversation moved back to how she felt before going on the trip so that I could get a sense of how things were before, in order to be able to compare it to after returning from the SUPT, as I had done with all of the participants. Diane told me that she loved the outdoors, and often played softball and went on walks and hikes with her family.

Despite spending a substantial amount of time in the outdoors with her family, Diane had not been to the areas we visited on the SUPT, though she was very excited to go. *A feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) was, as mentioned throughout this chapter, one of the most prevalent of the themes that emerged. I then asked Diane if there was anything besides her feelings of nervousness right before we left that she had to work to overcome in order to be able to go on the SUPT. She told me that she had to overcome the obstacles of catching up her grades and "And then, have a good attitude towards my parents." Again, as with before, it is telling that the students that were able to go on this OEE did not seem to have very many barriers to their participation. This is to be expected when, as pointed out above, you compare their responses to their demographic information, as that fits with what is found in the literature (Warren, 2005).

When asked, Diane told me her main motivation for going on the trip was "I wanted to travel more places. Go to a national park." She also told me that she really

looked forward to going on the trip with her friends. It seemed that her desire to travel was in order to see more places, and learn more about them through direct experience. It was not surprising to see the themes of *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *learning about the outdoors and nature* show up in Diane's responses as they had shown up so easily in so many of the other participants responses.

Diane stood out from the other participants in that she was very excited about the research report she had written about Capital Reef National Park. As mentioned in the previous chapter, all of the students participating in the SUPT were assigned a report to write on some aspect of the areas we were visiting for this trip and then teach the group what they had learned. Diane would talk about the things she had learned often throughout the trip, and was very excited to go and visit the park she had learned so much about. Most of the other students had done an excellent job on their reports, writing on a variety of topics, and on the day we talked about each of them, they were excited to share what they knew. Two of the participants did fail to get it done by the time we were on the trip though, but because of the last-minute changes in leadership, their omission fell through the cracks.

Diane and I began to talk about the different areas we visited on the trip, and I was somewhat surprised because Diane began to give answers that were concise and without much detail, even when prompted to explain further. For our time in Bryce Canyon National Park she said she was excited to "just see the cool transformations and all that." Her *connection to the geological formations* (Ford, 2003) and *excitement* (NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) were themes that had been seen throughout. She was quick,

however, to remind me that the hike back up the Queens's Garden Trail was her least favorite part of the trip because of how steep and difficult it was. She then went on to tell me about her favorite part of the trip, which was our stay at Escalante Petrified Forest State Park.

Diane thought that all of the places we visited and stayed in were "really pretty," but she especially like "Petrified Forest, Escalante because where we stayed, there's petrified wood all around us, so we could go and see that. It was really cool. I liked that. And there's the lake." Like so many of the participants, she really enjoyed the time they spent playing in the lake. In fact, that was her favorite part. Her short response here connected to the themes of *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014), *connecting with geology* (Ford, 2003), and *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

These same themes came up for Diane again when we talked about our hike to Lower Calf Creek Falls in that her favorite part of that hike was "going into the water." As mentioned above with Terry, they both spent quite a bit of their time at the fall in the water, going in deeper than any of the others in the group. She added reflectively at the end of her answer, "That was really pretty." Both of responses also tied into the theme of *learning in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) as Diane very intentionally made sure to say "we."

The theme of *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) and *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014) carried over into Diane's descriptions of her experiences at Upper Calf

Creek Falls and Hickman Bridge in Capital Reef National Park. She enjoyed our trip into Upper Calf Creek Falls, especially seeing the top of the waterfall, until the hike back out. “The hike back was horrible. Because it was all uphill.” When I first asked her how she felt about the hike to Hickman Bridge, she didn’t remember it at first. I gave her a quick reminder of the area and the hike we went on and she said, “Oh, that was awesome! I actually never seen a bridge like that. A transformation like that. So, it was really cool to see that.” Beside the theme of *connecting with the scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) as I have already pointed out, it is apparent from her response that Diane also *connected with the geology* (Ford, 2003) of Capital Reef National Park as she had with the geology of Escalante Petrified Forest State Park.

I then asked Diane about the trip in general, and how she felt about the SUPT overall. She told me “I was still really happy ‘cause I got to travel new places; go to new places I haven’t been. But the hikes were hard.” I was glad to see that her *feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) was a theme that had carried over to after the trip. She told me again that her favorite part was “learning different things about it” which gave evidence to the theme of *learning about the outdoors*.

I followed Diane’s response up with the question of what she thought about the outdoors in general and learning in the outdoors. “I still love them. I just like to learn more, and to help kind of, keep the Earth clean.” For Diane, as with many of the other participants, her experience on the SUPT seems to have strengthened her positive attitude and perceptions of the outdoors. I was curious what her least favorite part of learning in

the outdoors was, so I asked her. She responded that her least favorite part of learning in the outdoors was the reading we did. “Because I have to read things, to learn about the other things.” I thought this was an interesting answer because there was not much reading involved in the SUPT or the assignments and learning activities that were part of it. The only reading that was really assigned to the students was the research involved for the report the students were supposed to write, as mentioned above, and some reading in the different visitor centers to help them understand more about the areas and why they are important. However little reading there was, it stood out to Diane as her least favorite part.

As I began to wrap up our conversation, I asked Diane what she thought of human’s interactions with the outdoors and nature. She said, “I feel like nature should be treated like part of us, ‘cause we can’t really live without nature.” I thought this was a profound answer, and really showed that she was beginning to see her connection to nature herself (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). I then asked her if she thought humans did a good job of treating nature as a part of us, and she said she feels like some people do a good job of it, which also implies that she feels that some people do not. I was then curious to see how many pictures Diane had taken, as another way of gauging how connected she felt to the areas of this trip. She told she had taken about 600, and then gotten about 400 more from the other students who had gone on the trip too, giving me the sense again that she had formed a strong connection to the SUPT and the places we visited. I then finished it all up with asking her what part she thought she would remember the most about the

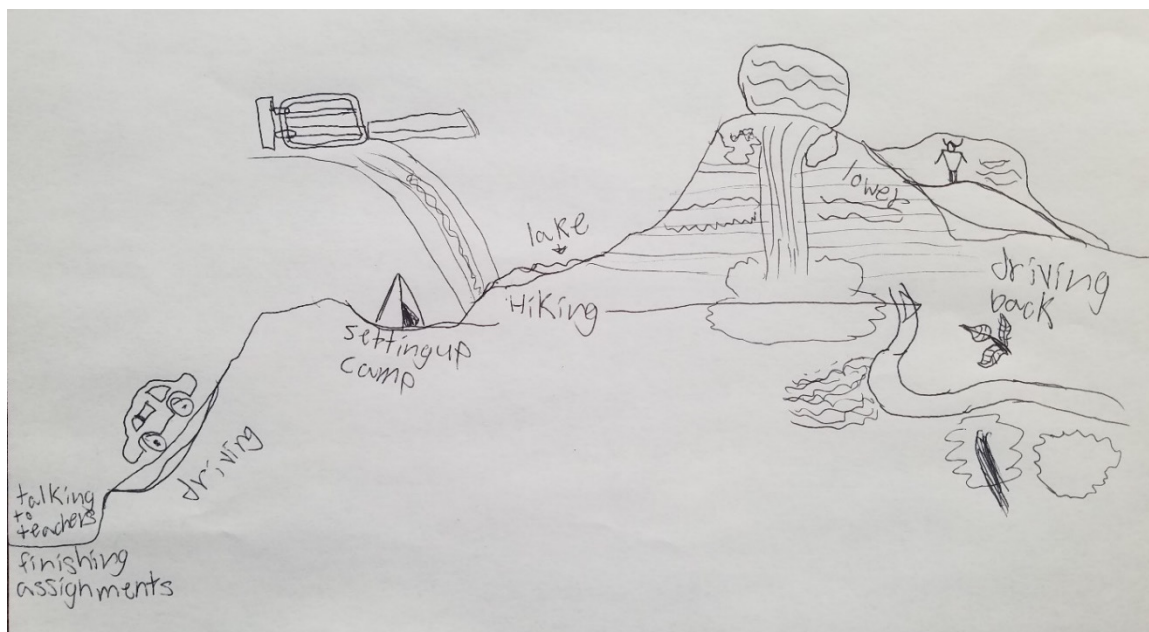
experiences. Her answer was quick and short and again invoked the theme of *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014). She would remember playing in the lake [Wide Hallow Reservoir] the most “Cause that was the funnest part.”

Louis's Experience

Every student that wants to go, should be able to go at some point in their life. If at least once, 'cause it's really cool. And you get to learn a lot. – Louis

Figure 21

Louis' Journey Map



Louis was a quiet, intelligent, and hard-working boy. He seemed from the beginning like he would be one of the most prepared students for this trip, and that carried true all the way through to the end of the trip. When the participants were hanging out together, he was often with the group, but always on the edges. He told me that he

was already friends with some of the group, but that he was also able to make new friends during the SUPT. You could tell from the way he answered that *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) was important to him, as it was to nearly all of the participants on the SUPT, hence the strong emergence of the theme. Anytime we had a learning activity, Louis would give it his all. He told me he was excited for the experience because, “I’d never really done anything like it before, and it seemed like it would be a cool experience.” As mentioned throughout this chapter, *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) was one of the most common themes found throughout the data collected in this study.

I asked Louis how he felt, besides excited, before the trip. He told me that he was nervous to go because of how many school assignments he would be missing. Here again we see the theme of *a feeling of nervousness or anxiety* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) prior to the trip, helping to make it one of the most common themes in the participants responses. Turning to his journey map, he pointed out that the first obstacle was talking to his teachers and figuring out what he would be missing. This could have been a barrier to him, and possibly for some of the students who did not go on the trip, if they found out there would be too much schoolwork missed while they were on the trip. He said he felt much better when he found out it wasn’t going to be too many assignments.

I found his response to this question to be troubling as a trip leader, however, because the students who went on the SUPT were excused from all of the classwork for that week because they would be doing so much learning and work on the trip. This told

me that either the message that they should be excused from schoolwork did not get to the participants, or it did not get to some of the faculty at IWJH. As was just pointed out, this could be one of the reasons that some of the students at the school were choosing not to go. If they felt that they would have to make-up a lot of work when they got back, that might feel like too much of a burden, and keep them from participating. This let me know that those in charge of future trips need to be more explicit with both the students and the teachers about all schoolwork for those going on the trip being excused.

Louis, at this point, moved away from talking about his journey map, and simply told me that he likes the outdoors, especially playing baseball for the school as well as “going on hikes, but I couldn’t really do it because all my siblings were like, ‘no, we don’t want to go.’” He then told me that he was most looking forward to “Probably getting to hike. And see a lot of really cool scenery.” I asked him if he felt like the SUPT came through with what he was looking forward to, and he said that it did. It was interesting to note that he anticipated seeing a lot of cool scenery. He felt that he had seen what he was hoping for added to the established theme of *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). Related to his answer of what he was looking forward to on the trip, was his response to my question of why he wanted to go on the SUPT. “It seemed like it would be kind of like, scout camp, so I thought, why not go.” I asked him what is was about scout camp, meaning a camping trip done with the Boy Scouts of America, that he liked. He said it was “That we got to learn about nature and do the merit badges outside. That it was like an outdoor classroom.” His response to why he wanted to go gave strong

evidence to the themes of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) and *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002).

Like most of the other participants on this trip, there was only a few obstacles that Louis told me he needed to overcome in order to be able to attend the SUPT. For him, it was, other than making sure his assignments were caught up, “more or less just kind of getting all my stuff together and going and buying snacks.” As it had been with the other participants, Louis faced very few obstacles or constraints to his going on the trip. As mentioned throughout the chapter, this, compared to the demographic data of the group of students who did participate in the SUPT, is consistent with what is found in the literature (Warren, 2005).

Louis was also excited to go to the areas we had planned for the SUPT because, as he put it, “I’ve never really been down in southern Utah and stayed there for a while. Because usually when I’ve been down there it’s been when we’re traveling on the road to go to New Mexico.” He did not know much about the areas we were going to, other than the fact that he had learned that Bryce Canyon was a national park during his social studies class the year before. He said he was excited the whole drive up, and into the park. “The first hike we did (at Bryce Canyon) was awesome. It was really cool.” You could hear a sense of the *feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) that Louis felt from just listening to him talk about it.

At this point in the interview, Louis went back to explaining more his journey map to me. He pointed out the uphill drive, and said that was his excitement growing as we drove to where we would be staying, and then leveled off while they were setting up

camp. He said it was “kind of interesting because we had to look around for a space that would be big enough for our tent.” He seemed as though he was frustrated at the memory of this, which matched with field notes I had taken during that time. All of the boys were staying in one large tent, and Louis and another boy were working hard to get it set up, but Ted and John kept playing around and not helping set up camp as much. I noted that it seemed as though Louis was getting briefly frustrated, but then seemed to quickly move past it, and the group seemed very excited again, adding to the theme of *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005).

Louis then talked about the section of his journey map where he had labeled the lake and hiking. One of his favorite parts of the SUPT was during some of the brief downtimes, the students would often go for a hike on a dirt road around Wide Hollow Reservoir. This gave them some time to be a little independent, and to socialize. He told me, “I liked it more and more as we kept hiking.” He also said that he had really enjoyed playing in the lake, swimming and having fun with everybody. His enjoyment of spending time with the group, and playing in the reservoir gave support to the themes of *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014). As can be clearly seen at this point, these were themes that showed up quite often in the students’ responses.

Represented as a high point on his journey map was Upper Calf Creek Falls, including a small branch of poison ivy. Louis explained this part of his map as:

I really enjoyed all the hikes. But my favorite one was Upper Calf Creek Falls. I just really enjoyed it. The hike was really nice, just because the scenery was really nice, and some of the stuff we learned was interesting and really cool to me. This is the little bit of trail, like right down by the waterfall. The poison ivy. This is the

mud, which was fun avoiding...and stepping in a little bit. It was nice when we got to sit on the sandstone beach, sort of up by the top of the waterfall.

I was somewhat surprised by this answer as he had not said before that the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls was his favorite, especially since so many of the other participants had not enjoyed that hike as much. In this response, Louis hit on several of the themes that had been previously established, namely learning in the outdoors, connecting with plants, connecting with scenery, and connecting with water. It was quite apparent that this part of the trip had quite an effect on his connection to the outdoors, and his perceptions of and attitudes towards the outdoors.

I noticed that Louis had also included a petroglyph near his drawing of Upper Calf Falls on his journey map. I asked him about this, and he said that the petroglyphs were really cool and that they were one of his favorite parts. He didn't specify which set of petroglyphs he was meaning, if any, so I took it to mean that he had enjoyed exploring them throughout the SUPT in general. As stated above, I had noted in my field notes how excited he had been to show me his petroglyphs he had drawn during our learning activity on petroglyphs that we had completed the third night of our trip. All of this gave strong support for the theme of *connecting with past cultures* (Smith et al., 1997).

Louis ended his explanation of his journey map with "The drive back was just, kind of like, I wish we could stay longer. But, weather and stuff. It'd been fun the entire week and another day would have been nice." His longing for more time on the SUPT was suggestive of how much he had connected with the places we had visited on the trip. Throughout the entire experience, I never felt in my observing of the participants, that Louis experienced any sort of burn-out. He always seemed ready and excited to move on

to the next things.

After having discussed Louis's journey map, I moved our discussion to each of the different areas we visited and hikes we went on during the SUPT. I started this by asking Louis what he thought of our time in Bryce Canyon National Park, to which he responded, "It was cool, and I do kind of wish we could have gone on Navajo (Trail) because from the little bit that we saw, it looked really enjoyable." I then asked what it was about the park that he thought was cool. He told me, "Seeing all the different hoodoos and all the different plants. And some of the wildlife." Again, in a relatively short response, Louis mentioned several of the themes that had emerged, like *connecting to geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003), *connecting with plants*, and *connecting with animals* (Bullock, 1994). I think this is largely because Louis was so intensely involved on the trip. He was constantly trying to take everything in and really experience everything.

Louis's favorite part of our time Escalante Petrified Forest State Park was during our hike on the Petrified Forest/Trail of the Sleeping Rainbows, in which we saw all of the samples of petrified wood scattered across the top of the plateau. "We could see the rings in the petrified wood and how there were all the different colors in the trees, the petrified trees." Because of all of the different varieties of pieces of petrified wood, this area became a favorite for Louis, showing that he had developed even more of a *connection to geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003). Ironically, Louis also said that the first part of the Petrified Forest hike was his least favorite place we visited because "it was a little plain."

The things that stood out the most to Louis from our time at Lower Calf Creek Falls in Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument were the petroglyphs we saw that he mentioned above. He added, “That was really cool...seeing the petroglyphs from afar, and then hearing how big they were, how big they really were. It’s like...that’s really cool. I wonder why they did that.” For these responses, and from his including them on his journey map, it is clear that Louis had made *a connection with these cultures of the past* (Smith et al., 1997) more than most of the participants on the SUPT, though it was a theme that came up several times.

At this point in our conversation, Louis did not have much to say about the other areas we visited. When I asked him if there was anything else about Upper Calf Creek Falls that he wanted to mention, and he said just that “If possible, it would have been kind of cool to explore some of the underwater caves. Even if with just a camera.” These underwater caves, located at the top of the waterfall, where an area of immense interest to the students in the group.

Concerning our time in Capital Reef National Park, Louis only had a little bit to say. He told me “Hickman Bridge was really cool with how the sandstone was and...the divots in the sandstone in some of the areas.” This further supported that the theme of *connecting with geology* (Ford, 2003) was important and influential in Louis’s experience on this trip. There were several times in my field notes that I noted Louis closely examining a large piece of petrified wood, or a wildflower, or really examining the arch of Hickman Bridge. As just mentioned, he really tried to take it all in.

Since Louis didn’t have much else to say about the specific areas we visited, I

decided to ask him more about the outdoors in general and how he felt the SUPT had affected his views of the outdoors. He told me that he thought the places we had visited were awesome. I asked him to explain further what it was about those places that made them awesome. He responded that for him it was,

the scenery, getting to learn about everything. Seeing all the unique formations of rock, and all the different kinds of rock. Like, I remember you saying something about there being like, iron in one of the rocks at Upper Calf Creek.

Yet again, Louis encapsulates several themes, *connecting with scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998), *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), and *connection with geological formations* (Ford, 2003), in a rather short answer.

I asked Louis, as I had done with all of the participants, whether or not they had felt included on the trip and at school in order to examine in a small way the social effects of the trip in comparison to those found in a normal school environment. Louis was one of the only students to stated that he did not always feel included on the trip. He responded, “Um, pretty much. Other than when like...other than like a few times. And that was just kind of when we’re just relaxing and having more or less nothing to do back at Escalante.” Knowing that we did not have a lot of downtime on the trip, I asked him if he had an example of what he meant, and he gave this, “I didn’t really feel like going and doing anything because I’d just want to rest for a little bit. And sometimes, they would kind of leave before I had a chance to, a chance to get ready.” I asked him how this compares to how often he feels included in school. He told me,

It depends on what we’re doing. If we’re like doing something with like [technology] classes, then I feel really...that’s something that I feel included in,

and it's really fun. When I don't really feel included is like when we're supposed to make groups in like math or science and like, we can do it on our own, and sometimes there's not a lot of people that I usually partner with.

It was quite clear from his response that being excluded from *a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001), even if only for a short time, was bothersome to Louis. His response here strengthens the importance of the theme of *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) for this group of participants.

I then moved on to asked Louis if he thought he would go on another trip like the SUPT, and he answered very excitedly.

I would definitely go again. It was really fun. Especially with everybody. We got to have fun, talk, get to know each other. This time was awesome. And another time would probably be similar. But it would still be just as cool, and there would be differences. Different things that would make it as interesting or more.

He continued after a moment "Every student that wants to go, should be able to go at some point in their life. If at least once, 'cause it's really cool. And you get to learn a lot."

This response gave even further support to the idea that the themes of *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) and *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) were so influential on Louis's, as well as other participants, experience on this trip.

I then asked Louis what it was about learning in the outdoors that he had liked. He told me liked it because he "didn't really know a lot about the plants and some of the animal life, and it was really cool." He also told me he liked learning outside because "we can kind of sit where ever, in a general area, and be comfortable. And we can actually see...the actual thing, depending on what we're talking about." Here Louis adds to the data for the themes of *connecting with plants* and *connecting with animals* (Bullock, 1994), *learning in the outdoors* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), and *hands-on learning*

(AEE, n.d.). I then asked him what he did not like about learning in the outdoors, to which he had to think a moment. After his brief pause, he responded, “Probably if it’s like, too hot, or there’s like mosquitos and bugs. Or if it’s like really really wet. Or we’re not prepared.” All of the things that Louis listed in this part of his response further add to the theme of *comfort in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003). As this came up with nearly all of the participants in response to the question of what about learning in the outdoors they liked least, it is not something that can be ignored for those who are in charge of OEEs.

I asked Louis if his feelings about the outdoors had changed by going on the SUPT. He told me “I like it more, and feel like it should be protected.” His quick response was able to give me some insight into how this experience had positively affected Louis’s perceptions of and attitudes towards the outdoors. This led me to ask him what he thought about how people interact with nature.

I think it should be protected, and when we find something about it that we can use, we should...we can use it, but we don’t like overuse it and destroy it. It’s awesome, and I can see why it’s protected.

As with many of the participants, Louis’s response to this question showed the theme of *a feeling of wanting to protect the area* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006), which is indicative of the connection these students have made with the areas we visited. I asked Louis if he could clarify what places he thought we should protect, and he told me “the areas that we were in, really important places in nature, important, special, and then some just kind of plain areas which are just kind of nice to be in at times,” further supporting the evidence of the connection he had made to this trip. I was curious about what he

thought in regards to how well humans were taking care of nature, and he said that he thought we were trying to preserve it more and better, but he also stated that he thought we are overusing the outdoors in some areas, showing he had a pretty realistic idea of how things are.

Louis had not been able to take many pictures because his phone had died early on in the trip, and he did not know where to charge it, but he was no less connected to the areas we visited on this trip. In fact, he may have been better able to deeply explore the things we saw because he was not distracted by trying to get a picture of everything. I ended the interview here with a question to Louis about what he thought he would remember most from the SUPT experience. He told me that he thought that he would most likely remember seeing the Upper Calf Creek Falls and the surrounding area in Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument area. “I just really enjoyed it and it seemed really cool.”

Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the participant’s responses to the anonymous pre- and post-trip surveys, their journey maps, and a summary of the semi-structured interview I conducted with each participant, as well as the field notes I took as a participant observer on this trip. From all of this data, several themes emerged, and are discussed at the beginning of this chapter. An analysis of those themes provide evidence to support the claim that the SUPT outdoor educational experience had a positive impact on the participants attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the

outdoors, which give answer to my first research question in this study; QUESTION 1.

My analysis of these themes also provided some insight into my second research question in this study; QUESTION 2. Some of the things that could have been a main barrier to participants for many of the eight-grade students at IWJH were *a lack of access to necessary supplies, including money, a feeling of nervousness prior to the trip, and not wanting to be uncomfortable in the outdoors*. With the results of both questions, that data can be used to improve the SUPT, and other OEEs like it. But there is more that could be understood in response to both of the research questions. In the following chapter, I will provide an autobiographical account of myself as an eighth-grade student attending the OEE with IWJH, as well as my experiences as a teacher and trip leader several years later. My account will continue to provide answers to both of the above research questions.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS—AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL EXPERIENCE

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.” – John Muir

Figure 22

Havasu Falls the First Time I Saw It



As I began describing in the first chapter of this dissertation, I was privileged enough as a student at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH) to be able to participate in their annual outdoor educational experience (OEE), which at that time was

a backpacking trip to Supai Village campground in the state of Arizona, deep in part of the Grand Canyon. This experience had a tremendous impact on my life, and forever connecting me to that place. As was shown in the previous chapter, as well as in the literature, this connection to a place is one of the many positive impacts that this type of experience in the outdoor can have on a person (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). As was also shown in the previous chapter, and will be further shown here, not all students at IWJH had access to the trip each year. This is sadly a common theme throughout the field of outdoor education (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007; Warren, 2014).

In this chapter, I will recount my own autobiographical experience with the OEE at IWJH, both from the continued perspective of myself as an eighth-grade student at the school, followed by my experience with the trip as a teacher and trip leader there. This is done with the understanding that there is an obvious personal bias on my part as the author and that there is a possibility that in my reflection on these experiences, some of the events may be magnified, while still others may have been lost to my memory. I still find that the data provided by my personal account will likely be useful and can be used to further address my two research questions. (1) How did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at IWJH perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs? (2) What are the barriers that kept eight-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT? As I address these research questions with my personal account, I will classify that data under the themes that emerged from the data provided by the eight students who participated in the SUPT

experience at the school the year this study took place. Those themes are:

- *A feeling of excitement (in general or toward an activity)* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005).
- *Learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001).
- *Connecting with the scenery or views of the scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).
- *Connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014).
- *Connecting with plants* (Bullock, 1994).
- *Connecting with geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003)
- *Connecting with cultures of the past* (Smith et al., 1997).
- *Connecting with animals* (Bullock, 1994).
- *A feeling of wanting to protect an area or resource* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006).
- *Hands-on learning* (AEE, n.d.).
- *Learning about the outdoors and nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002).
- *Being physically active in the outdoors* (Cooper, et al., 2010; Page et al., 2010).
- *Learning outdoor skills*
- *Being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003).
- *A feeling of burn-out or impatience* (Campbell, n.d.).
- *A feeling of nervousness or anticipation* (Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016; Bendall, 2013).
- *Meeting with challenging situations* (Little & Wyver, 2008).
- *Lack of access to supplies or experience* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007).

This chapter ends with a summary of the conclusions that can be drawn from the

analysis of this data, as well as how they address the two research questions above. In the following and final chapter of this dissertation, I will show how all of these findings add to the existent literature, and provide insight into how to improve the SUPT and other OEEs like it, as well as make recommendations for further study.

As an Eighth-Grade Student

I entered Intermountain West Middle School as a scared, but excited, sixth-grader. I am the oldest of my siblings, and so I had no idea what to expect. I was able to get the hang of middle school rather quickly, but I can remember a lot of people talking about “Havasupai,” and having no idea what they were talking about. It wasn’t until later that first year that I found out it was a camping trip that you could go on with the school at the end of your eighth-grade year, if you earned it. I was quite intrigued by the idea, and having just started the Boy Scouts of America, I was also excited by the possibility of being able to go on a trip like that.

Over the next 2 years, I would occasionally hear about the Havasupai trip as they talked to the eighth-graders during an assembly or on the morning announcements, or when a teacher or friend would bring it up. Even with all of that though, I still knew very little of what the experience actually entailed. I hear rumors such as when you went on the trip you got to camp in the Grand Canyon, or that you had to hike in twelve miles to get there (it is actually 10 miles, but I had always heard it was more), but I would more often than not brush them off as unlikely because to me and my inexperienced self, there was no way those things could be true. After all, how could a school let a bunch of

students go on a trip like that? Fortunately for me, it all turned out to be *mostly* true.

One of the things I looked forward to most about starting the eighth-grade, besides being the oldest grade at the school and being in student government, was finally getting to learn what Havasupai was all about, and finally being old enough to be able to go. I had heard a lot about it over the years. After all, it really was something the whole school was proud of and talked a lot about. But there was still much I didn't know about the experience. I was very *excited* about the whole idea (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005), a theme that was common throughout the entire experience for me. That excitement only grew exponentially when early in the year they held the assembly for the eighth graders in order to introduce Havasupai and all of the requirements that had to be met to go on the trip.

I remember sitting in the auditorium of the school, in the center section (because that is where the eighth-graders sat), and hearing the teachers, like Charles and Margaret (pseudonyms to protect their identity), explain what the trip was like and why we should all do all we could to go. They also showed us a video that was made each year as a way to remember the trip. The video used photographs taken by the teachers and students who went on the previous trip, all put to music. It was a kind of video scrapbook of the whole experience from start to finish. At that first assembly of the year, they would use the previous year's video as a way to get students interested and excited to go on the trip.

After that initial assembly, we as eighth-graders would hear about the Havasupai trip all the time, especially from our teachers. Charles and Margaret would also use every assembly, and our morning announcements to remind us of the requirements to go on the

trip, and the deadlines for those requirements. The year I went the requirements were rather simple. We had to pay \$165 to help with the expenses of the trip, not have any major behavioral referrals to the office, go on all four of the hiking field trips used to make sure we were physically ready to go, attend all training/planning meetings, obtain all the necessary gear, and keep our “citizenship” grades higher than an “N” or a “U.” The citizenship grade was assigned by each one of our teachers alongside our class grade, and was based on such things as classroom and school behavior, attendance, tardiness, and assignment completion. The highest citizenship grade was an “H” which stood for “Honors,” the next grade lower was an “S” for “Satisfactory,” followed by an “N” for “Needs improvement,” and finally a “U” for “Unsatisfactory.” Each time we would hear these announcements, or any talk about Havasupai, I would get more and more excited to go.

One of the more exciting things leading up to the trip happened upon our return from winter break; the start of the early morning meetings that would prepare us for the trip. Don’t get me wrong; none of us seemed all that excited to go to school an hour early every Friday for the rest of the year, but we were excited about the fact that it meant the trip was getting near. Excited, and *nervous* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016), another theme that was present for me through much of the trip. I remember being nervous the morning of the first meeting, wondering if anyone else would show up, did I have the right day, what if people I did not like went, and other concerns like that. As I sat down next to Bart, my best friend, in the classroom the meeting was being held it, most of my nerves over those particular concerns were quickly alleviated, as deep down I

knew they would. However, I still had a general nervousness caused by all of the unknowns that still existed with the trip.

During these meetings we spent much of our time *learning outdoor skills*, which was one of the minor themes that came up several times between both the experiences of the students in the previous chapter and my own experiences here. The outdoor skills they taught to us in those meetings were things like, what was on the pack list and why we would need it, the principles of Leave No Trace to minimize our impact on the area, how to pack a backpack so it is easier to carry and access your gear, and how to cook on a trip like Havasupai. I had learned many of these skills already in the Boy Scouts of America, which gave me a lot of confidence in my ability levels. My *being comfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003) was a theme that was also apparent in many of the students who went on these trips at IWJH. It seems as though the students who did go on the trip in any given year, at least the years that I had experiences with the OEE, more often than not were quite comfortable in the outdoors, usually because they already had some experience in the outdoors to varying degrees. This is an area that I later grew to realize many of the students at IWJH struggled with because they often *lacked access to these types of experiences*, like I personally had in the Boy Scouts. This theme of *lack of access to experiences in the outdoors* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007) gave me some insight into one of the possible barriers that might have prevented some of the students at the school from going on the trip. I was also quite excited during these meetings because I was also able to learn a lot about skills I didn't yet have, or how to do the things I already knew in a better way.

With the trip getting closer, I started to get worried that I would not be able to raise enough money to go. My parents didn't have a lot of extra money as I grew up, and a trip like that fell outside what we would usually count as a necessary expense. We were a lower middle-class family, with my dad working a blue-collar job, and my mom staying home to make sure we always had a parent available to us. When I first brought up the idea of the trip, my parents liked the idea, but were concerned with the cost, including buying the gear I didn't yet have from scouting. We came to a deal that they would pay for half the trip, and I would have to earn the other half through my newspaper route. I would also be in charge of buying the equipment I needed for the trip. I found this to be very fair, as I knew we often struggled to make ends meet. However, I knew my hiking boots were going to be very expensive, and I didn't know how I would pay for them, my half of the trip fee, and everything else I needed.

I was quite surprised one Saturday when my dad took me to an outdoor equipment store, and bought me a pair of boots. As we were trying on the pair that would be the ones he ultimately ended up buying for me, he made sure I knew they were expensive, and asked that I take good care of them. I told him I would, and I meant it as I knew it was not easy for him to come by the money, but he wanted me to have a good pair if I was going to be hiking that far. *A lack of access to the necessary gear* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007) could have kept me from going on the Havasupai trip, as I am sure it has been a barrier for countless students at IWJH over the years. It is likely, based on the data in this study, and the literature related to the barriers and constraints to participation in OEEs and outdoor recreation, the most common reason people are not

able to participate in experiences like these. But because my dad saw the importance of this trip, and was willing to sacrifice, I was able to go. I proudly wore those boots every Friday, as recommended and required by Charles, to get them broken in before the trip. I took such good care of those boots that they are still the boots I wear on long hikes like the trail to Supai.

As the year progressed, each meeting got me more and more excited to participate in the trip. We, Bart and I, along with our other friends, often talked about the parts of the trip we were most excited about. We did not say so explicitly, but I think we all felt quite grown-up as we learned the different skills being presented to us. A great example for me was how grown-up I felt when I finally learned to cook more than just scrambled eggs. I can remember my dad being nervous that I wouldn't know how to prepare my own food, and so he had me practice a few days before we left. I felt so accomplished when I had successfully made some of the kinds of food I was going to be taking on the trip. Years later, I found out from my parents that they felt the Havasupai trip was a big step in my becoming a more grown-up and independent person, a little better able to take care of myself. Even with that though, we were all still nervous as the trip approached.

That was especially true the night before and the morning of the actual trip. That night, as I got a few last-minute things together, I was very worried because my pack was over the weight limit of twenty-five pounds by two whole pounds, a lot of weight when you are carrying everything on your back. We had been told that the next morning, before we left, they would weigh our packs. If they were over the limit, Charles would dump them and look for things he could throw out to help our pack make it under the weight

limit. As I went over everything in my pack that night, I could not think of a single thing I could go without, and I really did not want someone else going through my pack. Once again, my dad was the one to help me out by assuring me that they wouldn't care that my pack was over by that amount. In addition to this, he would make sure they didn't dump it after they weighed it, as he was going in to work late that morning in order to see me off. I could also tell that night that my little brothers were nervous to have me leaving for a full week. None of us had ever done anything like going on Havasupai before.

It wasn't until the next morning, the morning of the trip, that I really saw how nervous my parents were. I knew my dad was somewhat worried because he had heard from someone at his work that the area was prone to flash-flooding, and we were scheduled to go down during a time that was likely to rain a lot. He had talked to me several times in the days before we left about what I should do if there was any sort of flooding. That morning, as I gathered my things, I could really tell he and my mom were very nervous. Again, none of us boys had ever done anything like this. It is easy to see how the theme of *feeling nervousness and anxious* could easily be too much for a student, especially one with limited experiences away from their family, and cause them to choose not to go on an OEE like Havasupai or the SUPT.

My dad drove me to the school early that Monday morning, long before the rest of the school not going on the trip would get there. I was really excited to finally be able to wear the trip t-shirt that everyone who was going on the trip got. Each year, Charles, Margaret, and the other teachers involved in the trip would design and buy shirts for all of the people going on the trip, both the students and the adults. The shirt had a design

with the words Havasupai and the year printed on the front, and the names of everyone who went on the trips name printed on the back. It was fun to see the shirts from past trips on the teachers throughout the year and wonder what ours would look like. But what the shirt looked like was always a well-kept secret until the Friday before the group left for the trip. We were all so excited when that day finally arrived, and we were so proud to wear it.

When my dad and I got to the school that morning, there were a lot of kids and parents milling about in front by the woodshop doors. The students going on the trip, around 60 of us, and the adult chaperones, were easy to pick out of the crowd as we were all wearing the trip t-shirts. It was exciting to see how many people would be going on this experience, and the shirts helped to give a feeling of cohesiveness to the group. The *social nature* (Garst et al., 2001) of the trip suddenly became a lot more apparent to me, and a lot more important. We were all in this together. The theme of *learning or being in a social setting* was another of the themes that carried throughout all of my experiences with these trips, both Havasupai and the SUPT, much as it did for the students on the SUPT in the previous chapter.

I had my pack weighed, with my dad standing off to the side, watching over it all just like he said he would. My pack was indeed over the weight limit, as I knew it would be. But Charles just looked at me and said, “You’re a big guy, you can handle the extra weight.” I was beyond relieved as I took my pack back from him and stepped off to the side. As soon as I was out of the way, Bart had his pack weighed, and his was over the limit too. Charles told him that he would be fine with the extra weight as well, and you

could tell he was just as relieved as I was. We then took our packs out and loaded them into the back of his dad's truck. Bart's dad was going down on the trip as a driver and a chaperone.

As the time drew near to leave, my dad came back from his car with a bag of snacks and a magazine for me to take on the ride down and back. It was a big surprise for me, and I really appreciated that he took the time and thought to do that for me, especially since, as mentioned above, we did not have a lot of money for things like that. We hugged, then the parents not going on the trip left, and Charles said a few words to the students, and made sure the drivers knew where our first stop was, and we hit the road. I was still pretty *nervous* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016), largely because of not knowing what to expect or exactly how the trip was going to go.

We drove for a substantial amount of time, stopping only to refuel, until we finally reached our stopping point for the night in the early evening. Our camp that night was the gym of a high school in the town we had stopped in. I thought it was incredibly strange, and rather unbelievable, that we were going to be sleeping in some random school gym. We set up our sleeping bags, and then went outside to hang out as the sun went down. I can remember the incredible feeling of being a part of something as we all talked and laughed that evening. As stated before, *being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) was one of the strongest themes to emerge from all of the data for this study with one of the biggest effects on the positive impacts of OEEs, and that evening was a great example of that theme in my life. For me, it was one of the first times at IWJH that I had felt truly included with a group of my peers.

The next morning, we woke very early (we had to be out before school started at the high school), quickly got ready, loaded back up into the vehicles, and were on our way. We drove for about an hour, and stopped at a casino for breakfast. I had never crossed state-lines without my parents, and I was in a casino, two firsts for me that I found to be very *exciting* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) at my age and gave me a strong feeling of independence. We ate breakfast rather quickly so that we could get back on the road, and headed for Hoover Dam. We stopped there to explore the dam itself, and take a tour of the inner workings of it all. I was blown away by how massive the entire structure was. I had never seen anything like it, and the experience of *learning about the lake and surrounding area* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002), as well as the dam really stuck with me over the years. I attribute much of that to being able to learn about it all, while actually there, supporting the claims of place-based education (Sobel, 2004).

Leaving Hoover Dam meant that we were about to drive on to the trailhead of Supai. The whole group was very excited to get there, but there was also a definite *feeling of burn-out* (Campbell, n.d.) toward being in the cars for such a long time. Burn-out was a theme that showed up in both the Havasupai trip, and the SUPT experience at different times, though it never seemed to have too big of a negative impact on the perceptions and attitudes of the participants in either case. It is, however, something that needs to be considered when planning an OEE for a group of students. Trip leaders should be looking at what might cause participants to burn-out, and how to avoid it as much as possible. Or, it could be a situation where it is okay if they get a little tired of something, like we

were tired of being in the cars.

This is the point in my autobiographical account in which the anecdotes I shared in the first chapter of this dissertation come in. I will continue with the story of my experience, omitting those parts already told in that chapter, while adding some of the details that were left out of that first account. One piece I left out of my arriving at the trailhead that second evening of the trip, after the drive in from Hoover Dam, was our astronomy lesson that night. One of the teachers that had joined us gave a brief lesson on how to find some of the planets and constellations that were out that night. It was a few years before I was in eighth-grade that I began to study astronomy as one of my favorite hobbies, and I had done a lot of learning about the subject on my own. Because of this, I was very excited to take part in that lesson, and to even show off how much I knew a little for my peers. That being said, I still *learned even more about some of the constellations* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) we were talking about, and that evening standing in a parking lot next to the rim of the Grand Canyon is burned into my mind as one of the coolest experiences with the night sky I have had. That type of *learning in the outdoors* and having it stick is one of the themes and driving purposes of these OEEs. It is still one of my favorite places I have ever looked at the stars, and was another experience that helped me to really forge a life-long *connection with that place* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

Another part of our arrival at Hualapai Hilltop that I did not yet mention was right as we arrived there. As we all unloaded from the vehicles, I walked over and was treated

with an amazing view of the Grand Canyon, which for me was my first time seeing it, as was previously told in the Introduction. It became quickly clear to me why it was one of the wonders of the world, and as I also mentioned, I felt immediately *connected to that scenery and place* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). What I did not talk about yet was it was also my first time seeing the notorious switchbacks at the start of the trail to, and the end of the trail out of Supai Village. That part of the trail was almost a mile, and wound back and forth as it took you from Hilltop into the bottom of the canyon, hundreds of feet below, or vis versa on the way out.

Everyone who had gone on the trip talked about how strenuous the switchbacks were, especially when you were hiking out. They had even spent some time in the early morning meetings trying to give us some tips on how to successfully hike them. I remember as I stood there taking in the wonderous canyon below me, I also was awestruck by how difficult and incredible the switchbacks looked, and wondering if I would be able to make it down them. Even beyond the nerves I was experiencing for the climb down, it was more so the climb back out that I knew would happen in a few days that really had me nervous. As I recount this, it again brings to mind the themes of *a feeling of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016), and *meeting with a challenging situation* (Little & Wyver, 2008). Most of us students, and some of the parents, I am sure, were intimidated by this part of the trail. But, because of the training hikes we had gone on throughout the year, and because of our other preparations, the trip leaders knew we would be able make it, and that gave us all the confidence to try. These

ideas of building preparedness and confidence could be quite helpful for those who are leading students on an OEE with something that could be considered strenuous, like the switchbacks, or the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls.

Jumping forward to my time in the actual canyon, staying in the Supai Village campground, there are several experiences that stood out to me. The first was the incredible waterfalls and blue-green pools throughout the area. As I stated in the Introduction, I had never seen water like that, nor did I know that it could be found in the desert. It was a large part of why that area felt like a paradise. It was also where our group spent a lot of time on that trip, playing in the pool at the base of Havasu Falls near our camp, or just walking up stream to find the somewhat hidden Navajo Falls. Even early on in the experience, I knew that trip would not be the only time I ever experienced playing in that water, or sitting off to the side in wonder of its power and beauty. I felt a deep and strong *connection to the water* found throughout the area (Nichols, 2014). I am reminded of that connection anytime I see a picture of any of the waterfalls in that area on social media, calendars, or in magazines.

Going back to the previous chapter, it was it was easy to see that visiting a waterfall, like Havasu Falls, or Lower Calf Creek Falls, and playing in the water, are just some of the ways that the themes of *connecting with water* (Nichols, 2014) and *connecting with the geology of an area* (Ford, 2003) emerged so readily from the data of this study. It was also mentioned, and further supported here, that when an OEE has something like a waterfall, it gives the participants something to work toward or look forward to when they are hiking. I knew from hearing the experiences of other students,

the yearly videos shown to recruit students, and the early morning meetings that the waterfalls were there on my first hike into Supai, but I had no idea how amazing they were until I *experienced them first hand* (AEE, n.d.). It was actually getting to be there and experience them, and all other parts of the trip, that make it so that I would make that hike again anytime just to see the area, just to be there again. These are the types of experiences, connections, and themes that can be used to help us improve the SUPT and other OEEs like it, as well as contribute to the existing literature of outdoor education.

One of our learning assignments given to us by the trip leaders was to sit and sketch Havasu Falls. One of the English teachers that came on the trip was a trained artist, and gave us a lesson on how to sketch a landscape while sitting there in such a beautiful place. After the lesson, we were to go off to a spot by ourselves, sitting in the warm spring sunshine, and draw the waterfall. I was so excited to try this, as I really enjoyed drawing, and I wanted so badly to capture as much of the trip as I possibly could. I could also tell in that moment that learning to sketch a landscape while actually there was an outdoor skill I was going to be very glad I had begun to learn. *Learning outdoor skills* like that one was, as previously stated, also one of the main points of taking students on these trips, to teach them new things in the places they are learning about, making the teaching much more effective and long-lasting. At the end of the lesson, I was quite proud of my sketch, and *excited* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) to show my parents when I got home. I felt *a strong connection to that place* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) as I sat and compared my sketch to the actual waterfall. These moments of accomplishment and

connection that participants then want to share with others are something that leaders of OEEs should try to build into their programs as often as possible. It is evidence that the activities these students are doing are of value to them.

Related to these moments of accomplishment was our group's hike to Mooney Falls later that week. The first part of the hike to the falls was an easy trail, mostly flat and well worn, and it remained that way even after the actual falls came into view. When I first saw Mooney Falls, it was from the top of the falls, as it plunged nearly 190 feet down into a lower part of the canyon. While the sight of it from that spot was truly incredible, our destination was the base of the falls. This was another part of the Havasupai trip that was notoriously difficult and often talked about by the past participants when they returned to school.

The trail to the base of Mooney Falls involved a cliff-side decent using natural tunnels, rock steps, short sections of wooden ladders, and chains hung along the way for handrails and barriers against falling. As an added precaution, the trip leaders stationed themselves and the other adult chaperones at different points to help the students stay safe and make it past the more difficult parts of the decent. That section of the trail was another part of the experience that raised the theme of *meeting with a challenging situation* (Little & Wyver, 2008) for me. I remember standing at the top of the cliff-side decent, and *feeling incredibly nervous* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) and intimidated, and as I listened to my peers nervously talk, I realized I was definitely not the only one. It was here again that the confidence and encouragement of the trip leaders helped us to overcome our anxiety, and make the climb down.

Once we were at the bottom of the falls, it was even more breath taking. I stood at the base of the falls for some time taking it all in, and *feeling so connected to all that I was seeing*. It was so easy to *connect with the scenery* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) of Supai, as it often is in areas like it, that it was not surprising to see that theme emerge from this data. Once we were done with the decent and at the bottom of the falls, we were allowed to explore the area a little, and play in the river if we wanted to. I chose not to as it was a cloudy, colder day and had been raining, but plenty of our group did. The next day, we made the trip to the base of the falls again, but this time with the intent of hiking further down the canyon to Beaver Falls. I was so much more confident on the cliff-side decent part of the trail the second time because I had experience doing it, and knew I could. It was also a much warmer, much sunnier day, and so I jumped in the river several times at Beaver Falls, as did most of our group. It was one of the most enjoyable parts of the trip, as we splashed around together and jumped from the small ledges into in the pools below.

Those experiences with all of the waterfalls, and playing in their pools further cemented *a connection with the water* (Nichols, 2014) on that trip for me. It was also during those times in and around the waterfalls, as well as our time in camp, usually as we prepared meals, that were the most social parts of that OEE. *Being able to be social* (Garst et al., 2001) and talk with my peers allowed me to strengthen my existing friendships, as well as forge new ones, through our shared experiences on the trip. Some of those memories of the Havasupai trip that are the most important to me involved being able to hang out and talk with my peers. It was during those times that we felt connected

as one big group, and, as previously mentioned, I felt included. As it was with the eight participants in the previous chapter, *learning and being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) was one of the most important themes for the participants of these experiences.

One of the shorter experiences on the Havasupai Trip that stood out to me was a lesson Charles conducted in the middle of the week. We had finished preparing and eating our dinner, and the group had gathered together. We hiked a short trail, near the middle of the campground, up a small, but somewhat steep climb, to rather large cave. Again, the trip leaders stationed adults at several points on the climb, and a rope was tied on in order to do all they could to ensure the safety of everyone on the hike. It took several minutes, but we were all able to gather the into the cavern, and everyone was able to get seated in a spot that they could see and hear Charles. He then proceeded to teach everyone how a cave like that would form, again supporting the theme of *connecting with the geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003) of the area. He also gave a little bit of the history of how the Havasupai people used the cave in the past, helping us as a group to *form a connection to other cultures* (Smith et al., 1997). After that, he had everyone in the group turn off our flashlights, and when all the noise from the students had subsided, he talked about how that was one of the ways to experience total darkness. We spent a few moments like that, at which point, he turned on his flashlight, and proceeded to tell ghost stories. It was so much fun to be in a cave, surrounded by my friends, listening to some very well-crafted ghost stories. He ended the lesson by teaching us the elements of a good ghost story, and then gave the assignment to head back to camp, and write our own. We left the cave so excited to get back and start writing.

Later in that week, our group went on another notorious hike called “The Rim Hike.” The start of this hike was a short, somewhat steep climb, and was where we as a group *met with another challenging situation* (Little & Wyver, 2008), a theme Charles and Margaret purposely built into the very fabric of the experience. To start the Rim Hike, one of the parent chaperones who went on the trip every year for many years in a row, would tie a short section of climbing rope, as he had done at the cave, and added support for the group as we climbed up a somewhat steep, but short section of rocky trail. The leaders and parents were also stationed at different points to help the students to stay safe. I remember as I climbed up, and later down, this section of the trail that I had a lot more confidence in my abilities because I had experience and had done the trail to the base of Mooney Falls.

The rest of the Rim Hike followed along one of the benches of the canyon wall, about 100 feet up from the canyon floor. It was a rather safe way to hike along the canyon and look down on the campground, and toward the end of the hike for us, Mooney Falls from far above. I remember feeling both *nervous* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) and *excited* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) as I looked down from such a height. I also remember being in total awe as I looked around at the canyon itself, and the rock formations, like the Wigleeva towers I saw as we hiked into the village. The Wigleeva are two columns of rock at the start of Supai Village, that stand like sentinels over the canyon.

The Havasupai people look to the two towers, one male and the other female, as guardian figures over the village and its residents. The legend holds that when the towers fall, that will spell the end of the canyon and of the Havasupai people. (Witt, 2016, p. 67)

I could hardly believe that water and wind had been able to form such beautiful and incredible features, and it sparked in me a desire to know more about geology and how the Earth's surface took its shape. That *connection to geology and geological formations* (Ford, 2003) is a theme stuck with me, and carried over into my career choice as a science teacher.

One part of the Rim Hike that really stayed with me over the years was the tradition of taking a picture of the entire group on a giant, flat, boulder that was slightly slanted to one side. The rock was lovingly called "Lizard Rock" by the trip leaders, as was used for the group picture for decades. We all climbed onto the face of Lizard Rock, and found a spot to sit, while Charles set up a camera on a tripod, set the timer, and hurried back to his spot on the rock. As I see the picture of us in the copy of the video Charles made for our trip, it symbolizes how connected our group was, and how important that time making and strengthening friendship in *such a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) was for me, as I'm sure it was for others in the group.

It wasn't too long after that picture was taken that it came time to leave. I can remember feeling very conflicted that last day in the canyon. I was incredibly homesick, and in many ways just wanted to get back and see my parents and brothers. But I also didn't want to leave Supai. I had fallen in love with the area as soon as I saw it, and that love and *feeling of connection to it and to all I had seen* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998) had only increased exponentially as the week went on.

I couldn't wait until I would find my way back down there sometime in the future.

We started the hike out of the canyon in the rain, and it quickly soaked through the jacket I brought. As I hiked, I vividly remember worrying and hoping that it hadn't soaked through my pack so that I would have dry clothes when we stopped to camp in "The Wash" at the base of the switchbacks. We would not be climbing the mile-long switchbacks until the next morning, rather than trying to tackle them after a nine-mile long hike out from the campground. As the rain came down, I found I was quite nervous of flash-flooding. After all, my dad had been so nervous about it, and I had rarely ever seen him like that. However, those *feelings of nervousness* (Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016; Bendall, 2013) were not able to get in the way of my sense of wonder as I looked all around me and got to see the beautiful canyon during a rainstorm.

I made it to the wash toward the front of our group, and therefore was able to find a spot under an overhang in the cliff that provided me with great shelter from the rain. I checked my pack and found my clothes were mostly dry. I ran behind a rock, and changed into some of the dry clothes I found, and then jumped into my sleeping bag (luckily the rain had not gotten to it either) and spent the evening talking and eating with all of the people that were near me under that overhang. It was a great time, with all of us so happy, despite being dirty, tired, cold, and still a bit wet. We didn't really care because we got to hang out together. *Being in a social setting* (Garst et al., 2001) really was one of the most important themes for the participants of this Havasupai Trip, as it had been for the SUPT detailed in the previous chapter. It seems as though *being and learning in a social setting* is one of the themes that has the greatest positive impact on the attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. This fits when one

considers how important socializing is to the adolescent age group.

The next morning, we were awakened before sunrise, and told to start hiking out. We rolled up our sleeping bags and mats, packed them away, and started the arduous trek up the switchbacks. I was quite nervous to begin such a notoriously difficult part of the hike out, but as I went along, I realized that even though it was difficult, I was up for the task. I made it out of the canyon and was relieved to drop my pack at the back of the truck and spend the remaining time looking out at the Grand Canyon and talking with my friends as they finished the hike as well. When everyone was out of the canyon, we loaded up the vehicles, and drove into Las Vegas, Nevada, where we would be spending our last night of the trip eating at a buffet in a casino, and then camping in a KOA Campground, where we hung out and talked with our friends late into the night. We were finally sent off to bed, and I was very excited get some sleep, and to head home in the morning.

The next day was spent driving home, quite exhausted from the trip. I was definitely *feeling burnt-out* (Campbell, n.d.) from being in a cramped truck with so many others by the time we pulled into the school parking lot. My mom and dad were there waiting as I unloaded my pack from the back of the truck, and said goodbye to my friends and the trip leaders. I was grateful to be home and with my family again, and I was more than excited to tell them all the things that had happened on the trip. Even though I was so glad to be home, I felt I was and always will be forever *connected to that place*. I have also found over the years that I have a strong *desire to keep Supai and the surrounding area protected and pristine* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al.,

2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006). I want to be able to continue to share the experience of hiking to and all around Supai with as many people as I possibly can. I also attribute my experiences there as a major reason for my concern with protecting the outdoors in general and getting as many people as possible to experience all they have to offer. And as was stated in the last chapter, this connection and desire to protect these kinds of areas are strong evidence for the positive impact that these types of OEEs have on the participants' attitudes toward and perceptions of being and learning in the outdoors.

As a Teacher and Trip Leader

Fast forward eight years, and I was a college senior with one semester left before I could graduate. I was scheduled to student teach with an amazing teacher at a high school near the university, when my wife suggested I look for a placement that could lead right into a job. I did a quick internet search, and found that IWMS had just posted a job opening, and school started in a week, so they were anxious to fill the position quickly. Having been a student in the district, I knew enough people that I easily got an interview, and was offered an internship that lasted from August into December, when I would graduate, and my internship would turn into my first teaching position. I was ecstatic. As I mentioned in the Introduction, part of why I decided to become a teacher was because I had hoped to one day work my way into a job at Intermountain West Middle School. Now, it was going to be my first job.

A large part of why I had wanted to teach at IWMS was so that I might one day

be able to become a part of the team that ran the Havasupai trip. I could not wait for my chance to help out, but I knew the spots as trip leaders were hard to come by, as everyone wanted to be part of the experience if they had the chance. I lucked out in a big way in my second year of teaching. I was incredibly *nervous* at having so much responsibility so early in my career, but I was far more excited at an opportunity to help with the Havasupai Trip so early on in my career. Both the themes of *a feeling of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016), and *a feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) were feelings that carried all the way through my experience of being a teacher and a trip leader involved in the planning and running of IWJH's yearly OEE, as will be shown below.

With the help of my mentor, I began planning and executing the four yearly hiking field trips the eighth-graders took each year to get ready for Havasupai. This was also the year the school made the switch to Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH). I loved the fact that four times a year, I was able to take a group of 40 to 150 students on hikes in the mountains near our homes. I could think of no better way to spend a workday. It was exactly as I had hoped it would be as I pictured my future career after going on Havasupai myself. One such hike was on an old trail used by the Shoshone people when the spring runoff would flood the trails to their hunting grounds.

As the group was hiking up a small section of switchbacks near the beginning of the trail, I had an overwhelming *feeling of excitement* and gratitude that it was a part of my job, to be on that hike, helping so many students to gain an appreciation for the outdoors right there in our own backyard. It was moments like that, of which I have had

many, that have helped me to realize I had chosen the right career path. Those experiences have also helped to strengthen *my desire to protect those areas, and the outdoors in general* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006), so that more and more people could have experiences like those we had on those hikes.

There were times during those years that I ran the hiking field trips that I was surprised to find out students did not even know the trails were there in the mountains, so close to our homes, or that they were free to use, despite all of them only a few miles away. I was also somewhat surprised, and heartbroken to find that some of the students weren't even able to make it very far on a trail due to being physically unprepared. That almost always meant that they would not be able to participate in the trip that year. It was always hard to see the disappointment on their faces. But, *being physically fit enough* (Cooper, et al., 2010; Page et al., 2010) was one of the themes that we as trip leaders had to be cautious about, especially with how strenuous and long the trail in and out of Supai was. Then there were the times that the students would find something that filled them with wonder, like an animal skull, or an interesting rock formation, and it would make my day to watch them be so excited and engaged and connected with the natural world. Their *feelings of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) were clear, as was the *connection to animals* (Bullock, 1994) and *to rocks* (Ford, 2003).

A few years into my teaching, I received some news about the trip that made my stomach turn. I had known from the start of that school year that both Charles and Margaret were retiring (they had started the same year). That made me nervous about

what would happen to the Havasupai trip. But Charles had been training another teacher for several years so that he could take over when that time came without any interruption to the trip. What really set me on edge was during the last week of school that year, the teacher who was set to take over the trip took a teaching position at another school. He would no longer be there to take over the trip. I was horrified that the trip might come to an end after a little more than 40 years. New teachers were chosen to take over, but I worried that they did not have enough experience to keep the trip going at the caliber it had been. They ended up doing fine, with some learning and struggling of course. It was at that point, however, we started to see a decline in the number of students who went on the trip.

From about my time going on the trip, up until Charles and Margaret retired, there were about 40 to 70 students who went on Havasupai each year with the school. In the years following their retirement, that number began to decline, and was usually around thirty students. The new trip leaders worked really hard in the beginning of their tenure to make sure the trip was well prepared for and ran smoothly. But, as the years passed, and more teachers left IWJH, the trip to Havasupai struggled more and more. With those struggles, fewer and fewer students chose to or possibly were able to go, and fewer teachers with experience helping to run the trip were around to help. It was also around this time that I left my teaching position at the school, and my place as a trip leader, due to personal issues with the way the district was being run. It broke my heart because I was just one more experienced person leaving, and based on what I had seen up to that point, that further threatened the very existence of the trip.

A few years went by, and I happened to pass a past colleague and friend of mine on the street. She informed me that there had been some changes in the district that addressed the issues I had left because of, and that I should come back. It took me another year, but I found my way back into a teaching position at IWJH again. I was so glad to be back there, and I was beyond excited to see that the yearly OEE was still going, though it had changed location due to travel restriction put in place by the school board, and therefore its name changed as well. It was now the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT), and instead of hiking into Supai, Arizona, the group now went to several state and national parks in the Southern Utah area. My excitement quickly turned to dismay when I learned that only six students would be going on the trip the year I came back to the school. I could not believe that the participation numbers had fallen so low.

I began to ask around, focusing on both the students and the teachers, trying to find out why so many of the students at the school were not going on the trip. I wanted to know if it was by choice, or was there some barrier getting in their way. It was my hope that if I could better understand what was keeping so many from participating, I would be able to help fix the problems and issues facing the trip, and the number of participants going on the trip each year would come back up. In my quest for understanding, the main thing I heard from both students at the school and from my fellow teachers was that it was *a lack of access to supplies, namely money* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007) that was keeping the participation rates so low. I was not at all surprised by this theme being the main reason so many students were not able to go on the trip. After all, as was stated in Chapter III, this was a highly impacted school, especially when it came to

socioeconomic status (SES), and SES was the most common constraint to participation in outdoor activities.

The second thing I heard the most from the students, based on my recollection, as to why they did not go, was that they did not know enough about the trip. Many of the students did not even know the trip took place, or if they knew it took place, they knew little more about it than that. Thinking back on my time at the school, everyone talked about the trip, even people in the community and neighborhood around the school. But now, it was hardly ever mentioned by anyone, including the teachers that were in charge of the trip. The trip's reputation was one of the main forms of advertisement year after year in the early days. But as the trip had changed locations, and rumors began to circulate that there was a lot of down time on the trip, often making it boring, the reputation of the trip, and, therefore, the number of participants began to suffer.

Another of the changes to the trip that was made during the time I did not work at IWJH was the adding of an academic grade requirement. Students were then required to not have any "F" or "D" grades on their transcript, in addition to all of the other requirements mentioned above. Often, when I was trying to recruit students to go on the trip, and I mentioned the grade requirement, they would say something to the effect of "Oh, I'm out then. I have too bad of grades to be able to go." Due to the impacted nature of the school, this requirement kept a lot of students from being able to participate, when helping those types of struggling student was why the trip was founded in the first place.

The last things that I heard that could have been keeping students from going on the SUPT were a general lack of interest, as well as not wanting to go because of who

else was or was not going. Some of the students at the school were just not interested in camping, even if it was with friends and away from school for a week. However, I often found when I talked a little more with these students, that it boiled down to the fact that they were *uncomfortable in the outdoors* (Givoni et al., 2003). Whether it was having to sleeping on the ground, or the bugs, or other things that some view as an uncomfortable part of the outdoors, it was keeping some of the students at IWJH from participating in the trip. It should be recalled that for the eight student participants in Part 1 of this study, this was the same theme that emerged when the vast majority of them cited something that made them uncomfortable when asked what they liked least about learning in the outdoors.

As for the students choosing not to go because of who was or was not going on the trip, I would receive a number of answers when I looked into it further what exactly they meant by this. The answers I received ranged from the student choosing not to go because someone they did not get along with was going and they did not want there to be any issues, on up to one of the teacher trip leaders going was someone the student would often have had a negative experience in their class before and therefore was a cause of concern for them. Finally, some of the students would choose not to go because their friends were not able to go for some reason or another, like them not being able to afford it, or not being able to make the grade requirements. All of these reasons fell under the theme of *being in a social setting* on the trip, and therefore being very important to the students.

Another possible cause of the eighth-grade students not being interested in

participating in the SUPT, as mentioned above, might have been partly due to the reputation that the trip had begun take on in the few years prior to this study. I had heard from students, as well as teachers and parents that had helped as chaperones, that in those few years prior, many of the participants felt that there was too much down time, causing large sections of the trip to feel boring. More than one student had told me that they had heard that all you did was sit around a lot. While I knew that this was not the only thing happening on the trip, it was still partly the idea that was being passed around, and as was mentioned before, much of the recruiting for the trip was the word of mouth reputation of the trip. The *excitement for the trip* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) was a major driving force in getting students to go, as can be seen by the prevalence of the theme in this data.

All of this data on some of the reasons why the students were not going gives great insight into an answer for the second research question of this study, which was: What were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience? By now having some understanding of what was keeping the majority of students from going, whether it was a choice, or some constraint on the student, this information could now be used to alleviate some of the barriers to participation, thus beginning to help to improve the SUPT and other OEEs like it.

My second year back at IWJH, I was preparing to conduct this study, while working with the trip leaders to help get the SUPT ready to go. Part way into the year, one of the trip leaders was no longer able to participate. The second leader was able to recruit one of the staff at the school, Henry (a pseudonym) to help him out. I was not

asked at this time to help, as I was hoping to go along on the trip as a participant observer only, and be able to focus on conducting the study, without the added responsibility of running the trip. However, not long after the first trip leader was unable to go, and only a few months before the trip, the second trip leader left teaching, and left his position as a trip leader with it. Henry was unable to run the entire trip by himself, and none of us wanted to see it end, so he asked me to help run it. I chose to become a trip leader, in addition to conducting this study, rather than see the experience come to a sudden end. A short time later, another teacher, Edward, came to us and offered his help and experience as well.

The trip leaders quickly got to work putting together the details of the trip in order to try and make sure a quality experience was ready for the students in time. We planned learning activities, hikes, and made reservations for campsites. After much discussion amongst the three of us, we decided that one of the things that was most needed to recruit more students was to cut the costs of the trip as much as we could, even with such little notice. We wrote letters asking for donations, and got the overall price for each participant down to \$125. We also tried to make sure that if a student could not pay, they knew the school would cover the costs for them. We later found out that word of the school helping to pay for the trip did not get around enough as several students told us they would have gone if they had known there was financial help.

We also decided that we would cover the cost of all the food for both students and chaperones. Edward had experience cooking for large numbers and was able to come up with and execute a great menu on a very limited budget. It was clear to us from the

beginning of our taking control that many of the eight-graders at the school were not going because of a *lack of access to the necessary funds or supplies* (Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007) need to go on the trip, and this idea has been borne out in the data from this study. Even with all of these last-minute measures and recruiting, we were still only able to bring up the number of participants from 6 the prior year, to 10 the year of this study.

As the time for the trip drew near, I was *very nervous* for several reasons. As has shown these two chapters describing the findings of this study, *a feeling of nervousness* (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016) was one of the most prevalent themes emerging from the data. It is quite possible that if that *feeling of nervousness or anxiety* was too strong, it might be a barrier to a student's ability to participate in the SUPT and other OEEs like it. Leaders of OEE should then keep in mind the age of their participants in conjunction with how nervous they are, therefore, likely to be prior to the experience, and do what they can to alleviate those nerves ahead of time, making the potential participants more comfortable and therefore more likely to go.

For me, the source of my *feelings of nervousness* were twofold. I was nervous as a trip leader, being responsible for all of the participants and their learning on the trip, as well as my being a father and husband, I was nervous to leave my family, as I am anytime I am away from them for an extended period of time. It is worth noting that it seems as though leaders too are often nervous or anxious about leaving their families before an OEE. This could be used to help them develop empathy for the students they are about to take on the trip, reminding them that the students are probably nervous, and

then using that empathy to comfort the students and help to reduce those nerves and anxiety. As for my nerves as a trip leader, they didn't go away until the very last child was picked up by their parent or guardian after we had returned from the trip, and I was no longer responsible for them. As I gain more and more experiences, I suspect those particular nerves and anxiety would lessen, but probably never go away fully.

One such instance in which I was quite nervous prior to the trip was the evening of the mock camp out. I was very excited that we were so close to the actual trip, but I was also very nervous about how it would all actually go. Did we plan well enough? Did we have enough food? Did the parents really trust us and feel confident enough to have us take their children on this trip? These were the questions I had running through my mind that day. As the students and their parents showed up, the leaders got them started on setting up their tents and laying out their sleeping bags, and then we talked with the parents about the trip. It went very well, and the parents still seemed slightly skeptical about us as new leaders, but they did seem more at ease after our conversation, and all of them still allowed their children to participate in the trip. I felt slightly more at ease because I saw how well the mock campout went, and it gave me a small confidence boost that the rest of the trip would also go well.

When the first day of the trip finally came, I found I was very nervous all over again. Not only was a major part of this study, and very important part of my requirements for graduate school, about to begin, but I was also about to take my first group of students on the yearly IWJH trip as a trip leader. It was something I had hoped for and wanted for such a long time, and it was finally here. I wanted everything to go

smoothly, and everyone to have fun and learn a lot, and deep down I knew they would, but I was still anxious. We got off to a somewhat rough start by not leaving until over an hour past when we intended to. But, once we were on the road, it was smooth sailing, for the most part, and I was able to relax a little.

Once we were actually in Bryce Canyon National Park, I found *I was incredibly excited* for the learning part of the trip to begin, and I think the students were too, judging by how enthusiastically they engaged with the assignment I gave them in the park visitor's center (see Appendix G). *My feeling of excitement* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) about the students and their *learning about nature* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) were themes that played a major role in how this trip positively affected their perceptions of and attitudes toward learning in the outdoors. As we gathered up the students, I gave them their assignment which they had a few questions to find the answer to, such as how did Bryce Canyon form, and then we turned them loose to go and figure it out.

It was really great for me as a teacher to see the students quickly engage with the assignment, as they excitedly moved from display to display, trying to find the answers to the questions, and writing them down in the nature journals we had given each of them. The excitement of this carried over to a while later when we were outside at one of the viewpoints on the rim of the canyon. I began that days learning activity (see Appendix G), which was to introduce to them their first plant that I was going to teach them to identify, the ponderosa pine. I could not believe how excited the students were to learn to identify this tree, and really *form a connection with this plant* (Bullock, 1994). That

excitement and desire to learn to identify each plant that we introduced each day carried throughout the trip, and was evidence of the students forming *a connection with nature, and the places we were visiting* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998).

There were several other times that the students really engaged with the learning activities (see Appendix G) we had planned on the trip. The activities that really stood out to me as examples of the students really getting into the learning, and having a positive impact on their attitudes and perceptions of learning in the outdoors were the petroglyph assignment, the 3-scale assignment, and the beaded bracelet assignment. The petroglyph assignment had the students take what they learned from the lesson on petroglyph and the cultures that made them, and create their own petroglyph they would put on a canyon wall had they been a part of the Fremont people. This activity gave evidence to the themes of *a connection to past cultures* (Smith et al., 1997), as was described in Chapter IV. But it also showed me *a desire in each participant to protect the area* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006), because I could see that they knew how important those glyphs were, and they did not want them disturbed.

The 3-scale drawing assignment had the participants pick a living organism, usually a plant because they do not move, and first drew the whole organism. When they had finished, they moved closer and drew a part of the organism, like a branch, close up. Finally, they drew what they saw in an extreme close up of the part they had drawn second, like the texture of the bark on the branch. This assignment taught the participants

to look more closely at things. This slowing down and taking a look helped many of them *form a connection to the plant* (Bullock, 1994) they were studying.

The last learning activity that stood out to me was the beaded bracelet assignment. For each hike and learning activity, I would give each participant a plastic bead, and tell them why I chose the color I did for that activity. They would then save the bead in a small plastic bag until our last morning, in which I taught them to tie the beads into a bracelet that would remind them of each activity they took part in, and what I hoped they learned from that activity. It was also another symbol of group unity, as everyone in the group had a bracelet. The students were so *excited* (Kellert et al., 2017; NFEREW & Dillon, 2005) about the bracelets, and *the outdoor learning* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) they stood for, and as they all planned together to wear them to school when we got back, it gave even further evidence of *the social nature of the learning* (Garst et al., 2001) that had taken place on the trip.

The rest of the hikes and learning activities, and really the rest of the trip, also went incredibly well. It was not perfect by any means, but it was considered very successful by myself, as well as by Henry and Edward and the parents that came along with us. This claim was further supported by the responses of the eight students who participated in this study, as was shown in the previous chapter. Some of the things I wished had gone better were things like the students not enjoying the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls as much as I had thought they would, how cold it got the night we stayed in Capital Reef National Park, or especially how *burnt-out* (Campbell, n.d.) some of the students got toward the end of the experience, but those paled in comparison to the

positive impact this trip had the attitudes and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors for all involved.

Truthfully, toward the end of the week, I think all of the participants, students, teachers, and parents, were all beginning to feel some level of *burn-out* (Campbell, n.d.) and were ready to head back home. It was quite cold and windy, and it had started to rain that last day as we stopped to make our lunches at Panoramic Point in Capital Reef National Park. This burn-out was quite evident as we quickly made sandwiches at the back of the gear trailer, and then loaded into the vehicles, and headed home, sad to be done with the trip, but glad to be headed back.

In the days that followed the trip, the leaders talked extensively about what went well, and what we felt we could have done better. The former list vastly outweighed the latter, and the main points of each list have been described throughout this section. We were very proud of how successfully the trip had gone, and how well we felt we had done in our first experience as trip leaders. We all thought that the trip had a positive impact on how the students viewed the outdoors, and I really felt it had a positive impact on our attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors as well. I came home feeling every student and teacher should be able to have the experiences we had just had. I also had *a strong desire to do what I could to protect the areas we visited* (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006) so that others could have the opportunity to experience what we did. This was a theme I felt was shown in all of our group as well. The leaders also talked a lot about what we felt needed to be done to try and increase the number of participants

that went each year. How were we going to remove the barriers and constraints that were getting in the way of so many of the eighth-grade students at our school.

Our main conclusions we decided to start with, knowing it would be a long process over many years, were to begin advertising a lot more in order to get word out about trip to more potential participants. We would tell them what the trip was and what was needed to have in order to be able to go. Our second course of action was to begin to do what we could to cut the cost as low as we could, as we saw that as the first and largest barrier that needed to be removed for our students. *Lack of access to the necessary resources* seemed to be the theme that always came up first in response to what was keeping so many students from participating in the trip, and if we wanted more students to go, we needed to help them gain access to what they needed in order to go.

Summary

In the end, it was an incredible feeling for me personally, to see the SUPT back on track and ready to continue on, allowing for the possibility of many more students to gain the benefits of participation in an experience like it. This was something that had had such a profound impact on my own attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. Plus, I had seen it have a similar effect on the perceptions and attitudes of countless students I was able to help go on this OEE. I have attempted in this chapter, as well as in the previous chapter, to show that positive impact, and how it answers the first research question in this study; How did participation in the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT) outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students

at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH) perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs?

I have also attempted in both chapters to answer the second question, what were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience? I have done this by showing that there are several barriers to a student's participation in OEEs like Havasupai and SUPT, the most common of which, but certainly not only one, being *a lack of access to the necessary resources* for participation. Those other barriers, along with the impacts of these OEEs and how they contribute to the existing literature on the field of outdoor education will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, along with some of the possible implications of this study, and recommendations for further areas of research that needs to be done in order to better improve the quality and inclusivity of OEEs, a goal we in the field should all be aiming for.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

If children are to grow into healthy, well-adjusted adults, nature needs to be integral to their everyday lives, from place-based learning at school to unstructured, unsupervised, even risk-prone play around home. Nature isn't just a bunch of far-off plants, animals, and landscapes to learn about and visit once or twice a year. It's an environment to be immersed in daily, especially during our childhood years. – Scott D. Sampson (2015, p.14)

Figure 23

Students and Trip Leaders on the Trail of Sleeping Rainbows in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park



Note. Faces covered to protect their anonymity, except author.

For the majority of people who have ever participated in, or lead an outdoor educational experience (OEE), it is intuitive to them that that experience has had a positive impact on that person, and has changed how they feel and view the outdoors, and learning in the outdoors. For the majority of those who have had an opportunity to learn in an OEE setting, they also know intuitively that there can be more natural, more organic, and more effective that the learning that takes place in the traditional setting. It is also clear, to those who look, that not everyone gets a fair chance at participating in those experiences. There are clearly some groups of people that are being left out of the benefits that come from participation in these OEES. This study gives evidence, alongside several other studies, to those things that are already known by so many.

The goals of this study were to figure out how the Southern Utah Parks Trip (SUPT) effected the attitudes and perceptions of those students who participated in the experience in regard to the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, and to find out what was blocking so many of the students at the school from participating in the experience. This study shows that the SUPT had a positive impact on all eight of the participants attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, though to varying degrees. This study also shows that there were several possible barriers to participation for many of the students at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH), with the foremost of those barriers being a lack of access to necessary resources, especially money, and experience. These conclusions will be discussed in much more detail below.

In this chapter, I begin with a short summary of the findings of this study, and

how they were reached. In that summary, there is a review of the themes that emerged from the data. As I summarize those themes, I will also demonstrate how these themes provide a better understanding of and answers to the two research questions that drove this study. This is followed by the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings of Part 1 and Part 2 stated above, and the theories that emerged from those findings, grounded in the evidence found in the data. The theories that emerged from my analysis were, first, the Southern Utah Parks Trip, and other OEEs have a positive impact on each participant's attitude toward and perception of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, helping to cause a connection to and a deeper understanding of nature. This is in line with what others in the literature (Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Ballantyne & Packer, 2002) have found in their studies in which they showed that experiences in the outdoor can help children develop a connection and a bond with those places.

As many of the participants put it in Kellert's (1998) classic study, these experiences are often "one of the best (p. 18)" experiences of their lives. This theory is further supported by the work of Ballantyne and Packer (2002), in which they found that learning in natural environments are attractive to students, and that it has an important impact on their attitudes toward the environment. They also found that it has an impact on their desire to look after the environment and their personal behavior in nature, as well as their household environmental practices.

The second theory that arose from my analysis was there are several things keeping most of the students at Intermountain West Junior High School from

participating the Southern Utah Parks Trip, and likely keeping other students at other schools from participating in OEEs. This theory is supported by the works of Warren et al. (2014) showed that not everyone has the same access to outdoor activities, with inequities falling along gender, race and ethnicity, and socio-economic status, and the work of Ghimire et al. (2014) who showed that there are many different constraints and barriers faced by those groups.

I then provide suggestions of how the SUPT and other OEEs might be improved on what was found in this research. Following this, I provide a summary of the known limitations of this study, as well as the possible implications that might come from it, along with suggestions for areas of further research that were discovered along the way. All of this is done with the intention of helping to move the field of outdoor education forward in a positive and more equitable way.

What Was Done to Get Here

After participating in the SUPT with the eight students from Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH), and collecting the data for Part 1 of this study, starting with their demographic surveys (see Appendix D), the anonymous pre-trip survey (see Appendix E), the anonymous post-trip survey (see Appendix F), their journey maps, their semi-structured interview responses, and my field notes, I was able to begin to search for answers to my two research questions. Those two questions were: (1) How did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the eighth-grade students at Intermountain West Junior High School (IWJH) perceptions and attitudes about the

outdoors and participation in OEEs? and (2) What were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience?

I then began Part 2 of this study by journaling all I could remember using pictures, videos, and other related documents as reminders. Upon completing this, I wrote out an autobiographical account of my own experiences with the yearly OEE at IWJH, both from my time there as a student, and as a teacher and trip leader. Using the data collected from my own experiences, I was able to continue my attempt to answer my two research questions in further detail, supported by further evidence.

Following the guidance proved by Charmaz (2014) in conducting a grounded theory study, I analyzed all of the data collected by using the phases of coding laid out by her, starting with initial coding in which I looked for the basic patterns in the data, followed by focused coding where I was able to take those initial codes and begin to form themes out of the data. While doing so, I used constant comparative analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2013), in which I switched between the phases of coding in order to gain a deeper understanding of what was found in the data.

Emergent Themes

What I found from the analysis of all of the data in this constitutes Chapter IV and Chapter V of this dissertation. One of the main findings that came about was the emergences of multiple themes that give insight into how the SUPT effected the attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors of the different participants, as well as some of the possible barriers that may have kept the vast majority

of students at the school from participating in the experience. Those themes are summarized below.

Themes Related to Impact on Attitudes and Perceptions

A Feeling of Excitement (in General or Toward an Activity). In my analysis of the data from the students' experience, as well as my own experiences, the feeling that stood out as one of the most commonly used descriptive words mentioned by us both was that of excitement. Whether it was the excitement leading up to the trip, or the excitement of seeing something like Havasu or Lower Calf Creek Falls for the first time, or any number of other things found in the data, there was a lot of excitement in and around this trip. These feelings of excitement were one of the strongest pieces of evidence that the SUPT had a positive impact on the participants because it was prevalent throughout the experience, and carrying over days after the trip was done (NFEREW & Dillon, 2005). This is in line with part of the findings from Kellert et al, (2017) in which they showed that people are excited to go into the outdoors, largely because of the perceived tremendous benefits they receive from the experience.

Learning and Being in a Social Setting. The socialization that occurred on the trip was another of the themes that had the largest positive impact on the attitudes and perceptions of the participants. The students often cited different parts of the trip that were social in some way as being one of the best parts of the SUPT (Garst et al., 2001; Kellert et al. 2017). Two of the participants, Mollie and Rachel, even stated that the group was so socially cohesive that they felt like "a family." For me, Havasupai was one

of the first times as a student at IWJH that I felt like I was included in a group larger than my close friends. Again, Kellert et al. had a finding similar to this theme. In the authors' results, they found that for the people in their study, experiences in nature are often deeply social, just as I found them to be for myself, and for those that participated in the SUPT.

Connecting with the Scenery or Views of the Scenery. When you go to places like Supai, Arizona, or Bryce Canyon National Park, or any of the other places that the IWJH yearly trip has gone, it is hard to not be in awe of the scenes before you. And with that sense of awe often comes a deep feeling of connection to that place (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Charles & Wheeler, 2012; Cheng & Monroe, 2012; Kellert, 1998). The students, and I, formed connections to the places we saw on these trips that illustrated another of the themes that had a strong positive impact on our attitudes and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. This is a similar result to that of Cheng and Monroe, in which the authors found that the more time children spent in nature, viewing and experiencing it, the deeper the level of connection with nature, and the deeper the sense of oneness with what they experienced, those children formed, as measured by the index the authors created. This is also supported intuitively by those who have stood before a dramatic natural scene and felt the deep sense of oneness with their surroundings.

Connecting with Water. Whether it was swimming in Wide Hollow Reservoir, or hiking to Lower and Upper Calf Creek Falls, or for me, hiking to and playing in the incredibly beautiful turquoise waters of Supai Village, water left a lasting imprint on

most of the participants in this study (Nichols, 2014). As Nichols puts it, “proximity to water strengthens the positive effects that environment has upon well-being” (p. 63).

Connecting with water on these trips, and the memories that come from those connections add to the positive effects of these experiences on our attitudes and perceptions of these places, and the outdoors in general, much as it did in the studies cited by Nichols.

Connecting with Plants. Each day the participants were excited to learn to identify a new native plant species each day (Bullock, 1994), especially the “butterscotch trees” (ponderosa pines) in Bryce Canyon National Park. As was pointed out by Bullock, this respect for and appreciation of all forms of nature, such as trees and other plants, is one of the foundational goals of outdoor education. The students on the SUPT were often found showing this appreciation for plant life when they would stop and take pictures of the wildflowers all around us, or by trying to identify those different wildflowers growing near our campsite in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park. Some even chose to draw those flowers for their 3-Scale Drawing assignment. It is often on a trip like SUPT that students get excited about something like plants, that they wouldn’t normally get excited about, a further positive impact coming from the experience.

Connecting with Geology and Geological Formations. It was not surprising that the students found a connection with the geology and geological formations on the SUPT as the areas we visited are world famous for their unique geological features. That being said, from the perspective of a trip leader, it is good to see that the participants were able to form that connection, as was shown by several of their responses in the

surveys and interviews (Ford, 2003). As Ford demonstrated in her study, students are able to form better connections to and understanding of the rocks and geological formations they most often come into contact with. It is easier for students to make those connections when they have experiences with the actual rock or formation. A quote that is representative of this connection came during Mollie's interview, as she talked about our time in Bryce Canyon National Park. She said, "I've never seen it before, so I was excited to see especially the views and the rock formations."

Connecting with Cultures of the Past. The participants seemed to be fascinated by the different petroglyphs and ruins we saw throughout the trip. As Smith et al. (1997) put it "Many people feel a sense of well-being knowing that there are still places where they can connect with lifeways and peoples gone by" (p. v). This connection was evident in the students as there were several times, especially after they had completed the Petroglyphs Assignment (see Appendix G), that the students would, on their own time, sit and discuss what the petroglyphs represented and what the artists were trying to communicate to others by placing the glyphs where they did. Anytime there was something in a gift shop or visitor's center with petroglyphs on them, the students would excitedly show me, and some even bought souvenirs showing them, or included them in their journey maps. It was a topic that most of the participants found to be quite engaging.

Connecting with Animals. The participants were quite excited anytime they saw an animal like the ground squirrels in Bryce Canyon National Park or the lizards in Escalante State Park, often giving each one they found a name (Bullock, 1994; Cheng & Monroe, 2012). They did not seem to be as interested in the birds found in the area, but I

think that is largely to their not noticing them unless they were pointed out by one of the trip leaders. Participants like Ted spent most of any free time he had catching and identifying bugs around our camp. When he had done this, several others in the group would gather around to share in his discovery. They clearly connected with the animals they did notice on the trip, as was evidenced by our entire group pausing our last morning to watch the deer wander through the Fruita Campground in Capitol Reef National Park. All of this is similar to the empathy for creatures that Cheng and Monroe found in their study of children's connection to nature.

A Feeling of Wanting to Protect an Area or Resources. Along with the connections the participants made with the areas we visited, and with the water, plants, geology, and animals, usually came a desire to protect and preserve those things (Ballantyne & Packer, 2002; Chawla, 2006; Muller et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 2008; Wells & Lekies, 2006). As one participant put it in the anonymous post-trip survey, "Yes because if we don't future generation will not be able to see and enjoy what we got to see. And be able to understand how we felt when we first got to see it." This desire to protect each of those things fits in with the goal of environmental education, as defined by The Belgrade Charter (UNESCO, 1975):

The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones. (p. 2)

The data from this study shows that all eight participants had gained that emotional affinity toward nature to some degree, and as Muller et al. showed, this is a significant

predictor of that child's willingness to commit to pro-environmental behaviors.

Hands-on Learning. Several of the participants mentioned that they learn better when they are able to actually experience and manipulate the things they are learning about in a hands-on way (AEE, n.d.). For Sobel (2004), this hands-on, real-world learning, is one of the biggest benefits to this type of experiential learning. As Rachel put it in her explanation of why she liked learning in the outdoors, "It's that it's really different from the stuff that you would learn in school." Considering the context of other things Rachel had told me during that interview, I took this response to mean learning in the outdoors was different structurally from learning in a traditional classroom. For Mollie, it was the fact that "we got to do stuff, it was kind of hands on, we got to go explore, and it was really fun" that really helped her to have such a positive perception of the experiential nature of the SUPT. It is because of experiences like these that participants had that Hammerman et al. (2001) emphasize the need for children to get outside and learn more often.

Learning About the Outdoors and Nature. All of the participants reported that they enjoyed learning in and about the outdoors for the vast majority of the trip. Ballantyne and Packer (2002) demonstrated in their study of students' perceptions, expectations of, and experiences of OEEs that students want to and enjoy learning in the outdoors. This was also found in many of the participants in this study. One of Mollie's proudest moments on the trip was when she used to identify a wildflower that was growing near the pavilion in our campsite in Escalante Petrified Forest State Park. The most interesting thing to Ted were the bugs he would catch, identify, and then observe for

as long as he could. When I asked John what part of learning in the outdoors he liked, his answer was direct and simple, “Usually just stuff like rock formations. I like learning about that, how it works.” In our post-trip analysis of what worked and what didn’t work on the trip, all leaders agreed that the different learning activities (see Appendix G) were quite effective in teaching the students about the nature that was all around them. This level of success with the learning objectives on the trip, along with the independent learning that took place, is right in line with the goals of learning in the outdoors.

Being Physically Active in the Outdoors. Several of the participants enjoyed being able to be out and physically active, as opposed to sitting at a desk in a classroom. Being physically active and the health benefits that come along with that activity are one of the strongest pieces of evidence that is often used in arguing for getting children outside more (Cooper et al., 2010; Louv, 2008; Page et al., 2010). As Mollie put it during her interview, “It’s just so fun getting to know new people and going to hike and be healthy and go see amazing stuff.” As Cooper et al. found, children who are more active when they are outside, and tend to enjoy it more. They also have more independent mobility, meaning they have more choice in where they go and what they do when they are outside, as shown by Page et al., much like the group choosing to walk the dirt road by Wide Hollow Reservoir when they had a little free time during the SUPT.

The level of physical activity sometimes found in an OEEs like the SUPT could be one of the potential barriers to a student’s participation. This was the case with some of the students at IWJH, as they were not fit enough for one of training hikes prior to the Havasupai Trip, and therefore was very unlikely to be ready for the ten-mile hike to

Supai Village a few months later.

Learning Outdoor Skills. Some of the participants on the SUPT really caught hold of the outdoor skills taught on this trip, such as the principle of Leave No Trace, or basic camping skills. Most of these skills were taught in the early morning Friday meetings each week leading up to the actual trip. It was telling to then see the students talk about and practice those skills on the actual trip.

Themes Related to Barriers to Participation

Lack of Access to Supplies or Experience. The main barrier that emerged from the data, both in Part 1 and Part 2 of this study, was a lack of access to supplies, especially money, or a lack of access to experiences in the outdoors. This is in line with what other researchers have found as they have looked to what groups are being blocked from participating in outdoor activities and why (Ghimire et al., 2014; Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007). A quick look at the demographic data of the participants of this study, and it is clear that not all groups present at the school were represented in the group of participants on the SUPT, which is in line with the findings of Warren et al. (2014) as they reviewed the literature on who is and is not participating in outdoor activities. There is clearly an issue of social injustice related to who is and who is not going on the trip. As we in the field look to improve the rates and diversity of participation in the field of outdoor education, it is here we should first look. We must find ways to get access to the necessary supplies and experiences to more and more people, not just the dominate White, male, educated, and affluent people that currently dominate the field, as is shown by Warren et al. and Ghimire et al. in their research. We

must level the playing field and be more responsive to the needs of people who are marginalized by these experiences.

Being Comfortable in the Outdoors. Another one of the main themes describing a possible barrier to the participation of some of the students at IWJH was possibly their choice not to go on the trip because the outdoors, like sleeping on the ground and pesky insects, can be uncomfortable. As it was, the thing that came up most often when the participants were asked what they did not like about learning in the outdoors were issues related to physical comfort (Givoni et al., 2003). This idea was supported in the study by Ghimire et al. (2014) in which they listed seventeen possible constraints to participation in outdoor activities, such as outdoor pests, and feeling afraid of natural settings. The same was true of the theme involving a lack of access to the necessary supplies or experiences.

A Feeling of Burn-out or Impatience. At the beginning of the OEE there were a few times that I noted the participants were impatient to get started with something. As the week went on, it seemed that for some a feeling of being burnt out and tired happened more and more often as they began to show some of the symptoms of burn-out that were outlined by Campbell (n.d.), such as appearing disengaged, and general negativity when it wasn't there before. As word-of-mouth reputation was the main form of recruitment at IWJH, this could have a negative effect on the participation rate. If others are hearing that participants were overwhelmed and burnt-out, it may cause them to not want to go themselves. Related to this, if the trip is boring, as there was rumor it was for a few years, and participants are impatient to do something, they could also have a negative impact on

the reputation, and therefore participation rate, of the OEE.

A Feeling of Nervousness or Anticipation. From talking with the participants and looking at their journey maps, it seemed that the predominate feeling prior to the trip was that of being nervous in anticipation of what was to come (Bendall, 2013; Elliot, 2018; Leonhardt, 2016). As Elliot put it in his article, “A little [pre-trip] anxiety is inevitable (para. 3)” This was true for me as well, both as an eighth-grader at the school, and as a trip leader. If that nervousness is too overwhelming, it is easy to see how an adolescent could not be able to participate in a week-long trip away from family.

Meeting with Challenging Situations. The theme of meeting with a challenge could go one of two ways, as a possible way to add excitement to an OEE and allow students to test themselves and try new activities, as was shown in Little and Wyver (2008), or it can be an unpleasant experience for them. For Jane, the challenging hikes, like those in Bryce Canyon National Park and Upper Calf Creek Falls, were a chance to challenge herself, and to feel accomplished when she had completed them. For most of the participants, the hike to Upper Calf Creek Falls was only slightly enjoyable, and the difficulty often overshadowed what they experienced on the hike. If a potential participant hears how difficult the hikes on the trip are, and falls into the second category, they may decide the challenge isn't worth the benefits of the trip.

Effect on Participants Attitudes and Perceptions

The first set of conclusions drawn from this study relate to the first research question; how did participation in the SUPT outdoor educational experience effect the

eighth-grade students at IWJH perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and participation in OEEs? The conclusion that clearly arose from my analysis of the data and themes of this study was that for the eight participants, and for myself, the SUPT and the Havasupai trip respectively, had an unanimously overall positive impact on our attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. Each of us gave evidence supporting how those trips had either changed our views of the outdoors from disliking them to liking them, or if we had enjoyed the outdoors prior to the trip, how our feelings had been strengthened, sometimes dramatically, by our experiences on these OEEs. One participant responded to a question asking for their overall perceptions of the SUPT experience with, “The Escalante trip is the best memory I have ever. It was so fun hiking and playing with my friends and getting to know people better there.”

Some of the major themes, described in some detail above, that had led to this conclusion were the participants, again including myself, having *a feeling of excitement* throughout the trip, *learning and being in a social setting, connecting with the scenery and views* of the places visited, *connecting with water* throughout the trip and *connecting with the geology and geological formations* found in the areas we went to. It seems from the prevalence with which these themes came up in the data as though these are predominate influences on the positive effect of these trips. The other themes that emerged from the data, and further supported this conclusion were: *connecting with plants, connecting with cultures of the past, connecting with animals, hands-on learning, learning about the outdoors and nature, being physically active in the outdoors, and learning outdoor skills*. While these themes were less common in how often they

appeared in the data, they are no less supportive of the above conclusion.

All this evidence led up to the final theme that greatly supports the first conclusion. That theme is the participants *wanting to protect an area or resource*. Each of the participants in this study, myself included, showed a desire to protect the areas that they visited as part of their OEE, as well as to protect the outdoors and nature in general. When asked in the anonymous post-trip survey if the participants felt it was people's responsibility to take care of nature and the outdoors, the answer was unanimously yes. As one participant put it, "I do because we are the ones who are in the outdoors and we are the ones who ruin the outdoors." This connection and desire to protect these areas are strong evidence for the positive impact that the SUPT had on the participants attitudes toward and perceptions of being and learning in the outdoors. It is as Muller et al. (2009) found; when children develop an affinity towards nature, they are more likely to commit to pro-environmental behaviors. That commitment to those behaviors that support and protect our environment are, again, a substantial part of the ultimate goal of environmental education (UNESCO, 1976).

Barriers Blocking Many from Participation

The second conclusion drawn from the data in this study relates to the second research question: What were the barriers that kept eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT outdoor educational experience? Having analyzed the data from the eight participants who participated in the SUPT during the study, I focused on their responses that related to any potential barriers they might have encountered, or

heard of others encountering in preparation for the SUPT.

By looking at any obstacles they had to overcome in order to go on the trip, as well as the things that they disliked about the trip, or things they heard from other students in regards to why they did not go, the picture of what the barriers were began to emerge. For example, one student wrote “yes I would because most of my friends wanted to go, they just couldn't afford it,” in response to if they would suggest others go on the SUPT on the anonymous post-trip survey. In order to better answer the second research question, I also looked at the things I had experienced as a student participant, or as a teacher and trip leader, and having done this, the themes related to the potential barriers to participation in the SUPT one might face continued to be strengthened. Those themes give evidence to the fact that there were several possible barriers that contributed to the low participation numbers for the SUPT. These potential barriers may have prevented many of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in that experience, and therefore kept them from receiving the potential benefits of their participation.

Of those themes, it clear that the main thing getting in the way of many of the students' participation in the SUPT was *a lack of access to the necessary supplies or experiences* needed to participate in the OEE, especially the necessary funds needed to pay the fee, as well as to purchase gear and food for the trip. This theme is in line with what the research on the things that constrain different marginalized groups from participating in outdoor activities have found (Ghimire et al., 2014; Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007). In looking at the demographics of those who went on the SUPT, we find that it is also in line with that is commonly found in the literature. This is the case in

the work of Ghimire et al. (2014) and Warren et al. (2014), in which they show that those who are participating in outdoor activities tend to be predominantly White and middle to upper-middle class. Even being a part of the dominate groups, several of the participants, such as Rachel, Mollie, and myself, struggled with the necessary supplies or funds needed to go on the trip. As Rachel put it, “My dad tried to [find] out what was reasonable enough for me to go on the trip. For like, how much it was. Yeah, like justifying why he should do that.” Many in the group faced minimal obstacles to their participation, if any at all.

Related to a lack of access to the necessary supplies is a lack of access to the experiences in the outdoors that give the kind of knowledge and confidence that would make going on this type of experience much easier and much more comfortable. If a student doesn't feel like they know enough about how to camp or spend time in the outdoors, they are likely going to lack enough confidence in their abilities to even try to go on a long camping trip, away from their families. This is especially true if they fall into one of the groups identified in Ghimire et al. (2014) as experiencing the constraints to participation in outdoor activities more so than other groups.

There were several other themes that gave some understanding as to why so many of the students might not have gone on the trip. Another theme that seems as though it could have played a big part in keeping some of the students at IWJH from going on the SUPT was *a feeling of nervousness or anticipation* before the trip, which was common in nearly every participant that did go, including myself. As mentioned above, if those feelings of nerves and anxiety are too strong, it could easily prevent someone from being

able to go on a trip like the SUPT or Havasupai. For a participant like Terry, her nerves about not really knowing anyone else going on the trip almost kept her from going with us on the trip. I am sure there were others who felt like her and decided not to go anyway.

The other three themes, having to meet with *challenging situations* such as strenuous hikes and difficult learning activities, *being comfortable in the outdoors* or not being comfortable in the outdoors, even if only a little, and *a feeling of burn-out or impatience*, while not as common as the other themes related to possible barriers, still give a valuable look into what might have caused the vast majority of the students at IWJH to not participate in the SUPT, as described above. Of course, even with all of these themes emerging from the data, there is always the possibility and likelihood that many of the students who did not go on the trip simply just did not want to participate, for some reason or another, including a simple lack of interest in these types of outdoor activities.

Another barrier to the students' participation in the SUPT was a lack of information about the trip. As was stated in the previous chapter, many students I would talk to as a teacher did not know about the trip, its requirements to go, or that the school would help pay for it. This lack of advertising and getting the word out likely kept at least some students from going. In the early years of the trip, as I pointed out, there was plenty of talk and information about the trip at the school, every chance available. By not talking about it as much, fewer and fewer students heard about it, and therefore were not given the chance to go.

These conclusions give great insight into how the SUPT effected the attitudes

toward and perceptions of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, as well as what some of the barriers were that could be the reason why many of the students at IWJH did not participate in the experience. They also demonstrate that there is a clear social injustice in who is and who is not participating in this trip. This information could now contribute to the existing literature in the field, and can be used to improve the SUPT experience and other OEEs like it. These were the ultimate goals of this research when I set out on this journey years ago.

Theories

After examining all the data from both parts of the study, as well as the themes that emerged from that data, I used the final step of selective coding to develop propositions that interrelate the categories to form two theories. The first theory attempts to explain the student's perceptions and attitudes of OEEs after a student has participated in them. The second theory attempts to explain some of the barriers and reasons that exist that are keeping so many students from participating in these OEEs.

The first theory that emerged from my analysis is that the Southern Utah Parks Trip, and other OEEs have a positive impact on each participant's attitude toward and perception of the outdoors and learning in the outdoors, helping to cause a connection to and a deeper understanding of nature. All eight participants, and myself as well, reported an increase in their positive feelings toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors upon returning from these experiences. In addition to this, all eight participants, and again myself, also reported a feeling of connection to the outdoors and at least some

increased desire to protect them. The evidence in the data strongly supports this theory.

The second theory to come from this data is that there are several things keeping most of the students at Intermountain West Junior High School from participating the Southern Utah Parks Trip, and likely keeping other students at other schools from participating in OEEs. The main thing, but certainly not the only thing, blocking so many from participating is a lack of access to the necessary supplies and experience needed for the trip. In talking with the students who went on the trip, and the students who did not go on the trip, not having the money, or gear, or outdoor experience was the main constraint to participation, supporting what has been shown in previous literature on the subject (Ghimire et al., 2014; Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007). Again, the evidence from this study strongly supports this theory.

Recommendations to Possibly Improve the Southern Utah Parks Trips and Other Outdoor Educational Experiences

While this study was not a program evaluation, suggestions for improvement of the SUPT arose from the findings that emerged from the data. While these suggestions are focused on the SUPT, they may also transfer to the improvement and designing of other OEEs like the SUPT. It must also be remembered that the SUPT, and other OEEs are complex and multi-faceted, and therefore, these are only possible recommendations.

Reduce the Costs

The first recommendation for possible improvement of the SUPT that arose from the data is to reduce the costs of the trip as much as possible. A lack of access to the

necessary supplies, including cost, was found to be the most common barrier to participation in the SUPT, as well as in other OEEs based on the literature on the topic (Ghimire et al., 2014; Green et al., 2009; Shores et al., 2007). Therefore, it stands to reason, the lower the cost, the more students at IWJH that would have at least the potential to participate in the trip.

Get the Word Out Better

The second recommendation I have is to do all that can be done to make sure every student at IWJH knows what the SUPT is, what the requirements are to go, what the costs and gear are that are necessary for the trip, and what help is available to reduce the costs, such as borrowing gear, fundraising, or the school covering part or all of the costs as it has done in past years. Too many students at the school had little to no information about the trip the year this study was conducted. The more students know about the trip, it is likely that more of them will chose to go. Creating a video recap, as Charles had done early on, and then showing that to all the students each year at an assembly dedicated to informing the students about the trip could be one way to do this.

Restore the Reputation of the Trip

Related to getting the word out about the trip is the suggestion of making sure that the trip is of high quality, and well run, so that when students do talk about the trip, it is positive and complementary. Again, a video recap could be very useful here. It might also be beneficial to get past participants to give testimonials in support of the trip. As was stated before, word-of-mouth reputation was the most effective recruiting tool at one

point, and has the potential to be so again.

Make the Trip Worth It

Related to *Restoring the Reputation of the Trip* is the suggestion that the trip leaders carefully plan, construct, and execute a trip that is well worth the cost and “risk” to the students. By risk, I mean the nerves and anxiety that have been shown to be associated with going on a long-distance trip like this, and leaving your family and home for a week, as well as the risk of putting up the money, that may very likely may be quite difficult for you and your family to come by, especially at a school like IWJH, and risk having the trip not be worth it. If the trip is boring, and there is too much down time, and not enough interesting things to see, the students will likely return home feeling that it was a waste of that precious resource.

In line with that, based on the evidence given by the participants in this survey, the scenery, or a target at the end of a hike, play a major role in how the students perceived the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. As Mollie put it,

‘Cause if the trip was just a bunch of hikes without the views, and the special, like, scene at the end...because we always had that with, like the falls and the Petrified Forest...that really helped bribe the hike for me. And so, I got used to hiking, and now I just love it.

The trip leadership should keep this in mind as they plan the locations that this and other OEEs take place in. It seems from the findings of this study that if there is something to look forward to, or something to look at in the outdoor areas for an OEE, the students are more likely to have that positive impact on their attitudes toward and perceptions of the outdoors that we as educators are looking for with these types of experiences.

If this is all done well, the students will not be able to keep from talking about how amazing and wonderful the experience was when they return from the SUPT, or other OEEs like it. The word will quickly spread, and more potential students are likely to make the effort necessary to participate when their chance comes. As was pointed out in Chapter V, part of the reason the Havasupai Trip was so successful, and had such high participation rates, especially when compared to the SUPT, was because teachers and students at the school, as well as members of the community surrounding the school, were often talking about it and how amazing it was. If SUPT could get to that point, it is likely a lot more students would go on the trip, and it is likely that with increased participation would come increased diversity in those who participate.

Get the Students Outside More to Give Them Experience

When I went to IWJH, as was stated before, we went on four hiking fieldtrips to prepare for the Havasupai trip. However, these were not the only OEEs we went on at the school each year. From sixth to eighth grade we would go on several outdoor fieldtrips. These trips gave us experience, and that experience gave us confidence in the outdoors. The more hikes and fieldtrips in the outdoors the school can give the students, the more confidence they will have, likely improving the number and diversity of students that go on the SUPT. In addition to this, the students that participate in these hikes and fieldtrips will gain the benefits of participation in outdoor activities outlined in Chapter II.

Another way in which IWJH can get the students outside more would be to offer professional development and coaching to the teachers at the school related to teaching

their curriculum outside. If the teachers at the school were show how they could take their curriculum outside, and how to manage a class in the outdoors, it stands to reason that more of them might do so. Simply teaching students outside can lead to many of the benefits that were outlined in Chapter II, such as Matsuoka (2008) who found that student access to views of nature, or the chance to be outside at school was associated with higher student achievement and better behavior in school. This simple change would therefore be beneficial to the students, the teachers, and the SUPT trip.

Trip Leaders and Teachers Need to Work Together

In addition to the idea of teachers taking their students outside more often as a way to help their students get more time outside, another way in which teachers and the SUPT could help each other would be to work together to make sure the curriculum of the trip and the curriculum of the school aligned more clearly. If teachers used topics and examples the students would see on the SUPT, and made those things explicit, and if the trip leaders then explicitly pointed out those topics and examples while on location during the trip, there is reason to believe that there would be a synergetic impact on the students' learning of that content. This type of working together would allow the students at IWJH who go on the trip to be able to see first-hand the material they learn in the classroom transfer to real-world scenarios. That would could be powerfully beneficial for both the trip leaders and the classroom teachers.

District Leadership Need to Allow These Trips

It is one of the aims of this study to examine the empirical evidence of the

benefits and potential of OEEs like the SUPT so that when trip leadership seeks to continue, or even start an outdoor educational experience, they can provide data to school boards and other district leadership as to why these experiences are beneficial and needed. There are some school districts that do not allow this type of overnight, long distance OEE to happen, citing too much risk. I feel that this is a mistake. Yes, there is risk involved. But with careful planning and preparing, proper chaperoning and an appropriate number of leaders, as well as with proper training such as outdoor educational leadership training and wilderness first responder training, those risks can be minimized. But, if their types of experiences are continued to be blocked, many students are missing out on all the previously mentioned potential benefits of these experiences that could be some of “the best” (Kellert, 1998, p. 18) experiences of their lives.

Continue to Seek Out the Students’ Reasons for Going, and for Not Going

Another incredibly important thing IWJH can do to improve the SUPT is to ask the students. Let them tell the trip leaders what worked on the trip, and what did not. Then go to the students who did not go on the trip and find out why. Ask them what it would have taken to get them to go on the trip. The people who are part of it all will have the best suggestions for how to make the trip better and more inclusive, and they deserve to have their voices heard.

Limitations

The main limitation of this study is, of course, the narrow range of participants in

Part 1. I was only able to study volunteer participants from those eighth-grade students at IWJH who went on the SUPT. It was clear that the participants in this study were not a representative sample of the student body at the school, and therefore, the findings likely have limited generalizability. Chametzky (2013) points out that with the conceptualizing of theory in grounded theory, and the “grab” that should be there (meaning the attention-grabbing nature of the study) a certain amount of generalizability and transferability is appropriate and present. Selecting my participants on a volunteer basis created an obvious selection bias, but also avoided my bias as a researcher in the selection of participants.

As was stated in my positionality in Chapter III, I am highly invested in the success of the yearly OEE at Intermountain West Junior High. Because of this, there is a clear bias in my recounting of my experiences as both a student and a teacher and trip leader at the school. I have made a concerted effort in my autobiographical account to be honest and accurate in how I presented my experience. There is also an obvious bias in my analysis of the barriers and constraints effecting the students at IWJH because of my privileged position as a middle-class, able bodied, college educated, White, middle-aged, straight, Christian, cis-male. I again, have made a concerted and honest effort to represent the findings as objectively as I am able to.

Implications

The first, and most impactful implication of my research was found in the fact that I was unable to get enough participants for the originally planned second part of this

study. In that planned second section I had aimed to survey and interview many of the eighth-grade students at IWJH who did not participate in the SUPT in order to gain a better understanding of what it was that had prevented them from going on the trip. It had been my hope with the data collected from those surveys and interviews to gain a first-hand account from those in that vast majority of students who did not participate in the SUPT as to why they had not participated in the experience. However, as explained before, I was unable to get more than two students to consent to participate, despite several attempts at recruiting more, and the two students who did participate would have been outliers compared to the rest of the group of students who did not go on the trip. I therefore opted to not use their data, and instead plan to conduct future research focused on gaining that missing first-hand account of why the students didn't participate that I was not able to attain with this study

Related to the implication of my not being able to obtain the first-hand accounts mentioned above is that the results I was able to get by using my autobiographical account as both a student at IWJH and a teacher and trip leader come from a very privileged voice. As mentioned before in this dissertation, I am a very privileged person, and I do not represent the same demographics of many of the students at IWJH, especially those who did not participate in the SUPT. Therefore, the results I was able to obtain from my own account must be viewed through a privileged and biased lens. This is not to say that as a person of privilege I do not have insight into why the majority of eighth-grade students at IWJH are not participating in the SUPT, but rather because I do not and cannot understand the experience of those students to a full extent, there are surely

things that I missed that would have likely been brought to light by having the first-hand accounts that were missing in the second part of this study.

One possible way that the trip leaders at IWJH may be able to increase participation in the SUPT related to these implications may be to start with smaller OEEs that require less of a commitment to the students at the school. This shift could be as simple as spending more time outside on the school grounds and examining the nature there, or possibly visiting the rivers and ponds that are not far from the school, or even taking the students on more hikes, especially in earlier grades, on up to short-term camping field trips in order to get them used to the outdoors. These smaller OEEs could help the students get outside in a learning environment more often and in a less intimidating way, and could help them to become more comfortable and knowledgeable about being in the outdoors, which could in turn help to better prepare and possibly motivate more students to ultimately go on the SUPT.

It is also possible that by creating these smaller, more frequent, and more accessible OEEs, there would be an increase in research opportunities in which we could study what parts of outdoor experiences are relevant to students, as well as possibly have a chance to look into why some of the students do not participate in these types of OEEs. This could open the possibility of gaining a first-hand account of the possible reasons and barriers that keep the students who do not participate in the schools OEEs from going, the main piece that was missing from the original second part of this study. This same research on smaller OEEs could also be done at other schools to broaden the generalizability of the results and to help us better understand how we can improve the

quality and access of OEEs for all students.

Another substantial implication of this study is the contribution it makes to the existing literature in the fields of outdoor education as well as social justice. The above stated theories can help us to better understand the impacts of OEEs like the SUPT on the attitudes and perceptions on those that participate in the experience, as well as what barriers are keeping the vast majority of students at the school, and likely other students at other schools, from participating in OEEs like the SUPT. This contribution to the literature can then help those of us in the field to improve the effectiveness of OEEs, the participation rates of those experiences, and the diversity of the groups that are participating. All of these improvements will move the field forward in a positive direction.

The data from this study can give us a chance to see what elements of the SUPT had a positive impact on the participants perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and learning in the outdoors. The data can also inform us as to what were some of the reasons and barriers that kept so many of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in this trip. From there, we can address those issues for the SUPT, and also use that information to help address barriers and constraints to participation in other OEEs. With increased participation, it is hoped, will come increased diversity, both for the SUPT and OEEs in general. Our efforts need to be directed toward better OEEs that are more available and accessible to everyone. It is my goal that the knowledge gained here will assist in that. In doing this grounded theory study I had a chance to examine a rather unique school that not only has relatively easy access to several outdoor

recreational and learning opportunities, but also has the school sponsored, week-long camping and hiking trip to some of the parks, both national and state, in the Southern Utah area. Many other schools do not have OEEs such as the one featured in this study, and therefore I had a chance to explore the following: (1) which eighth-grade students at IWJH are participating in the SUPT, and which ones are not; (2) what reasons and barriers are keeping the vast majority of the eighth-grade students at IWJH from participating in the SUPT; (3) what are the OEEs that students at IWJH have participated in; (4) what are the things that motivated some of the students at IWJH to participate in the SUPT; and (5) how we can use all of this information to reform this OEE, and others like it to increase participation and inclusivity for students everywhere.

By studying who among the eighth-grade students at IWJH participated in the SUPT and comparing that to who did not participate in the trip, we saw trends that show substantial inequalities in participation and access similar to those found by other researchers, such as Warren (2002, 2005). By allowing the students at IWJH who went on the trip to tell their own story, and then contributing my own experiences this research gets at the heart of what is happening, or not happening, at IWJH in regard to student participation in OEEs, especially the SUPT. This information can be very informative in what changes can and should be made to the SUPT to help usher in a more diverse group of eighth-grade participants at IWJH.

That data was then paired with the data gathered on what motivated some students to participate in the SUPT, while others did not, as well as what reasons and barriers I have personally witnessed that have kept those who did not participate from this

experience. This combined data informs us of possible explanations for why there might be those discrepancies in OEE participation. With this knowledge we can then begin to address the barriers that specific groups are facing, thus hopefully making OEEs like the SUPT more accessible and open to all.

This mission can be further helped along by our knowing what OEEs students at IWJH are participating in outside of the SUPT. I began to look for trends to see why it was those particular OEEs and not others. By examining the trends found in the data, I found that the participants seem to have either not participated in very many OEEs, both formal or informal, or they did not remember the OEEs they have participated in. This could mean that there are not many OEEs available to these participants, or they are not taking part in the OEEs that are available to them. It is also possible that they have participated in OEEs, but those experiences did not make much of an impact on them, and therefore are not well remembered. It is not possible to tell without further research.

Another of the substantial findings that arose from this study was the fact that all eight participants in the SUPT had an increased desire to protect nature and the outdoors upon returning from the experience. This was demonstrated especially well in some of the responses to the anonymous post trip survey question that asked the participants if they felt it was people's responsibility to care for nature, such as, "Yes because if you don't you won't have it," "Because we don't have a planet b," "Yes, because it came before us and helps to sustain life and it can teach us about our past." This is in line with the research of both Wells and Lekies (2006) and Muller et al. (2009), who demonstrated that time in the outdoors as children lead to increases in pro-environmental attitudes and

behaviors, both as children, and carrying over into adulthood. It is possible that getting more students to participate in OEEs like the SUPT could have a substantial impact on efforts to combat climate change and global warming. Having access to what the participants in this study remembered and reported learning from the different OEEs they have experienced, I was able to know some of the parts of these experiences that were effective, from the eyes of those that had experienced them. I began to examine what made those parts of the experience stood out to the participants and found that there really was not much that gave any insight into what the effective parts of those OEEs were. Had there been more information, it could have been used to design more OEEs that emphasize and replicate those effective parts, making them that much more engaging to students and effective at teaching them. Instead, this is another area that will need further research.

By closely examining the students of Intermountain West Junior High School, and the OEEs they have participated in, or not participated in, as well as what is kept them from participating, or what has motivated them to go, we can find ways to get more students involved in these experiences like the SUPT, and others like it. The benefits to OEEs, as stated in Chapter II, are numerous, and all children deserve to have access to and be able to participate in these experiences. I, as a researcher, needed to take a critical look at what is working and what is not, and use that knowledge to begin to better our practices and inclusion in outdoor education. We need to use the knowledge gained through this research to assist in removing the barriers to OEEs and help to level the playing field for all.

It was the aim of this research to give students a voice about the experiences they have had when it comes to learning in the outdoors, specifically in regard to the SUPT. It gave them a chance to tell us how their perceptions and attitudes toward the outdoors and OEEs changed. This research also gave me an opportunity to tell my experience as it relates to the SUPT program and why so many students do not participate. This will help us better understand these experiences, mainly from the participants' points of view, giving us a better reference to where we really stand in the creation and implementation of OEEs that work for the participants, and more importantly, where we need to go.

By having this better understanding of OEEs from the point of view of the participants and someone who was intimately connected to these OEEs, we can use that information to reform and improve outdoor education. Teachers, facilitators, and other educators can then design better, more inclusive, OEEs for their participants, ones that help participants to be able to learn more and remember that information for longer periods of time. We can also create OEEs that are representative of everyone, and that everyone can feel a part of.

By taking a critical approach to this grounded theory study, I was able to be a driving force behind a pedagogy that does not continue to reproduce the existing social and political norms, but rather begins to transform the political, social, economic, and institutional structures of outdoor education, in the name of social justice (Bates, 2013). This may have been a big goal for this research, and, as Apple (2012) puts it, "The tasks then are numerous and the realities will be hard to change" (p. 166). But I agree with him, the work needs to be done.

Suggestions for Further Research

The first and foremost area of further research needed that is related to this study would be to go back and succeed where I (see Figure 24) was not able to, and ask those students who did not go on the SUPT why they did not go in a research setting. Those students need a chance to tell their own story, rather than having a teacher who is not like most of them in many ways, give a second-hand account of what he has heard, and what he thinks. It would be far more valuable data to hear it directly from those students. Perhaps with more time, more students could be recruited to tell their own account.

Figure 24

The Author at Lower Calf Creek Falls



A second area of possible research that needs to be conducted is in looking deeper into what OEEs, if any, the students at IWJH have participated in, and what they have learned from those experiences. There was little data from the participants in Part 1 of this study related to this topic, giving us little information. It is hard to tell from such limited data whether or not the students are missing out on outdoor learning experiences, or if they are just not remembering them. If it is the latter, it would be worthwhile to look into why those experiences are not making a stronger impression on those students. This could lead to an examination of what makes an effective OEE, and what is missing from an OEE that is less effective. This would be a valuable insight into how we can improve the efficacy of these programs for our students.

A final suggestion for further research, as important as the first, is to repeat this study, year after year, and see how the SUPT changes over the years, especially in light of the information gained from such studies. The SUPT is an amazing opportunity for the students at IWJH, but far too many students are missing out on that opportunity. A longitudinal look at the program could do much to improve the impact and inclusivity of the program dramatically and would be well worth the effort.

Concluding Thought

There is a higher purpose to the work being done by outdoor educators. I may be biased in this sentiment, but I am not alone. As Newell (2018) put it,

There is a symbiotic relationship in play. Throughout my entire journey as an educator and river guide, a silent, persistent motivation drives me. If no one is connected to the landscape, then no one will care. If this electronic generation grows up completely detached from the natural world, there will be no advocates,

no stewards, for the wild country and that is a future I do not wish to live within.
(p. 212)

The work of connecting young people to nature and the outdoors needs to be done. They deserve it, and every generation after them that lives in a better and more well taken care of Earth deserves it. It is one of my life's purposes to help raise up advocates and stewards that care for and watch over our only home. That is why I did this study. That is what I hope to achieve.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed Consent (English Versions)



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 Protocol #9251
 IRB Approval Date: May 6, 2019
 Consent Document Expires: December 1, 2019
 IRB Password Protected per IRB Director

v.8.3: Mar2017

Informed Consent

An Exploration of an Outdoor Educational Experience

Introduction

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Steven Camicia, a Professor in the Department of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University and David Joy, a Doctoral student in the Department of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University. The purpose of this research is to look at how outdoor learning trips like the eighth-grade trip to ██████████ affect students' views of nature, and to examine what keeps most of the eighth-grade students from going on the ██████████.

This form includes detailed information on the research to help you decide whether to allow your child to participate in this study. Please read it carefully and ask any questions you have before you agree to allow them to participate.

Procedures

Your child's participation will involve first, answering a few questions on a survey before they go on the ██████████ with ██████████. This survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. Then your child will go on the ██████████ during which time David Joy will collect field notes about your child's experience on the ██████████ their views of the outdoors, and learning in the outdoors. These field notes will be collected throughout the ██████████ and will conclude when your child leaves for home. They will focus only on your child's experience and views of the outdoors and nature.

When your child has returned from the trip, they will fill out another survey, this time anonymously in order to encourage them to be fully honest, asking similar questions to those in the first survey. This survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. After the second survey, your child will be asked to draw a "journey map" which is a picture that explains what the trip was like for your child, and they will be asked to explain their journey map, as well as answer some questions in an interview, which will be audio recorded. Your student will have the opportunity to look over all of the data that is collected from or about them. The drawing and explaining of the journey map, as well as the interview, should take about 35 minutes to complete.

We anticipate that 160 people will participate in this research study. We are also asking that the parent/guardian of those students who are participating fill out a short demographic questionnaire, which is attached to this informed consent document, so that we have a better understanding of who participating students are.

Risks

This is a minimal risk research study. That means that the risks of participating are no more likely or serious than those your child encounter in everyday activities. The foreseeable risks or discomforts include a possible loss of confidentiality, meaning there is a very small chance that someone might be able to find out what your child's responses to the surveys and interview were, as well as they may see your child's journey map. In order to minimize those risks and discomforts, the researchers will not use your child's name, but will instead use your child's student number or a pseudonym for all parts of the study. The researchers will also keep all of your child's responses in a password protected, secured cloud server call Box, or in a locked drawer in a restricted access office at Utah State University. If your child has a bad research-related experience, please contact the David Joy right away at 801-781-0616 or david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu, or Steven Camicia at 801-518-3191 or steven.camicia@usu.edu.

Benefits

There is no direct benefit to your child for participating in this research study. More broadly, this study will help the researchers learn more about outdoor education, how it shapes our perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and outdoor experiences, and what keeps students from participating in outdoor educational experiences and may



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help future researchers design interventions to help with making outdoor educational experiences better and more equitable for all students.

Confidentiality

The researchers will make every effort to ensure that the information your child provides as part of this study remains confidential. Your child's identity will not be revealed in any publications, presentations, or reports resulting from this research study. However, it may be possible for someone to recognize your child's particular responses.

We will collect your child's information through audio recordings of interviews and Qualtrics for the surveys. This information will be securely stored in a restricted-access folder on Box.com, an encrypted, cloud-based storage system and in a locked drawer in a restricted-access office.

It is unlikely, but possible, that others (Utah State University, or state, or federal officials) may require us to share the information your child give us from the study to ensure that the research was conducted safely and appropriately. We will only share your child's information if law or policy requires us to do so. If the researchers learn that your child is being abused, or going to engage in self harm, state law requires that the researchers report this behavior or intention to the authorities.

Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal

Your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you agree to allow your child to participate now and change your mind later, you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting David Joy at 801-781-0616 or david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu tell him of your decision to no longer allow your child to participate. If you choose to withdraw your child from this study after we have already collected information about them, all your child's responses will be deleted or destroyed, and not used in this study. The decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not affect your students school experience, relationship with school personal, or their experience on the Escalante trip in any way.

Compensation

There is no compensation for participating in this research study. Every student who returns an informed consent document, whether you agree to allow your child to participate or not, will receive one lunch time "Fast Pass." This is slip of paper that allows them a onetime chance to go to the front of the lunch line.

IRB Review

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Utah State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the research study itself, please contact the Principal Investigator David Joy at 801-781-0616 or david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu or Steven Camicia at 801-581-3191 or steven.camicia@usu.edu. If you have questions about your rights or your child's rights or would simply like to speak with someone other than the research team about questions or concerns, please contact the IRB Director at (435) 797-0567 or irb@usu.edu.

Steven Camicia
 Principal Investigator
 (801) 518-3193; steven.camicia@usu.edu

David Joy
 Student Investigator
 (801) 781-0616; david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu



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Informed Consent

By signing and making the appropriate selection below, you agree to allow your child to participate in this study. You indicate that you understand the risks and benefits of participation, and that you know what they will be asked to do. You also agree that you have asked any questions you might have, and are clear on how to stop your participation in the study if you choose to do so. Please be sure to retain a copy of this form for your records.

 Signature of Parent or Guardian

 Printed Name of Parent or Guardian

 Date

Please Circle One: **I Do / I Do Not** permit my child to participate in this study.

 Name of Student, Printed

 Student Identification Number

Youth Assent

We are doing a research study about outdoor learning field trips and who goes on them. Research studies help us learn more about people. If you would like to be a part of this research study, you will be answering questions on a survey that will take 10 to 15 minutes. David Joy will also be taking some notes throughout the trip about your experience on the [REDACTED]. These notes will be about the things he sees and hears related to the trip, what you think about the trip, and how you feel about the outdoors. When you get back from the trip, you will be answering questions on another survey that is almost exactly like the first survey you filled out. This survey will also take 10 to 15 minutes to answer, but this time, the survey will be anonymous so that you can be totally honest about your experience. After that, you will be asked to draw a journey map, which is just a picture that represents your experiences on the [REDACTED] and then David Joy will ask you some questions about your drawing and your experiences on the trip in an interview, which will be audio recorded. This part of the study will take about 35 minutes to do. You will have the chance to look at all the information David Joy collects about you.

Before you agree to do these things, we need to tell you a little more. First, when the researchers do ask you questions in the survey and interviews, or when you draw a journey map, people may find out that it was you who gave those answers or drew that journey map, and a loss of your confidentiality may happen.

Not everyone who is a part of research studies receives something good from it. In this study, nothing directly good will happen to you, but you helping will help us learn more about people. Also, we will tell other people about what we learned from doing this study with you and the 160 other people who are in the study, but we won't tell anyone your name or that you were in the study.

If this sounds like something you would like to do, we will ask you to say that you understand what we talked about, and that you do want to participate. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you decide to stop after we begin please tell David Joy that you no longer want to participate in person, or by calling 801-781-0616, or emailing david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu, that's okay, too. No one will be upset if you don't want to do this, or change your mind later.



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You can ask any questions you have, now or later. Your parents know about this research study, and they have said you can participate, if you want.

If you would like to be in this study, please sign your name and write the date.

Name

Date



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Informed Consent

An Exploration of an Outdoor Educational Experience

Introduction

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Steven Camicia, a Professor in the Department of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University and David Joy, a Doctoral student in the Department of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University. The purpose of this research is to look at how outdoor learning trips like the eighth-grade trip to ██████████ affect students' views of nature, and to examine what keeps most of the eighth-grade students from going on the ██████████.

This form includes detailed information on the research to help you decide whether to allow your child to participate in this [study]. Please read it carefully and ask any questions you have before you agree to allow them to participate.

Procedures

Your child's participation will involve filling out a survey that will take them 10 to 15 minutes to complete. They may also have the chance to further volunteer to be interviewed in order to better understand the reasons why so many students do not go on the ██████████. Ten students will be chosen for these interviews from the group who choose to volunteer further. These interviews will take 15 to 20 minutes to complete and will be audio recorded. Your student will have the opportunity to look over all of the data that is collected from them. Their total participation in this study will take 15 to 35 minutes, depending on if they are selected for the group to be interviewed or not. We anticipate that 160 people will participate in this research study. We are also asking that the parent/guardian of those students who are participating fill out a short demographic questionnaire which is attached to this informed consent so that we have a better understanding of who participating students are.

Risks

This is a minimal risk research study. That means that the risks of participating are no more likely or serious than those your child encounter in everyday activities. The foreseeable risks or discomforts include a possible loss of anonymity, meaning there is a very small chance that someone might be able to find out what your child's responses to the survey and interview were. In order to minimize those risks and discomforts, the researchers will not use your child's name, but will instead use their student number or a pseudonym for all parts of the study. The researchers will also keep all of your child's responses in a password protected, secured cloud server call Box. If your child has a bad research-related experience or are injured in any way during their participation, please contact the David Joy right away at 801-781-0616 or david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu or Steven Camicia at 801-518-3191 or steven.camicia@usu.edu.

Benefits

There is no direct benefit to your child for participating in this research study. More broadly, this study will help the researchers learn more about outdoor education, how it shapes our perceptions and attitudes about the outdoors and outdoor experiences, and what keeps students from participating in outdoor educational experiences and may help future researchers design interventions to help with making outdoor educational experiences better and more equitable for all students.

Confidentiality

The researchers will make every effort to ensure that the information your child provides as part of this study remains confidential. Your child's identity will not be revealed in any publications, presentations, or reports resulting from this research study. However, it may be possible for someone to recognize your child's particular responses.



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We will collect your child's information through audio recordings of interviews and Qualtrics for the surveys. This information will be securely stored in a restricted-access folder on Box.com, an encrypted, cloud-based storage system and in a locked drawer in a restricted-access office.

It is unlikely, but possible, that others (Utah State University, or state, or federal officials) may require us to share the information your child give us from the study to ensure that the research was conducted safely and appropriately. We will only share your child's information if law or policy requires us to do so. If the researchers learn that your child is being abused, or going to engage in self harm, state law requires that the researchers report this behavior or intention to the authorities.

The research team works to ensure confidentiality to the degree permitted by technology. It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your child's responses because they are responding online. However, your child's participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet.

Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal

Your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you agree to allow your child to participate now and change your mind later, you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting David Joy at 801-781-0616 or david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu tell him of your decision to no longer allow your child to participate. If you choose to withdraw your child from this study after we have already collected information about them, all your child's responses will be deleted or destroyed, and not used in this study. The decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not affect your students school experience, or their relationship with school personal in any way.

Compensation

For your student's participation in this research study, your student will receive one lunch time "Fast Pass." This is slip of paper that allows them a onetime chance to go to the front of the lunch line. They will receive this "Fast Pass" after they have returned their informed consent.

IRB Review

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human research participants at Utah State University has reviewed and approved this study. If you have questions about the research study itself, please contact the Principal Investigator David Joy at 801-781-0616 or david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu or Steven Camicia at 801-581-3191 or steven.camicia@usu.edu. If you have questions about your rights or your child's rights or would simply like to speak with someone other than the research team about questions or concerns, please contact the IRB Director at (435) 797-0567 or irb@usu.edu.

Steven Camicia
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Informed Consent

By signing below, you agree to allow your child to participate in this study. You indicate that you understand the risks and benefits of participation, and that you know what they will be asked to do. You also agree that you have asked any questions you might have, and are clear on how to stop your participation in the study if you choose to do so. Please be sure to retain a copy of this form for your records.

 Parent or Guardian of Participant's Signature

 Parent or Guardian of Participant's Name, Printed

 Date

Please Circle One: **I Do** / **I Do Not** permit my child to participate in this study.

 Name of Student, Printed

Youth Assent

We are doing a research study about outdoor learning field trips and who goes on them. Research studies help us learn more about people. If you would like to be a part of this research study, you will be answering questions on a survey that will take 10 to 15 minutes. If you would like to, you may also volunteer to answer questions in an interview, but only ten people will be chosen to do that, and it will take 15 to 20 minutes. These interviews will be audio recorded. You will have the chance to look at all the information David Joy collects about you.

Before you agree to do these things, we need to tell you a little more. First, when the researchers do ask you questions in the survey and interviews, people may find out that it was you who gave those answers and a loss of your anonymity may happen.

Not everyone who is a part of research studies receives a something good from it. In this study, nothing directly good will happen to you, but you helping will help us learn more about people. Also, we will tell other people about what we learned from doing this study with you and the 160 other people who are in the study, but we won't tell anyone your name or that you were in the study.

If this sounds like something you would like to do, we will ask you to say that you understand what we talked about, and that you do want to participate. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. If you decide to stop after we begin please tell David Joy that you no longer want to participate in person, or by calling 801-781-0616, or emailing david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu, that's okay, too. No one will be upset if you don't want to do this, or change your mind later.

You can ask any questions you have, now or later. Your parents know about this research study, and they have said you can participate, if you want.

If you would like to be in this study, please sign your name and write the date.

 Name

 Date

Appendix B

Informed Consent (Spanish Versions)



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Consentimiento informado

Una Exploración de una Experiencia Educativa al Aire Libre

Introducción

Su hijo está invitado a participar en un estudio realizado por Steven Camicija, profesor en el Departamento de Educación Docente y Liderazgo de la Universidad del Estado de Utah, y David Joy, estudiante de Doctorado en el Departamento de Educación Docente y Liderazgo de la Universidad del Estado de Utah. El propósito de este estudio es observar cómo los viajes de aprendizaje al aire libre, como el viaje de octavo grado a [REDACTED] afectan la visión de la naturaleza de los estudiantes, y examinar qué es lo que impide que la mayoría de los estudiantes de ocho grados participen en el viaje de [REDACTED].

Este formulario incluye información detallada sobre el estudio para ayudarlo a decidir si le permite a su hijo participar en este [estudio]. Léalo detenidamente y haga cualquier pregunta que tenga antes de aceptar permitirles participar.

Procedimientos

La participación de su hijo implicará completar una encuesta que los llevará entre 10 y 15 minutos completarla. También pueden tener la oportunidad de ser voluntarios para ser entrevistados con el fin de comprender mejor las razones por las que tantos estudiantes no van al viaje de [REDACTED]. Diez estudiantes serán elegidos para estas entrevistas del grupo que elijan ser más voluntarios. Estas entrevistas demorarán entre 15 y 20 minutos y se grabarán en audio. Su estudiante tendrá la oportunidad de revisar todos los datos que se recopilan de ellos. Su participación total en este estudio tomará de 15 a 35 minutos, dependiendo de si se seleccionan para que el grupo sea entrevistado o no. Anticipamos que 160 personas participarán en este estudio. También solicitamos que el padre /tutor de los estudiantes que participan complete un breve cuestionario demográfico que se adjunta a este consentimiento informado para que podamos comprender mejor quiénes son los estudiantes participantes.

Riesgos

Este es un estudio de riesgo mínimo. Eso significa que los riesgos de participar no son más probables o serios que los de su hijo en las actividades cotidianas. Los riesgos o molestias previsible incluyen una posible pérdida de anonimato, lo que significa que existe una posibilidad muy pequeña de que alguien pueda averiguar cuáles fueron las respuestas de su hijo a las encuestas y entrevistas, y también puede ver el mapa del viaje de su hijo. Para minimizar esos riesgos e incomodidades, los investigadores no usarán el nombre de su hijo, sino que utilizarán el número de estudiante de su hijo o un seudónimo para todas las partes del estudio. Los investigadores también mantendrán todas las respuestas de su hijo en un servidor de nube seguro protegido por contraseña, o en un cajón cerrado en una oficina de acceso restringido en la Universidad del Estado de Utah. Si su hijo tiene una mala experiencia relacionada con el estudio o se lesiona de alguna manera durante su participación, comuníquese con David Joy inmediatamente al 801-781-0616 o david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu o Steven Camicija al 801-518-3191 o steven.camicija@usu.edu.

Beneficios

No hay un beneficio directo para su hijo por participar en este estudio. En términos más generales, este estudio ayudará a los investigadores a aprender más sobre la educación al aire libre, cómo moldea nuestras percepciones y actitudes sobre el exterior y las experiencias al aire libre, y sobre qué impide que los estudiantes participen en experiencias educativas al aire libre y puede ayudar a futuros investigadores a diseñar intervenciones para ayudar a hacer Experiencias educativas al aire libre mejor y más equitativas para todos los estudiantes.

Confidencialidad

Los investigadores harán todo lo posible para garantizar que la información que su hijo proporciona como parte de este estudio se mantenga confidencial. La identidad de su hijo no se revelará en ninguna publicación, presentación



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experiencias educativas al aire libre y puede ayudar a futuros investigadores a diseñar intervenciones para ayudar a hacer Experiencias educativas al aire libre mejor y más equitativas para todos los estudiantes.

Confidencialidad

Los investigadores harán todo lo posible para garantizar que la información que su hijo proporciona como parte de este estudio se mantenga confidencial. La identidad de su hijo no se revelará en ninguna publicación, presentación o informe que resulte de este estudio. Sin embargo, es posible que alguien reconozca las respuestas particulares de su hijo.

Recopilaremos la información de su hijo a través de grabaciones de audio de entrevistas y Quiltros para las encuestas. Esta información se almacenará de forma segura en una carpeta de acceso restringido en Box.com, un sistema de almacenamiento encriptado, basado en la nube y en un cajón cerrado en una oficina de acceso restringido.

Es poco probable, pero posible, que otros (la Universidad del Estado de Utah o los funcionarios estatales o federales) nos exijan compartir la información que su hijo nos proporcione del estudio para garantizar que el estudio se realizó de manera segura y adecuada. Solo compartiremos la información de su hijo si la ley o la política así lo exigen. Si los investigadores descubren que su hijo está siendo abusado o va a autolesionarse, la ley estatal requiere que los investigadores informen este comportamiento o intención a las autoridades.

Participación voluntaria y retiro

La participación de su hijo en este estudio es completamente voluntaria. Si acepta permitir que su hijo participe ahora y cambie de opinión más tarde, puede retirar su consentimiento en cualquier momento comunicándose con David Joy al 801-781-0616 o david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu y comuníquese su decisión de Ya no permitas que tu hijo participe. Si elige retirar a su hijo de este estudio después de que ya hayamos recopilado información sobre ellos, todas las respuestas de su hijo se eliminarán o destruirán, y no se utilizarán en este estudio. La decisión de no participar o retirarse del estudio no afectará de ninguna manera la experiencia escolar de sus estudiantes, la relación con el personal de la escuela o su experiencia en el viaje de Escalante.

Compensación

Para la participación de su estudiante en este estudio, su estudiante recibirá un "Pase Rápido" a la hora del almuerzo. Esta es una hoja de papel que les permite tener una oportunidad única de ir al frente de la fila del almuerzo. Recibirán este "Pase Rápido" después de que hayan devuelto su consentimiento informado.

Revisión de IRB

La Junta de Revisión Institucional (IRB, por sus siglas en inglés) para la protección de los participantes en investigaciones humanas en la Universidad del Estado de Utah ha revisado y aprobado este estudio. Si tiene preguntas sobre el estudio, comuníquese con el Investigador Principal David Joy al 801-781-0616 o david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu o Steven Camicia al 801-581-3191 o steven.camicia@usu.edu. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos o los derechos de su hijo o simplemente desea hablar con alguien que no sea el equipo de estudios sobre preguntas o inquietudes, comuníquese con el Director del IRB al (435) 797-0567 o irb@usu.edu.

Steven Camicia
 Investigador principal
 (801) 518-3193; steven.camicia@usu.edu

David Joy
 Investigador estudiante
 (801) 781-0616; david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu



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Al firmar a continuación, usted acepta permitir que su hijo participe en este estudio. Usted indica que comprende los riesgos y beneficios de la participación y que sabe qué se les pedirá que hagan. También acepta que ha formulado cualquier pregunta que pueda tener y tiene claro cómo suspender su participación en el estudio si decide hacerlo. Asegúrese de conservar una copia de este formulario para sus registros.

 Firma del padre o tutor de los participantes

 Nombre del padre o tutor del participante, impreso

 Fecha

Por favor circule uno:

Deseo / NO deseo permitir que mi estudiante participe en este estudio

 Nombre del alumno, impreso

Asentimiento juvenil

Estamos haciendo un estudio sobre excursiones de aprendizaje al aire libre y quién va en ellas. Los estudios nos ayudan a aprender más sobre las personas. Si desea participar en este estudio, estará respondiendo preguntas en una encuesta que tomará entre 10 y 15 minutos. David Joy también tomará algunas notas a lo largo del viaje sobre su experiencia en el viaje de [REDACTED]. Estas notas serán acerca de las cosas que él ve y escucha relacionadas con el viaje, lo que piensas sobre el viaje y cómo te sientes acerca del aire libre. Cuando regrese del viaje, estará respondiendo preguntas en otra encuesta que es casi exactamente igual a la primera encuesta que completó. Esta encuesta también tomará entre 10 y 15 minutos para responder, pero esta vez, la encuesta será anónima para que pueda ser totalmente honesto acerca de su experiencia. Después de eso, se le pedirá que dibuje un mapa de viaje, que es solo una imagen que representa sus experiencias en el viaje de [REDACTED] y luego David Joy le hará algunas preguntas sobre su dibujo y sus experiencias en el viaje en una entrevista, que será grabado en audio. Esta parte del estudio tomará unos 35 minutos para hacerlo. Tendrá la oportunidad de ver toda la información que David Joy recopila sobre usted.

Antes de que acepte hacer estas cosas, necesitamos contarle un poco más. Primero, cuando los investigadores le hacen preguntas en la encuesta y las entrevistas, o cuando dibuja un mapa de viaje, las personas pueden descubrir que fue usted quien dio esas respuestas o dibujó ese mapa de viaje, y puede ocurrir una pérdida de su anonimato.

No todos los que forman parte de los estudios reciben algo bueno de ello. En este estudio, no le pasará nada bueno directamente, pero usted nos ayudará a aprender más sobre las personas. Además, le diremos a otras personas lo que aprendimos al hacer este estudio con usted y con las otras 160 personas que están en el estudio, pero no le diremos a nadie su nombre o su participación en el estudio.

Si esto suena como algo que te gustaría hacer, te pediremos que digas que entiendes de qué hablamos y que quieres participar. No tiene que estar en este estudio si no quiere estarlo. Si decide detenerse después de que comencemos, indíquelo a David Joy que ya no desea participar en persona o llame al 801-781-0616, o envíe un correo electrónico a david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu, también está bien. Nadie se molestará si no quieres hacer esto, o cambiar de opinión más tarde.

Puede hacer cualquier pregunta que tenga, ahora o más tarde. Tus padres saben sobre este estudio, y han dicho que puedes participar, si quieres.



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Si desea participar en este estudio, firme su nombre y escriba la fecha.

Nombre _____

Fecha _____



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Consentimiento informado

Una Exploración de una Experiencia Educativa al Aire Libre

Introducción

Su hijo está invitado a participar en un estudio realizado por Steven Camicija, profesor en el Departamento de Educación Docente y Liderazgo de la Universidad del Estado de Utah, y David Joy, estudiante de Doctorado en el Departamento de Educación Docente y Liderazgo de la Universidad del Estado de Utah. El propósito de este estudio es observar cómo los viajes de aprendizaje al aire libre, como el viaje de octavo grado a [REDACTED] afectan la visión de la naturaleza de los estudiantes, y examinar qué es lo que impide que la mayoría de los estudiantes de ocho grados participen en el viaje de [REDACTED].

Este formulario incluye información detallada sobre el estudio para ayudarlo a decidir si le permite a su hijo participar en este [estudio]. Léalo detenidamente y haga cualquier pregunta que tenga antes de aceptar permitirles participar.

Procedimientos

La participación de su hijo implicará completar una encuesta que los llevará entre 10 y 15 minutos completarla. También pueden tener la oportunidad de ser voluntarios para ser entrevistados con el fin de comprender mejor las razones por las que tantos estudiantes no van al viaje de [REDACTED]. Diez estudiantes serán elegidos para estas entrevistas del grupo que elijan ser más voluntarios. Estas entrevistas demorarán entre 15 y 20 minutos y se grabarán en audio. Su estudiante tendrá la oportunidad de revisar todos los datos que se recopilan de ellos. Su participación total en este estudio tomará de 15 a 35 minutos, dependiendo de si se seleccionan para que el grupo sea entrevistado o no. Anticipamos que 160 personas participarán en este estudio. También solicitamos que el padre /tutor de los estudiantes que participan complete un breve cuestionario demográfico que se adjunta a este consentimiento informado para que podamos comprender mejor quiénes son los estudiantes participantes.

Riesgos

Este es un estudio de riesgo mínimo. Eso significa que los riesgos de participar no son más probables o serios que los de su hijo en las actividades cotidianas. Los riesgos o molestias previsible incluyen una posible pérdida de anonimato, lo que significa que existe una posibilidad muy pequeña de que alguien pueda averiguar cuáles fueron las respuestas de su hijo a las encuestas y entrevistas, y también puede ver el mapa del viaje de su hijo. Para minimizar esos riesgos e incomodidades, los investigadores no usarán el nombre de su hijo, sino que utilizarán el número de estudiante de su hijo o un seudónimo para todas las partes del estudio. Los investigadores también mantendrán todas las respuestas de su hijo en un servidor de nube seguro protegido por contraseña, o en un cajón cerrado en una oficina de acceso restringido en la Universidad del Estado de Utah. Si su hijo tiene una mala experiencia relacionada con el estudio o se lesiona de alguna manera durante su participación, comuníquese con David Joy inmediatamente al 801-781-0616 o david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu o Steven Camicija al 801-518-3191 o steven.camicija@usu.edu.

Beneficios

No hay un beneficio directo para su hijo por participar en este estudio. En términos más generales, este estudio ayudará a los investigadores a aprender más sobre la educación al aire libre, cómo moldea nuestras percepciones y actitudes sobre el exterior y las experiencias al aire libre, y sobre qué impide que los estudiantes participen en experiencias educativas al aire libre y puede ayudar a futuros investigadores a diseñar intervenciones para ayudar a hacer Experiencias educativas al aire libre mejor y más equitativas para todos los estudiantes.

Confidencialidad

Los investigadores harán todo lo posible para garantizar que la información que su hijo proporciona como parte de este estudio se mantenga confidencial. La identidad de su hijo no se revelará en ninguna publicación, presentación



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v.3.3: May2017

o informe que resulte de este estudio. Sin embargo, es posible que alguien reconozca las respuestas particulares de su hijo.

Recopilaremos la información de su hijo a través de grabaciones de audio de entrevistas y Quiltros para las encuestas. Esta información se almacenará de forma segura en una carpeta de acceso restringido en Box.com, un sistema de almacenamiento encriptado, basado en la nube y en un cajón cerrado en una oficina de acceso restringido.

Es poco probable, pero posible, que otros (la Universidad del Estado de Utah o los funcionarios estatales o federales) nos exijan compartir la información que su hijo nos proporcione del estudio para garantizar que el estudio se realizó de manera segura y adecuada. Solo compartiremos la información de su hijo si la ley o la política así lo exigen. Si los investigadores descubren que su hijo está siendo abusado o va a autolesionarse, la ley estatal requiere que los investigadores informen este comportamiento o intención a las autoridades.

El equipo de estudio trabaja para garantizar la confidencialidad en el grado permitido por la tecnología. Es posible, aunque improbable, que personas no autorizadas puedan acceder a las respuestas de su hijo porque responden en línea. Sin embargo, la participación de su hijo en esta encuesta en línea implica riesgos similares al uso diario de Internet de una persona.

Participación voluntaria y retiro

La participación de su hijo en este estudio es completamente voluntaria. Si acepta permitir que su hijo participe ahora y cambie de opinión más tarde, puede retirar su consentimiento en cualquier momento comunicándose con David Joy al 801-781-0616 o david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu y comuníquese su decisión de Ya no permitas que tu hijo participe. Si elige retirar a su hijo de este estudio después de que ya hayamos recopilado información sobre ellos, todas las respuestas de su hijo se eliminarán o destruirán, y no se utilizarán en este estudio. La decisión de no participar o retirarse del estudio no afectará de ninguna manera la experiencia escolar de sus estudiantes o su relación con el personal de la escuela.

Compensación

Para la participación de su estudiante en este estudio, su estudiante recibirá un "Pase Rápido" a la hora del almuerzo. Esta es una hoja de papel que les permite tener una oportunidad única de ir al frente de la fila del almuerzo. Recibirán este "Pase Rápido" después de que hayan devuelto su consentimiento informado.

Revisión de IRB

La Junta de Revisión Institucional (IRB, por sus siglas en inglés) para la protección de los participantes en investigaciones humanas en la Universidad del Estado de Utah ha revisado y aprobado este estudio. Si tiene preguntas sobre el estudio, comuníquese con el Investigador Principal David Joy al 801-781-0616 o david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu o Steven Camicia al 801-581-3191 o steven.camicia@usu.edu. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos o los derechos de su hijo o simplemente desea hablar con alguien que no sea el equipo de estudios sobre preguntas o inquietudes, comuníquese con el Director del IRB al (435) 797-0567 o irb@usu.edu.

Steven Camicia
 Investigador Principal
 (801) 518-3193; steven.camicia@usu.edu

David Joy
 Investigador Estudiante
 (801) 781-0616; david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu



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v.8.3: Mar2017

Consentimiento informado

Al firmar a continuación, usted acepta permitir que su hijo participe en este estudio. Usted indica que comprende los riesgos y beneficios de la participación y que sabe qué se les pedirá que hagan. También acepta que ha formulado cualquier pregunta que pueda tener y tiene claro cómo suspender su participación en el estudio si decide hacerlo. Asegúrese de conservar una copia de este formulario para sus registros.

 Firma del padre o tutor del participante

 Nombre del padre o tutor del participante, impreso

 Fecha

Por favor circule uno:

Deseo / NO deseo permitir que mi estudiante participe en este estudio

 Nombre del alumno, impreso



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v.8.3: May2017

Asentimiento juvenil

Estamos haciendo un estudio sobre excursiones de aprendizaje al aire libre y quién va en ellas. Los estudios nos ayudan a aprender más sobre las personas. Si desea participar en este estudio, estaré respondiendo a preguntas en una encuesta que tomará entre 10 y 15 minutos. Si lo desea, también puede ofrecerse como voluntario para responder preguntas en una entrevista, pero solo diez personas serán elegidas para hacerlo, y tomará de 15 a 20 minutos. Estas entrevistas serán grabadas en audio. Tendrá la oportunidad de ver toda la información que David Joy recopila sobre usted.

Antes de que acepte hacer estas cosas, necesitamos contarle un poco más. Primero, cuando los investigadores le hacen preguntas en la encuesta y en las entrevistas, las personas pueden descubrir que fue usted quien dio esas respuestas y que se puede perder su anonimato.

No todos los que forman parte de los estudios reciben algo bueno de ello. En este estudio, no le pasará nada bueno directamente, pero usted nos ayudará a aprender más sobre las personas. Además, le diremos a otras personas lo que aprendimos al hacer este estudio con usted y con las otras 160 personas que están en el estudio, pero no le diremos a nadie su nombre o que usted estuvo en el estudio.

Si esto suena como algo que te gustaría hacer, te pediremos que digas que entiendes de qué hablamos y que quieres participar. No tiene que estar en este estudio si no quiere estarlo. Si decide detenerse después de que comencemos, indíquelo a David Joy que ya no desea participar en persona o llame al 801-781-0616, o envíe un correo electrónico a david.joy@aggiemail.usu.edu, también está bien. Nadie se molestará si no quieres hacer esto, o cambiar de opinión más tarde.

Puede hacer cualquier pregunta que tenga, ahora o más tarde. Tus padres saben sobre este estudio, y han dicho que puedes participar, si quieres.

Si desea participar en este estudio, firme su nombre y escriba la fecha.

Nombre _____

Date _____

Appendix C

USU IRB Approval Letter



Institutional Review Board

Expedite #6,7
Letter of Approval

From: Melanie Domenech Rodriguez, IRB Chair
Nicole Vouvalis, IRB Director

To: Steven Camicia, Ph.D.

Date: May 6, 2019

Protocol #: 9251

Title: *An Exploration of an Outdoor Educational Experience at Intermountain West Junior High School*

Your proposal has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board and is approved under expedite procedures #6 and #7 (based on the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations for the protection of human research subjects, 45 CFR Part 46, as amended to include provisions of the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, January 21, 2019):

Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file for the period of approval specified in the protocol. You will be asked to submit an annual check in around the anniversary of the date of original approval. As part of the IRB's quality assurance procedures, this research may also be randomly selected for audit. If so, you will receive a request for completion of an Audit Report form during the month of the anniversary date of original approval. If the proposal will be active for more than five years, it will undergo a full continuation review every fifth year.

Any change affecting human subjects, including extension of the expiration date, must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation by submitting an Amendment request. Injuries or any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board.

Prior to involving human subjects, properly executed informed consent must be obtained from each subject or from an authorized representative, and documentation of informed consent must be kept on file for at least three years after the project ends. Each subject must be furnished with a copy of the informed consent document for their personal records.

Upon receipt of this memo, you may begin your research. If you have questions, please call the IRB office at (435) 797-1821 or email to irb@usu.edu.

The IRB wishes you success with your research.

Appendix D
Demographic Survey Questions

**Demographic Information for Intermountain West Junior High
Southern Utah Parks Trip Study:**

PLEASE FILL THIS OUT ONLY IF YOU ARE GIVING CONSENT FOR YOUR STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY DESCRIBED IN THE INFORMED CONSENT PROVIDED.

MUST BE FILLED OUT BY PARENT/GUARDIAN.

Below are some questions about your student and your household that we would like to ask in order to gain a better understanding of who is and who is not participating in the Southern Utah Parks Trip at Intermountain West. All information provided will be kept confidential and protected. Thank you for your help.

Please circle the answer that best fits your student and your household.

If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please feel free to leave that question blank.

What is your student's age?

- 12 years old
- 13 years old
- 14 years old
- 15 years old
- Prefer not to respond

What is your student's gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other (please specify): _____
- Prefer not to respond

What is your student's race?

- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- White
- Other (please specify): _____

Please turn over, more questions on back.

What is your household income?

Below \$10,000 a year
\$10,000 to \$25,000 a year
\$25,000 to \$50,000 a year
\$50,000 to \$75,000 a year
\$75,000 to \$100,000 a year
\$100,000 to \$150,000 a year
Over \$150,000 a year

Is English your student's first language?

Yes
No

Are any other languages spoken in the home? If so, what are they?

Yes (please specify): _____
No

Appendix E

Anonymous Pre-Trip Survey Questions

Default Question Block

How often do you participate in activities outside?

- Every day
- A couple of times a week
- Once a week
- Once every other week
- Once a month
- Less than once a month

What do you do when you are outside?

How many field trips or school activities that did not take place not at your school, do you remember going on since starting school (Pre-school to your current grade)?

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7-8
- More than 8

Of those field trips and school activities mentioned above, how many of those took place in an outdoor environment?

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4

5/4/2019

Qualtrics Survey Software

- 5-6
 7-8
 More than 8

What do you remember most about those outdoor field trips and activities?

What did you learn during those outdoor field trips and activities?

What outdoor learning activities have you participated in **outside of school** (not related to school)?

What did you learn from those outdoor learning activities that you participated in **outside of school** (not related to school)?

How do you feel about the outdoors and nature?

How do you feel about going outdoors or being in the outdoors?

Do you feel that it is people's responsibilities to take care of nature and the outdoors?
Why or why not?

How do you feel nature and the outdoors should be used?

Do you like participating in outdoor activities like going for hikes, or playing in a park, or things like that? Why or why not?

Do you like participating in outdoor learning activities like field trips that take place outside, or going to the zoo, or things like that? Why or why not?

What is your favorite part of learning in the outdoors, and why is that your favorite part?

What is your least favorite part of learning in the outdoors, and why is that your least favorite part?

Do you feel like those who participate in outdoor activities are like you? Why or why not?

Do you feel that those who have participated in the Escalante trip are like you? Why or why not?

Appendix F

Anonymous Post-Trip Survey Questions

Default Question Block

What were your feelings about going outdoors or being in the outdoors before the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?

Did those feelings change after you participated in the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?

If so, how did your feelings change?

What was your favorite part of the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?
Why was this your favorite part of the trip?

What was your least favorite part of the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?
Why is this your least favorite part of the trip?

Do you feel that your culture was represented on the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?
(Did you feel included on the trip?)
Why or why not?

How do you feel about the outdoors and nature?

5/4/2019

Qualtrics Survey Software

Would you go back to any of the places that were visited on the Grand Staircase/
Escalante trip?

Why or why not?

Would you tell your friends to go and visit the places you visited on the Grand Staircase/
Escalante trip?

Why or why not?

Did you enjoy the Grand Staircase/Escalante trip?

Why or why not?

What was your favorite part of the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?

Why was this your favorite part?

What was your least favorite part of the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?

Why was this your least favorite part?

What do you think could be done to improve the Grand Staircase/ Escalante trip?

Do you feel like those who participate in outdoor activities are like you?

5/4/2019

Qualtrics Survey Software

Why or why not?

Do you feel like those who participated in the Escalante trip are like you?

Why or why not?

Do you feel it is people's responsibilities to take care of nature and the outdoors?

Why or why not?

How do you feel nature and the outdoors should be used?

Powered by Qualtrics

Appendix G

Southern Utah Parks Trip Learning Activities Lesson Plans

Teacher: D. Joy	School: Intermountain West Junior High
Subject: 8 th SUPT	Students will engage in:
Dates: ___/___/___	Observing
Block: N/A	Drawing
Semester: 2	Journaling

Lesson Title: Petroglyph Assignment

Class Objective: Help students to understand what a petroglyph is, what a pictograph is, what we know about them, and what we don't know about them.

Useful Vocab.: Petroglyph, pictograph, indigenous people

Assessment: Each student will draw a petroglyph or set of petroglyphs and write a journal entry explaining their drawings. These will be assessed to see if class objectives were met.

Time	Procedures followed:	Materials/ Text References
15 min	<u>Class starter:</u> A group discussion on what we had seen in petroglyphs so far, what the students think they mean, and how they think they got there.	
10 min	A brief lesson on what we know so far about petroglyphs, and what we don't know.	
30 min	Students will draw a petroglyph or set of petroglyphs in their nature journals. They will then write a journal entry explaining their drawings.	Students nature journals. Colored pencils. Pencils.
10 min	<u>Class Ender:</u> Come back together and allow those who want to share the chance to, and then debrief the lesson.	

Homework Given: None.

Reflection:

Teachable Moments that Happened:

Notes:

Teacher: D. Joy	School: Intermountain West Junior High
Subject: 8 th SUPT	Students will engage in:
Dates: ___/___/___	Observing
Block: N/A	Drawing
Semester: 2	

Lesson Title: Line sketch of a natural scene

Class Objective: The students will understand the basics of a simple line sketch, and be able to complete one.

Useful Vocab.: line sketch

Assessment: The students will draw a line sketch of a natural scene. These will be assessed to see if class objectives were met.

Time	Procedures followed:	Materials/ Text References
5 min	<u>Class starter:</u> Start by having the students sit and pick a spot they will draw. Have them look at the basic shapes of the objects in their scene.	
10 min	Teach the students what a line sketch is, and then demonstrate how to draw a natural scene as a line sketch.	
40 min	Allow the students plenty of time to complete their line sketch of their scene. Ask them to do so without talking so that they may concentrate.	Students nature journals. Colored pencils. Pencils.

	<u>Class Ender</u> : Come back together and allow those who want to share the chance to, and then debrief the lesson.	
--	---	--

Homework Given: None

Reflection:

Teachable Moments that Happened:

Notes:

Teacher: D. Joy	School: Intermountain West Junior High
Subject: 8 th SUPT	Students will engage in:
Dates: ___/___/___	Journaling
Block: N/A	Observing
Semester: 2	Drawing

Lesson Title: 3-Scale Drawing

Class Objective: Teach students to do a 3-Scale nature journal entry. Get students to slow down and really observe something as a whole, as its parts.

Useful Vocab.: Scale, observation

Assessment: The students will complete a 3-Scale nature journal entry. These will be assessed to see if class objectives were met.

Time	Procedures followed:	Materials/ Text References
5 min	<u>Class starter:</u> Have the students find a leaf, and really look closely at it. Discuss what they saw.	
	Teach the students how to make a good, detailed observation of an object.	
	Teach the students what a 3-Scale nature journal entry is, and then demonstrate how to do one. (Draw whole organism, then draw a close up of one part of the organism, then draw a close up of one part of that part. i.e. Tree, then branch, then bark.)	Students nature journals. Colored pencils. Pencils.

	<u>Class Ender</u> : Come back together and allow those who want to share the chance to, and then debrief the lesson.	
--	---	--

Homework Given: None.

Reflection:

Teachable Moments that Happened:

Notes:

Teacher: D. Joy	School: Intermountain West Junior High
Subject: 8 th SUPT	Students will engage in:
Dates: ___/___/___	Observing
Block: N/A	Identifying
Semester: 2	

Lesson Title: Daily Plant Identification.

Class Objective: The students will learn how to identify a new native plant each day.

Useful Vocab.: field guide, ponderosa pine, sagebrush, sego lily, rubber rabbitbrush, cottonwood

Assessment: Students will be asked randomly throughout the trip if they can identify the plants that have been taught up to that point.

Time	Procedures followed:	Materials/ Text References
	<u>Class starter:</u> not done in a class setting.	
	When the plant for the day is seen, stop the group and teach them the characteristics they should look at in order to identify the plant.	
	Later in the trip, when a plant is seen that has already been taught, stop the group and have a student or two identify the plant.	
	Teach the students how to use a field guide, and then allow the students to use the field guides to practice identifying other plants they find.	Field guides.

Teacher: D. Joy	School: Intermountain West Junior High
Subject: 8 th SUPT	Students will engage in:
Dates: ___/___/___	Journaling.
Block: N/A	Crafting.
Semester: 2	

Lesson Title: Beaded Bracelet Assignment.

Class Objective: Students will create a beaded bracelet with each bead representing an activity or lesson from the trip.

Useful Vocab.: None.

Assessment: The students will be creating a bracelet to help them remember the lessons and activities of the trip. They will also write a journal entry about their experience.

Time	Procedures followed:	Materials/ Text References
5 min	<u>Class starter:</u> Have everyone get out their bead, and go over what lesson or activity is represented by each color of bead.	Colored beads Hemp cord
7 min	Have the students write in their nature journals what lesson or activity is represented by each color of bead.	Students' nature journals
20 min	Have the students write in their nature journals a summary of their experience on the trip.	
30 min	Teach the students how to tie the beads onto their bracelets. Allow them some time to practice, but it can be finished on their own.	

	<u>Class Ender</u> : Take a few minutes to tell the group what you learned and what the trip meant to you. Allow others the same opportunity.	
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Homework Given: None.

Reflection:

Teachable Moments that Happened:

Notes:

Appendix H

Journey Map and Interview Prompts for Southern Utah Deserts Trip

Journey map and interview prompts for Southern Utah Deserts Trip

Give an example of a journey map and explain what it is.

“I would like you to think about the trip you just took to Southern Utah Deserts, and think about the things you learned, and the things you think you will remember about the trip, and I would like you to draw a picture that represents that experience for you.”

-Give them time to draw their journey map

Please tell me about your drawing and how it relates to your experience.

What were your feelings about going on a trip like the Southern Utah Deserts trip before you went?

What are your feelings about going on more trips like the Southern Utah Deserts trip after you went?

What were your feelings about going outdoors or being in the outdoors before the Southern Utah Deserts trip?

What are your feelings about going outdoors or being in the outdoors after the Southern Utah Deserts trip?

What do you think about nature and how people interact with nature?

What did you look forward to the most about the Southern Utah Deserts Trip?

What worried you about going on the Southern Utah Deserts Trip?

What motivated you to go on the Southern Utah Deserts Trip?

What were some of the things you had to do/overcome in order to go on the Southern Utah Deserts Trip?

What did you know about the Southern Utah Deserts area before the trip?

Were you excited to go and visit this area? Why or why not?

Have you ever been to an area like Southern Utah Deserts and the other places visited on the trip?

What did you think of Southern Utah Deserts and the other places visited on the trip?

How did you feel about outdoor school trips before this Southern Utah Deserts Trip?

Would you go on another outdoor school trip like this if you were given the chance? Why or why not?

Did you like learning in the outdoors like you did on the Southern Utah Deserts Trip? Why or why not?

What is your favorite part of learning in the outdoors? And why is that your favorite part?

What is your least favorite part of learning in the outdoors? And why is that your least favorite part?

What do you think you will remember most about the Southern Utah Deserts Trip?

CURRICULUM VITAE

DAVID N. JOY

Science Teacher

Wahlquist Junior High School
Weber School District

Phone: 801-781-0616**Email:** joyboy31415@gmail.com**Education:****Utah State University****Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

August 2013 – April 2020

Program: Curriculum and Instruction**Emphasis:** Outdoor Education/ Social Justice**Dissertation:** Hitting the Trail: An Exploration of an Outdoor Educational Experience at Intermountain West Junior High School**Advisor:** Steven Camicia**Weber State University****Degree:** Master of Education

August 2009 – April 20, 2012. (GPA: 3.9)

Major: Curriculum and Instruction**Thesis:** *A Survey of Utah Secondary Science Teachers and the Gender Gap: Views, Knowledge, and Self-Reported Use of Gender Equity Strategies*
Louise Moulding (Chair)**Utah State University****Degree:** Bachelor of Science

August 2003 – December 17, 2007. (GPA: 3.6).

Major: Composite Teaching Physical Science with an Integrated Science Endorsement.**Minor:** Physics Teaching.**Honors:** Cum Laude, Sigma Pi Sigma. Phi Kappa Phi. National Society of Collegiate Scholars.**University Teaching:****Utah State University** 2013-2014

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Courses: SCED 5500 Student Teaching Seminar- Science, Fall 2013

SCED 4300 Secondary Science Teaching Methods, Spring 2014

SCED 4400 Secondary Science Clinical Experience, Spring 2014
Supervision: Secondary science student teachers, Fall 2013
Secondary science student teachers, Spring 2014

University Work:

Utah State University 2016
Utah STEM Action Center Program Evaluation Team

Secondary Teaching:

Wahlquist Junior High- 2019- Present
Weber School District
Farr West, Utah
8th Grade Integrated Science

Intermountain West Junior High- 2017- 2019
Intermountain West School District
Intermountain West Region
7th Grade Integrated Science
8th Grade Integrated Science
7th Grade Elective Naturalist Class

Mount Ogden Junior High- 2016- 2017
Ogden City School District
Ogden, Utah
7th Grade Integrated Science
8th Grade Integrated Science
7th and 8th Grade Elective Lab Class
Earth System (Summer Credit Recovery)

Bear River Middle School- 2014-2016
Box Elder School District
Garland, Utah
8th Grade Integrated Science

Ben Lomond High School- 2012-2013
Ogden City School District
Ogden, Utah
General Chemistry
Advanced Placement Chemistry
Conceptual Chemistry

Intermountain West Junior High- 2007- 2012

Intermountain West School District

Intermountain West Region

8th Grade Integrated Science7th Grade Integrated Science

Earth System (Summer Credit Recovery)

Professional Affiliations:

National Science Teachers Association, Utah Science Teachers Association

Conference Presentations:

Joy, D. N. (November 8th, 2019). Examining School Sponsored Outdoor Educational Experiences and How to Make Them More Inclusive. Presentation at the 29th Annual Utah Society for Environmental Education Conference. Eccles Wildlife Education Center at Farmington Bay, Farmington, Utah.

Professional Award:

Empowering Excellence in Education Award- Ogden City School District

Community Service:

Majestic Elementary Science Fair Judge, North Ogden Utah
Shriners Children's Hospital Volunteer, Salt Lake City Utah