

Residential Program Classes

For the average 2½-day program, please choose four Day Classes and two Evening Classes. Classes are tied to ISBE, Common Core, and/or NGSS state standards.

Day Classes	
Birds of Prey	River Study
Field Science	Map and Compass
Predator / Prey	American Indian
Outdoor Living Skills	History Hunt
Teams Course	Environmental Issues
	Conservation
Evening Classes	
Alpha Wolf	
Nocturnal Animal Puppet Show & Campfire	
Campfire & Night Hike	

Class Descriptions

Day Classes

Birds of Prey Program

The Atwood bird handlers will introduce students to one or two raptors in a birds of prey presentation. This program can be held either outdoors or indoors. Have your cameras ready for a real treat. This 60-minute program is included in a 2 ½ day trip.

NOTE: The Birds of Prey are also available to visit your classroom or school function; please inquire for fees and details.

Field Science

This class highlights the major ecosystems inside Atwood Park, incorporating a wide variety of seasonal topics, current events, and historical landmarks in the park. Have the students prepare to hike as they explore all that Atwood Park has to offer!

Predator/Prey – “The best game of tag you will ever play.”

Nature contains many dramas, and one example is the predator/prey relationship. Questions like, "What do animals eat?", "Who are the hunters?" or "Which animals are the prey?" are of particular interest. What better way to answer those questions than through the active learning of a food chain simulation. This unit explores predator and prey relationships using an activity which involves student and teacher participation. Have students dress in long pants and long sleeves.

Outdoor Living Skills

This class focuses on teaching skills that can increase the comfort level in an outdoor setting while having minimal impact on the environment. Teachers will choose two activities from fire-building, archery, and shelter building, and have the option to tie the activities to the novel Hatchet.

Teams Course

Cooperation, communication, inclusion and teamwork are the key concepts in this unit. Our teams' course features elements that are low to the ground and is the place for participants to face challenges together. Participants will learn to help support and trust one another. Problem-solving activities are also used to involve the participants in working together to accomplish common goals. The sequence of events will be determined based on weather conditions, skill level, and how well the group works together.

Day Classes

River Study

Students will investigate the life in and around the Kishwaukee River through collection and observation. Using macroinvertebrate identification and chemical testing, participants will determine the health, chemistry and turbidity of the river. Then students will discuss ways to make the river a better natural environment. Weather and river conditions permitting. Bring extra clothes and a pair of shoes or boots that can get wet (no sandals).

Map & Compass

Basic orienteering with map and compass is a practical skill that combines math knowledge with practical field use. Activities may include compass instruction, map work, warm-up games, setting a course, or running a course. Working together as a small group helps each student learn group dynamics and team work, as well as confidence in compass abilities.

American Indian

The native people that once inhabited this area have much to teach us today. This unit will introduce students to the culture and the lifestyle of these original inhabitants. Teachers will be able to choose two activities from the options of trade blanket, tomahawk toss, and honor games.

History Hunt

The timeline begins with the Woodland Native Americans and continues through Atwood Park's rich local and national history, including its Camp Grant heritage. Original target pits and bunkers tell of the military days. Also, evidence of the Civilian Conservation Corps work projects constructed during the Great Depression remain on the site today. The New Milford Cemetery, which is adjacent to Atwood Park, features graves dating back to the 1800s and can be viewed as an optional part of the class.

Environmental Issues

During this class, students will explore current environmental issues involved in park and recreation planning. Students will develop a land use policy as they conceptualize a construction project within the park.

Conservation Project

Students can spend a portion of time during their stay at Atwood improving the park environment. After learning about human responsibility for the environment, students can participate in practical activities such as invasive species removal, litter collection, trail improvement, or prairie restoration.

Evening Classes

Alpha Wolf

Students will mimic the life of a wolf pack in this simulation activity. An Atwood staff member becomes the “alpha wolf”. The students and their evening instructor go in search of the “alpha wolf” — a hide-and-seek style activity. Included will be an opening discussion and explanation and a hike to search for the alpha wolf.

Sensory Night Hike & Campfire

Groups will learn about how human senses change as darkness falls. An optional solo hike can be added onto the sensory night hike. After the hike, students will head to a campfire for songs and stories. Bring along some S’mores to complete the campfire experience!

Puppet Show and Campfire

Start the evening off with a humorous look at the animals that call Atwood Park their home after the sun goes down. Then enjoy songs and stories by the campfire. S’mores may be brought along by school staff to help complete the campfire experience!