

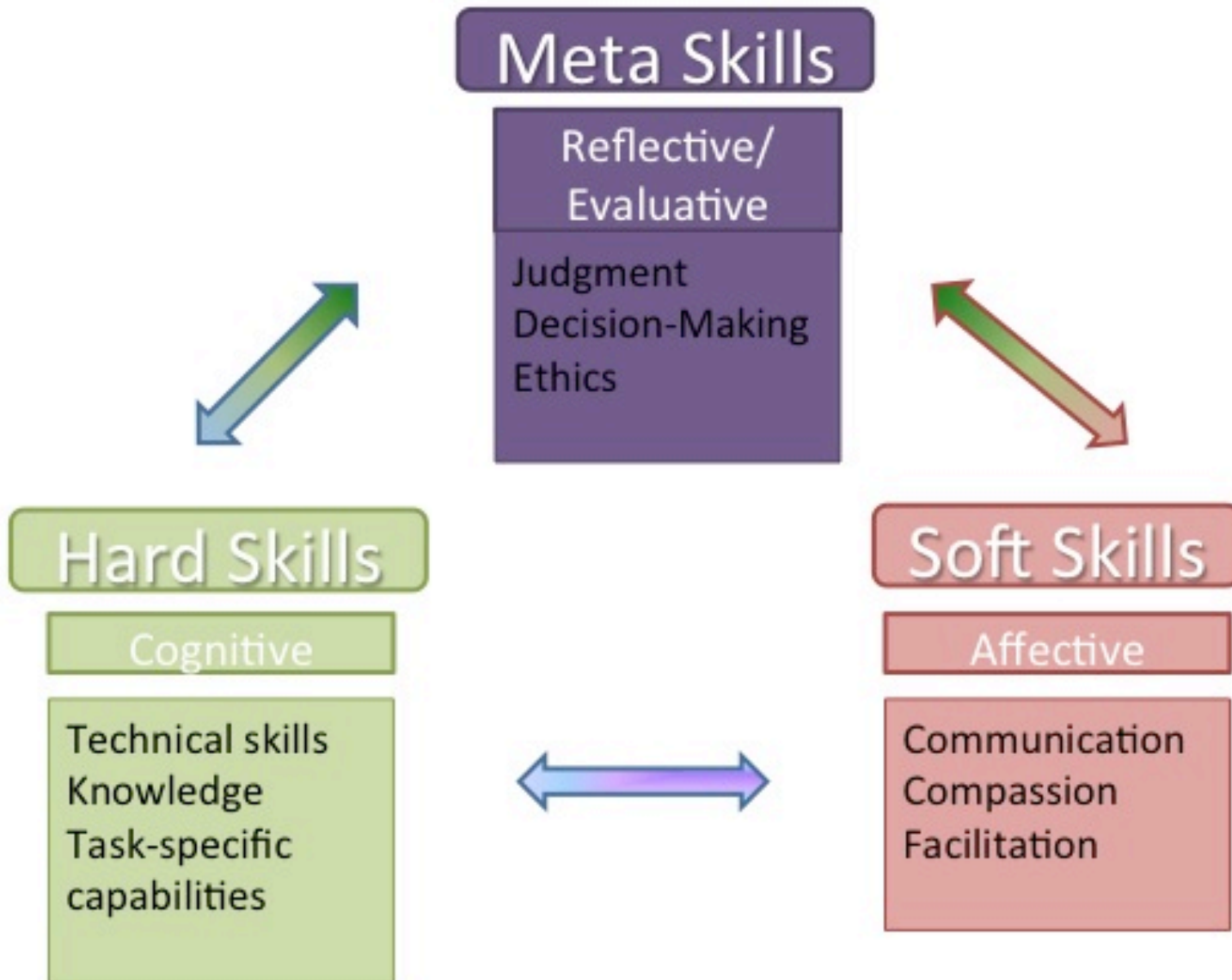
# Think@Achieve

CREATING CONNECTIONS

Challenge Course Construction &  
Training

Andrew Bailey & HHP 3070

# The Goal: Wise Leadership





# The Method



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

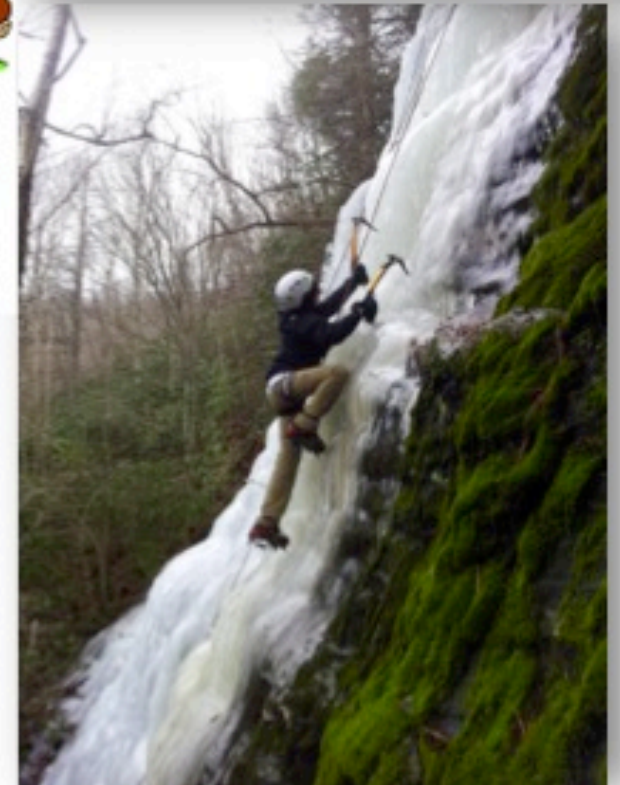
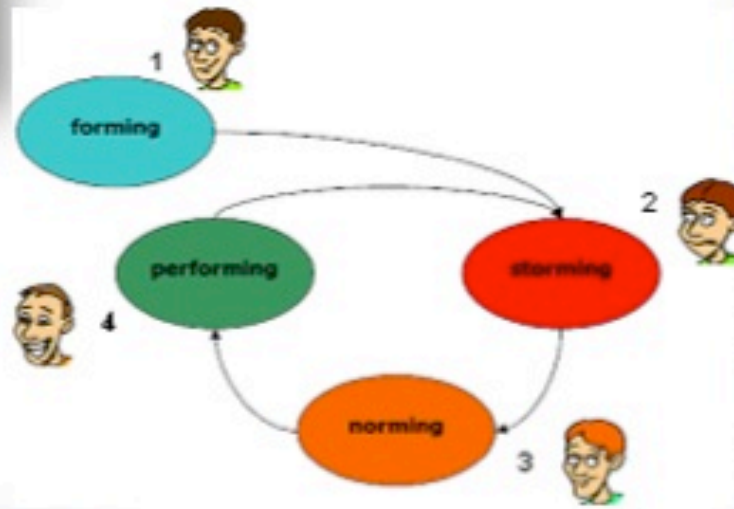
- **Experiential Education**

- “Wisdom has never lost its association with the proper direction of life. Only in education, never in the life of the farmer, sailor, merchant, physician, or laboratory experimenter, does knowledge mean primarily a storage of information aloof from doing” (Dewey, 1916, p.185).

- **Project-Based Service Learning**

- “a form of active learning where students work on projects that benefit a real community or client while also providing a rich learning experience.” (Bielefeldt, et al., 2010).

# Preparation (Group Processing)



# Preparation (Empirical Evidence)

Dewey

Ropes Course Outcomes

Kolb

Outward Bound

Hitler

Decision Making

Native American

Wilderness Therapy

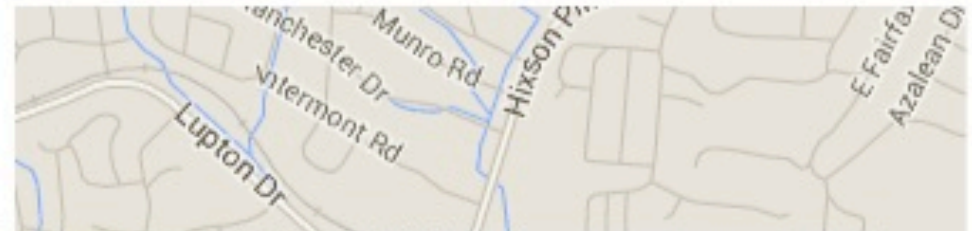
Rites of Passage

Gillis, Russell, Luckner, Simpson

Facilitation

# Our Partner

- Rivermont Elementary
- Dan Basler (PE Teacher)



# Application

- Video here

# Processing

- Which elements are appropriate for K-5<sup>th</sup> graders?
- How can we minimize liability?
- How can we minimize impact to the environment?
- Engineering (working load limits, torque, ANSI & ACCT standards)
- How can we maximize the activities with less equipment?
- How many drill bits does it take to get through a 3-foot thick tree?





# Teacher Training

## Ropes Course Elements

### Two Line Bridge

The Two Line Bridge is a simple element requiring only one participant. The object is to traverse from one pole to the next with the participants' feet on the bottom cable and hands on the chest high cable. One spotter stands in front and behind the participant and walks beside them as they complete the activity.

#### **Safety:**

Participants on the two line bridge can fall either forward or backwards so spotters have to stay alert to make sure they are not injured. Participants may be inclined to continue holding onto the cable while falling which could cause them to bounce or swing away from the spotters.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvAv5-RSE5c>

### Triangular Tension Traverse

The Triangular Tension Triangle consists of three cables connected to poles or trees to form a triangle. One of the poles, a rope is attached for the participant to hold onto during the activity. The participant starts at one corner of the triangle and, using the rope to balance, attempts to circumnavigate the entire triangle without falling off the cable. For this element, two spotters are positioned behind the participant and one in front. They walk with the person until they reach the end.

#### **Safety:**

Participants in this activity will most likely be inclined to continue holding the rope at all times, even falling and this may ~~will~~ cause them to swing in all directions. Participants can also fall forward or backwards trying to use the rope for balance. Falling on the element is a bigger issue than the two line bridge and requires more attention to the participant.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=or2HNmhl1Vg>

# Reflection

- **Civic Engagement:** “These trips really taught me that you can learn a lot by simply doing what you love to do... By simply getting kids interested in the [ropes] course and what we did there, could lead them to becoming involved in other activities as well as teaching them a wide variety of skills. It really makes it worth all the effort put in during the trip...”
- **Hard skills:** “One of my favorite activities of the semester was building a ropes course at an elementary school. I, like many of the students in the class had never contributed to building a ropes course before...I learned a ton of new technical skills with machines, and saws, and bolts and screws that I had never known in the past.
- **Soft Skills:** “Having out of class or outdoor experiences and activities is very valuable to a leader and her group. One reason is because, in the initial gathering, it builds bonding between members and breaks the ice to help start communication and relationship growth. As the group grows together, activities help strengthen relationships and bonds between members and the leader and therefore increasing trust.”
- **Meta-Skills:** Lao Tzu says, “A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves” ... The group comes together as a community learning about each other and developing compassion for one another while learning hard skill tasks from the leader, but also from each other. Then in the end looking back and seeing all of the technical skills and knowledge that they have learned and developed over time, while having the feeling of being involved rather than following along. The leader’s followers become leaders.

# Teachers learn, too.

- Prepare for bureaucracy.
- Assumptions are often wrong.
- Never cut corners.
- Flexibility saves stomach acid & friendships.



## Dewey's Ghost

“Experiences such as [these] have molded me into the person that I am and hope to be. My entire life I have sat in a classroom to memorize facts...This has benefitted me and equipped me to be an intelligent human being. However, what I have learned through experiences in my life has developed my ability to think critically, to observe and learn, to learn from others and have good relationships, and a better understanding of the world and the One who has created it.”