

THE IMPACT MONSTER

A Skit for Teaching Land Use Ethics



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A Skit for Teaching Land Use Ethics

Review the Tread Lightly! Pledge and seven Leave No Trace principles before starting the skit.

The most current publication available is:

Learning and Teaching Leave No Trace – available free at www.tcfroar.org.

Additional resources available at www.treadlightly.org and www.lnt.org.

Background:

The Impact Monster skit was developed by Jim Bradley of the Eagle Cap district on the Wallowa Whitman National Forest in the 1970's. The skit has been modified to reflect Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace principles in effect in July 2005.

Materials:

The participants all need something to show what animal they are. You can use stuffed animals or puppets from home, purchase them from a second hand store, or you can make costumes. Be creative; the more stuffed animals, puppets or costumes, the more fun the participants will have. The costume can be as simple as poster board antlers or horns, blue material or tarp for the lake, green material or tarp for a mountain and cardboard branches for the trees.

Ideas for animals and props for the skit:

Rabbit	Chipmunk	Matches
Deer	Bird	Pencil (for writing ticket)
Bear	Squirrel	Paper (for ticket)
Eagle	Fish	Toilet Paper
Snake	Frog	Trees and limbs
Large Flowers–Put on wire to hold		Sun–Put on wire to hold
Small Blue Tarp (for lake)		Items to set up camp
Small Green Tarp (for mountain)		Sleeping bag
Plastic Flowers		Boom Box with loud music
Hand soap		Backpack
Brightly colored clothes for the Impact Monster		

Assorted Litter–chip bag, candy wrappers, gum wrappers, toilet paper, pop can, etc.

Procedure:

You need two people who know the skit – the Impact Monster and the narrator. The Impact Monster can be a hiker or driving an off highway vehicle depending on your audience. It would help if you had one or two assistants. One assistant can also play the part of the Ranger. If you have no assistants the narrator will also play the part of the Ranger. The rest of the characters are participants from the audience. The audience participates as the narrator asks questions. Participation from those attending the session is crucial.

BE SURE TO HAVE FUN WITH THIS. IF YOU AREN'T HAVING A GOOD TIME WHILE TEACHING, THEN THE PARTICIPANTS WON'T HAVE A GOOD TIME LEARNING. BE FUNNY AND SMILE.

The Impact Monster Skit

Stage Setup:

Make sure you have stuffed animals or costumes for animals and all props for the Impact Monster. The Impact Monster is really an average hiker or off highway vehicle user going camping. Place blue tarp (lake) on the ground and green tarp (mountain) over chair. The assistants can coach the participants on what to do when the Impact Monster arrives.

Note: Suggested things to say are in *bold and italics*.

NARRATOR: *We need some volunteers to help us - Who would like to volunteer?*

Get enough volunteers to be each animal you want - it is okay to use all of the participants. As you give a participant an animal (one animal each) identify the animal for the audience. As you identify the animals place them where they will not block the view of the audience. The narrator will stand on the edge of the stage to say his/her parts. At the appropriate time the narrator will "freeze" the action to ask questions. Wait for answers after each question. Resume the skit when all questions are answered.

NARRATOR: *During the skit each of the animals should do what you think the animal would do in that particular situation. For example: When the Impact Monster enters with loud music what animals would run around and act scared? When the Impact Monster washes in the lake with soap what happens to the frog and fish?*

Before we start let's review the Tread Lightly! Pledge which applies mostly to motorized recreation and the Leave No Trace Principles which applies more to human powered recreation. You will notice that the Pledge and Principles say basically the same thing and both are equally important to understand.

The Pledge is:

*Travel and recreate with minimum impact.
Respect the environment and the rights of others.
Educate yourself, Plan and Prepare before you go.
Allow for future use of the outdoors, Leave it better than you found it.
Discover the rewards of responsible behavior.*

The principles are:

*1: Plan Ahead and Prepare.
2: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces.
3: Dispose of Waste Properly.
4: Leave What You Find.*

5: Minimize Campfire Impacts.

6: Respect Wildlife.

7: Be Considerate of Other Visitors.

This experience could happen with an off highway vehicle user, like a 4-wheeler, or a hiker. Today we will use a hiker in our skit. Imagine we are high in the mountains, with a beautiful blue sky, cool breeze and a clear blue lake.

With all the participants in place, quietly making animal noises and trees swaying, the narrator leaves the stage and the Impact Monster enters with a boom box blaring and singing,

"Oh what a beautiful campsite."

Narrator says: **"FREEZE!"** At this point all animals freeze in their tracks and attention is focused on the narrator and he asks:

Could anyone hear the loud music?

When you go outdoors do you want to hear loud music?

Are we being considerate when we are noisy outdoors when there are other people around?"

Skit resumes and Impact Monster tramples flowers getting to his campsite and says,

There's a lot of flowers anyway."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

Does it make a difference where we walk when we are outdoors?

Why?

How do we know where to walk?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster picks a flower, decorates the boom box and says,

"That looks better."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

Should we pick flowers when we are outdoors?

Is it okay to keep animal parts like feathers and deer antlers?

Is it okay to capture small critters to play with or take home?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster Kills a snake with a tree branch and says,

"The less snakes the better."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

Are all snakes bad?

Should we kill any snakes?

Why not?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster sets up camp next to lake and says,
"What a great place for a camp."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

Does it matter where we put our camp?

What is wrong with having it next to the water?

Does soft and muddy ground recover as quickly from our camping and traveling on it?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster litters while setting up camp and says,
"No one will ever come here so it doesn't matter."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

The Impact Monster threw wrappers and litter everywhere. Does it matter?

Why shouldn't we litter?

Can litter harm animals?

Can litter harm people in the outdoors?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster goes to the bathroom behind the mountain and leaves toilet paper all around and says,

"Wow....I feel much better now."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

What should we do when we do number two in the outdoors?

Does it matter where we urinate in the outdoors?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster uses soap to wash hands in the lake and says.
"It's nice to get all this dirt off."

Narrator: **"FREEZE!"**

Has anybody ever eaten soap? Yech!!!

Where should we wash our hands and dishes?

What do we do with the water after we are through?

Skit resumes and Impact Monster attempts to build a fire and says,
"Now for dinner."

Ranger enters stage and says,

"Hold on there buddy. You can't build a fire here because of fire dangers. Here's a ticket."

Ranger gives the Impact Monster a ticket and leaves the stage.

After receiving the ticket the Impact Monster leaves for home saying,
"Why can't I just do what I want?"

Narrator enters and says: ***"FREEZE!"***

Should a fire be big or small?

Why?

Why shouldn't we burn trash and cans?

What does a fire ring do to the rocks?

Narrator dismisses the participants. He waits for them to be seated and then asks:

Should we get a ticket when we do something we shouldn't do?

How can we make sure we don't get a ticket when in the outdoors?

Where can we find out what we can and cannot do in the outdoors?

Can we do anything we want to in the outdoors?

How can preparation help us when in the outdoors?

Narrator continues:

It is important that we all make proper choices and take proper actions when in the outdoors. These ethics apply in our own back yards, city parks, campgrounds, or any kind of wilderness. We can contact land management agencies like the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Parks Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and state agencies in our efforts to learn and live Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace principles. Agencies are great resources. Let's be sure to use them.

Are there any questions?

Thank you for your participation and have a good day.