



River Kayak Day-Trip Leading Course Instructors Guide and Exam

General Requirements:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Successfully complete the Trip Leader Assessment
- ACA membership
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of Paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to efficiently perform all of the following material unassisted.

Course Duration: 2 Day (Minimum)

Venue: Moving water rivers rated up to Class I – II rapids. Course conditions are level I-II rapids where limited maneuvering in current may be required to avoid obstacles

Class Ratio:

1 Instructor to 5 students, 2 to 10 with a qualified assistant

Instructor Trainer/Instructor: L3 and above Instructor Trainers and L4 WW Instructors and above

Prerequisites: Completion of the L3 River Kayak Skills Course; L3 Assessment Course or equivalent skills. Completion of an L 2 River Rescue Course is recommended.

Trip Leader Course:

The emphasis of this course is day Trip Leading, Safety Education and Rescue skills.. This course is intended to provide the minimum skills and training necessary for an adult leader with solid competent paddling skills, to effectively lead a trip for participants with adequate paddling skills, on a **day** trip, on moving water rivers up to and including Class I-II rapids. Class conditions are level I-II rapids where limited maneuvering in current may be required to avoid obstacles

Trip Leader Assessment: *(Not a Teaching Certification)*

The Trip Leading Assessment tests for the minimum the safety knowledge and rescue skills necessary for an adult leader with good paddling skills, to effectively lead a trip for participants with adequate paddling skills, on a **day** trip, on moving water rivers up to and including Class I-II rapids. Participants will be asked to demonstrate and execute progressively complex group management, safety and rescue scenarios. The assessor may recommend refinements and adjustments/critiques as necessary during the Assessment. To pass the Assessment a participant must demonstrate that they can perform all skills on the course outline and score a minimum of 70% on the written examination.

The Trip Leading Assessment includes a Skills Checklist and a Written Exam. The written exam is self explanatory, ***Instructors should be very familiar with the questions to assure they are covered during the course.*** The Exam and Answers to the exam are included in this document. Do not let the candidate keep the exam. Collect them, after the exam is given. The Instructor can go over the exam individually or as a group. As Instructors, we need to safe guard that the written exam does not become available to the general public prior to taking the Assessment.

The Assessment Checklist is filled out for each candidate. The results can be Pass, Failed or Continue. If the candidate passes and they are a member of the ACA, they will then be issued a Trip Leading Assessment card by the ACA Office. If the candidate has passed most of the skills and only needs to work on a few skills to pass, they can be put on a Continue status. At which time they can then present themselves to a qualified Assessor and be checked

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off on the skill that they were deficient in. If the candidate was not close to meeting the requirements, they are Failed and after working on their skills and knowledge, they must repeat the one day Assessment again at a minimum.

Bottom line, as Instructors we need to keep the goal and objective of the Assessment in mind: If we pass a candidate, we are saying the ACA verifies the candidate has demonstrated the Trip Leading abilities to lead a group (such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts) on a day trip down a moving river including Class I -II rapids. They have demonstrated good judgment, how to plan a one-day trip and how to provide guidance, rescues and safety.



AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION
Kayak & Canoe Recreation

River Kayak Trip Leading Assessment Written Examination

I. Trip Preparation and Planning:

1. The ACA Trip Leading Assessment is designed for trips on water of what type and level of difficulty?
 - a. Flat Water
 - b. Moving Water
 - c. Class I-II and below
 - d. Class I - II and below
 - e. All of the above

2. The ACA Trip leading assessment recommends a leader to participants ratio of:
 - a. 1 to 6 with an assistant
 - b. 1 to 5
 - c. 1 to 10 with an assistant
 - d. 1 to 10
 - e. Whatever ratio the Trip Leader deems prudent

3. You are planning a trip which includes paddlers of mixed abilities (low, average and highly skilled). You should design this trip for which skill level:
 - a. Low Skill
 - b. Average Skill
 - c. Highly Skilled
 - d. Your own Skill level

4. You have prepared a float plan as outlined in The Trip Leading Course. What do you do with the float plan?
 - a. Take it with you in a Waterproof case
 - b. File with your organization/group.
 - c. File one with the destination Organization if possible. [i.e. local National Park Service station]
 - d. All of the above.

5. Planning the route for a day trip involves:
 - a. Obtaining a weather and river level report
 - b. Determining the distance the group will paddle
 - c. Discussing local water hazards
 - d. Establishing intermediate stopping/meeting points along the route.
 - e. All of the above

6. You will be leading a trip for a church group. The group asks where to find information on buying life jackets, cold water safety, scale of river difficulty, river practices, ethics, and conduct, etc. What is the best source for all of this information?
 - a. ACA web site
 - b. Local outdoor retailer
 - c. Local paddling club
 - d. Fellow boaters/paddlers
 - e. All of the above

7. A document that includes: Driving routes, put-in and take-out locations, time schedules, contingency plans for weather or injury, evacuation routes, list of leaders and participants, emergency contacts and permits or permissions is generally called
 - a. Logistics Plan
 - b. Contingency plan
 - c. Float Plan
 - d. Put-in plan
 - e. All of the above

II. Trip Hazards, Avoidance and Prevention:

8. Hypothermia is the...
 - a. Lowering of the body's core temperature
 - b. Rising of the body's core temperature
 - c. Rapid fluctuation of body temperature
 - d. Fluctuation of water temperature

9. What sum of water temperature and air temperature protocol indicates that special clothing (wet suit, dry suit) should be worn while paddling?
 - a. 60 degrees
 - b. 100 degrees
 - c. 120 degrees
 - d. 98.6 degrees

10. A river hazard commonly found on the outside of a sharp river bend after rising water conditions is called a _____
 - a. Keeper
 - b. Strainer
 - c. A souse hole
 - d. Eddy

11. Hydration can help avoid both hypothermia and hyperthermia. As a trip leader you should advise your group to
 - a. Take a water bottle and drink conservatively
 - b. Take a water bottle for emergencies only
 - c. Take ample water and drink it frequently
 - d. Reduce the amount of water intake, so that minimize the number of bathroom stops.

12. You are a trip leader on a day trip. One of the participants shows up with flip flops. Which of the following actions is **not** acceptable?
 - a. Find him safe suitable shoes
 - b. Send him home
 - c. Allow him to go on the trip

13. You are leading a trip. You see a horizon line downstream and hear rapids. You decide to scout from the bank. As a best practice, what should you take with you?
- Hands empty for a fast safe scout and return
 - Paddle and a throw rope
 - Paddle, throw rope and at least one member of the group
 - Water bottle, a snack, first aid kit
14. When crossing a river channel where boat traffic is the major hazard, to minimize exposure and increase visibility Your group's crossing formation should be:
- Together, as a close tight unit at a right angle to channel
 - Together, but spaced far apart
 - Paddlers should cross one at a time
 - Using the buddy system, boats cross two at a time
15. You are leading a trip on an easy moving river, one of the participants has accidentally turned their boat sideways to the current and they are about to hit a rock. Your best advice to them would be.
- Hang onto the grab loop
 - Lean downstream onto the rock
 - Lean upstream away from the rock
 - wet exit
16. You are running a river you have never run before. Your party is approaching a loud sounding rapid that lies beyond a blind turn in the river. How should you proceed?
- Send the leader down to run it first.
 - Take out and carry your boats around it.
 - Pull out a safe distance from the bend and scout it.
 - Have everyone run it, but stay close together.
17. Which of the below is a valid reason why paddlers should scout rapids:
- Find a clear path to run the rapid.
 - Assess the rapid for hazards and obstacles.
 - Decide whether to run the rapid or portage it.
 - Decide where to set appropriate safety in the rapid
 - All of the above

III. On Water Conduct & Management

18. You are a trip leader. You have strong, average and weak paddlers in your group. You should generally not place the weaker boaters.
- generally toward the front of the group
 - At the back of the group
 - Disbursed through the group
 - It does not matter where boaters are placed
19. A storm front is moving toward you. You see lightening; count to 30; and then hear thunder. One of the following statements is **not** true.
- The lightening is about 6 miles away
 - The lightening is within the 10 mile radius of strike danger.
 - generally lightening is not a threat until it is 3 miles (15 seconds from sight to thunder)and as long as you are outside of the rain area.
 - The lightening is an immediate threat now and 30 minutes past the last thunder clap.

20. You have selected 2 skilled, athletic and very energetic paddlers in your group to be the lead boats for your trip. That is generally a
- Good choice
 - Questionable choice
 - As long as the lead boats are skilled the choice criteria doesn't matter.
21. You are inspecting life jackets, you discover a worn discolored and threadbare jacket. It should be.
- Washed and repaired
 - Disposed of
 - Given to a more experienced paddler
 - Returned to the Manufacture
22. Which of the following would not be part of the Put-in Talk.
- Discuss the weather and water temp for today
 - Review trip plan, known hazards, and avoidance
 - Set buddy boats, lead, sweep, limit points and group order.
 - Review assignments of shuttle vehicles and seats
 - Discuss communication signals, capsize& pin protocols, PFD fit & condition
23. When choosing a sweep boat on a river trip, the Trip leader needs to consider that
- The sweep needs to be particularly alert, capable and knowledgeable
 - The boaters who like to play, surf and explore are best as sweep since in the back they don't hold up the group.
 - The sweep has little to do at the back and is a good job for one of the slower paddlers in the group
24. You are outfitting a boat for a river trip. Which of the items below is most important from a safety standpoint?
- thigh braces
 - sponge or pump
 - Carrying yoke
 - Flotation
 - Foot braces /bulkhead
25. When all is said and done about clothing "you should always dress for the water first, then the weather, then the weather report"
- True
 - False

IV. Rescue and Recovery

26. The things to check for and the proper order to check them when a participant tips and swims
- Boats, people, equipment
 - Assess scene, groups safety, others safety, the swimmer
 - Equipment, boats, people
 - People, boats, equipment
27. Which one of the following is not one of the techniques involved in self-rescue:
- Get to the upstream end of the boat. Grab the grab-loop and swim towards an eddy or shore if it appears safe to do so.
 - Get in defensive swimming position: body horizontal on surface, feet downstream, back-stroke and kick with head towards the shore to which you want to go.
 - Aggressively swim to catch a critical eddy or avoid a dangerous obstacle.
 - Wait for someone in your group to throw you a rescue rope.

28. You have capsized and are being unavoidably swept into a strainer. What should you do?
- Get on your back with your feet facing downstream in the defensive swimming position.
 - Swim aggressively toward the strainer and try to thrust yourself up and over it.
 - Wait for someone to throw you a rope.
 - Fend off of the strainer with your feet and dive down to clear water and swim under the obstruction.
29. When using a bumping or towing rescue technique in current it is important to effect a ferry angle. The object (rescued person or boat) will travel easiest and quickest
- toward the bank to which the up stream end of the rescued boat or person is pointed.
 - toward the bank to which the down stream end of the boat or person is pointed.
 - the angle of the rescued boat or person doesn't matter in river current.
30. When throwing a throw bag to a swimmer in current it's important to have eye contact, yell "rope", and then throw it
- An arms length upstream of the swimmer
 - An arms length downstream of the swimmer
 - Right at the swimmer so the rope hits them
 - All of the above are acceptable
31. In a boat over boat (T) rescue the first thing is to
- Get your hand(s) on the capsized boat.
 - Make sure that the group is safe and controlled
 - Make sure that the paddlers in the water are safe
 - Have the safe swimmers hold onto the capsized boat while you collect loose gear, paddles etc.
32. If a boat pins, once the paddlers are safe and you begin procedures to recover the pinned craft, which of the following actions are important considerations..
- Set up and down stream safety
 - Control the pinned boat with a tag line.
 - Wrap a pulling line around the hull of the pinned boat.
 - Use the Armstrong method first to pull on the recovery line.
 - All are important considerations
33. RETHROG stands for reach, throw, row or go. The go concept may involve wading in swift current.
- True
 - False
34. To wade safely you may need to:
- Set up safety above and below the site you are wading to
 - Bring a paddle with you
 - Get help from others
 - Practice
 - All of the above

V. Basic Paddling Skills

35. To correct a failing ferry angle the most effective stroke to initiate a turn is:
- Push away/reverse sweep
 - Sweep/stern draw
 - Bow draw on upstream side
 - Stern draw on one side bow draw on other
36. Generally speaking the power phase of a forward stroke in a river kayak stops at the?.
- Knee
 - Hip
 - 6" to 8" behind the paddler
 - Both a and b
37. When doing peel outs - speed, angle and boat lean are critical. Boat lean is always down stream
- True
 - False
38. When making an eddy turn, the approximate angle at which you hit the eddy line is
- A little less than 45 degrees
 - 45 degrees
 - 90 degrees
 - close to 90 degrees
39. When making eddy turns, upstream ferries, and peel outs the boat angle is generally controlled by the
- Sweeps
 - Stern draw
 - Both a and b
40. In general, to avoid hitting an obstacle in front of you in fast current, your strokes might best be:
- A forward sweep immediately followed by a reverse sweep
 - A draw on the move, or hanging draw stroke
 - A rudder stroke followed with a low brace
 - A reverse sweep followed by forward strokes
 - Both b and d, depending on skill and time to react

River Kayak Day Trip Leading Assessment Exam
ANSWER SHEET

Candidate _____ ACA Number _____

Workshop Date(s) _____ Instructor Trainer/Assessor : _____

Please circle your answers

TRIP PREPARATION AND PLANNING						
1.	A	B	C	D	E	24. A B C D E
2.	A	B	C	D	E	25. TRUE FALSE
3.	A	B	C	D		
4.	A	B	C	D		RESCUE AND RECOVERY
5.	A	B	C	D	E	26. A B C D
6.	A	B	C	D	E	27. A B C D
7.	A	B	C	D	E	28. A B C D
						29. A B C
TRIP HAZARDS, AVOIDANCE & PREVENTION						30. A B C D
8.	TRUE		FALSE			31. A B C D
9.	A	B	C	D		32. A B C D E
10.	A	B	C	D		33. TRUE FALSE
11.	A	B	C	D		34. A B C D E
12.	A	B	C	D		
13.	A	B	C	D		BASIC PADDLING SKILLS
14.	A	B	C	D		35. A B C D
15.	A	B	C	D		36. A B C D
16.	A	B	C	D		37. TRUE FALSE
17.	A	B	C	D	E	38. A B C D
						39. A B C
ON WATER COURSE MANAGEMENT						40. A B C D E
18.	A	B	C	D		
19.	A	B	C	D		Score <u> </u> / 40
20.	A	B	C			Passing = 28 / 40 (70%)
21.	A	B	C	D		
22.	A	B	C	D	E	
23.	A	B	C			

IT/Instructor Name _____ ACA Number _____

Date _____

River Kayak Trip Leading Skills Assessment Checklist *Rating: ✓ - Passing N - Needs more practice.*

Candidate must be able to perform efficiently all strokes, maneuvers and rescues on Class I rivers.

Candidate's Name

ACA #

Skill or Knowledge To Be Demonstrated	P or N	Comments
1. Prepare a trip plan		
2. Posses knowledge of topics to cover in a put-in talk:		
a. Overview of the trip plan, including known hazards and how to manage them		
b. Organization of group on water		
c. On water communications/signals		
d. Checks of personal and group equipment		
e. Review of communication systems/river signals		
f. Review river etiquette and outdoor protocols		
3. Demonstrate the following maneuvers on a river		
a. Move boat forward with good control in current		
b. Move boat backwards in with control in current		
c. Draw laterally to each side with control		
e. Forward ferry to a fixed point (Class 1- II Current)		
f. Back ferry to a fixed point (Class I Current)		
g. Eddy turns		
h. Eddy peel outs (C turns and S turns)		
i. sideslip or equivalent, to move laterally to either side with control to avoid obstacles while underway		
4. Explain and/or demonstrate the following rescues		
a. Rescue priorities		
b. Self rescue including defensive and offensive swimming		
c. Extension rescues, talk and reach		
d. Throw bag or rope rescues – throw 30 ft to swimmer		
e. Wading rescues including paddle, two/three person , pendulum crossing and rope traverse crossing		
f. Tired swimmer rescue from bow and stern		
g. Towing rescue with quick release		
h. Bumping rescue		

i. Boat over boat rescue		
j. Parallel rescue for deepwater re entry into kayak		
k. Boat extraction using Armstrong method		
l. Boat extraction using a vector pull		
5. Rescue Scenario: Example – leading a group of down a moving river, boat(s) tips over and the swimmer(s) act like 12 year olds, letting go of the boat and paddles		
6. Overall Safety awareness/group management:		
a. Models safe behavior, analyzes students and conditions; recognizes and avoids unsafe situations/hazards;		
b. Organizes and manages group proactively		
c. Communicates safety-related issues with emphasis, in a clear and concise manner		
7. Communicates necessary paddling skills to participants		

FINAL ASSESSMENT			COMMENTS
PASS	CONTINUED	FAIL	
ASSESSOR			
Final Comments Below (Required if Continued or Failed)			
IT: _____			
Signature: _____			
ACA #: _____ Date: _____			
Assisting IT or Instructor: _____			
ACA #: _____			