Book Review – by Jason Zuars

Outdoor Education: Methods and Strategies
Human Kinetics

The book is divided into three parts;

Part I covers the foundations of outdoor education.
Part II emphasises the preparation required to teach in the outdoors.
Part III provides detailed instructional methods and examples for delivering outdoor lessons.

Part I
Chapter 1 – Defining Outdoor Education
The objectives of this chapter are to explain the role of outdoor education in learning about, in and through the outdoors. It describes the characteristics of outdoor educators the history of outdoor education and defines outdoor education.

Chapter 2 – Describing the Outdoor Educator
This chapter describes professionalism in outdoor education and gives examples of professional practice. The chapter also elaborates on professional responsibilities in providing outdoor instruction.
Chapter 3 – Theories and Foundations in Outdoor Education
Theories in Outdoor Education are described and related to real working examples. This chapter also describes learning theories such as Experiential Education, a fundamental of what we do.

Part II
Chapter 4 – Understanding Participants
The GAME FACe acronym is used to describe the key principles in understanding any group. It outlines some simple strategies for teaching a diverse range of people.

Chapter 5 – Creating the Learning Environment
This chapter explores how to create an effective learning environment. It provides some simple do’s and don’ts. It also describes some effective student-management strategies.

Chapter 6 – Outdoor Education Settings
The essence of this chapter is in leading the reader to understand outdoor environments and what components of them contribute and deter from creating effective learning.

Chapter 7 – Designing Lessons
This chapter discusses the value in designing lesson plans and explains components of lessons that are extremely important. It also describes the importance of reflection and provides methods and ways to incorporate reflection. Basic assessment techniques are covered.

Chapter 8 – Physical Methods
This chapter explains the kinaesthetic element to educating in the outdoors. Getting the whole body involved assists in delivering effective outdoor lessons.

Chapter 9 – Cognitive Methods
Cognitive development in education is primarily what we aim to achieve. This chapter describes different cognitive methods that assist with building knowledge.

Chapter 10 – Affective Methods
There are many stimuli in the outdoors. This chapter explores the emotion based learning which takes place in the outdoors.

Chapter 11 – Sample Lessons
This chapter has many sample lesson plans which are useful with assisting the development of your own program.

Chapter 12 – Your Future in Outdoor Education
This chapter examines certification and different issues within the Outdoor Education field.

This book will assist any educator with their personal development in Outdoor Education. I like its simplicity and its straight forward explanations of concepts. This book provides enough information to be beneficial to any Outdoor Educators library without going into excessive educational theory.

Outdoor Education: Methods and Strategies can be purchased from Human Kinetics Australia. http://www.humankinetics.com