

THE WEB

This initiative problem is becoming more popular, and rightly so; it's inexpensive, fits almost anywhere, can be made portable, and has the right mix of challenge and fantasy.

The object is to move your entire group through a cord nylon web without touching the web material. Four or five small bells can be tied anywhere on the web so that movement of the cords causes the bells to ring. The sounding of a bell indicates that the participant has been felt by the "spider" and he must begin again to keep from being eaten, or wrapped in silken cords to be eaten later. Try to buy a rubber spider at the dime store and dangle it from one of the nylon threads.

To make the event more challenging, a body may pass through a web opening only once. This adds to the group commitment and the need to work together. Number the group so that there are at least as many web openings as there are bodies to pass through.

Some tips:

1. Use nylon cord. The stretch characteristic of this cord allows the web to remain taut under tension. Parachute cord seems to work best—it is strong, elastic, and has a "weblike" diameter.
2. Place six anchor points in the two vertical support posts or trees. These anchors can be any type of substantial eye screw. You can use a large ($3/8$ " x 5") galvanized staple as a non-critical (no belay) connector. The anchor points are placed at about the 7-, 4-, and 1-foot points.
3. Tie one end of the nylon cord to any one of the anchor points and begin weaving the free end through the other anchors in sequence, to make a rectangular outline with the cord. While doing this, take a turn around each anchor and pull the cord tight. Read Tip No. 4 before proceeding.
4. If you didn't read this and have been enthusiastically cutting and stringing cord, STOP! The loops (figure eight or butterfly knots) must be tied while stringing the cord to ensure proper placement of the loops. The loops serve as anchor points for the web strands, and allow practically an unlimited variety of web patterns.
5. Using the loops and anchors, tie a unique web arrangement, remembering that people of all sizes must be able to fit through the web gaps. If you haven't tried this initiative problem before, you will be surprised at how small an opening a person can get through.

Safety considerations and other possibilities:

- Do not allow people to dive through the web. There is the possibility of neck injury, cord burn, and web destruction.
- Allow participants to go under the web, but not over.
- Try to fabricate a web that will allow a put up-take-down

function, perhaps using short elastic shock cords at the anchor points.

- Try using waxed nylon cord for the actual web strands. It is thinner than parachute cord and has a more weblike look. Waxed cord also holds a knot well.

THE BOY SCOUT SHUFFLE

For this initiative test, you need a 30-foot telephone pole. With a few strong friends, place the telephone pole horizontally on a flat area. Ask a group of about 20 Scouts to split into two teams, or use two patrols. The two groups stand balance on opposite ends of the pole so that they are facing each other in single file. They have the two groups exchange ends of the pole without any team members touching the ground. Time the entire procedure and give a 15-second penalty for every touch of the turf. After a completed attempt, encourage the group to talk it over and try again.

As with all timed initiative problems, it is important to attempt the problem more than once. The first attempt establishes a time to beat. Additional attempts invariably result in a faster time because of greater cooperation, planning, individual effort, etc. Beating a "personal best" is the best kind of competition.

SHIPWRECK

A peripatetic "all-aboard" problem. The object of Shipwreck is to gain the most points during the activity through group cooperation and fast action. Play it on a large field. *Materials:* 1/2-inch plywood circles 3 or 4 feet in diameter for each group to use as a "ship." Sand the sharp edges and splinters from each side of the plywood.

Procedure:

- Divide participants into two groups, each with 8-10 members.
- Give each group a plywood circle "ship" and instruct all members to hold onto its sides as they run the length of the playing field.
- Groups run with their ship until a staff member yells "Shark!" Then all members jump on board the ship. The first group with all feet off the ground gains a point. Repeat this procedure several times. The first group to reach the finish line gains three points.
- Add up points to decide the winner.
- Debrief with specific suggestions on how to improve next time.
- Repeat the activity if the group had fun the first time. For younger or larger groups, use hula hoops in place of the plywood sections.