



III. BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Basic Considerations in Outdoor and Camping Education

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THE evidence is clear that we learn best through direct experience. It has been proved that learning of this kind is faster, is retained longer, and is accompanied by deeper appreciation and understanding. Much, if not most, of the material in all subject matter areas at all levels that school youth study *about* in school can actually be *seen and experienced* firsthand outside the classroom and in the school camp. It is chiefly a problem of dividing this subject matter for inside and for outside learning. Therefore, the basic thesis of outdoor and camping education is: *That which can best be learned inside the classroom should be learned there; and that which can best be learned through direct experience outside the classroom, in contact with native materials and life situations, should there be learned.* This involves, for *outdoor education*, the utilization of the whole environmen-

them; and for *camping education*, all of the learnings that can best take place in a favorable camping environment.

For the school administrator who accepts this thesis and wants to apply it to the school or college curriculum, there are certain basic considerations that should be carefully weighed. In enumerating some of them, the writer realizes that all of the evidence is not yet in hand and that there is probably divergence of opinion with respect to the value of certain procedures. However, this is an attempt to summarize the experience to date as a guide for those who want to make a serious and intelligent attempt to extend education out into the open for American youth.

Outdoor Education

1. Beginning just outside the classroom, every effort should be made to use the immediate environment