

Time Capsule Embers

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Theme: Making a time capsule to open again in one year.

Age of campers: 8-12

Time allotted/actual: 30-45 minutes

Location: Any outside location where a bottle can be buried in the dirt.

Props/Materials/Symbols: one large bottle w/ lid, a shovel, several sheets of paper, a sign post or stick, envelopes, pens

Prep done: Have a location in mind.

Opening/Mood set: Begin by having the campers meditate for a short time on the upcoming school year. There may be some resistance to this, but challenge them through it.

Questions/Activities:

1st activity: Half way through meditating, ask them to reflect on what lessons they have taken from camp that will assist them. Tie this in to what the expectations will be of them in a higher grade and what challenges will be in store. It's not necessary to share this part, simply reflect on it.

2nd activity: When the meditation is over, hand out paper and pens. Have each camper write "Dear Stranger" at the top. Have each of them write a short letter about their resolutions for the year and in what ways they think they will change.

3rd activity: Put the letters into the bottle and bury it together. The "stranger" is the self, and the letters are a time capsule to be dug up next season. Best to bury the bottle in an obvious place so that it can be found again, otherwise you may want to consider making a map or posting a sign above it.

Closing: Have the campers take turns digging the hole. For the burying process, each camper takes the shovel a single time and throws one scoop. While they do so, encourage them to ponder a promise that they made to themselves when writing.

Were other people involved? Yes, if it helps to have someone else prep the dig site if your time is going to be short, or you have a large bottle to bury, or the ground is very hard.

Thoughts on pacing? The meditation and writing time can vary greatly with campers. If anything, try to slow them down on the writing aspect.

What would you change next time / what did you learn / how would you enhance it? Add objects or keepsakes that fit and include them in the capsule.

Camper feedback: Works best with the ones who enjoy writing or drawing and readily have a contemplative inclination.