

JUNIOR SAINTS

ACTIVITY PLAN

AGES 7–11

CANOEING

PHYSICAL CORE

Version 2026.1



Dry-Land Paddle

Learn how a canoe works and how to paddle, all on dry land.

🕒 60 minutes · one session

🎯 WALK AWAY WITH

- Has fit a life jacket and checked it stays put.
- Has tried three paddle strokes with a partner.
- Has sat in a pretend canoe and switched spots without tipping.
- Knows to keep a hand on the boat after a capsize.

📦 BRING / SET UP

- A life jacket for each Junior Saint (any properly sized PFD works)
- A broomstick or sturdy dowel for each pair of Junior Saints (the dry-land paddle)
- A blue tarp or two long ropes to mark out a pretend canoe shape on the floor
- A whistle for the leader (for the capsize game signal)
- A water bottle for each Junior Saint

FOR THE LEADER

This is a Junior Saints preview of the **Canoeing** badge. No advancement credit is earned here — the goal is to introduce these concepts to Junior Saints alongside the older Saints Global youth working the full BRC. The 4-session Saints Global arc lives under *Activity Plan (SG)* in the BRC builder.

DRY-LAND PADDLE (PAGE 1 OF 2)

THE HOUR

BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION **Opener — Welcome circle**

⌚ 5 min

Stand in a circle. Each Junior Saint says his name. Then he names one thing he has seen on the water. Examples: a boat, a duck, a fish, a paddle. The leader goes last. Keep each turn short.

BLOCK 2 · SKILL PRACTICE **Fit your life jacket**

⌚ 10 min

1. Hold up a life jacket. Point at the buckles, the zipper, and the loop on the front.
2. Put your life jacket on. Buckle every buckle. Zip the zipper.
3. Pull the loop on the front up toward your chin. It should not come past your ears.
4. If it slides past your ears, the jacket is too loose. Tighten the straps on the sides.
5. Walk in a circle wearing the jacket. Sit down. Stand up. Make sure it stays put.

BLOCK 3 · SKILL PRACTICE **Three paddle strokes**

⌚ 15 min

1. Pair up. One broomstick per pair. The broomstick is your pretend paddle.
2. Forward stroke: hand on top, hand on the middle. Reach forward, pull back along your side.
3. Sweep stroke: same grip. Reach out wide and sweep the tip in a big half-circle.
4. J-stroke: the back paddler's stroke. Pull back, then twist the blade out at the end.
5. Older Saints use the J-stroke to keep the canoe going straight.
6. Each youth does five of each stroke. The partner watches and counts.

BLOCK 4 · PHYSICAL **Sit in the canoe**

⌚ 13 min

1. The tarp on the floor is a pretend canoe. The front point is the bow. The back point is the stern.
2. Two Junior Saints sit in each canoe. The smaller youth sits in the bow. The bigger one sits in the stern.
3. Sit still. Now try to switch spots without tipping the canoe.
4. Switch by moving slow. One stays low while the other steps over the middle.
5. Now try kneeling instead of sitting. Kneeling is steadier in real waves.
6. Teaching point: in a real canoe, fast moves tip you over. Slow moves keep you dry.

DRY-LAND PADDLE (PAGE 2 OF 2)

THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 5 · PHYSICAL **The capsiz game**

⌚ 12 min

1. Stay in your tarp canoe. Hold your broomstick like a paddle.
2. The leader blows the whistle. That means capsize.
3. On the whistle, step off the tarp. Keep one hand on the tarp the whole time.
4. Walk around the tarp once. Then climb back on from the same side together.
5. Rule: never let go of your canoe. Even on dry land, stay with the boat.
6. Run it three times. Each youth practices keeping a hand on the boat.

BLOCK 6 · REFLECTION **Close — Stretch and cheer**

⌚ 5 min

1. Take off your life jackets. Sit in a circle.
2. Stretch your arms, shoulders, and back. Hold each for 10 seconds.
3. Drink water.
4. Each Junior Saint says: 'My favorite stroke was ____.' Just the name.
5. Group cheer: 'Stay with the boat!' Three times.
6. Homework: tell your parent the three strokes you learned today.

AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Show the group how you fit a life jacket. Where does the loop go?
2. Name one of the three paddle strokes you tried.
3. What is the rule when your canoe tips over?

☑ *This is a Junior Saints preview session. No Canoeing BRC requirements are earned here — the goal is to introduce the concepts the older Saints will work on.*

HANDOUT 1 OF 1

FROM SESSION — THREE PADDLE STROKES

Three Paddle Strokes

Print and hold up while the youth practice with the broomstick paddles.

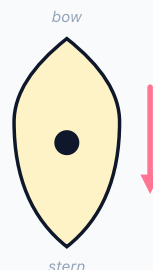
CANOEING · JUNIOR SAINTS CARD

Three strokes every paddler learns.

Hold the paddle with one hand on top, one hand on the middle. Pull, do not push.

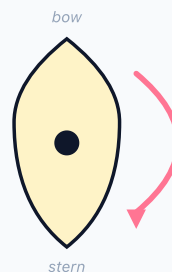
1 Forward stroke

- Reach the paddle forward along your side.
- Pull the blade straight back to your hip.
- Lift it out. Reach forward again.
- This is the stroke that moves the boat.



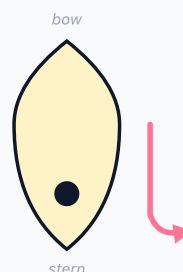
2 Sweep stroke

- Reach the paddle out wide, away from the boat.
- Sweep the blade in a big half-circle.
- Start at the bow. End at the stern.
- This is the stroke that turns the boat.



3 J-stroke

- Used by the back paddler to keep the boat straight.
- Start with a forward stroke along your side.
- At the end, twist the blade away from the boat.
- The path looks like the letter J in the water.



Practice on land. Then practice on the water with a partner.

Print this handout for in-person reference during the session.