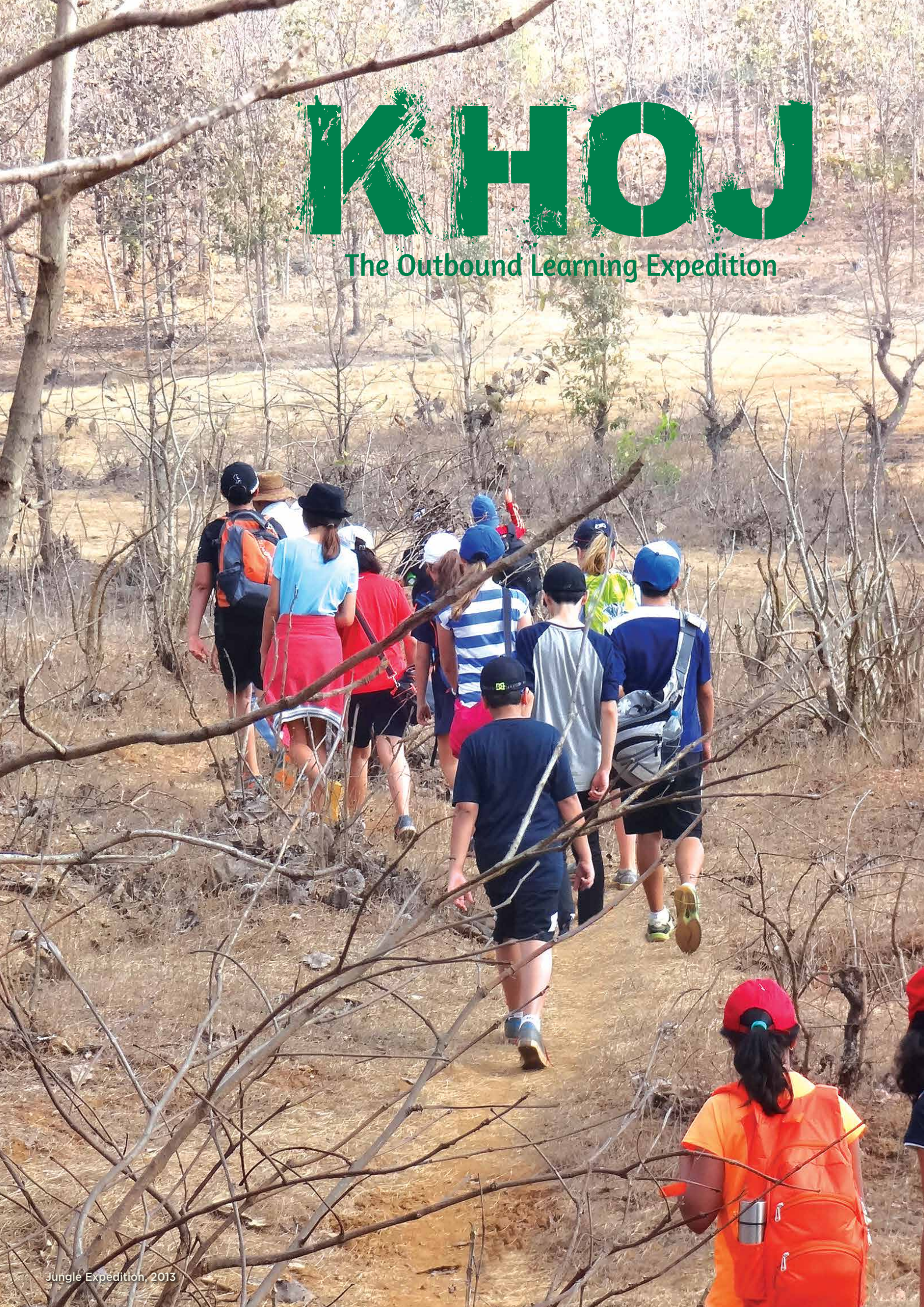
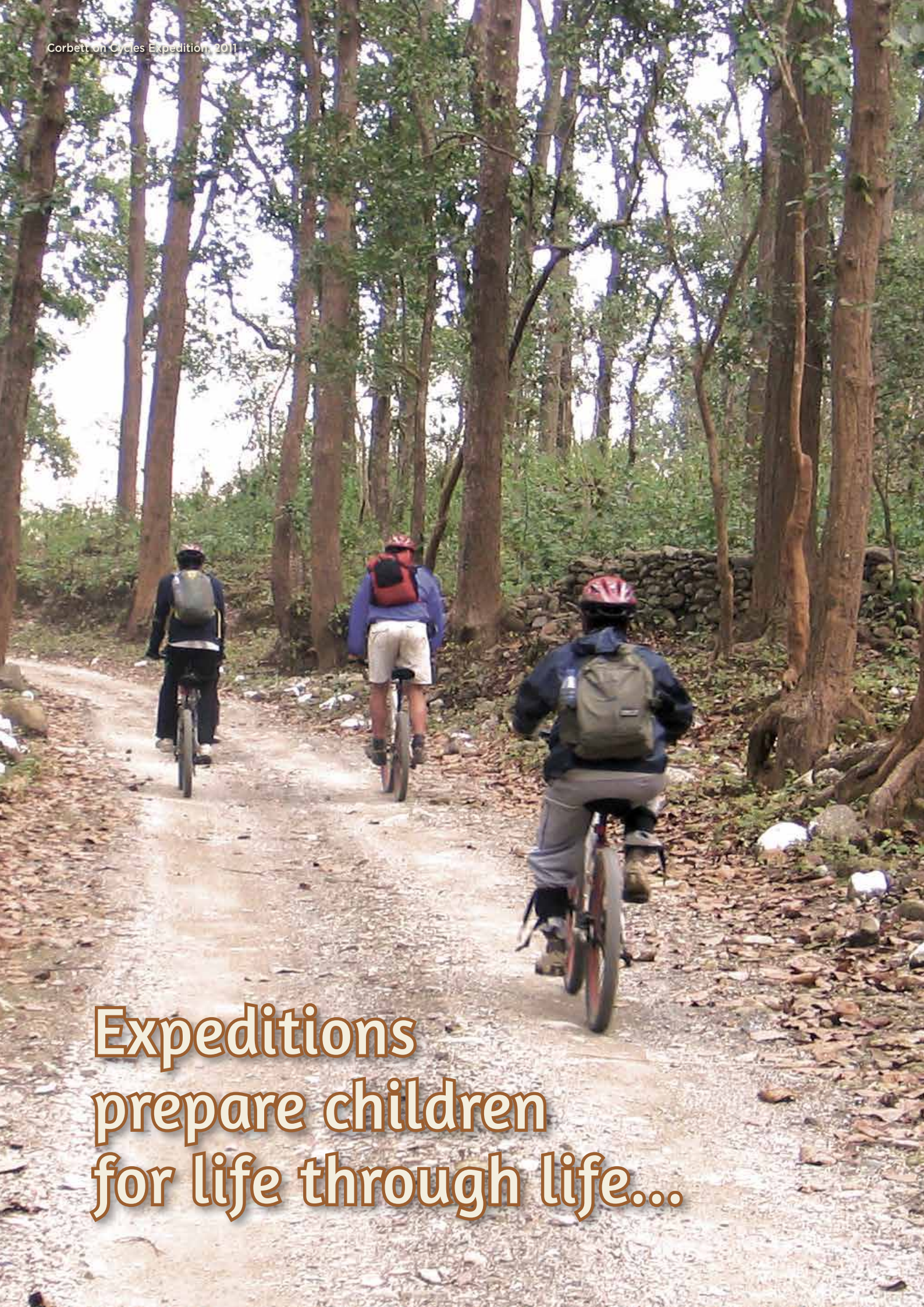


KHOJ

The Outbound Learning Expedition





**Expeditions
prepare children
for life through life...**

Khoj is a Journey into the Unknown...

Khoj is an expedition in wilderness, where both children and teachers explore, experience and learn together about the world outside the school. In Khoj, we use adventure, crew work, reflection, working with the community and service to overcome physical, emotional and cognitive limitations in children and help them in seeing and experiencing the abundance in self and the world around.

During Khoj learners set out to explore the challenging unknown as a crew and in the journey, they rediscover and re-connect with themselves and the world around. The important aspect of the expedition is that it has the elements of curiosity and creative anxiety at every step. It helps the learner experience and understand how he/she navigates the unknown challenge and develops his/her capacity further. How one navigates the unknown is one of the important life skills.

Kurt Hahn, the co-founder of Outward Bound, employed challenge, adventure and service not as an end in itself, but as a method of inculcating perseverance, skill, teamwork, leadership, compassion and taking responsibility for the common good in the students of Gordonstoun, a school in Scotland that he founded in the 1930s. Through challenging expeditions, he developed among students, a sense of moral commitment to the community and empowered them to take personal responsibility for physical fitness, craftsmanship and self-reliance.

Inspired by the vision and work of Kurt Hahn, the purpose of Khoj expeditions is:

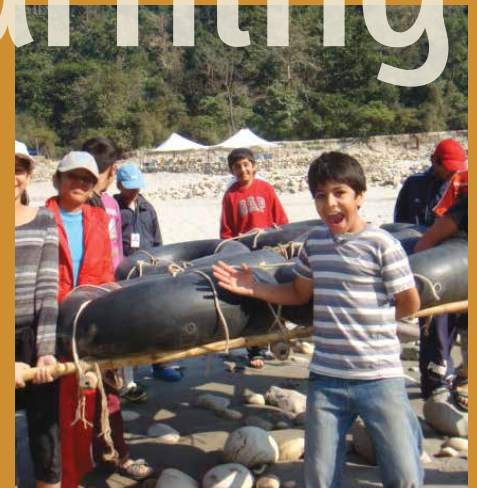
- a. To develop character and capacity to see and experience in children through challenge, adventure, crew work and service
- b. To impel them to achieve more than they ever thought possible
- c. To show compassion for others
- d. To actively engage in the world around them.

In Khoj learners are nurtured and guided with care and compassion; their individual differences and needs are acknowledged and addressed, this in turn unleashes their capacity to learn, relate, create and act.

The word expedition is derived from the Latin verb 'expedire', which is complex in its meaning. Its first meaning is "to free something". In an expedition, we leave behind old habits and thinking, and break out for the new.



Experience as a source of learning

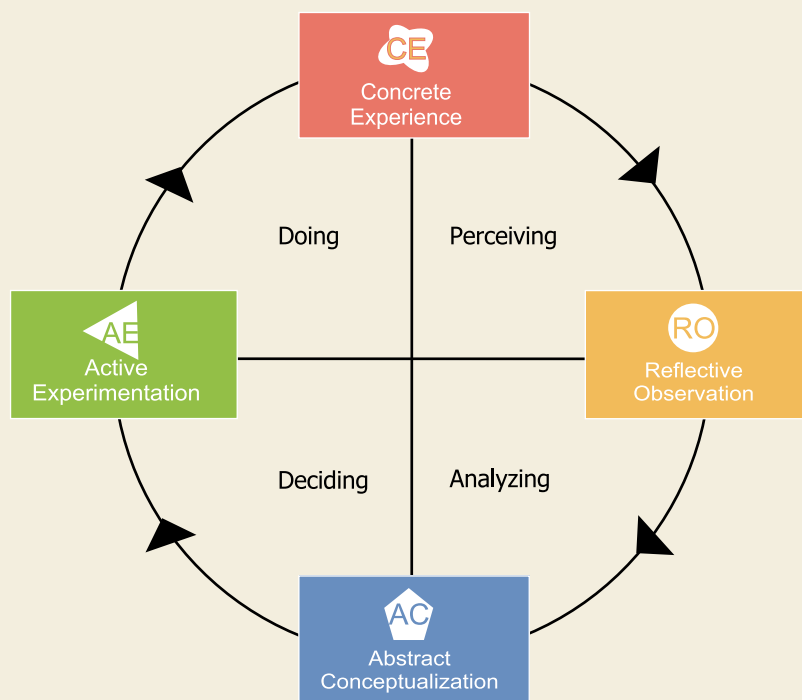


Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning

Learning is a process where knowledge is derived from and continuously modified by the experiences that a learner goes through. To learn is not a special province of a single specialized realm of human functioning such as cognition or perception. It involves the integrated functioning of the total being i.e. thinking, feeling, perceiving and doing. For effective learning to happen one needs four different kinds of abilities- concrete experience abilities (CE), reflective observation abilities (RO), abstract conceptualization abilities (AC) and active experimentation abilities (AE). This means, one must be able to engage oneself fully, openly and without bias in new experiences (CE). He/she should be able to reflect upon and observe his/her experiences from different perspectives (RO). He/she must be able to construct conceptual understanding that integrates his/her observations into logically

sound theories (AC) and he/she must be able to use these theories to make decisions and solve real life problems (AE).

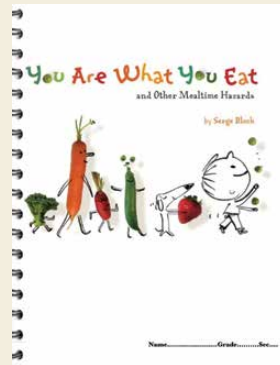
Learning is a continuous process grounded in the personal experiences of the learner. It involves transaction/interaction between the person and the environment and both get essentially changed during the process of learning. The process of learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world i.e. the conflict between concrete experience and abstraction and the conflict between observation and action. When we use both the concrete and the abstract modes to experience our experiences and when we both reflect and act on our experiences, we expand our capacity to learn.



Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

“The aim of education is to impel young people into value forming experiences.”

Kurt Hahn, Founder- Outward Bound



Food and Farming Expedition

In a quest to understand the connection between our food, farming and healthy living, grade 6 students go to an organic farm for Khoj.

The big ideas for this expedition are:

- We are what we eat. Organic and healthy eating leads to a healthy body, mind and spirit.
- Organic farming is sustainable and viable.
- Working with hands build confidence and capacity for self-reliance, which are important life skills.

To work towards the above big ideas, we have the following guiding questions:

- What is healthy food? How does it taste like, smell like, feel like, touch like?
- How is healthy food grown? What is organic farming?
- How does it feel to work on a farm? Why is it important to work with our hands?
- How can I contribute towards healthy living in my community?

Once the students had built an understanding of how organic farming & food leads to a healthy living, they create a street play to build an awareness for healthy organic food and farming. They do this awareness campaign in their local and school community. Students also rework on the school lunch menu and give suggestions for healthier options.



Khoj Expedition Design Framework

Khoj is much more than a collection of activities. It is an integrated experience that focuses on holistic engagement, development and learning of the child. Inspired and guided by Outward Bound (www.outwardbound.net) principles and pedagogy, it has the following elements & strands as part of its design:

a. Skill Building

The first part of Khoj focuses on building skills that children will use during their final challenge. The idea is to prepare them for the final challenge.

b. Working in Crews

When we are on a Khoj expedition, we explore and navigate in crews. The idea is to help children learn how to build on each other's strengths and create a synergy in the group. They need to experience the power of diversity and inclusivity – and how it dramatically increases the richness of ideas, ability to solve problems and capacity to act. As the expedition unfolds, crews will be expected to take more and more responsibility for the navigation and decision-making. This is important, as it will ensure that the skills learnt before the final challenge become tools for success during the expedition.

c. Final Challenge

Expedition will include at least one big challenge like doing a social campaign, climbing the peak, earning your own meal, repairing the trails, working with the community on a specific social issue, etc. These challenges push crewmembers to find strength that they did not know they had. During the final challenge, the leadership is real and the success is theirs to keep.

d. Reflection and Sharing

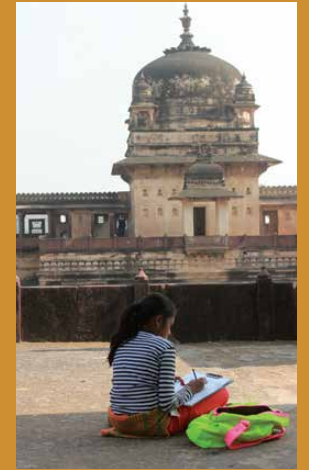
Solitude, reflection and silence replenish our energies and open our minds. It is during the reflection that learners make a connection with experiences that they go through during the expedition and their real life. It is time to relook at their beliefs, construct new understanding and most importantly, to re-invent the self.

e. Service

During service, learners are encouraged to work with communities on real life issues, which gives them an opportunity to apply their new understanding built during the expedition. It also helps them to learn how to contribute meaningfully towards the larger community causes and experience the joy of working selflessly. Children get a first hand experience to empathize and connect with issues of change, equality, justice and denial. The important aspect of service is to experience one's true and abundant self.

“I regard it as a foremost task of education to ensure survival of these qualities: an enterprising curiosity; an undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, readiness for sensible self-denial and above all, compassion.”

Kurt Hahn, Founder- Outward Bound



The Khoj Curriculum

The Khoj expeditions are designed for children of grade 4 to 12 i.e. children within the age group of 9 to 18. The expeditions are designed based on the curriculum needs, life skills that need to be developed and the habitat in which Khoj takes place. The curriculum has the following strands:

1. Adventure/Physical Challenge
2. Systemic study of the Habitat
3. Case study of any one element from the habitat
4. Life skills
5. Service
6. End product/ performance

The curriculum grid on the next two pages gives an idea about how different strands flow from grade 4 to 12. It is the basic curriculum framework, which we customize and rework according to the specific needs of the school curriculum, life skills to be developed and children's interest.

As part of the Khoj expeditions, we do pre and post work in schools. The pre-work sets the context for expedition during which we build background knowledge, share the broad design and listen to children's' expectations from Khoj. During post-work children work on the end product/performance, consolidate their learnings and learn how to use it in their daily lives.



Grade	Expedition	Adventure / Physical Challenge	Systemic Study	Focused Research / Case study	Life skills	Service	End Product / Performance
IV	Birds and Wetland Expedition	Nature walks, Boating, Rickshaw ride, Tonga ride, Cycling	Wetland as an eco-system	Focused research on any one bird- its characteristics, uniqueness & habitat. How it has adapted to its habitat? The relationship between form and functions. What and how we have learnt from nature?	Leave no trace i.e. how to go on a nature trail without disturbing the eco-system. Observation and listening skills i.e. recognizing birds by their sounds. Making connections and synthesizing. Working in crews.	Cleaning of the nature trails in the sanctuary. Creating awareness through street plays for the conservation of birds and wetland.	Making flash cards on birds for grade 2 students. An awareness campaign for the conservation of local birds and their habitat in one's own community.
V	How a Historian works Expedition	Treasure hunt, Historical walks	Studying a historical monument- its structure & design and constructing the history of that period through the monument	Studying different parts of the building like pillars, terraces, doors etc as a source of history	How to study buildings as an important source of history? What are the other sources of history around us? Listening to stories and songs and how history was passed on to generations through them. Drawing and illustrating different parts of the building to observe and understand in detail and also what the engravings & patterns on them tell.	Working with the local staff on cleaning/upkeep of the monument	Designing postcards/guidebook with pencil illustrations of parts of the monument & stories they tell. Tourist and other people who visit the monument can use these postcards. Working for the maintenance of a historical monument in one's own city.
VI	Food and Farming Expedition	Farming- Plowing, Sowing, Weeding, Mulching, Harvesting, etc.	What is healthy food? How it is grown? What is natural/ organic farming?	Different types of seeds and their benefits. Why we need to conserve our local seeds?	How to grow healthy food? How to cook healthy food? Cleaning one's own utensils. Working with hands in fields. Eating balanced and healthy diet. Recycle, reuse and repair.	Working on field with local farmers	Creating an awareness campaign in one's school and community on healthy food. Participating in campaigns against the corporatization of farming and importance of saving our local seeds.
VII	Desert Expedition	Climbing sand dunes, Orienteering and Endurance run on sand dunes. Riding camels and camel carts. Cycling.	Studying the desert village as an eco-system	Focused research on children's rights in villages	How to survive in the desert i.e. clothing, food & water? How to use maps and compass to find direction? First aid in the desert. Experiencing diversity and inclusivity- and its importance. Learning a local craft. Solo time- the power of silence.	Street play on children's rights in the village	Writing a persuasive letter to local authority/district magistrate on children's right in one's local community/society
VIII	Himalayan Expedition	Rock climbing, Rappelling and Trekking	Understanding the mountain eco-system	Architecture of the houses in a mountain village	How to set a personal goal? What does it takes to achieve it? How to pitch a tent? How to pack a rucksack and other essential items for the wilderness? Cooking in the wilderness. How to keep oneself warm and hydrated? Learning about basic knots.	Working in the local village school/hospital	Making habit cards on personal mastery and positive habits for junior children

Grade	Expedition	Adventure / Physical Challenge	Systemic Study	Focused Research / Case study	Life skills	Service	End Product / Performance
IX	Jungle Expedition	Jungle trek, Cycling and High rope course	Jungle as an eco-system – studying the inter-dependence that exists in the jungle	Research on different species and the function they perform in the jungle eco-system	How to plan and prepare for a jungle trek? Taking responsibility. Cooking in the jungle. Learning how to study a jungle- looking for signs around and discussing them. Different techniques of counting animals e.g. camera trapping, etc. Casting pugmarks. Learning how to conduct biodiversity surveys.	Working with a local NGO on wildlife conservation. Doing a campaign on jungle conservation in the local village school.	Guide book on jungle eco-system and its parts for junior children
X	River Expedition	Rafting, Raft making, Floating, Guiding the rafts through grade 1 and 2 rapids and Kayaking	Understanding the river dynamics i.e. how rapids are formed, the current dynamics in the river, the flora and fauna of the river system	Research on different landforms of the upper course of river and making their models with sand	How do I learn a skill? What enables me? How to nurture courage? What does it take to act from courage? How to navigate the unknown? Working as a crew and how to guide a crew. Discovering personal inspirations and aspiration. Solo time.	Cleaning the river beaches	Designing a guide book/habit cards on 'how to act with courage?'
XI	Crafts Expedition	Working with craftsmen. Cycling.	Studying different crafts. The challenges faced by the craftsmen. Why crafts are dying? Why is it important to conserve crafts?	Studying different crafts and their uniqueness	Why self-reliance is important? How working with hands lead to self-reliance? What is creativity? How working with hands lead to creative living? Learning a local craft. What enables me to create? What blocks me?	Designing the profiles/brochure of craftsmen and their work	Writing a position paper/essay on working with hands, self-reliance and freedom. Reading Gandhiji's writings on crafts and why crafts are important for our villages. Supporting local craftsmen.
XII	AMUL Cooperative Expedition	Working with farmers in their dairies, milk collection booths and at milk plants, etc.	What is a cooperative? How does it work and what are its strengths? The history and future of cooperative movements in India. The role of women in cooperatives.	What made AMUL a success?	Discovering personal vision. Making a self-development plan. How to conduct appreciative inquiry? How to discover root cause of success? How to make a difference? How to create social organizations? Systems thinking skills.	Working on some of the problems/ challenges that the cooperatives are facing and making a presentation to the stakeholders	Creating a documentary on 'why cooperatives'. Making habit cards on sustainable and community living.

Khoj Designers and Facilitators



Parminder Singh Raparia

Learning Coach & Expedition Designer, Disha India

Parminder has led several whole school transformation projects with varying challenges and complexities, including one at The Heritage School, Gurgaon. In his work with schools, he has played the role of a learning

designer, teacher mentor and a change leader. Almost a decade ago, inspired by Gandhian principles of work-centered education i.e. how we can use productive works from the local context of the child as medium of teaching and learning, he founded Disha India Education Foundation. He believes that true education is one that liberates the learner. Parminder is also a long distance runner and a farmer.



Meenu Tomar

Learning Coach & Expedition Designer, Disha India

Meenu designs and facilitates learning expeditions for children and educators. She was a Social Science teacher for eight years. She strongly believes that for real and meaningful education, we need to bridge the

gap between schools and society – children need to learn in and through their local context. She went through the Outward Bound Classic 15-day course to experience the power of experiential learning and how it helps a person discover and understand oneself. She has also gone through the Learning Expedition for Educators at Expeditionary Learning, USA and Systems Thinking level 1 course at Waters Foundation, USA. She loves traveling and exploring new places.



Jaya Iyer

Educationist & Social worker

For the last eighteen years, Jaya has been working in the field of development theatre and social education. Trained in participatory theatre skills, she has designed and trained field workers, teachers, activists and young people in India and abroad. She has been

associated with Pravah, a non-profit organization working with young people for a decade and was its CEO for three years. Currently, she is involved in setting up a National Children Centre at NMM, developing a leadership curriculum in environment for WWF and takes classes for B.El.Ed in Delhi University. She is also a dancer and trekker.



Ashish Shah

Outdoor Education Facilitator

Ashish is an experienced and passionate outdoor facilitator. He has been working with children of all age groups on various outdoor expeditions for last 16 years. He has also created, developed and executed curriculum and outdoor learning programs for children.

Some of the programmes that he has developed are Ganga Ek Antaryatra, Green School programs and studying the villages. He truly believes that education is about sharing of knowledge and wisdom that enables young people to contribute positively to the process of sustaining and developing the human world.



Zubair Mohammed

Outdoor Education Facilitator

Theatre is Zubair's passion and also his profession now. He works as a consultant and facilitator in the field of theatre with government institutions, non-government organizations, educational institutions (formal and non formal) and private companies. He

has independently worked in this field for the past seven years. He specializes in street theatre, stage plays, social campaigns and personality development programs. Apart from theatre, exploring the history, food and heritage of the city of Delhi are his evolving passions.



Jayant Solanki

Outdoor Education Facilitator

Jayant has been working in the area of outdoor education for last six year. He has a diploma in outdoor education from Australia. He has been associated with various outdoor organizations in India & Australia. He is now using outdoors as a tool for experiential

learning for children. Jayant is a National level swimmer and has also participated in Delhi to Ladhak bi-cycle expedition. He is the first Indian to summit Mt. Kangla Tarbo I & II. He is also a NOLS graduate. He believes that true learning comes from real life experiences.



Anurag Kumar

Operations & Research, Disha India

Anurag plays an important role in Khoj outbound expeditions by doing the research and helping out with the designs of the same. He found his true passion after attending the Basic Mountaineering Course at Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi.

He is a NOLS qualified wilderness first aid responder. He is also responsible for the administration and logistics at Disha India.



Shameem Ahmad

Outdoor Education Facilitator

Shameem Ahmad has been teaching theatre in schools, NGOs and institutions for more than a decade now. He uses theatre as a pedagogic medium for bringing the desired social change in communities. He has been associated with different organizations

working in the field of education and training. He has also worked with theatre in education wing of National School of Drama, Delhi.

Safety and Support at Khoj

a. Outdoor Instructors and Equipment: Keeping our high standards and concerns for safety as the first & foremost requirement we have certified outdoor instructors from the best institutions of the country like The Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi and Mountaineering Institute, Manali etc. All our equipments are of best quality by world standards and go through regular quality checks.

b. Medical Support: The Medical support at Khoj is provided by doctor on call & wilderness first-aid certified instructors by NOLS. We also have tie-up with local hospitals at all our camp locations & an emergency vehicle is stationed at the camps at all times.

Reflections and Sharing at Khoj

SEARCHING FOR THE LIGHT

While the stars twinkle through the night,
 We keep moving to the end, with all our might.
 Be it cycling on and on or climbing up ropes,
 Nothing can dampen our spirits or deter our hopes.
 Being patient, determined and building confidence,
 These are values we shall remember whenever time.
 Khoj has brought out things we did not know we had.
 It has helped us bring ourselves up when sad,
 Living among the wild, appreciating nature,
 Khoj has indeed taught us to be contended creatures.

By - Pratyusha D.

A1) The one thing that has^{is} really been exciting for me was when I went to the border and saw the fencing which divided a piece of land forever.

Great change is that he has the same drawing and drawing good. Something hidden him has come out.

PARENT'S FEEDBACK

Pratyusha learnt how to ride a bicycle during Khoj and after that she did almost 90 kms in three days. She wrote her feelings and thoughts in a form of poem.



A3) The thing I take with me is COURAGE to do something.

A4) One thing I discovered about myself was that I am capable to do things which I never imagined of.

How was the KHOJ experience for your child?

KHOJ, as always, is a much longed-for event and this year, as per Shruya, the KHOJ experience was truly amazing! In her own admission, she re-counts two outstanding and worth noting experiential learnings that she had and i.e.:

- "Fear is only in the mind" (while rope climbing exercise, initially she was overcome with fear, doubt and self-denial that she was incapable of doing it but she overcame her apprehensions and DID IT)
- "You can achieve anything if you think you can". I feel the lesson that "I think, therefore, I am" has been driven convincingly in her psyche.

PARENT'S FEEDBACK



A4) I discovered that if I push myself and am determined to do something I can definitely do it. And you that you always have a choice to do what's right.

“One’s destination is never a place but a new way of seeing things”

-Henry Miller

**“A mind that is stretched by a new experience
can never go back to its old dimensions.”**

Oliver W. Holmes



Food and Farming Expedition, 2013

Disha India Education Foundation is an educational initiative striving towards re-defining education and learning and thereby facilitating the re-invention of schools and the education system at large. The idea is to design and develop an experiential curriculum and pedagogy that uses real-life experiences from the child's local context as a pedagogic medium for developing knowledge, skills and character.

Disha India's work involves designing and developing of the experiential curriculum and pedagogy, whole school design and development, educational leadership development, teachers' capacity building and designing learning expeditions for children.

So far 250 school heads and educators from 50 different schools across India have participated in our Courage to Lead and Courage to Teach learning expeditions for school heads and educators respectively. These expeditions help educators explore and

understand the power of experiential learning and how we can use experience as a source of teaching and learning in schools. Every year around 1200 students experience Khoj, where we use wilderness, challenge and service as a pedagogic medium for discovering and understanding different habitats and the self. Some of the schools that have participated in Khoj are The Heritage School, Gurgaon, Mercedes Benz International School, Pune, American International School, Chennai, Bombay International School, Mumbai, Daly College, Indore, DPS, Surat, etc.

In last 5 years, we have worked intensively at The Heritage School, Gurgaon on creating an experiential middle program based on the principles and practices of experiential education.


Disha India Education Foundation is a non-profit social organization registered under section 25 of companies act, 1956.



disha india
सा विद्या या विमुक्तये


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 Khoj- The Outbound learning Expedition

KHOJ

The Outbound Learning Expedition

 Tear here for bookmark.

Khoj Registration Form

Personal Details

Name: _____ Age: _____ Class: _____ Section: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Father's Name: _____

Personal Email: _____ Parent's Email: _____

Participant's Questionnaire

This will help us to know you better.

1. Please list three words you would use to describe yourself.

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

2. What are the three things you are looking forward in Khoj?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

3. How are you feeling about attending Khoj?

Nervous Not Sure Ok Ready Excited

4. Khoj will be physically and emotionally challenging. What are your plans to prepare yourself for it?



Desert Expedition, 2012

5. What more would you like to know about Khoj?

To be filled by the parents:

1. What are your expectations from Khoj? What changes would you like to see in your child after Khoj?

2. What more would you like to know about Khoj?
