

IAYP ADVENTURE JOURNEY REPORT

The impending journey to the NALS camp was in fact creating an overwhelming effect in the minds of all the tenth standard students. We left to this exciting destination at Manjakombai on the afternoon of 23rd September, 2018. The planning for this Bronze Level adventurous journey began earlier in the month itself. A group of 53 students reached the NALS campsite at 4 'o clock in the evening.

The programme began with registration and safety briefing by Mr.Seshadhri, the head of the NALS team, in the campus, following which we went on an acclimatization trek, this was generally done to gain an understanding of the surrounding and also served as an ice breaker. The trek was approximately 5 kms and by the time we returned to camp it was almost dark. It was quite thrilling to walk through a forest area listening to the sounds of the jungle. This experience was quite new for many and we went to bed anticipating more risky trips for the next two days.

The second day started quite early, beginning with a nature trail and exercise at 6.30 in the morning. After breakfast we were divided into two groups, the first group began their trek to Kottakal and second group went on to the intimidating 'high ropes'. Most of us were exhausted by the time we finished our trek, at the same time we learnt a lot from our trainer who showed us bear trails and taught us how to survive in case of any encounter with wild animals. By the time we finished our 12 km trek the second group had finished their activity on the high ropes, the description they gave, frightened us a little, but the spirit of adventure took over our fear. Lunch was provided on time but we could hardly eat, owing to the butterflies in our stomachs. Most of us trudged up to the spot to Pembroke Villa, about 100 mts from our campsite. The high ropes were about 40 feet from the ground and most of us nearly blacked out – to say the least – at the sight. Our trainer encouraged us and this made us go the extra mile and not give in to our acrophobia. All of us completed the double support and single support high ropes, but the free fall was the most exhilarating, in spite of the safety harness most of us were frozen at the idea of dropping down to the ground from a height of 40 feet. Nonetheless no one gave up. We returned to camp feeling a few feet taller, it was a lifetime achievement.

The third day was like the second, beginning with the nature trail followed by fun games for a change. We enjoyed these games, screaming our hearts out and by the time we returned to camp we felt really fresh. On this day we were divided into three groups as our Tower Trek was cancelled due to heavy rain the previous night. The trainers informed us that there was a dire threat of leeches on the way. So instead of the trek we had rappelling, campus cleaning and survival training. Rappelling again was another challenge. We had to climb down a menacing rock. Safety harnesses in place, we began this journey one by one. Although some of us were driven to tears, it did not stop us. After about two hours we returned to our rooms and cleaned the campus. The third activity on our trip was the survival training, in which our trainer taught various survival skills, he also taught us to build tents using the basic material that we would find in a forest. The last activity for the trip was knot making, where the children learnt different styles of tying knots. The exciting two day trip came to an end at 4 in the evening.

We returned to school realising that we had changed much over this short journey. The cocoons that we had built around ourselves had been shed voluntarily, helping us to spread our wings. The element of fear had diminished to a certain limit and we knew that the next step in life would be tread with greater confidence.