

## VESTALS GAP VENTURES Challenge Course Elements

VESTALS GAP VENTURES offers more than 100 different “events” that can be combined to make your IQ Challenge Course uniquely yours.

We divide these events into 11 categories. A course might have events from each category, but this isn't necessary. The choice of events depends mostly on your objectives and also on your site.

### **1. Initial Events**

These events start the sequence of each day's activity. They "**break the ice**" and permit the members of the group to open up to each other, thus providing the foundation for cooperative interaction and trust.

Initial Events provide the groundwork necessary for proper **safety** orientation and understanding the need for adhering to established safety guidelines. These events require no equipment and are included in the staff training program.

Some examples:

- **Name Game**  
An association game to learn names
- **Trust Circle**  
Team members spot each other to keep from falling
- **Flying Carpet**  
Team members give each member a flying carpet ride

Also included in the training is help with processing each event. These "debriefing" skills are an important part of insuring that your objectives are met as well as helping relate those objectives to every-day life.

### **2. Lawn Events**

These events introduce the **group work concepts**. They, as well as most all events, can be made more challenging by adding or subtracting factors concerned with the problem-solving process.

Some of these factors include:

- verbal communication
- sight
- time limitations
- improving performance.

These events introduce the concepts of leadership, teamwork, trust, responsibility and communication.

Some examples:

- **All Aboard.**  
The whole group stands on a small square platform at one time.
- **Alligator Boards**  
The whole group moves from one place to another on 3 short boards.
- **Australian Trolley**  
The whole group travels simultaneously on two long "ski-like" boards.
- **Hot Stuff**  
The group transports a "radio-active" can into a "decontamination chamber" by remote control.
- **Traffic Jam**  
The group has to un-jumble a “people puzzle.”

### 3. Simple Initiatives

These events **continue the challenge** of group problem solving and promote objectives such as:

- communication
- compassion
- leadership
- responsibility

Some examples:

- **Play Pen**  
The group traverses together around a circle of low stumps.
- **Pulley Weight**  
The group races against time to hoist a weight high into the air as many times as possible.
- **Bomb**  
The group carefully passes a "bomb" from person to person while sitting on suspended tire swings.
- **Punctured Drum**  
The group attempts to fill a drum with water while trying to plug its many leaks.
- **Spider's Web**  
The group tries to sneak through a giant spider's web, one at a time, without waking the spider.
- **Cave Crawl**  
The group can experience the dark, cool world of caving in a man made cave.

### 4. Complex Initiatives

These events take the concept of group initiatives **one step further**. The psychological and physical challenge is increased and the need for effective problem solving and teamwork is more evident.

Some examples:

- **Hanging Teeter Totter**  
The entire group must balance on this huge suspended beam.
- **Amazon**  
The group must devise a way to retrieve a much needed can of "serum" using beams, sticks and ropes.
- **Nitro Crossing**  
The group must cross a "moat" on a swinging "vine" and take along a can of "nitro glycerine" without spilling it.
- **Destroyed Bridge**  
An advanced version of the Nitro Crossing with an added stump traverse and two swings instead of one.
- **Island**  
The group has to cross an "ocean" by moving from island to island with only two boards as aids.
- **Draw Bridge**  
In this very difficult event, the group must construct a drawbridge from a beam and some rope, in order to cross a "moat".
- **Mountain Rescue**  
The ultimate in complexity, this event requires a group to perform mock first aid and evacuate an "injured" person across a cable bridge.

### 5. Stacking Events

These initiative events require the group to **construct a human pyramid** while applying problem solving and teamwork skills.

Some examples:

- **Bear Tree**  
The group must claim its territory by placing a mark high on a tree.
- **Donut**  
The group must remove a huge donut from a tall pole.
- **Thread the Needle**  
A free standing pyramid of people is required to thread a huge needle suspended high above the group.

## 6. Up-and-Over Events

Also group initiatives, these events require the group to cross "up and over" some obstacle. Again, problem solving and teamwork are essential.

Some examples:

- **The Beam**  
The group must cross a horizontal beam suspended well above their heads.
- **Moonwalk**  
The group climbs up and over a horizontally suspended cargo net.
- **Waterwheel**  
The group crosses, one at a time, over a large cable spool.
- **Rebirth**  
One at a time, the group climbs through a tire suspended overhead.
- **Electric Fence**  
The group carefully crosses an "electric" string without getting zapped.
- **The Wall**  
The ultimate. The entire group must get over a massive wall. This event is available in different heights and in a dual height version.

## 7. "Spotted" Individual Events

Designed to introduce the concepts of trust, responsibility, agility, physical well-being, balance and to develop "spotting" skills.

The overall goal is to promote a **positive self-concept**. The participants perform the event one at a time with safety provided by spotting from the rest of the group.

Some examples:

- **Tension Traverse**  
Each person traverses a tight-wire using a hand rope for some additional support.
- **Wild Woosey**  
Each pair of participants works together to traverse a pair of cables which become farther and farther apart.
- **Tunnel**  
Each person traverses through a "tunnel" of suspended tires.
- **Balance Maze**  
A series (usually 6) of various size balance beams set at different heights and angles which the participant must walk across.
- **Swinging Balance Beam**  
This balance beam moves as it is crossed.
- **Figit Ladder**  
Each person tries to climb a diagonally mounted, diamond shaped ladder that can easily spin upside down.
- **Flea Hops**  
Each person steps across a series of posts arranged at various heights and distances apart.
- **Hickory Jump**  
The participant jumps from a stump and attempts to grab a horizontal bar suspended overhead.
- **Handicap Ramps**  
These ramps are designed to allow wheel chair participants access to other specially designed events.
- **Scoot Bridge**  
A rope bridge especially designed for physically challenged participants to cross.

## 8. Belayed Ladders

Participants climb tall ladders (approximately 30') of various types while protected by a special "belay" safety system.

The objectives are similar to those for the spotted individual events, but more commitment is required. Ladders can be used by themselves or as access to other high events.

Some examples:

- **Giant's Ladder**  
Built with rungs 4' apart, bolted to a double trunked tree.
- **Jacob's Ladder**  
Made from a cable caving ladder.
- **Knotted Rope**  
Just what it sounds like! Made with polypropylene rope.
- **Firecracker**  
The rungs on this ladder are supported by a single rope.
- **Dangle-Do**  
A giant version of the Jacob's Ladder and very difficult.
- **Inclined Log**  
A huge diagonal balance beam with foot notches.
- **Block Climb**  
2x4" wooden blocks bolted to a tree to simulate rockclimbing.

## 9. High Impact Events

In these belayed events, "**perceived risk**" is **maximized** and the participant is given the opportunity to transcend self-imposed limits simply by making a decision to try, continue and finish the event.

Participation and decisions are individual, though moral support from the rest of the group is essential. Note: These events are usually combined with either high bridges or belayed ladders in order to provide adequate access.

Some Examples:

- **Zip Wire**  
Participant rides a pulley along a cable high above the ground.
- **Pamper Pole**  
A high element where a belayed participant climbs and mounts a utility pole and attempts to leap to a suspended trapeze or target rope.
- **Giant Swing**  
An amazing swing ride beginning with a pull up from the group and ending safely on the ground below.
- **Continuous Ropes Course**  
A series of bridges (see below) that are traversed consecutively. These courses can range from a few bridges to many, from simple to very complex!

## 10. Traverse Bridges

The participant traverses from one place to another. These “places” can be built either low to the ground or high in the air.

If low, they are spotted events with objectives similar to the Spotted Individual Events mentioned earlier. Low bridges can also be used to develop the skills and confidence needed to attempt higher versions.

High bridges are equipped with belay (safety) systems and have the same objectives as High Impact Events.

Some examples:

- **Two-Rope Bridge**  
Two cables, one about 4 1/2' above the other.
- **Commando Crawl**  
A single hose-covered cable traversed by crawling.
- **Leopard Crawl**  
A two-cable (side by side) version of the Commando Crawl.
- **Eagle Walk**  
A three cable bridge with two hand cables above a single foot cable.
- **Burma Bridge**  
A classic version of the Eagle Walk resembling a jungle bridge (can be adapted for the physically challenged).
- **Eagle-Commando**  
An Eagle Walk that turns into a Commando Crawl!
- **Spacewalk**  
A series of suspended swings with foot and/or hand loops at the end that are traversed "Tarzan" style.
- **Balance Beam**  
A horizontal 3 1/2" wide beam.
- **Tyrolean Traverse**  
A single cable traversed while hanging from a seat harness (can be adapted for physically challenged).
- **Hourglass**  
A challenging "X-shaped" bridge made of three hose covered cables.
- **Tire Traverse**  
A series of tires suspended from swings (similar to Spacewalk). When built low, this event is used to do "Tunnel" and "Bomb" described earlier.

## 11. Climbing Walls & Towers

This event is designed to simulate rockclimbing and rappelling and can be constructed on most existing interior or exterior walls.

The objectives are similar to those listed under Spotted Individual Events, but can also be like the High Impact Events if high enough walls are available.

Safety belays are provided as on the Belayed Ladder Events.

*Lawn Elements:*

- All Aboard- The whole group stands on a small square platform at one time.
- Alligator Boards- The whole group moves from one place to another on 3 or 4 short boards.
- Australian Trolley- The whole group travels simultaneously on two long "ski-like" boards with hand ropes attached.
- A-Frame- The group walks one of it's members along inside a giant A-Frame guiding it by remote control ropes.
- Hot Stuff- The group transports a "radio-active" can into a "decontamination chamber" by remote control.
- Traffic Jam- The group has to un-jumble a people puzzle.

*Initiatives:*

- Play Pen- The group traverses together around a circle of low stumps.
- Pulley Weight- The group races against time to hoist a weight high into the air as many times as possible.
- Bomb- The group carefully passes a "bomb" from person to person while sitting on suspended tire swings.
- Punctured Drum- The group attempts to fill a drum with water while trying to plug its many leaks.
- TP Shuffle- Each half of the group attempts to switch sides with the other while balancing on a low log.
- Whale Watch- The group attempts to balance a large teetering platform.
- Spider's Web- The group tries to sneak through a giant spider's web, one at a time, without waking the spider.
- Cave Crawl- The group can experience the dark, cool world of caving in a man made cave.
- Hanging Teeter Totter- The entire group must balance on this huge suspended beam.
- Amazon- The group must devise a way to retrieve a much needed can of "serum" using beams, poles and ropes.
- Nitro Crossing- The group must cross a "moat" on a swinging "vine" and take along a can of "nitro glycerine" without spilling it.
- Prouty's Landing- This element combines the Nitro-Crossing with the All-Aboard to provide a new more difficult problem.
- Destroyed Bridge- This is an advanced version of the Nitro Crossing with an added stump traverse and two swings instead of one.
- Islands- The group has to cross an "ocean" by moving from island to island with only two boards as aids.
- Draw Bridge- In this very difficult event, the group must construct a drawbridge from a beam and some rope, in order to cross a "moat".
- Mountain Rescue- The ultimate in complexity, this event requires a group to perform mock first aid and evacuate an "injured" person across a cable bridge.
- Bear Tree- The group must claim its territory by placing a mark high on a tree.
- Donut- The group must remove a huge donut from a tall pole.
- Thread the Needle- A free standing pyramid of people is required to thread a huge needle suspended high above the ground.
- The Beam- The group must cross a horizontal beam suspended well above their heads.
- Moonwalk- Here the group must climb up and over a horizontally suspended cargo net.
- Waterwheel- The group crosses, one at a time, over a large cable spool.
- Rebirth- One at a time, the group climbs through a tire suspended overhead.
- Electric Fence- The group carefully crosses an "electric fence" without getting zapped.
- Blindfold Maze- The group is blindfolded, lost in a rope maze, and must work together to escape.
- Zig-Zag- This "swamp" crossing takes the form of a large scale puzzle and group balancing act all rolled into one.
- Mohawk Walk- This problem involves moving the entire group from one spot to another on a series of tight-wires using each other for support and balance.
- The Wall- The ultimate in up and over events, the entire group must get over a massive wall. This event is available in different heights and in a dual height version.

## Additional Standard Element Descriptions- Page 2

### *Spotted Individual Elements:*

- Tension Traverse- Each person traverses a tight-wire using a hand rope for some additional support.
- Wild Woosey- Each pair of participants works together to traverse a pair of cables which become farther and farther apart.
- Balance Maze- This event is a series (usually 6) of various size balance beams set at different heights and angles which the participant must walk across.
- Swinging Balance Beam- This horizontally suspended balance beam moves as it is crossed.
- Fight Ladder- Each person tries to climb a diagonally mounted, diamond shaped ladder that can easily spin up-side-down.
- Flea Hops- Each person steps across a series of posts arranged at various heights and distances apart.
- Hickory Jump- The participant jumps from a stump and attempts to grab a horizontal bar suspended overhead.
- Spacewalk- A series of suspended swings with foot and/or hand loops at the end that are traversed "Tarzan" style. Can also be built as a high element.
- Tire Traverse- A series of tires suspended from swings (similar to Spacewalk). Also used with "Tunnel" and "Bomb" elements. Can also be built as a high element.
- Tunnel- Each person traverses through a tunnel" of suspended tires.
- Criss-Crotch- Similar to a Wild Woosey but a double version; Converges then diverges.
- Accessible Ramps - These ramps are designed to allow wheel chair participants access to other specially designed events and can be added to both Initiative and Spotted Individual elements.
- Scoot Bridge- A rope bridge especially designed for physically challenged participants to cross. Also available high.
- Trust Fall- Each person climbs onto a low platform and falls into the arms of the group members.

*Individual Elements:*

- Giant's Ladder- Built with rungs 4' apart and usually supported by a double-trunked tree.
- Jacob's Ladder- A small, steel, cable ladder (caving ladder) or a Rope Ladder with wooden rungs which is climbed with a belay.
- Centipede- A dangling ladder, which is made with alternating staples on vertical timbers and is climbed with a dynamic belay.
- Knotted Rope- Just what it sounds like! Made with large diameter nylon rope.
- Firecracker- The rungs on this ladder are supported by a single rope.
- Dangle-Duo- A giant version of the Jacob's Ladder and very difficult; Normally climbed by two participants at a time.
- Staple Climb- A series of large staples installed in a tree or pole for climbing and protected with a dynamic belay.
- Inclined Log- A huge diagonal balance beam with foot notches. Not usually appropriate where access limitation is needed. (Note: The ladder elements above can be built as a stand-alone or can be added to most any other high element as an alternative access. All ladder elements are generally protected by dynamic belay systems.)
- Zip Wire- The student rides a pulley along a cable high above the ground.
- Platform Rappel- This popular rockclimbing activity is adapted to a platform in a tree.
- Pamper Pole- A high element where a belayed participant climbs and mounts a utility pole and attempts to leap to a suspended trapeze or target rope. This is a stand-alone element which is built on relatively level ground. This element requires a dedicated, fall-rated, UIAA approved belay rope which must be carefully logged and replaced after every 500 or so participants.
- Trapeze Leap- A true commitment activity requiring the participant, while on belay, to leap to a trapeze or target rope from a platform high above the ground.
- Giant Swing (Swing by Choice)- An amazing swing ride beginning with a pull up from the group and ending safely on the ground below.
- Flying Squirrel- Each participant is taken on a high ride by the members of their group by use of a rope and pulley system.
- Continuous Ropes Course- A series of bridges (see below) that are traversed consecutively. These courses can range from a few bridges to many, from simple to very complex!
- Two-Rope Bridge- Two cables, one about 4' to 5' above the other traversed sideways by walking on one and holding the other.
- Commando Crawl- A single rope traversed by crawling.
- Leopard Crawl- A two-rope (side by side) version of the Commando Crawl.
- Eagle Walk- A three cable bridge with two hand cables above a single foot cable.
- Burma Bridge- A classic version of the Eagle Walk resembling a jungle bridge (can be adapted for the physically challenged).
- Eagle-Commando- An Eagle Walk that turns into a Commando Crawl in the middle!
- Vinewalk (Multi-Vine Traverse)- A high, cabled, traverse bridge, with a foot cable, a belay cable and a second overhead cable used to suspend vertical handlines every 6' or so. The bridge is negotiated by walking on the foot cable while moving from rope to rope.
- Balance Beam- A horizontal pole or beam negotiated by walking.
- Tyrolean Traverse- A single cable traversed while hanging from a seat harness and pulling along a separate rope (can be adapted for physically challenged).
- Hourglass- A confusing "X" shaped bridge made of three ropes.
- Loopwalk (Bottomless Burma)- Similar to a Burma Bridge but without the lower foot cable resulting in a considerable increase in difficulty.
- Loop Traverse- A very difficult bridge consisting of cable loops which must be traversed sideways.
- Wild Woosey (high)- A belayed version of this popular low event.
- Heebie Jeebie- A single walking cable crossed by holding two ropes which converge with the foot cable near its mid-point.
- High Y- (high teamed element) A high traverse which challenges two participants to work together to cross a series of cables and ropes.
- High Y- (high teamed element) A two-cable traverse navigated one or two participants at a time.