



# Liferaft Dilemma

## ***The Crean Award:***

**Discovery:**  
Patrol Activity

**Endurance:**  
Develop Teamwork

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## ***SPICES***

Physical  
Character

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## ***Adventure Skills***

Backwoods

**Terra Nova:**  
Patrol Activity

**Polar:**  
Patrol Activity

## ***The Activity:***

**Objective:**  
An inter-patrol activity to explore world trade and the inequalities involved.

***Activity Type:***  
Troop Activity

***Roles:***  
Activity Leaders





## Plan: Liferaft Dilemma

The Scout Life Raft dilemma is a good teambuilding exercise for your patrol or troop and a good activity for a rainy meeting day. The patrol should work together and allow enough time to fully discuss and consider the problem at hand. Your answers should represent the consensus of your patrol (not just what the patrol leader decides).

To run this activity, one patrol member should carefully read out the instructions and scenario to the patrol, print out a copy of the item ranking table and compare it to the expert answers table (no cheating, don't read them beforehand). The patrol should then take 20 minutes or so to rank 15 items that you think will best aid you in your survival.

*(Adapted for scout use from Graham Knox's 'Lost At Sea')*





## Liferaft Dilemma: Scenario

You and your patrol are practicing some sailing to attain a new level in your adventure skills. By accident, the member of the patrol who was supposed to check the forecasted weather checked the conditions predicted for the Valencia, on the west coast of Spain. Unfortunately, it is Valentia Island in Kerry that you are sailing from. Believing that a light breeze, clear skies and 35°C heat is predicted, you decide to head out to sea on a yacht. About five hours into your trip, the weather conditions start to grow poor. Confident that the wind and rain will soon pass over, you continue on. Two hours later the conditions worsen with heavy rain and strong storm force winds reaching speeds over 100km/h. The yacht is hit by a massive wave which causes catastrophic damage and starts to sink. Luckily, your patrol members are very experienced at pioneering and manage to quickly lash a sturdy

raft together using some spars, rope and empty water barrels that you just happened to bring with you on your voyage. Boarding the raft, you abandon the sinking yacht and begin to drift further out into the Atlantic Ocean. The weather over the next couple of hours improves greatly but your location is unclear because your vital navigational and radio equipment sank and you can no longer see land. You and your patrol have managed to save 15 items, undamaged and intact after the storm. One patrol member is also carrying a box of waterproof matches. Your task is to rank the 15 items in terms of their importance for you, as you wait to be rescued. Write the number 1 beside the most important item, the number 2 beside the second most important and so forth until you have ranked all 15 items.



Item	Patrol Ranking	Expert Ranking	Difference
A quantity of mosquito netting			
30 litre container of fresh water			
A case of army food rations			
Maps of the Atlantic Ocean			
A 10 litre can of petrol/oil mixture			
A 20 sq foot sheet of clear plastic			
A can of shark repellent			
15 feet of nylon rope			

Item	Patrol Ranking	Expert Ranking	Difference
2 boxes of Mars bars			
An ocean fishing kit and pole			
A compass			
An inflatable cushion			
A dinner plate size mirror			
A bottle of rum (80% alcohol)			
A small hand torch			
Total Difference (Patrol Score):			

# Expert Analysis

**To be given to participants ONLY after they have completed their patrol rankings:**

Drifting on a simple raft so far out at sea, the best chance of survival for your patrol is to be rescued. For this, you needed to prioritise items which would best attract attention and buy you as much time as possible. Navigational items on a raft drifting across the Atlantic are almost useless because even if you could successfully steer it, you wouldn't have a big enough food and water supply to reach land. Without signalling devices, you have little chance of being spotted and rescued. So, the list below is the ranking order of the items according to their importance to your survival:

Item	Expert Ranking	Reason
A quantity of mosquito netting	15	There are NO mosquitoes in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and the netting would be useless for any other purposes, even fishing.
A 30 litre container of fresh water	4	Vital for your patrols survival as this will supply water rations for your patrol for several days.
A case of army food rations	5	This is your basic food intake.
Maps of the Atlantic Ocean	14	Worthless if you cannot control the direction in which you are drifting.

Item	Expert Ranking	Reason
A 10 litre can of petrol/oil mixture	2	The second most important item for signalling. The mixture will float on water and can be set alight using the matches.
A 20 square foot sheet of clear plastic	6	This can be used to collect rainwater and shelter your patrol from the wind and waves.
A can of shark repellent	11	To repel sharks, of course!
15 feet of nylon rope	9	Could be used to lash people or equipment together to prevent being washed overboard. There are a variety of other uses, but none high on the list for survival.
2 boxes of Mars bars	7	Your reserve food supply.
An ocean fishing kit and pole	8	Ranked lower than the chocolate as there is no guarantee you will catch any fish. The pole might be used as a tent pole.

Item	Expert Ranking	Reason
A compass	13	Without any means of radioing or phoning for rescue, estimating your location is worthless.
An inflatable cushion	10	May be used like a lifebuoy if someone falls overboard
A dinner plate size mirror	1	The mirror is absolutely critical. It is the most powerful tool you have for communicating your presence. In sunlight, a simple mirror can generate five to seven million candlepower of light. The reflected sunbeam can even be seen beyond the horizon.
A bottle of rum (80% alcohol)	12	This may be used as an antiseptic for any injuries but is otherwise of little value. Very dangerous if drunk as a substitute to water, as it would cause the body to dehydrate, the opposite of what you need to survive.
A small hand torch	3	Useful for signalling at night





# Score

Compare and then calculate the difference between each of your rankings and those of the coastguard experts. For example, if your patrol ranked something as number 3 and the coastguard ranked it as number 7, the difference will be 4. If you ranked something as number 11 and the coastguard ranked it as 2, the difference will be 9. Add up the differences to get a total score for your patrol (the lower the better) and see how well the patrol performed!

Score	Comment
0-25	<b>Excellent-</b> Your patrol demonstrated great survival skills and have been rescued!
26-32	<b>Good-</b> This is an above average result ad your patrol is rescued.
33-45	<b>Average-</b> Seasick, hungry and tired but rescued.
46-55	<b>Fair-</b> Dehydrated and barely alive. It was tough, but rescued.
56-70	<b>Poor-</b> You have lost some patrol members but the remainder are rescued just in the nick of time.
71+	<b>Very poor-</b> Your empty raft is washed up on a beach, weeks after the search was called off.







# Review 'SPICES'

## **Social**

- Relationships
- Communication Skills
- Other Cultures
- Community Involvement
- Promise & Law

## **Physical**

- Eat Well
- Personal Hygiene
- Balanced Lifestyle
- How Body works
- Physical Limitations
- Health Choices
- Access Help

## **Intellectual**

- Achieving Goals
- New Ideas/Creativity
- Learn from Decisions
- Team Member

## **Character**

- Promise & Law
- Friends & Friendships
- Plan before do
- Ensuring Fairness
- Respect
- Differences & Views
- Following Dreams
- Live the Scouting Spirit

## **Emotional**

- Aware of feelings
- Asking/Giving Help
- Responsibility for Emotions
- Controlling Emotions
- Going Further
- Beliefs & Values
- Developing Talents

## **Spiritual**

- Promise & Law
- Impact on Environment
- Reflection
- Changing Beliefs





# Review

**How did your patrol do?**

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**Patrol Review**

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**What can we do next?**

