

The Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School

Summer Camp - Complete Week

Youth Fly Fishing Curriculum - Ages 6-17 - Inspired by the Methods of Joe Humphreys

"The secret of life is having something exciting to look forward to. And fly fishing is that - you're going fishing."

- Joe Humphreys

The Week-Long Summer Camp

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Camp Overview & Philosophy

Joe Humphreys spent over 80,000 hours on trout streams. He's taught tens of thousands of students over a career spanning nearly seven decades. He taught physical education at Penn State University, coached wrestling, boxed, built fly fishing programs from scratch, hosted the first fly fishing series on ESPN, and led conservation efforts that saved Spring Creek - the stream that runs behind his home.

This camp follows Joe's method: Observation Before Action. We spend as much time watching the water as fishing it. We learn to tie the flies we fish. We study the insects trout eat. We read every ripple and seam. And we fish with intention - never casting until we understand why.

Required for all instructors before delivering this program: watch the documentary film *Live the Stream* (2018) in full. The film follows Joe at age 86 across the streams and memories of his life. Stories, quotes, and scenes from it are woven throughout this curriculum.

Our Promise to Every Camper

By the end of this week, you will understand the stream, tie flies, execute advanced casts, read water like a professional, and become a steward of trout habitat. You will fish independently. And you will have something extraordinary to look forward to for the rest of your life.

Camp Goals

Read: Read water independently and identify trout holding positions

Tie: Tie at least two fly patterns from scratch - and catch a fish on one

Cast: Execute the short stroke, tuck cast, bow-and-arrow, and Downer-Upper cast

Entomology: Understand the aquatic insects trout eat and match them to fly patterns

Conserve: Practice and explain catch-and-release ethics and conservation principles

Observe: Complete a Look Up moment each day - living in the whole environment

5-Day Camp Overview

Day	Theme	Motto
Monday	Stream Ecology + Casting Basics	<i>"Observe Before You Cast"</i>
Tuesday	The Fly Tying Connection	<i>"To Deceive the Fish, First Understand Its World"</i>
Wednesday	Nymphing - Getting to the Bottom	<i>"The Fish Lives on the Bottom. Go There."</i>
Thursday	Dry Flies, Tight Brush & The Night Game	<i>"The Best Anglers Fish With Their Ears As Much As Their"</i>

Day	Theme	Motto
		<i>Eyes"</i>
Friday	Synthesis, Conservation & Legacy	<i>"You Are Now a Steward of the Water"</i>

The Daily "Look Up" Moment - Required Every Day

Joe Humphreys has a teaching habit he practices on every single day on the water. At some point during the session, he stops fishing, turns to whoever is with him, and says: "Look up. You've been staring at the water from the moment we made the first cast. I'd like to stop and live the moment."

He might point to a red-wing blackbird on a cattail. The shape of clouds moving across a ridge. Sunlight hitting a wet log. The sound of a riffle around a bend. "Those are cherished moments," he says. "The good Lord has given us such a beautiful place to fish. When you don't take time to recognize and appreciate it - you're missing part of the game."

Every day of this camp includes a dedicated Look Up moment. It is not a break from the curriculum. It is the curriculum. The habit of noticing - really noticing - the world around a stream is what transforms a fisher into a steward.

DAILY RITUAL: INSTRUCTOR CUE: At a natural pause each day - after a good catch, at a beautiful bend, or when you see something the students might miss - stop everything. Say: 'Look up.' Then point it out. Let the silence hold for thirty seconds before continuing.

Day 1: Monday - "The Anatomy of the Stream and the Angler"

Theme: Stream Ecology + Casting Basics | Motto: "Observe Before You Cast"

Morning Block (3 hours): Hydrology & Entomology

Opening Circle - 20 minutes

Welcome, introductions, camp safety rules

Introduce Joe Humphreys: show key facts (80,000+ hours on stream, 19 years at Penn State, fly-caught state record brown trout, documentary Live the Stream)

Play the opening 5 minutes of Live the Stream - Joe at the stream at 86 years old

Ask students: "What does Joe say fly fishing gave him?" - guide to the answer: "The secret to life is having something to look forward to."

Before the first cast of the week, share this story: Joe was once asked if he could teach a busload of fifth graders - fifteen ten-year-olds - at Fisherman's Paradise. In a short time, they were all casting beautifully. That evening, the teacher called: one girl caught three trout, a boy caught four, another got three more. Joe had missed the only fish he hooked himself.

"I just got outfished by a busload of fifth graders. Nobody will ever have all the answers. It is always humbling." - Joe Humphreys

Start Day 1 with this story because it sets the tone for the entire week. The stream is a great equalizer. Begin with humility.

"I was on my bicycle with the fly rod across the handlebars, three peanut butter sandwiches in my pocket. Thompson Run was my classroom. What we caught and what we shot is what we ate. That is just the way it was." - Joe Humphreys

Distribute camp journals - students document one observation each day

Ice breaker: "Where would YOU hold if you were a trout right now?"

Stream Ecology Walk - 60 minutes

Walk along the stream WITHOUT fishing gear. This is observation time only.

Current speed variations: riffle, run, pool, seam, eddy - identify each

Upstream approach: demonstrate crouching, slow wading, downstream-first observation

Joe did not just crouch - as a boy, he crawled to the stream. On his belly, through the morning dew-soaked grass. 'I learned to crawl because when I walked up to the stream, the fish went everywhere.' Before students wade for the first time, make this real: the stream sees them before they see it. Their shadow. Their footsteps on the bank. Their reflection. Stealth is the first skill.

Fish vision: introduce the trout's 'window' - looking up, a trout sees out through a roughly 45-degree cone, so it can spot you on the bank. Stay low.

Where would YOU rest if you were a trout? Where's the easiest food?

Fish biology: lateral line, vision cone, cold-blooded metabolism

Introduce the concept of water temperature and trout metabolism

Kick-Seine Sampling - 60 minutes

Groups of 3-4 students with kick-seine nets. Collect and identify macroinvertebrates.

Mayfly nymphs: 3 tails, gill plates - most important hatch food

Stonefly nymphs: 2 tails, flat body - indicator of clean water

Caddis larvae: building cases from local materials

Midge larvae: tiny, red/brown, crucial in cold months

Freshwater scuds: shrimp-like - "This is exactly what Joe tied at age 10"

Tell the orange shrimp story here: ten-year-old Joe, Thompson Run, mother's sewing basket

AGE ADAPTATIONS: Age 6-10: Focus on finding cool bugs and learning their names. Ages 11-13: Sketch them in journal and guess the matching fly. Ages 14-17: Discuss emergence timing, water temperature triggers, and hatch-matching strategy.

Reading Water + Presentation - 40 minutes

Return to stream: instructor points to specific features

The seam is the money zone - where fast and slow water meet

Trout face into current, rest in slow water, dart to fast water to eat

Stealth approach: downstream, crouch, no bright clothing

Light angle: fish see into air at roughly 45 degrees

Afternoon Block (3 hours): Introduction to the Short Stroke

The History of Casting - 20 minutes

Why traditional 10-to-2 was developed: tournament casting on open western rivers

Why it fails on tight eastern streams: trees, banks, brush

Joe's solution: the shortened stroke, born from necessity on Pennsylvania streams

Show the scene from Live the Stream: the "Cast in a Thicket" sequence

"This piece of water we're going to fish - it's a thicket. The casting is very demanding in this tight brush. I don't think this type of fishing has ever really been recorded. If we can capture this on film today, it will be a highlight." - Joe Humphreys, Live the Stream

"Wrestling and fly fishing? They're both physical sports. Secondly, the technique is so important. There's technique and smarts involved. You have to have great fly control so that the fly will float perfectly, drag-free." - Joe Humphreys

Casting on the Lawn - 110 minutes

Grip: thumb on top of handle

The pick-up: smooth lift, accelerate to abrupt stop

Thumb squeeze at back stop

Forward stroke: crisp acceleration to abrupt stop at 11 o'clock - the rod stops right between your eyes

Thumb squeeze on forward stop

Follow-through with rod tip low to water

Hula hoop target course: 5 hoops at 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 feet

Add the roll cast: useful when backcast is blocked by trees or banks

Knot Tying Lab - 40 minutes

Davy Knot with paracord first, then actual tippet

Double Surgeon's Knot for connecting tippet sections

Goal: every camper ties both knots from memory before Day 2

Day 1 Closing Circle - 10 minutes

LOOK UP MOMENT: Before heading in, stop at the stream. Point out one thing no one noticed all day.

"Look up. You've been staring at the water from the moment we made the first cast. I'd like to stop and live the moment." - Joe Humphreys

Journal prompt: "What surprised you most about the stream today?"

Conservation moment: one fact about clean water and trout habitat

Preview Day 2: "Tomorrow you become a fly tier. You will make the fly you fish with."

Day 2: Tuesday - "The Fly Tying Connection"

Theme: Understanding Fish Food from the Inside Out | Motto: "To Deceive the Fish, First Understand Its World"

Morning Block (3 hours): Vise Fundamentals

Why We Tie - 20 minutes

Begin with the full orange shrimp story - this is Day 2's thematic anchor.

Joe's principle: understanding what fish eat makes you a better angler AND a better observer. But there is another dimension to fly tying that Joe discovered as a teenager: it gave him direction.

"Fishing was the catalyst that moved me from the depths of despair into a whole new life." - Joe Humphreys

For some of the students in this room, fly tying may do the same thing. It is a craft requiring patience, fine motor skill, material knowledge, and problem-solving. It connects students to biology, chemistry, art, and engineering. And at the end, there is something to fish with.

JOE ON BOOKS: "Now if the teacher would ask me to write a paper - I had direction. I would write about the brown trout. Or about how to fish the wet fly. That book gave me a new start on life. Hopefully my books - I hope maybe they give somebody direction." - Joe Humphreys

Introduction to the Vise - 70 minutes

Tying vise, bobbin, hackle pliers, scissors - the tyer's toolkit

Thread control: starting the thread, consistent pressure, half-hitch to secure

Materials today: dubbing (hare's ear mix), pheasant tail fibers, wire rib, hackle

Body proportions: keep the body about as thick as the gap of the hook - slim and buggy, never bulky

Basic nymph sequence: thread base, tail, rib, body, thorax, head

Tying Pattern 1: Hare's Ear Nymph - Size 14 - 90 minutes

Ages 6-10: simplified version - thread, dubbed body, head only

Ages 11-13: full pattern with rib and tail

Ages 14-17: full pattern with optional bead head and wire rib variation

Each student completes at least one fly to fish tomorrow

Afternoon Block (3 hours): Tying the Local Pattern + Wet Flies

Joe's Challenge: The Orange Fly - 60 minutes

Give each student orange thread or materials

Challenge: create YOUR version of Joe's original orange shrimp, using what you observe from Day 1 specimens

Students can examine actual stream specimens collected on Day 1

No rules on pattern - orange must be present, must be fishable on a hook

Share and discuss: what design choices did you make and why?

Tying Pattern 2: High-Visibility Foam Dry Fly - 90 minutes

Yellow or chartreuse foam cylinder body

White calf tail or Z-lon wing post

Elk hair or deer hair wing

High-visibility so young anglers can track it on the water

Ages 6-10: instructor-aided assembly; Ages 14-17: fully independent

Introduction to Wet Fly Concepts - 20 minutes

What is a wet fly? Soft hackle, classic patterns, subsurface presentation

The swing: cast across current, mend, let fly swing through seam

How to detect strikes on a swung wet fly

Preview of Day 4's swing fishing session

Day 2 Closing Circle - 10 minutes

LOOK UP MOMENT: Take the group outside. Ask them to sketch one thing they see in their journals that is not a fish and not a fly.

Journal prompt: "Draw the fly you tied today and explain why a trout would eat it."

Connection exercise: hold your finished fly up - "A fish in this stream may eat this tomorrow."

Day 3: Wednesday - "Nymphing - Getting to the Bottom"

Theme: Sub-Surface Mastery | Motto: "The Fish Lives on the Bottom. Go There."

"We care about slack because we care about tension. Our flies, leaders, and fly lines are impacted by current from the instant they hit the water until we remove them for the next cast." - Joe Humphreys

"These fish don't want the flies swinging down over them. They want a perfect natural drift." - Joe Humphreys

Morning Block (3 hours): Rigging and Theory

Why Nymphing Matters - 30 minutes

80 percent of trout feeding happens sub-surface

Joe's revolution: heavily weighted flies, getting to the bottom quickly

Story: Joe as a boy at Thompson Run, watching trout dip to the bottom to feed

Today's challenge: get your fly within 6 inches of the stream bottom and keep it there

Building the Nymphing Leader - 90 minutes

Components: fly line, butt section, leader, tippet, fly

Leader length calculation: water depth x 1.5 = leader from indicator to fly

Adding weight: split shot placement, 8-10 inches above fly

Strike indicator: yarn, foam, stick-on - how to set and adjust depth

Fly selection: bead head sinks faster; tungsten bead fastest of all

Practice: each student builds a complete nymphing rig from scratch

Water Depth & Flow Analysis - 60 minutes

Walk the stream with depth gauge or stick measurement

Map depth variations along a 50-foot stretch of stream

Identify which sections need 2B shot vs. 3B vs. heavier fly

The bottom test: if the indicator never ticks or pauses, the fly is riding too high - add weight until it occasionally taps bottom

Afternoon Block (3 hours): The Tuck Cast Family

Tuck Cast Master Class - 75 minutes

Start on dry land:

Why the regular cast fails for nymphing: fly lands flat, drag sets immediately

Tuck cast mechanics: overpowered stroke, abrupt HIGH stop, nymph kicks under leader, enters water nearly vertically, sinks fast

Key moment: the rod tip stop must be HIGH (11 o'clock) and ABRUPT - no follow-through

Instructor drill: hold hand above rod at stop height so student learns the feeling

20 dry-land practice casts before moving to water

On-Water Tuck Cast - 45 minutes

Position students at bridge hole or high-probability pool

Goal: get the indicator to tip slightly every 3-4 drifts (confirms bottom contact)

Students call out when they see the indicator pause - instructor: "THAT'S A STRIKE - SET!"

Aggressive hook set practice: sharp upward wrist acceleration

The Rolling Tuck - 20 minutes

For when a backcast is partially blocked but not fully

Roll cast combined with tuck stop

Heavier than a standard roll cast, more wrist snap

The Downer-Upper Cast - 30 minutes

When the target is directly below you or slightly downstream

Sharp DOWNWARD rod stop - flies straight down into the column

Perfect for plunge pools, waterfalls, deep pocket water

Day 3 Closing Circle - 10 minutes

LOOK UP MOMENT: Ask students to listen for 30 seconds with eyes closed - what do they hear?

Journal: "Describe what the stream bottom looked like from the fly's perspective."

Trivia: How deep does a weighted nymph need to be to be in the strike zone?

Day 4: Thursday - "Dry Flies, Tight Brush & The Night Game"

Theme: Advanced Techniques and Sensory Awareness | Motto: "The Best Anglers Fish With Their Ears As Much As Their Eyes"

"In a world few fly fishers see or experience, yet one that is most dynamic, is from twilight to dawn... The Night Game!! Its beauty is unsurpassed." - Joe Humphreys

Morning Block (3 hours): The Bow-and-Arrow Cast

The Philosophy of Tight Quarters - 20 minutes

Joe Humphreys grew up fishing heavily wooded Pennsylvania streams tunneled over by rhododendron and hemlock. These streams hold the best wild trout - and are nearly inaccessible to conventional casters. The bow-and-arrow cast was born from necessity.

In *Live the Stream*, Joe demonstrates fishing a thicket - tight brush on a small stream, executing precise casts in spaces that seem impossible. "The casting is very demanding in this tight brush," he says. "I don't think this type of fishing has ever really been recorded." The key principle: the best anglers are the ones who can fish where others cannot.

Bow-and-Arrow Station Work - 120 minutes

Move to the most heavily vegetated section of the stream. RULE: Traditional overhead casting FORBIDDEN for the entire morning.

Station 1: Open but short - practice bow-and-arrow mechanics on a clear path

Station 2: Low branches - fire fly under a 3-foot high branch across the stream

Station 3: The Tunnel - rhododendron tunnel or simulated equivalent (bamboo poles + tarps)

Station 4: Accuracy Challenge - hit a 12-inch hula hoop at 15 feet through a 3-foot gap

SAFETY - MANDATORY: Grip the fly at the bend of the hook, point facing away from the palm - younger students grip the leader just above the fly instead. No exceptions at any station. Review before every station change.

Ages 6-10: stations 1 and 2 only; Ages 11+: all 4 stations

Dry Fly Fishing Introduction - 40 minutes

What makes a fly float: hackle fibers, elk hair, foam, CDC

The drag-free drift: presenting without unnatural pull

Mending: flip line upstream to extend drift

Presentation angle: upstream and slightly across, let fly drift down

Reading the rise form: sipping rings (selective), boils (aggressive), splashes

Afternoon/Evening: Dry Fly Fishing + Night Game Preparation

Dry Fly Practice on Water - 90 minutes

Fish the high-visibility foam flies tied on Day 2

Cast to rising fish OR to likely holding lanes

Focus: watching the fly drift, detecting drag, setting the hook at the right moment

Key mistake: setting the hook on reflex before the fish has it - PAUSE, then set

Upstream wading practice: stealth, current reading, foot placement

The Green Drake Hatch Discussion - 15 minutes

If timing permits (late May-early June), there is a chance students will witness the green drake hatch - one of the most dramatic events in fly fishing.

Joe calls it "the Memorial Day Classic." The green drake is one of the largest mayflies in North America - nearly two inches long. It emerges once a year in a brief, unpredictable window. When it does, trout that have been invisible for weeks rise to the surface and feed aggressively.

But the green drake is also a conservation indicator. Like brook trout, it requires very clean water. "A lot of streams don't have green drakes because they don't have the water quality," Joe says. A stream with a strong green drake hatch is a healthy stream.

"Such a phenomenon - the life cycle of that fly really stirs the fish into activity. This is one of my favorite times to fish." - Joe Humphreys

Night Game Preparation - 30 minutes

Background: Joe Humphreys holds Pennsylvania's fly-caught brown trout record - a 16-pound, 34-inch brown taken at one in the morning. He spent three years stalking that single fish. He is still pursuing a 20-pound brown. He calls the night game "one of my favorite games."

"Sculpins - I call them the strawberry shortcake of the trout world," Joe says. Nocturnal, and one of the primary reasons large brown trout leave their daytime lies to feed after dark. A sculpin pattern swung slowly through a pool tail after dark is one of Joe's most reliable methods for big fish.

Night hatch conditioning: when the green drake hatch arrives, many anglers assume fish will only want green drakes. Joe often fishes sulfur nymphs - if sulfurs have been hatching for several weeks prior, large fish may still be conditioned to them. Watch what has been hatching, not only what is hatching right now.

Why big trout come out at night: reduced predation risk, comfort in darkness, large food sources active at night. Night fishing requires mastery of pinpoint casting without sight, knowledge of the stream from memory, and the ability to feel a take rather than see it.

The Longline system: longer leader, large wet fly or stone fly pattern, swung through seams

Detection: feel for the "bump" or sudden tension - STRIP SET immediately

Sound as navigation: the riffle sounds different from the pool, the bank from the open water

SAFETY - REQUIRED: SAFETY: Joe is explicit - never fish at night on a stream you don't know in daylight. "You can lose your life." Night game concepts are introduced here as aspirational goals. Actual dusk/night fishing is optional and requires full safety protocol: buddy system, wading staff mandatory, phone with light available.

Twilight/Dusk Fishing - 60 minutes (optional, ages 14+ only)

Open only to Brown Trout tier campers (ages 14-17) with written parent/guardian consent. Younger campers return to base for the evening program.

Fish in pairs, buddy system strictly enforced

Swing large soft hackle wet flies through known holding seams

Each student fishes for a set rotation time - no student fishes alone

Journal discussion: "How does fishing at low light change how you relate to the stream?"

Night Game Story - Full Version (share this tonight)

Read or paraphrase Joe's state record story:

"I was fishing a big long deep pool and I hear a tremendous explosion - then stone quiet. I knew it had to be a heck of a fish. I stalked that fish for three years, going night after night. One night, at one in the morning, I chucked two flies across that stream, gave them a little tip to get them into motion, and all at once they stopped. It sounded like somebody rolled a washtub over. I put the hammer to that fish. I had no net. I couldn't turn it. The warden measured it: sixteen pounds, thirty-four inches. For eleven years it was Pennsylvania's record trout - and it is still the fly-caught record." - Joe Humphreys

Joe had been after that fish for three years. He had first heard it in a pool on Fishing Creek - a sound like a deer jumping off a bank, then stone silence. He worked the pool season after season. It was George Harvey who suggested trying the riffle at the pool's head. The night Joe finally hooked the fish, his buddy had already asked twice if it was time to go home. Joe made one more pass.

The fish took under a hemlock bough. Joe had no net. He threw the rod down, got both arms under the fish, and threw it up on the bank. Then he drove to his friend the game warden's house and knocked on the door at four in the morning.

"You woke me up at four in the morning to show me some damn fish?" the warden said. Joe said yes. The fish measured one inch longer than the previous state record.

Day 4 Closing Circle - 10 minutes

LOOK UP MOMENT: Stay outside as it gets dark. Listen. What sounds do you hear that weren't there at noon? What changes?

Journal: "What did you discover about your other senses when you couldn't rely on sight?"

Preview Day 5: "Tomorrow you use everything. And you give back."

Day 5: Friday - "Synthesis, Conservation & the Mentorship Field Trip"

Theme: All Skills Applied + Legacy | Motto: "You Are Now a Steward of the Water"

Morning Block (3 hours): The Graduation Field Trip

Opening Ceremony - 20 minutes

Begin by reading Joe's words from Live the Stream:

"Every day on the stream is an adventure. And as a teacher, if I've passed some good things on - not only the how-to, the nuts and bolts of fly fishing - but an appreciation of nature itself - that's what it's all about." - Joe Humphreys

Each student reviews their camp journal: what has changed in their understanding?

"This game - the way the good Lord made it - nobody will ever have all the answers. It is always humbling. You can do everything you know to do, but you also have to have some luck." - Joe Humphreys

Students write a "Letter to the Stream" - what they promise to do for the water

Pair students as mentors and mentees: oldest with youngest

Certificates ready for the afternoon commencement - do not hand out yet

Independent Fishing Session - 2+ hours

Students fish independently at a premier local trout stream

Requirement: 5-minute stream observation before first cast

Requirement: select a fly from their box (ideally one they tied on Day 2)

Requirement: tie on with a Davy Knot

Requirement: choose the appropriate Humphreys cast for the water

Mentor student coaches their younger partner

Instructors observe but intervene minimally - this is the culminating performance

Afternoon Block (2 hours): Conservation Action + Commencement

Conservation Action - 60 minutes

Joe's model: Spring Creek Trout Unlimited began with Joe and five friends around a kitchen table. The work of conservation does not require an institution. It requires someone who loves a piece of water and refuses to stop. Today, students take their first conservation action.

"This was my treasure. This was my life. And I saw it going. I don't know how I can do this - but I'm going to change this somehow." - Joe Humphreys, on Spring Creek

"We need to be stewards of the stream. You don't have to pick the fish up out of the water and wave it around. Keep it in the water. We have to work on water quality." - Joe Humphreys

Choose one of the following based on your site and available resources:

Stream Clean-Up: Remove trash, debris, and monofilament from the riparian zone. Monofilament kills birds and mammals - collect and properly dispose.

Riparian Planting: Plant native wildflowers, grasses, or tree seedlings along the bank. Riparian vegetation shades the water, stabilizes banks, and filters runoff.

Macroinvertebrate Survey: Formal kick-seine study of the stream bottom. Document species present, compare to data from Day 1. Are brook trout present? What do they indicate?

Water Quality Testing: pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen testing with test kits. Compare to ideal trout parameters from the Conservation Handout.

Tell the Spring Creek story here - the full version:

THE SPRING CREEK STORY: Joe and five friends sat around his kitchen table in the early 1970s. Spring Creek was dying - stormwater from the Duck Pond had contaminated the spring that fed it. Water temperatures hit the 90s. Wild trout disappeared. They formed Spring Creek Trout Unlimited. They punched through a concrete wall with jackhammers and diverted Thompson Spring around the contaminated basin. Spring Creek came back. Today it is one of the premier limestone streams in the eastern United States. "It starts right here," Joe says. "It starts at home."

The Brook Trout Connection - 15 minutes

If brook trout are present in the teaching stream, take a moment here to discuss what their presence means. If they are absent, discuss why.

"Brook trout serve as fabulous bio-indicators for our mountain streams. They're very sensitive to pollution. In many of the same streams where brook trout live, we get our drinking water. They are an early detector of poor water quality." - Joe Humphreys

Commencement Ceremony - 45 minutes

Review all 5 days: what was learned, what was caught, what was discovered

Share "best moment of camp" - each student contributes one

Present Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School Level 1 Fly Angler certificates

TAKE IT HOME - AFTER CAMP

Give every student a piece of paracord and a small carabiner to clip to their backpack.

Knot:

Tie the Davy Knot onto the carabiner once a day. Quarter-inch tag end. One firm tug.

Casting:

Use a wooden spoon or dowel. Stand sideways at a mirror. Ten short strokes - feel the thumb squeeze at the stop.

Observation:

5 minutes outside. Sit still. Record one sound, one insect, and wind direction in the camp journal.

See the Take-Home Practice Challenges handout for the full weekly tracker and journal prompts.

FINAL LOOK UP MOMENT: Take the group to the water one last time. One full minute of silence. Then Joe's words:

"We never stop learning. The good Lord made it that way." - Joe Humphreys

"These waters are filled with miles of endless memories - of my childhood, my family, my career, and my inspiration to pick up a fly rod. The springs are my heart. Their waters are the course of my life story. And there are trout - the friends I want to see flourish for lifetimes to come." - Joe Humphreys

Group photo

Announce how students can stay connected: local Trout Unlimited chapter, Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School alumni events

Camp Appendix

Fly Pattern Reference Card

Essential 12 Patterns for Youth Camp Fly Box:

Pattern	Notes
Hare's Ear Nymph #12-16	General-purpose nymph - works in all water types
Pheasant Tail Nymph #14-18	Slim silhouette, high success rate
Copper John #12-16	Flash attracts fish; weighted variant
Beadhead Prince Nymph #12-14	Visibility; tungsten bead sinks fast
Pat's Rubber Legs #6-10	High water; stonefly imitation

Pattern	Notes
Elk Hair Caddis #14-16	Dry fly - visible, durable
Parachute Adams #14-16	All-purpose dry; works any hatch
Stimulator #10-14	Large dry; great visibility for beginners
Sulphur Dry #16-18	Regional match-the-hatch
Griffith's Gnat #18-22	Midge imitation - small but critical
Woolly Bugger #6-10	Streamer - large trout attractor
Foam Dry Fly (homemade) #12-14	DIY construction; high visibility

Safety Protocols

Buddy System: No student fishes alone. 1 instructor per 5 students (1:5), never exceeded.

Wading Belt: Mandatory for all students when in water above knee depth.

Weather: Get off the water at the first clap of thunder and stay off for 30 minutes after the last one (the 30/30 rule). Check the water temperature daily - do not fish if it is above 68°F, because trout get dangerously stressed in warm water.

Sun & Hydration: High-SPF sunscreen; water breaks every 60 minutes.

Snagged Flies: 10-second countdown, controlled breakoff - never pull aggressively.

Night Fishing: Only on known water. Wading staff mandatory. Buddy system strictly enforced.

First Aid: On-site kit; lead instructor CPR/wilderness first aid certified.

Emergency Plan: before the first session, know the nearest hospital, check cell coverage on-site, set a lost-child procedure and a group meeting point.

Staff Ratios & Training

1 instructor per 5 students (1:5 maximum)

Lead Instructor: Certified fly casting instructor, minimum 5 years teaching experience

Assistants: River guide or advanced fly angler, trained on full curriculum

Required pre-camp: watch Live the Stream in full, complete curriculum walkthrough, 8-hour dry-run practice

Parent/Guardian Information

What to bring: Wading gear (provided if needed), lunch, snacks, water bottle, sun protection, rain gear, waterproof boots

What this camp covers: Fly casting, fly tying, stream ecology, water reading, nymphing, dry fly fishing, bow-and-arrow/tuck/Downer-Upper casts, knot tying, aquatic entomology, conservation ethics

Safety: All fishing under 1:5 instructor supervision. Wading belts mandatory. Weather monitoring. First aid on-site.

How to support at home: Ask what they observed on the water. Practice knot tying at home. Take them to a local stream. Connect them to Trout Unlimited.

Level 1 Certificate

[STUDENT NAME] has completed The Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School Week-Long Summer Immersion Camp and is a Certified Level 1 Fly Angler of The Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School. Observation Before Action.

The Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School | Inspired by the Methods of Joe Humphreys