The Stream School Weekend Series - Six Session Plans

The Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School

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

Overview: What the Weekend Series Is

The Weekend Series is six sessions, one per weekend, that take a student from holding a rod for the first time to fishing a real drift on real water and earning badges for it. It is the same method taught in every Stream School format - Joe's method, observation before action - but paced so a kid can practice between sessions and come back better.

That pacing is the whole point. The Weekend Intensive packs the foundation into one Friday-through-Sunday camp. The Series spreads it across six weekends, and the space between sessions is not dead time - it is where the learning sets. Every student goes home with a homework sheet for the fridge. Five minutes a day beats an hour on Saturday. Every session after the first opens with a 5-minute homework check-in: sheets come out, each student shows one thing they practiced, the Leader looks at the sheet one-on-one. Scores stay on the student's own card; nobody reads them to the group. (At monthly cadence, the second session of a weekend is show-and-tell - the sheet went home the night before.) That check-in is the feedback loop. It tells the instructor what stuck, it tells the student their practice counted, and it pulls parents into the program without asking them to fish.

How the Series differs from the Weekend Intensive:

	Weekend Intensive	Weekend Series
Shape	One Friday evening through Sunday	Six sessions across six weekends
Practice between sessions	None - it is one continuous push	The 7-week homework arc, checked every session
Depth	Foundation and a taste of everything	Foundation plus repetition, badges, and a capstone
Best for	Families who can give one full weekend	Families who can give a few hours a week

Cadence options. Run it one of two ways:

- **Weekly:** one session each weekend. Sessions 1-2 run 2.5 hours. Sessions 3-6 run 3 hours because they are on the water.

- **Monthly full weekends** for families driving a distance: three weekends, one per month, each combining two sessions - Sessions 1+2 the first weekend, 3+4 the second, 5+6 the third. Run one session Saturday and one Sunday, or one morning and one afternoon with a real lunch break between. The homework sheets then carry the month between weekends, and the check-in at the start of each weekend matters even more.

Enrollment: 6 to 15 students per Series.

Staffing: 1 instructor per 5 students, never exceeded, and a minimum of two cleared adults on site at every session regardless of headcount - 1:5 is the ratio, not the floor. A Lead Instructor is required on site for every Series. Youth Helpers (14-17) never count toward the ratio and are never alone with a student. The Lead Instructor watches *Live the Stream* (2018) in full before Session 1 - required.

Enrollment	Instructors required
1-5 students	2 adults minimum: the Lead Instructor plus a second cleared adult
6-10 students	Lead Instructor plus 1 Harvey Leader
11-15 students, single tier	Lead Instructor plus 2 Harvey Leaders
11-15 students, mixed tiers	Lead Instructor plus 3 Harvey Leaders (Sessions 3-6 run Minnow rotations beside two water groups)

Who is where, Sessions 3-6: Minnows rotate on the bank and in ankle-deep water with their own Harvey Leader at arm's reach; Brook and Brown tiers share the water with the other Leaders; the Lead Instructor floats and keeps every group within sight of a second adult.

Venue: a lawn or open field for Sessions 1-2, plus accessible water for Sessions 3-6. The water does not need to be famous. It needs a riffle, a seam, a safe wading depth, bank room for casting lanes, a restroom or portable toilet within a short walk, a place to change out of wet clothes, and parking a parent can find. Walk it before Session 3 and know your nearest hospital, your cell coverage, and your group meeting point.

Cost: The Series is free to every family, like everything at the Stream School. All gear is provided - rods, lines, leaders, tippet, flies, wading belts, PFDs, eye protection. A student needs clothes for the weather and shoes that can get wet. Nothing else. Homework never requires a rod at home: every casting item has a no-rod version (a broom handle, a stick, or just the casting hand), and the Harvey leader material for the Brown tier goes home pre-cut in the session kit.

Safety standard, every session on water:

Tier	Wading depth
Minnow (6-10)	Ankle deep, PFD on, instructor within arm's reach

Tier	Wading depth
Brook Trout (11-13)	Knee deep
Brown Trout (14-17)	Mid-thigh
Every tier	Never above the belly button, never alone, always with a wading partner and a Harvey Leader in sight

PFDs required for all Minnow-tier students and any non-swimmer whenever they are in or beside moving water; Brook and Brown tiers wear one when the Lead Instructor calls it (depth over the knee, cold water, or current). Wading belt on every student in the water, any depth. Every 3-hour session carries a 15-minute snack, water, and bathroom break at its midpoint; the block minutes below already account for it.

The homework ladder pairing: the Series was built to carry the Stream School's 7-week homework arc. Each tier has its own sheets - Minnow, Brook Trout, Brown Trout - and each session below states exactly which sheet goes home. The arc runs one week past the last session on purpose: the After the Series sheet (Week 7+) is independence and teach-forward, and it belongs to the student, not to us.

The Six Sessions at a Glance

Session	Where	Length	Focus	Homework arc
1	Lawn	2.5 hours	Gear, grip, the short stroke, the Davy knot	Week 1
2	Lawn	2.5 hours	Knots, rigging, casting targets	Weeks 2-3
3	Creek	3 hours	Reading water, first time at the creek	Weeks 3-4
4	Creek	3 hours	Nymphing, the tuck cast, tight-line for Brown tier	Weeks 4-5
5	Creek	3 hours	Drifts, take detection, bug life	Weeks 5-6
6	Creek	3 hours	Capstone fishing, badge sign-offs, certificates	Week 6, pointing to After the Series

Session 1: Gear, Grip, and Your First Cast

Purpose: every student leaves having cast a fly rod correctly, tied a Davy knot, and learned the one rule with no exceptions.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 1, each student can:

1. Name the parts of the setup: rod, reel, line, leader, tippet, fly.
2. Demonstrate the grip - thumb on top of the handle - and the compact short stroke with elbow tight, thumb squeeze at both stops: backcast stop at 12 o'clock, straight up, forward stop at 11 o'clock. The rod stops right between your eyes.
3. Land a yarn fly in or near a target at 15-20 feet.
4. Tie a Davy knot on paracord without help.
5. Recite the one rule with no exceptions: eye protection on, always. No glasses, no rod in hand.

Timing (150 minutes total)

Segment	Minutes
Arrival, setup, name tags, glasses fitted, a rod in every hand from the first minute	15
Welcome circle: who Joe Humphreys is, the one rule, how the fridge sheets work	15
Equipment anatomy, rod in hand: point to every part of the setup you are holding	20
The short stroke on the lawn: grip, squeeze, stops at 12 and 11, target lanes at 15-25 feet	40
Break and first Look Up moment: stop, listen, name one thing you notice	10
Knot lab: the Davy on paracord, then on real tippet for older students	30
Closing circle: homework sheets home, preview Session 2	20

Session 1 has no homework check-in - there is nothing to check yet. Use the welcome circle to show families the sheet and say plainly: this goes on the fridge, and next week you show us one thing you practiced. In the welcome circle, say this too: "Spinning rod, worms, a bobber - you already know how to set a hook and land a fish. Joe started on a worm. There is no wrong way to start."

Materials (per student unless noted)

- 1 rod outfit, rigged with yarn fly, no hook: Echo Gecko 3-4 wt or equivalent for Minnows, Redington Path II 4 or 5 weight or equivalent for Brook and Brown tiers
- 1 pair of safety glasses (prescription glasses acceptable)
- 2 feet of paracord for knot practice
- 1 spool of practice tippet per 3 students
- 1 target lane per 2 students: hula hoop or paper plates at 15, 20, 25 feet

- 1 Week 1 homework sheet (correct tier) plus 1 Knot Mastery Card
- Instructor kit: one fully rigged demo setup, spare glasses, first aid kit

AGE ADAPTATIONS

Minnow (6-10): rotations, never more than 30 minutes on one activity - the 40-minute casting block runs as two 20-minute rotations with a bug-drawing or “where would a fish hide” game between. Hoops at 15-20 feet only. Use the painting-above-a-doorway cue for the stroke. Knot work is the overhand knot in a shoelace, working toward the Davy: circle, mouse through the hole, pull his tail. Celebrate every hoop loudly.

Brook Trout (11-13): full session as written. Connect the thumb squeeze to things they know - tapping a hammer on a nail, hand and forearm one piece, the wrist never breaks. Davy on paracord, then real tippet before they leave. Their Weeks 1-2 sheet asks only for what they learned today: grip, short stroke at a mirror, Davy, Double Surgeon’s.

Brown Trout (14-17): full session, plus leader and tippet sizing during equipment anatomy. Introduce the Downer-Upper cast as their homework target: two parts, both required - the sharp downward stop fires the nymph into the water, and the immediate fast lift of the casting hand and forearm, thumb and forefinger pointing up, drives it to the bottom after entry. Demo it once into a bucket so their Weeks 1-2 sheet makes sense. Ask one of them to explain the Davy to a younger student.

Homework assigned: Minnow Week 1 sheet. Brook Trout Weeks 1-2 sheet. Brown Trout Weeks 1-2 sheet. Every student also takes the Knot Mastery Card.

Safety brief: eye protection on, always - no glasses, no rod in hand. Casting lanes spaced two rod lengths apart, all students cast facing the same direction, nobody walks a lane while rods are moving.

Rain plan: the whole session moves indoors or under pavilion cover - equipment anatomy, knots, and the stroke practiced with rod tips only (top half of the rod) at short indoor targets.

Session 2: Knots, Rigging, and the Target Lanes

Purpose: students rig a rod from scratch and start putting real scores on the casting scorecard.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 2, each student can:

1. Tie the Davy and the Double Surgeon’s from memory; Brook and Brown tiers also start the Improved Clinch and Perfection Loop.
2. Rig a rod using the 6-step Rig-Race sequence, from bare sections to fly on the keeper.
3. Post a score on the Casting Scorecard target lanes (in-lane 2, close 1, pile 0) and name what a pile means: stroke too long, stop higher.
4. Explain “wet it or regret it” and pass a tug test on one knot.

Timing (150 minutes total)

Segment	Minutes
Arrival and setup	10

Segment	Minutes
Homework check-in: sheets out, each student shows one thing they practiced	5
Knot lab: Davy review, Double Surgeon's, Improved Clinch and Perfection Loop for older tiers, tug tests, Knot Mastery Card initials	35
Rig-Race: the 6-step sequence taught, then run against each student's own stopwatch (personal best) or as team relays	30
Snack, water, and bathroom break	10
Casting target lanes with the scorecard, three rounds, coach the score	40
Look Up moment	5
Closing circle: homework home, preview the creek	15

Materials (per student unless noted)

- 1 rod outfit, broken down in its sock (they will rig it - that is the lesson)
- 1 pair of safety glasses
- 2 feet of paracord, 3 feet of practice tippet, 1 shoelace pair per Minnow
- 1 leader with Perfection Loop demo per instructor
- 1 target lane per 2 students, hoops or plates at 15, 20, 25 feet, yarn flies
- 1 Casting Scorecard and pencil
- Homework sheets (see below) and Knot Mastery Cards from Session 1
- 1 stopwatch per instructor for the Rig-Race

AGE ADAPTATIONS

Minnow (6-10): Rig-Race is steps 1-2 only, no timer - win means guides lined up and line through all of them. Rotations of 25-30 minutes maximum: knot station, rigging station, casting station. Davy and the two-color shoelace Surgeon's only.

Brook Trout (11-13): full Rig-Race, target under 5 minutes. Add the Improved Clinch. They build their own rig start to finish - ownership of the rig buys you their attention.

Brown Trout (14-17): full Rig-Race under 3 minutes with knots passing a tug test. Add the Perfection Loop at the leader butt. In the casting block, give them a Downer-Upper rotation into a bucket at 15 feet: fly lands first, then the Upper - the immediate fast lift of the casting hand and forearm, thumb and forefinger pointing up. Both parts, every rep.

Homework assigned: Minnow Weeks 2-3 sheet. Brook Trout and Brown Trout stay on their Weeks 1-2 sheet for its second week - tell them so plainly at check-out, and tell them Session 3 is the creek.

Safety brief: eye protection on, always - no glasses, no rod in hand. Lanes two rod lengths apart, same facing, no walking the lanes.

Rain plan: knots and Rig-Race move indoors unchanged; casting becomes short-range indoor tip-casting at paper plates, scorecard still runs.

Session 3: Reading Water - First Time at the Creek

Purpose: students meet the water the way Joe teaches it - watching before casting - and learn the wading rules that keep them fishing for life.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 3, each student can:

1. Recite the wading rules and demonstrate the shuffle (one foot always on the bottom) and the fall position (feet downstream, on your back, nose and toes up) on dry land.
2. Point out riffle, run, pool, seam, and eddy on real water.
3. Find a seam and name the feeding side - the money zone where fast meets slow.
4. Approach the water low and slow, shadow off the water, and say why: the trout's window sees you before you see it.
5. Flip a rock, find one bug, and put the rock back.

Timing (180 minutes total)

Segment	Minutes
Arrival, setup, belts and glasses fitted, PFDs on Minnows and non-swimmers, water temperature check	15
Homework check-in	5
Water safety briefing: wading rules, tier depths, PFDs, buddy system, belts, shuffle, fall position, Go / No-Go	20
Stream walk, no rods: riffle, run, pool, seam, eddy; stealth and the trout's window; where would YOU hold	30
Bug hunt: flip rocks in the riffle, kick-seine in pairs, first Bug-Hunt Field Sheets	25
Snack, water, and bathroom break	15
Seam drill: float a leaf down a seam, time its ride, mark three seams and call the feeding side	25

Segment	Minutes
First casts on water: short stroke and roll cast to a marked seam, supervised, every student within sight of a second adult	25
Look Up moment at the best bend	5
Closing circle: homework home, what surprised you today	15

Materials (per student unless noted)

- 1 rod outfit, rigged (yarn fly for Minnows, single barbless fly for older tiers at instructor discretion)
- 1 pair of safety glasses, 1 wading belt
- PFDs required for all Minnow-tier students and any non-swimmer in or beside moving water
- 1 kick-seine net per 3 students, 2 white sorting trays per group
- 1 Bug-Hunt Field Sheet and pencil
- 1 stream thermometer per instructor (no fishing above 68 degrees F)
- Homework sheets (see below)
- First aid kit, throw rope, instructor phone checked for coverage

AGE ADAPTATIONS

Minnow (6-10): rotations of 30 minutes maximum - split the group between the stream walk, the bug hunt, and the seam drill and rotate. Minnows stay ankle deep or on the bank, PFDs on per the program rule, one instructor's eyes on the water group at all times. Let them discover the bugs first, before any casting - kids this age are often more perceptive than adults.

Brook Trout (11-13): full session. Journal-style prompts on the Bug-Hunt Sheet: not just what you found, but what fly matches it and why. Their homework this cycle is bottom contact - the rig, the shot, and the tuck - so preview the rig today and tell them the seams they marked are where it goes live.

Brown Trout (14-17): full session, plus tactical questions on the walk: you see a fish rising at the far edge of that eddy - what do you do first? Ask them to walk a Minnow through the shuffle. Their tight-line homework starts now; tell them Session 4 is where it goes live.

Homework assigned: Minnow Weeks 4-5 sheet (water safety and wading - assigned early on purpose, the week they first wade). Brook Trout Weeks 3-4 sheet. Brown Trout Weeks 3-4 sheet.

Safety brief: eye protection on, always - no glasses, no rod in hand. Lanes and spacing on the bank as on the lawn. Water rules start today: wading belt on every student in the water, any depth; tier depths from the safety standard; PFDs on Minnows and non-swimmers; buddy

system; 1:5 in the water; two adults always; no student fishes alone; off the water at the first clap of thunder and off for 30 minutes after the last; no fishing above 68 degrees F.

Rain plan: light steady rain is fishing weather - carry on with rain gear. Thunder or high, discolored water: move to the pavilion or indoors for the safety briefing, wading-rule practice on the floor, bug ID from preserved samples or the handout, and seam-reading from photos. Reschedule the wet work to the makeup date.

Session 4: Nymphing - Getting to the Bottom

Purpose: the fish lives on the bottom, so we go there - students rig a nymphing setup, learn the tuck cast, and Brown tier goes tight-line.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 4, each student can:

1. Rig a nymphing setup from scratch: indicator set at 1.5 times the water depth, split shot pinched 8-10 inches above the fly.
2. Do the nymph prep before the first cast: rough the fly body on a streamside rock, sharpen the hook.
3. Explain the shot color code: Brown is medium, Yellow is light, Black is heavy.
4. Throw a tuck cast: overpowered stroke, abrupt stop at 12 o'clock or higher, then wait for the pull of the weight and the bounce of the rod tip - the bounce says go - and the nymph tucks under the leader and enters the water nearly vertically.
5. Run the bottom test out loud: no ticks means add weight, dragging means reduce.

Timing (180 minutes total)

Segment	Minutes
Arrival, setup, belts and glasses, water temperature check	15
Homework check-in	5
Rigging clinic: indicator at 1.5x depth, shot 8-10 inches above the fly, color code, nymph prep on a rock	30
Tuck cast on the grass: mechanics, abrupt high stop at 12 or higher, wait for the bounce, 20 dry-land reps each	25
Snack, water, and bathroom break	15
On-water nymphing: tuck casts to marked seams, watch for indicator ticks, THAT'S DEPTH, hooksets on every pause; Brown tier tight-line rotation inside this block	55
Look Up moment	5

Segment	Minutes
De-rig and gear care: flies to the keeper, rods wiped, Clean/Drain/Dry on boots	15
Closing circle: homework home, one adjustment you made today and why	15

Materials (per student unless noted)

- 1 rod outfit with 9-foot tapered nylon leader and nylon tippet (fluorocarbon tippet optional for the Brown tier's nymph rig)
- PFDs required for all Minnow-tier students and any non-swimmer in or beside moving water
- 1 yarn or foam strike indicator, plus 1 spare
- Split shot assortment (Brown, Yellow, Black) - 1 tin per instructor, students pinch their own
- 2 beadhead nymphs (Hare's Ear or Pheasant Tail, barbless)
- 1 pair of safety glasses, 1 wading belt
- 1 hook hone per instructor, streamside rocks are free
- 1 stream thermometer per instructor
- Homework sheets and Four-Elements Drift Scorecards (see below)

AGE ADAPTATIONS

Minnow (6-10): rotations of 30 minutes maximum - rigging game, casting rotation, bank rotation with a bug tray. Minnows fish the indicator rig in the softest water with an instructor at arm's reach, or fish yarn to targets if the water is pushy. Their win is a tick: yell it, celebrate it. If the creek is tough, run the Minnow drift rotation as a 30-minute First Fish block at a pond or stocked pool with the camp handling protocol (wet hands, cradle, 3-second lift, release), and keep the seine-catch fallback ready: one live insect, netted, named, released.

Brook Trout (11-13): full session. They rig everything themselves, measure the shot placement by hand until they can eyeball 8-10 inches, and run the bottom test out loud between drifts. The tuck cast is theirs this cycle - it is their homework.

Brown Trout (14-17): full session, plus the tight-line rotation: indicator off, direct feel only, rod tip leading the flies. Pair it with the Downer-Upper on the water - both parts, downward stop then the fast lift with thumb and forefinger pointing up - for plunge pockets and water directly below them. Log every take they felt and every one they suspect they missed.

Homework assigned: Minnow stays on the Weeks 4-5 sheet for its second week. Brook Trout stays on Weeks 3-4 for its second week. Brown Trout stays on Weeks 3-4 for its second week (tight-line and the Harvey leader build). Every student also takes a Four-Elements Drift Scorecard.

Safety brief: eye protection on, always - no glasses, no rod in hand. Bank spacing two rod lengths. Water rules in force: belts on every student in the water, tier depths, PFDs on Minnows

and non-swimmers, buddy system, 1:5, two adults always, thunder 30/30, 68-degree ceiling. Weighted rigs cast with wider spacing - open the lanes.

Rain plan: thunder or unsafe water sends the session under cover: full rigging clinic indoors on depth-marked buckets, tuck cast mechanics with rod tips into hoops, shot color code and bottom test as call-and-response. Water work moves to the makeup date.

Session 5: The Drift, the Take, and the Bugs

Purpose: students learn to fish a drift like Joe scores one - depth, drift, line control, imitation - and to answer the oldest question in nymphing: rock or trout?

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 5, each student can:

1. Score one of their own drifts on the Four-Elements scorecard and name ONE thing to fix on the next drift.
2. Strike on every hesitation of the indicator or the line - and say Joe's line back: you strike a lot without catching fish, that's the name of the game.
3. Identify 4 of the 5 core bugs from the riffle - mayfly nymph, caddis larva, stonefly nymph, scud, midge - and match a fly to one of them.
4. Tie an Improved Clinch on real tippet; Brown tier ties the Blood Knot.
5. Demonstrate keep-fish-wet: wet hands, cradle, 3-second lift, release.

Timing (180 minutes total)

Segment	Minutes
Arrival, setup, belts and glasses, water temperature check	15
Homework check-in	5
Bug hunt: kick-seine in pairs, Bug-Hunt Field Sheets, what's on the menu today, match the fly - Stream-Reading and Bug Tier sign-offs	30
Drift work on water: nymph rigs through marked seams, Four-Elements scorecard after each drift, one fix named out loud	40
Snack, water, and bathroom break	15
Take detection: rock-or-trout tally over 20 drifts; partner pinch drill on the bank for waiting students	25
Knot lab at the water: Improved Clinch against each student's own stopwatch (beat your own time) for Brook and Brown, Blood Knot for Brown, Knot Mastery Card initials	20

Segment	Minutes
Look Up moment	5
Keep-fish-wet and Clean/Drain/Dry demonstration - Steward Tier sign-offs	10
Closing circle: homework home, hand out the Great Day scorecard and walk one example - points start counting today	15

Materials (per student unless noted)

- 1 rod outfit, nymph-rigged from Session 4 (students re-rig their own)
- 1 kick-seine net per 3 students, 2 sorting trays per group
- 1 Bug-Hunt Field Sheet, 1 Four-Elements Drift Scorecard, pencil
- Small fly assortment matched to local bugs - 3 flies per student, barbless
- 1 pair of safety glasses, 1 wading belt
- PFDs required for all Minnow-tier students and any non-swimmer in or beside moving water
- Tippet spools for the knot lab, 1 stopwatch per instructor
- 1 soft rubber net per instructor, kept wet
- Homework sheets (see below)

AGE ADAPTATIONS

Minnow (6-10): rotations of 30 minutes maximum: bug hunt, drift rotation with an instructor at arm's reach, keep-fish-wet practice on a wet washcloth. Their drift scorecard is thumbs up or thumbs down per element, called out loud. Bug hunt is the star of their day - let it be.

Brook Trout (11-13): full session. This is their homework cycle - rolling the seam and take detection - so the 20-drift tally is their centerpiece. Confidence, not catch count, is the score. Improved Clinch against their own best time.

Brown Trout (14-17): full session. They fish tight-line where water allows and defend their Four-Elements numbers to a partner. Blood Knot introduced. Give them the weight-decision question every drift: what did you change and why. Their homework asks them to think like Joe in writing - tell them to bring it to Session 6.

Homework assigned: Minnow Week 6+ sheet (bug hunting, observation, your first fish). Brook Trout Weeks 5-6 sheet. Brown Trout Weeks 5-6 sheet.

Safety brief: eye protection on, always - no glasses, no rod in hand. Bank spacing two rod lengths, wide lanes for weighted rigs. Water rules in force: belts on every student in the water, tier depths, PFDs on Minnows and non-swimmers, buddy system, 1:5, two adults always, thunder 30/30, 68-degree ceiling. Wet hands before every fish, fish stays in or over water, 3-second lift at most.

Rain plan: steady rain fishes fine - the bugs will not mind. Thunder or blown-out water: indoors for the bug lab with preserved or photographed samples, the partner pinch drill (it was designed for the living room), the personal-best knot lab, and keep-fish-wet on a washcloth. Drift work joins the makeup date.

Session 6: Capstone - Fish It, Prove It, Pass It On

Purpose: students fish independently, finish their badge ladder, score a Great Day, and graduate.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Session 6, each student can:

1. Plan and fish a piece of water independently: observe five minutes first, choose the fly, tie it on with a Davy, choose the cast, adjust the rig without being told.
2. Complete a Great Day scorecard and explain why a high process score is a win, fish or no fish.
3. Demonstrate the remaining badge skills for sign-off.
4. Teach one skill to another student in the teach-back.

Timing (180 minutes total)

Segment	Minutes
Arrival, setup, belts and glasses, water temperature check	15
Homework check-in - the last one; sheets and scorecards on the table	5
Opening circle: read Joe's words, each student names their water, their fly, and their plan	15
Independent fishing with the Great Day scorecard; instructors observe, intervene only for safety or when asked; rolling badge sign-offs streamside	65
Snack, water, and bathroom break	15
Conservation action: stream clean-up of monofilament and litter, or a macroinvertebrate survey compared against Session 5	15
Teach-back: each student teaches one skill to a peer; badge ladder review, Stream School Angler declared where all five are signed at the student's tier standard	15
Certificates, Great Day scorecards reviewed one-on-one, final Look Up moment: one full minute of silence at the water, then Joe's words - we never stop learning	20
Gear return and de-rig, Clean/Drain/Dry, goodbyes	15

Materials (per student unless noted)

- 1 rod outfit - students rig their own, start to finish
- 1 Great Day scorecard and pencil
- 1 pair of safety glasses, 1 wading belt
- PFDs required for all Minnow-tier students and any non-swimmer in or beside moving water
- Fly boxes out, full assortment, barbless
- Badge ladder sheets and Knot Mastery Cards from the full Series
- 1 program completion certificate per student (format-neutral template in Badge_and_Patch_Program), printed and named in advance
- Trash bags and gloves for the clean-up, 1 pair per student
- 1 soft rubber net per instructor, kept wet
- Take-home packet (see homework below)

AGE ADAPTATIONS

Minnow (6-10): the 65-minute independent block runs as three 20-minute rotations plus a changeover: fishing with an instructor at arm's reach, bug hunt, and Great Day scorecard games on the bank. Their teach-back is teaching a parent, a buddy, or a Leader the Davy cue or the fall position - parents at Session 6 are part of the plan, invite them. Certificates get full ceremony. Loud.

Brook Trout (11-13): full independent block. The instructor's job is to stay quiet - this is the After the Series skill arriving early: adjust, read, fish it yourself. Sign off Stream-Reading and Bug, Rig, and Cast Tiers on today's evidence, not on memory.

Brown Trout (14-17): full independent block, tight-line or indicator by their own call, and they must defend the call. They bring their half-page on why Joe fishes minimal weight to the teach-back and read from it. Pair each one with a younger student for part of the block - teaching accelerates learning, and passing it on is the most Joe Humphreys thing a kid can do.

Homework assigned - the take-home extension: Minnow families keep the Week 6+ sheet plus the At-Home Practice Sheet and a fresh Great Day scorecard. Brook Trout takes the After the Series sheet: independence - adjust, read, fish it yourself. Brown Trout takes the After the Series sheet: teach it forward, plus the night-game knot standards and the Blood Knot. Say it plainly at the certificate table: the Series ends today, the fishing does not. Everything after today belongs to you.

Youth Helpers (ages 14-17) - say this at the certificate table: a Brown Trout tier student who has earned the Cast Tier and Knot Tier badges can come back as a Youth Helper, with a signed parent consent and the program's youth acknowledgment. Youth Helpers demonstrate lawn casting, hold targets, tie knots alongside students, and run the paracord Davy drill, always within sight of a certified Harvey Leader and never counted in the ratio. Twenty logged hours earns the Youth Helper patch. Email hello@joehumphreysyouth.org to apply.

Safety brief: eye protection on, always - no glasses, no rod in hand. Bank spacing two rod lengths. Water rules in force: belts on every student in the water, tier depths, PFDs on Minnows and non-swimmers, buddy system, 1:5, two adults always, no student fishes alone even on capstone day, thunder 30/30, 68-degree ceiling.

Rain plan: light rain, fish on - a capstone in the rain is a better story. Thunder or unsafe water: move certificates, teach-backs, badge sign-offs, and the Great Day review indoors, run the conservation talk with the full Spring Creek story, and move the independent fishing to the makeup date so nobody's capstone is a classroom.

The Homework Ladder - Session by Session

The two-week sheets for the older tiers each carry two sessions at weekly cadence, or one month at monthly cadence. Exception: the Weeks 5-6 sheets get one week between Sessions 5 and 6; their unfinished items ride home with the After the Series sheet. This table is the whole map:

Session	Arc weeks	Minnow (6-10)	Brook Trout (11-13)	Brown Trout (14-17)
1	Week 1	Week 1: safety, grip, first cast	Weeks 1-2: grip, short stroke, first knots	Weeks 1-2: the Downer-Upper
2	Weeks 2-3	Weeks 2-3: Davy and Surgeon's	Weeks 1-2, second week	Weeks 1-2, second week
3	Weeks 3-4	Weeks 4-5: water safety and wading	Weeks 3-4: bottom contact, the rig, the shot, the tuck	Weeks 3-4: tight-line nymphing
4	Weeks 4-5	Weeks 4-5, second week	Weeks 3-4, second week	Weeks 3-4, second week
5	Weeks 5-6	Week 6+: bugs, observation, first fish	Weeks 5-6: rolling the seam, take detection	Weeks 5-6: reading adjustments
6	Week 6 → after	Week 6+ continues, plus At-Home Practice Sheet	After the Series: independence	After the Series: teach it forward

The Minnow wading sheet lands at Session 3 on purpose - the same week they first stand in moving water. The After the Series sheet (file names keep "week-7") is never checked in a session. It is the program's handshake on the way out the door.

Badge Integration

Five badges (the Badge and Patch Program names), earnable in any order, all five at the student's own tier standard makes a Stream School Angler. Instructors carry the badge sheets

to every session and sign off streamside, the moment the skill is shown - not at the end from memory.

Badge	Earned by	Earliest realistic sign-off	Most students sign at
Knot Tier	Your tier's knot set, 3x each, unassisted - Minnow: Davy + Double Surgeon's; Brook: adds Perfection Loop + Improved Clinch; Brown: all five with the Blood Knot	Session 5 (tier set complete)	Session 5 or 6
Cast Tier	14+/20 on the Casting Scorecard at the tier's hoop distance	Session 2	Sessions 2-4
Rig Tier	The 6-step Rig-Race at tier standard (Minnow steps 1-2; Brook full rig; Brown full nymph rig from memory at Session 4)	Session 2	Sessions 2-4
Stream-Reading and Bug Tier	3 seams found, feeding side called correctly, plus core bugs ID'd at tier standard (Minnow 3 of 5, older tiers 4 of 5) and a fly matched	Session 3	Session 5
Steward Tier	Keep-fish-wet (3-second lift) plus Clean/Drain/Dry demonstrated	Session 5 (keep-fish-wet demonstration)	Sessions 5-6

A student who finishes the Series short one badge is told exactly which one and invited to show it at any Stream School event - the ladder does not expire.

Make-Up and Weather Policy

Cancellations go out by email from hello@joehumphreysyouth.org no later than 6:00 pm the evening before, or two hours before start time for weather that turns overnight - and the lead instructor confirms with each family by the contact they gave at enrollment. Every Series has one built-in makeup date scheduled on the weekend after Session 6, published at enrollment so families can hold it; a cancelled session slides whole into that slot and the remaining sessions keep their dates. Every session also has an indoor alternative written above, so a rainy Saturday is never a lost Saturday: knots, rigging, mechanics, bug ID, and scorecards all run under a roof, and only the water work waits for the makeup date. On the water, standing rules override everything on the calendar: off at the first clap of thunder and off for 30 minutes after the last, and no fishing when the water is above 68 degrees F - if the stream is too warm on makeup day, we run the conservation session and the students learn exactly why we got off the water. That is not a lost lesson either.

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

The Stream School is free to every student. It runs on donations - financial, and gear, new and gently used.