



## Level 4: Whitewater Rafting - Paddle

### Skills Assessment

**Assessment Overview:** This ACA Assessment Course is designed to evaluate a participant's ability to perform all the skills listed along with demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge. This assessment course provides the participant with the opportunity to receive documentation of having achieved a certain level of paddling ability.

#### **Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):**

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while underwater
3. Independently hold head upright without neck/head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with the assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with the assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket\*
8. Get on / off or in/out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance\*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft\*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance\*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities, and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation\*

*\* To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

**Course Prerequisites:** Must be an ACA Member

**Course Duration:** 1 day

**Course Location / Venue:** This class is taught on moving water up to Class I – III

**Class Ratio:** 6 students : 1 instructor; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 12 : 2



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**Assessor:** Level 4: Whitewater Rafting - Paddle Instructor (or higher)

**Succeeding Courses:**

Level 4: Whitewater Rafting - Oar Skills Assessment

Level 5: Advanced Whitewater Rafting - Oar Skills Assessment

Level 5: Advanced Whitewater Rafting - Paddle Skills Assessment

The sequence of assessment should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.

**Introduction, Expectations, & Logistics:**

- Welcome, introductions, paperwork
- Student & instructor course expectations and limitations
- Explain the assessment procedure
- Course itinerary & site logistics
- Review waiver, assumption of risk, challenge by choice, medical disclosure
- About the ACA
- PFD policy (always wear on the water)
- Appropriate personal behavior
- No alcohol/substance abuse
- Proper etiquette on & off the water
- Respect private property
- Practice Leave No Trace ethics

**Conclusion & Wrap Up:**

- Group debrief / Individual feedback
- Course limitations
- Importance of First Aid & CPR
- Importance of additional instruction, practice, experience
- Importance of an appropriate level of safety & rescue training
- Life sport / Paddling options
- Local paddling groups / Clubs
- Handouts / Reference materials
- ACA Membership forms
- Course evaluation
- Temporary Assessment cards (if applicable)



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**Participant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ACA #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location and venue:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rating:**            *P- Passing*            *N - Needs more practice*            *DNO - Did Not Observe*

Participants must be able to perform all strokes, maneuvers, rescues, and skills in the appropriate venue. In addition, the participant must demonstrate the appropriate level of knowledge for this skill assessment level.

STROKES & MANEUVERS: Note- All Strokes must be performed in a paddle raft with a paddle team in flat or up to class III water setting as appropriate. The participant should be able to:	P / N DNO	COMMENTS
Demonstrate efficient forward paddling 50 yards in a reasonably straight line with and without the assistance of a paddle team.		
Stop the raft from a good speed, forward and reverse with and without the assistance of a paddle team		
Demonstrate efficient back paddling 50 yards in a reasonably straight line with and without the assistance of a paddle team		
Rotate the raft 360° on the spot with and without the assistance of a paddle team		
Turn the raft while underway maintaining speed with and without the assistance of a paddle team		
Maneuver the raft in a figure 8 pattern, forward and backward, maintaining speed throughout pattern with and without the assistance of a paddle team		
Catch relatively small eddy class II-III water		
Maintain position in an eddy in class II-III water		
Demonstrate the ability to surf a raft in a hole or on a wave, maintaining proper body position (Position of Power) and explain when surfing is appropriate		
Demonstrate efficient catch, power & recovery phases of paddle strokes while maintaining proper body position in class II-III rapid		
Demonstrate efficient draw, sweep, pry and		



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rafting-J strokes		
Demonstrate experience and reasonable endurance of captaining on relatively regular class II-III water		
Demonstrate a clear understanding of raft angle while in rapids and angle importance		
Demonstrate ability to correct, change, hold ferry angle and obtain raft angle while in rapid with and without the assistance of a paddle team		
Demonstrate ability to blend strokes in class II-III water		

SAFETY and RESCUE The participant should be able to:	P / N DNO	COMMENTS
Explain the effects of cold water shock		
Explain the effects of hypo/hyperthermia		
Demonstrate raft flip recovery of boat and paddlers in class II-III water		
Bulldoze raft to shore in class II-III water		
Demonstrate high side commands and technique in class II-III		
Demonstrate an understanding of how to unpin a raft		
Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate rescue equipment, including safe use of ropes in a whitewater environment		
Demonstrate proficiency in swimming in class II-III whitewater		
Have the ability to recognize holes, avoid when necessary, and have knowledge of swim through techniques.		
Load and unload paddlers and self in and out of the boat in a safe manner.		

HAZARD EVALUATION AND JUDGMENT The participant should be able to:	P/N DNO	COMMENTS
Demonstrate <i>awareness</i> of and <i>ability</i> to manage objective hazards (e.g. strainers, foot entrapment)		
Demonstrate <i>awareness</i> of subjective hazards (e.g. human factors and perceived risk)		
Demonstrate <i>awareness</i> of group organization and communication while on		



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the river		
Scout class III rapids and assess all the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Objective Hazards</li> <li>● Various lines to navigate rapid</li> <li>● Potential consequences if lines are missed</li> <li>● Options for setting safety and swimmers</li> </ul>		
Demonstrate an ability to choose and execute a plan to run Class III rapids with confidence and control		
Demonstrate knowledge of trip planning and environmental considerations. (e.g. weather, water level, water temps, etc...)		
Demonstrate ability to give an adequate safety talk and paddle talk		

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE/ABILITY	P / N DNO	COMMENTS
The participant should be able to demonstrate knowledge/ability of:		
Raft construction and design characteristics		
The difference between Oar Boats, Paddle Rafts, and Cataracts and the ability to explain pros and cons of each.		
Proper river terminology		
Lifting and carrying rafts, on the side and overhead with a group while maintaining good, safe technique and posture		
Securing boats to rack, trailer, shore or other		

FINAL ASSESSMENT		COMMENTS
PASS	NEEDS MORE WORK	
ASSESSOR		



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<p><i>The assessor must be a current certified ACA Instructor at or above this level.</i></p> <p>IT or Instructor: _____</p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p>ACA #: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Assisting IT or Instructor: _____</p> <p>ACA #: _____</p>	
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