



Level 5: Advanced 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 – IV

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 5: Whitewater Rafting - Paddle Instructor

Succeeding Courses:

Level 5: Advanced Whitewater Rafting - Oar Skills Assessment

ACA Rafting Instructor Certification

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 paddle team in flat or up to class III-IV 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		
Catch relatively small eddy class III-IV water		
Maintain position in an eddy in class III-IV water		
Demonstrate the ability to surf a raft in a hole or on a wave, maintaining proper body position, and explain appropriate use, including as a maneuver		
Demonstrate efficient catch, power & recovery phases of paddle strokes while maintaining proper body position in class III-IV rapid		
Demonstrate efficient draw, sweep, pry, and rafting-J strokes		
Demonstrate experience and reasonable		



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endurance of captaining on relatively regular class III-IV 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 III-IV water		
Demonstrate the knowledge of and ability to “play boat” including playing with strong eddy lines and boofing a raft		

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-IV water		
Bulldoze raft to shore in class II-IV water		
Demonstrate high side commands and technique in class II-IV		
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-IV 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>consistent awareness</i> of and <i>ability</i> to manage objective hazards on and off the river (e.g. strainers, foot entrapment, unstable shore, snakes)		
Demonstrate <i>consistent awareness</i> of and <i>ability</i> to manage subjective hazards (e.g. human factors and perceived risk)		
Demonstrate <i>consistent awareness</i> of and		



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ability to manage group organization and communication while on the river		
Scout class III/IV rapids and assess all of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective Hazards • Various lines to navigate rapid • Potential consequences if lines are missed • Options for setting safety and swimmers 		
Demonstrate an ability to choose and execute a plan to run Class III/IV rapids with confidence and control		
Demonstrate accurate self-perception of all personal skills & abilities presented in this skills assessment sheet. (i.e. does not display overconfidence or underconfidence that could put self &/or group at risk.)		
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 The participant should be able to demonstrate knowledge/ability of:	P / N DNO	COMMENTS
All paddle raft equipment and raft construction, design, characteristics and performance		
The difference between Oar Boats, Paddle Rafts, and Cataracts and the ability to explain the 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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*The assessor must be a current certified
ACA Instructor at or above this level.*

IT or Instructor: _____

Signature: _____

ACA #: _____ Date: _____

Assisting IT or Instructor: _____

ACA #: _____