



Missouri River Academy: FAQ

“What type of weather should I plan for? How is Missouri River Relief prepared for this?”

“The Missouri River Academy takes place right in the middle of summer, so we can say with certainty that you should be prepared for the heat. At MRR, we use preventative measures to keep both our participants and staff safe. These measures include frequent hydration, the use of cold towels, and access to shade/air conditioning, when possible. In preparation for the Academy, we ask that you are well-equipped with items such as sun screen, a shady hat, at least two water bottles, umbrella, rain coat/boots, and more. A complete list of items to bring will be available upon enrollment. “

“What is the Missouri River Action Project? Do I need to do any work ahead of time for this?”

The Missouri River Action project is a research assignment that we require each student to complete by the end of the Academy. Jan weaver, MRR crew member and MEEA director, will lead instruction on the action project. For the action project, each student will identify an issue that in some way affects the Missouri River, and will conduct research - using MRR resources - to develop a solution that addresses their given problem. Now, I know conducting research doesn't sound like a typical camp activity, but at MRR, we believe in finding the right balance between fun and learning, creating an extraordinary overall experience. In addition, research will facilitate a deeper connection that students feel to the Missouri River, thus empowering the next generation of river stewards. Conducting research prior to the Academy is not a requirement, but we highly recommend that students at least identify a few topics that might be of interest before coming to the Academy. Resources for researchable topics can be found on our MRR education page.

“Are there any physical requirements for the Missouri River Academy?”

During the Academy, we will be doing some form of physical activity every day. Some days will be more strenuous than others; for example, one day will be spent riding bikes on the Katy Trail. The bike ride will be more physically demanding than, say, the fourth day, which includes several presentations. Be that as it may, the Academy is not an exercise camp, and we try to be as inclusive of all fitness levels as possible. All we ask is that students be honest about their skill level, particularly concerning bike riding or swimming, and that they keep an open mind. More information will be provided in the registration packets for the Academy.

“What makes this summer camp different from the rest? What kind of activities will the camp offer?”

The Missouri River Academy offers students the unique opportunity to learn about something that they can literally float on during camp! The Academy combines a traditional summer camp structure with a River Relief twist. During camp, students will be able to jump in the pool for a swim, play basketball or volleyball, make s'mores around the bonfire, but also get the chance to learn about the Missouri River. Students get to take a ride on our 24-foot aluminum plated MRR boats, and will explore several areas of interest related to the river, including the history and economics of a river town, ecology and river organisms, as well as human activity. But wait, there's more! Students will also be required to complete a Missouri River Action Project. For this project, students will choose an issue related to the Missouri River, and conduct research throughout the Academy to develop a solution that addresses the issue. For more information on the action project, see our related FAQ question. To be clear, there will not be a dull moment during the Academy, and at MRR, we make sure to pack all of our events with tons of fun. For more information on activities, check out our [MRR education](#) page.

“I've never heard of Missouri River Relief. What makes you qualified to run a 5-day summer camp?”

Missouri River Relief has been hosting the Missouri River Academy for the last five years. While each Academy is different, we attribute this long-standing tradition to the hard work and determination of our staff, volunteers, and presenters. Besides the Academy, MRR has been working since 2001 to connect people to the Missouri River, by coordinating various different events, collectively gathering over 22,000 volunteers. In addition to our experience carrying out programs, MRR Education Coordinator, Kristen Schulte, has over 10 years of experience working in outdoor education, and has personally coordinated the last two Missouri River Academy events. Our staff are well trained, prepared, and motivated, making us an ideal organization to run a complex summer-camp program. To learn more about MRR and its staff, check out our [about](#) page.

“Isn't the Missouri River dangerous, what kind of boats will the students be in?”

Just like with all bodies of water, the Missouri River can be dangerous, if correct safety precautions are not followed. At MRR, we pride ourselves on the standard of safety that we uphold for each and every one of our events. Beginning with a detailed safety talk before anyone steps on a boat, participants are instructed as to the proper behavior required both inside and outside the boat, and then are fitted for a life jacket by one of our friendly, trained staff members. The boats themselves are 24-feet long, and sided with aluminum plating. All MRR boat operators must complete a mandatory training session before they can drive a boat, and our pilots have years of experience under their belt. Rest assured, MRR takes every precaution necessary to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, and participants.

“I notice that Camp Trinity is a religious camp, will students be required to pray at meals?”

In short, no, students will not be required to pray at meals, but they are more than welcome to do so if they like. MRR is inclusive of all walks of life, including beliefs and non-beliefs, and maintains a culture of acceptance. MRR is not a religious organization, and its programs do not operate under any particular religious' faith. We understand that Camp Trinity is a Lutheran facility, and while we respect their beliefs, we do not promote these ideals within our program structure. Nonetheless, we expect that all staff, volunteers, presenters, and participants treat both the staff and property of Camp Trinity with respect. If you have any further questions regarding this manner, feel free to contact MRR Education Director Kristen Schulte at kristen@riverrelief.org.