ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

GOLD STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 4

EO C424.01 – WHITTLE WOOD

Total Time:	90 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-704/PG-001, *Gold Star Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Select an area where natural resources for whittling wood may be found.

Collect sticks that are 11–12 cm long for each cadet.

Collect branches and complete Step 1 on the Whittle a Whistle handout located at Attachment A for each cadet.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TPs 1 and 3 as it introduces the cadet to the craft of whittling wood using a survival knife.

A group discussion was chosen for TP 2 as it allows the cadet to interact with their peers and share their knowledge, experiences, opinions and feelings on the many survival items that may be crafted by whittling wood using a survival knife. Sharing in the discussion encourages the cadet to examine their own thoughts and may prompt them to re-think their previously held ideas. Participating in a group discussion improves the cadet's listening skills and team development.

A practical activity was chosen for TP 4 as it is an interactive way to allow the cadet to whittle wood in a safe and controlled environment. This activity contributes to the development of survival skills and knowledge in a fun and challenging setting.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

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OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall have whittled wood.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to whittle wood so they can learn how to manipulate a survival knife to create useful items. Whittling wood can help a cadet procure food, water and shelter in a survival situation. Whittling wood also keeps the mind occupied while being alone in an environment awaiting rescue.

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Teaching point 1 **Define whittling.**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture



To engage the cadets and develop an interest in the topic, present the cadets with the following questions:

(1) What is whittling?

(2) Who has whittled before? What did you whittle?

WHITTLING

Whittling is described as the art of changing the shape of a piece of wood with the removal of shavings or the cutting of small amounts of wood using a knife or small wedge-edged tool.

To whittle wood:

- hold the survival knife in the dominant hand;
- secure the piece of wood with the non-dominant arm;
- make small precise strokes to remove excess wood and shape the object; and
- adhere to safe knife usage.

Whittling requires no special tools, no special circumstance or any specific type of working environment; just a piece of wood and a knife. True whittling is very simple, the objects are very easily identified, as the knife strokes are plainly visible.

Materials used to whittle are small branches or twigs; however, depending on the size of the item that is desired, a larger piece of wood may be required.



If immediate access to good branches for whittling are unavailable, milled scraps of wood are a fine alternative. Make sure the milled lumber is straight-grained, without knots.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS:

Q1. Define whittling.

Q2. What tools are required to whittle wood?

Q3. What is the main raw material used to whittle?

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ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. Whittling is described as the art of changing the shape of a piece of wood with the removal of shavings or the cutting of small amounts by using a knife or smaller wedge-edged tool.

A2. Whittling does not require any special tools. All that is required is a piece of wood and a knife.

A3. The main raw material to whittle is wood.

Teaching point 2 **Discuss items that can be whittled out of wood.**

Time: 10 min Method: Group Discussion



The point of the group discussion is to draw the following information from the group using the tips for answering / facilitating discussion and the suggested questions provided.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

ITEMS THAT CAN BE WHITTLED OUT OF WOOD

There are a number of items that can be whittled out of wood. Imagination and determination are the driving forces and the ideas one comes up with are only limited to a persons creativity. When lost, many items can be created with the survival knife to help with survival. Items that can be whittled out of wood include:

- a walking stick,
- a splint,
- a hunting spear,
- a sling shot,
- a fire poker,
- a whistle, and
- utensils, such as:
    - spoon,
    - spreader,
    - fork, and
    - knife.

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TIPS FOR ANSWERING / FACILITATING DISCUSSION:

- Establish ground rules for discussion, eg, everyone should listen respectfully; don't interrupt; only one person speaks at a time; no one's ideas should be made fun of; you can disagree with ideas but not with the person; try to understand others as much as you hope they understand you; etc.
- Sit the group in a circle, making sure all cadets can be seen by everyone else.
- Ask questions that will provoke thought; in other words avoid questions with yes or no answers.
- Manage time by ensuring the cadets stay on topic.
- Listen and respond in a way that indicates you have heard and understood the cadet. This can be done by paraphrasing their ideas.
- Give the cadets time to respond to your questions.
- Ensure every cadet has an opportunity to participate. One option is to go around the group and have each cadet answer the question with a short answer. Cadets must also have the option to pass if they wish.
- Additional questions should be prepared ahead of time.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

Q1. What purpose does whittling serve in a survival situation?

Q2. What items do you think could be whittled out of wood?

Q3. Of those items considered, what items do you think could be beneficial in a survival situation?



Other questions and answers will develop throughout the group discussion. The group discussion should not be limited to only those suggested.



Reinforce those answers given and comments made during the group discussion, ensuring the teaching points have been covered.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

The cadets' participation in the group discussion will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

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Teaching point 3 **Explain how to whittle wood using a survival knife.**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture



Before a cadet can whittle an item, they must first learn how to perform basic cutting strokes.



For basic cutting strokes it is recommended that instruction take the following format:

(1) Explain and demonstrate the basic cutting strokes.

(2) Explain and demonstrate each step required to complete the strokes.

(3) Monitor the cadets' performance as they practice each stroke.

Note: Assistant instructors may be used to monitor the cadets' performance and safety.

IDENTIFY BASIC CUTTING STROKES

The following are ways to cut with a knife:

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Straightaway cut. Good for removing a lot of wood or bark quickly. Hold the wood in the non-dominant hand, and using long, firm strokes, cut away from the body with the dominant hand. The dominant hand wrist is locked, and does not bend during the stroke.







Note. Created by Director Cadets 3, 2009, Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

Figure 1 Straightaway Cut

Draw cut. Involves placing the wood in the non-dominant hand and the knife in the dominant hand. Cut toward the body (similar to peeling an apple) with short strokes, using the dominant hand thumb as a brace against the wood. Be sure to keep some wood between the blade and the thumb. It is safer to keep the dominant hand

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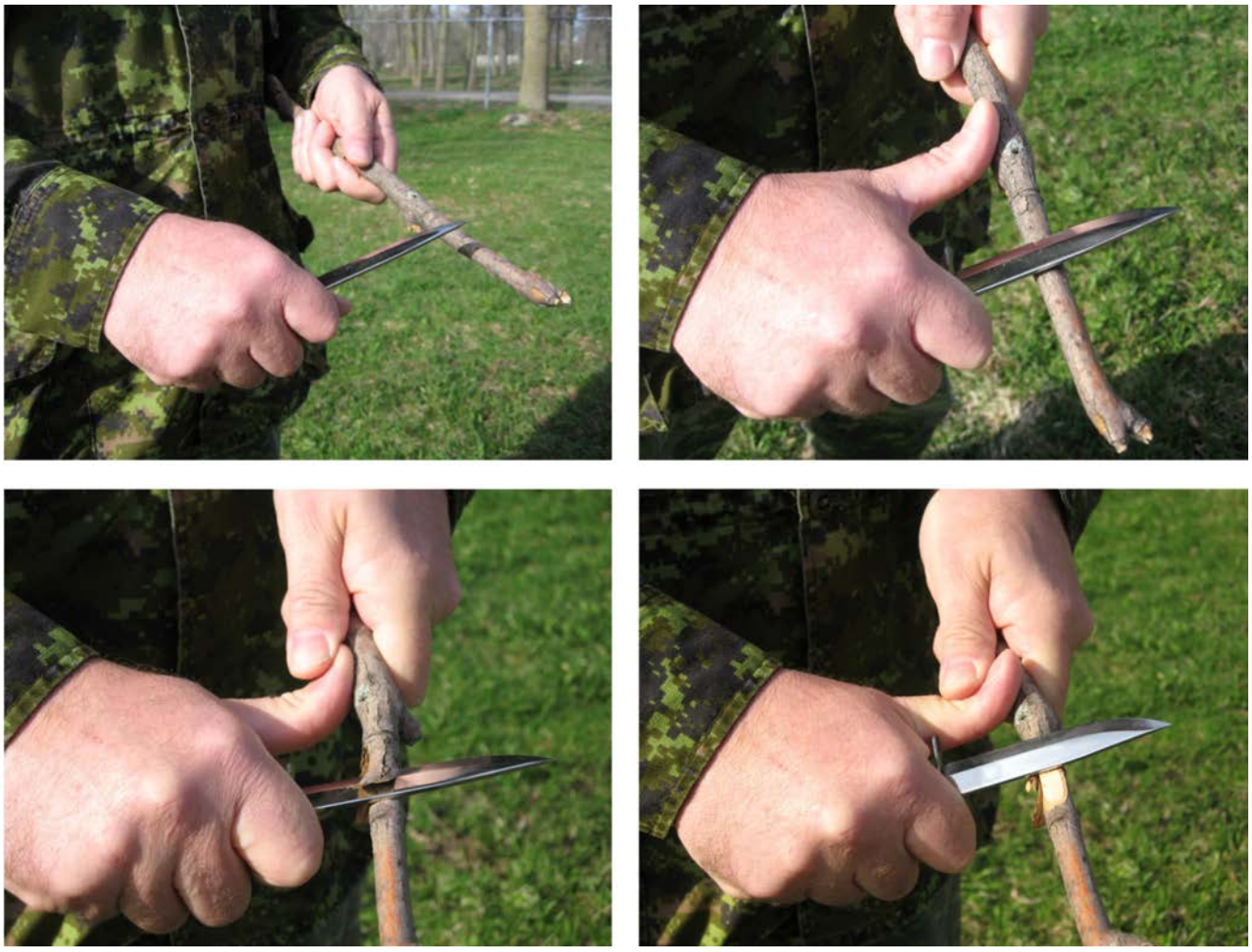
thumb braced on the other thumb, not on top of the wood itself. This decreases the risk of the blade moving into the thumb on its follow-through when it clears the wood.



Note. Created by Director Cadets 3, 2009, Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

Figure 2 Draw Cut

Thumb push. Practical for small cuts where precise control is needed and limited cutting is required. Hold the wood in the four fingers of the non-dominant hand, leaving the thumb free. Grip the knife in the dominant hand,

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keeping the thumb against the back of the blade. With the non-dominant hand thumb, push either the back of the blade or the back of the dominant hand thumb.

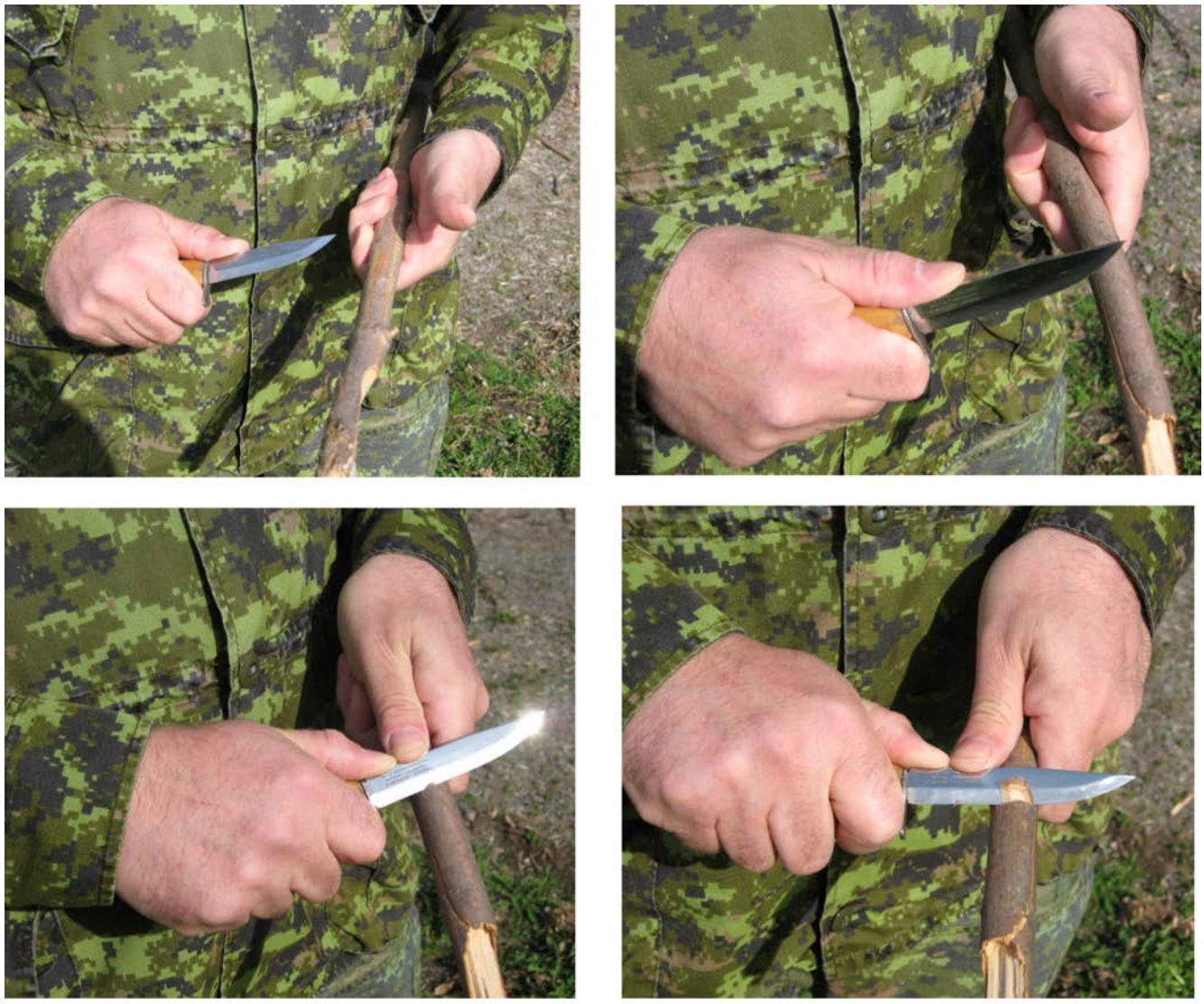

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Figure 3 Thumb Push

Shoulder and latissimus pull. This stroke is among the most powerful, because it slices away from the body and does not require a safety stop to protect the user from the blade. The knife is held in the dominant hand and the wood in the non-dominant hand. The arms are held close to the body so when the two objects meet, the chest provides a leverage point. The knife is held at an angle in the hand such that the stroke leads with

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the handle and the tip of the blade trails. The slice is powered by the shoulders and the back, but the leverage against the chest also helps power it.



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Figure 4 Shoulder and Latissimus Pull

IDENTIFY THE WHITTLING PROCESS

To whittle wood, there are specific steps to follow to successfully create an object. Use the following steps when whittling:



In a survival situation, choose an object that is relatively easy to whittle. A difficult object with many curves and angles requires a meticulous approach, increasing the time required to complete the item.

1. **Determine an object to whittle.** The object selected to whittle are determined based on the needs of the individual in the survival situation. When survival items are limited, the survivor will first determine what to whittle based on priority of needs.

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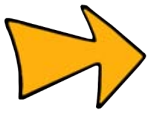

Many whittlers believe that a piece of wood will speak to the whittler—that the object already exists imprisoned deep within the wood, and that it is the whittler's job to let it out.

2. **Select a piece of wood.** The piece of wood should be big enough to whittle down, yet small enough to hold comfortably (depending on the object being whittled).

3. **Ensure the survival knife is sharp.** The knife should be extremely sharp. The sharp blade allows the knife to easily slice and cut away pieces of wood. The actions of the blade are predictable with each stroke. A dull blade requires greater amounts of force and can glance off or move suddenly causing an undesired result or injury. Sharpen if necessary.

4. **Mark the outline, if required.** The item to be whittled may require an outline of the design drawn on the piece of wood to be whittled. The outline guides the cadet to cut and chip the correct areas. This is only required on items that may be more difficult or require a precise design to follow. To mark an outline, use a pencil or pen. If those items are not available scrape the outline on the piece of wood.

5. **Whittle the wood into the object.** Once the design is determined, whittle the item out of the wood.

Teaching point 4 **Explain, demonstrate and have the cadets whittle a whistle using a survival knife.**

Time: 55 min Method: Practical Activity



The whistle is a simple item to whittle out of wood and is a good platform to practice many of the basic cutting strokes, while learning how a simple item can be made from minimal resources. Also, if lost, a whistle could be a key to becoming located by rescuers. This type of whistle would not be chosen in a survival situation, since a drill and wood glue are required.



Provide the cadets with the Whittle a Whistle handout located at Attachment A.

ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to have the cadets whittle a whistle.

RESOURCES

- Survival knife (one per cadet),
- One piece of seasoned (dry) wood, approximately 11–12 cm long with the thickness of a broom handle (one per cadet),
- One piece of wood matching the diameter of the drilled hole (one per cadet),
- Wood glue, and
- Whittle a Whistle handout located at Attachment A.

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ACTIVITY LAYOUT

Select an area where natural resources for whittling wood may be found.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Conduct a briefing to include an explanation of:
    a. the objectives and importance of the activity;
    b. the resources that may be required to perform the activity; and
    c. any safety guidelines that must be followed while performing the activity.
2. Distribute the Whittle a Whistle handout and resources to each cadet.
3. Have cadets whittle a whistle, following the handout procedures step by step.
4. Have the cadets test the whistle.
5. Conduct a debriefing of the activity.

SAFETY

Remind cadets to use the survival knife in a safe manner when whittling wood and avoid whittling toward oneself or in close proximity to others.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 4

The cadets' whittling a whistle will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' whittling a whistle will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Practicing whittling wood with a survival knife in a supervised environment provides an unskilled user with appropriate practices and methods. The survival knife can be a dangerous tool if used incorrectly. Inexperience can cause a serious injury that may threaten survival. Having the skills to manipulate wood keeps one busy in a survival situation, while at the same time creating a useful product.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

Select an area where natural resources for whittling wood may be found.

The instructor shall remind the cadet to use the survival knife in a safe manner when whittling wood and avoid whittling toward oneself or in close proximity to others.

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WHITTLE A WHISTLE

The following instructions describe how to whittle a whistle from two pieces of wood. Step 1 shall be completed by the instructional staff prior to this lesson. However, this step is provided for the purpose of understanding how the whittling of a whistle is completed.

Resources

- a stick or branch that is approximately 11–12 cm long with the thickness of a broom handle, and
- a stick or branch that is smaller in diameter than that of the previous; however has the diameter slightly greater than the diameter of the drill bit used to drill the hole in the first branch.

Instructions

1. Drill a hole in the thick branch. The branch should be approximately 11–12 cm long with the thickness of a broom handle. Stop before reaching the end, as seen in Figures A-1 and A-2.



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Figure A-1 Drill a Hole



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Figure A-2 Drill a Hole

2. Remove the bark halfway around the hole end of the whistle, as seen in Figure A-3.

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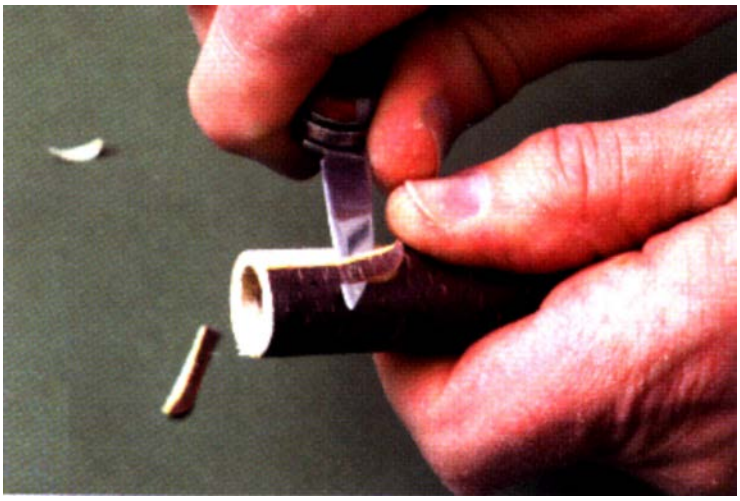

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Figure A-3 Remove Bark

3. Round and smooth the end, as seen in Figure A-4.

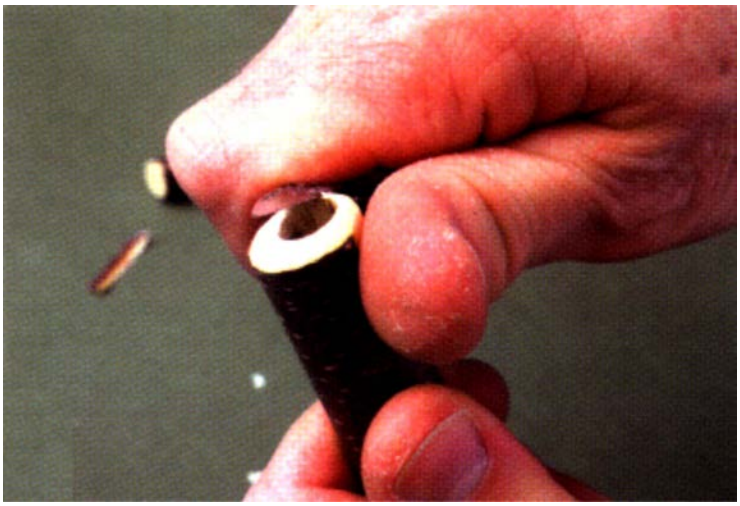

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Figure A-4 Rounding

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4. Notch the barked side of the branch with repeated straight and diagonal cuts until about halfway through the drilled hole, as seen in Figure A-5.



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Figure A-5 Notching the Stick

5. Select a smaller branch that has a diameter slightly greater than the diameter of the hole.



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Figure A-6 Selecting a Smaller Branch

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6. De-bark the end of the little branch, as seen in Figure A-7.

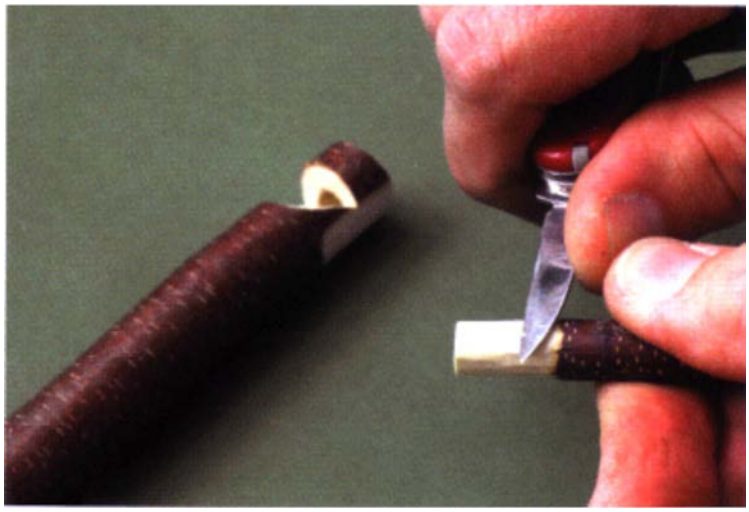

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Figure A-7 Whittling a Dowel

7. Make the smaller branch end into a small dowel that flattens slightly on one side, as seen in Figure A-8.



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Figure A-8 Fitting the Dowel

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8. Fit the dowel piece into the hole, flat side up and reaching to the edge of the hole, as seen in Figure A-9.

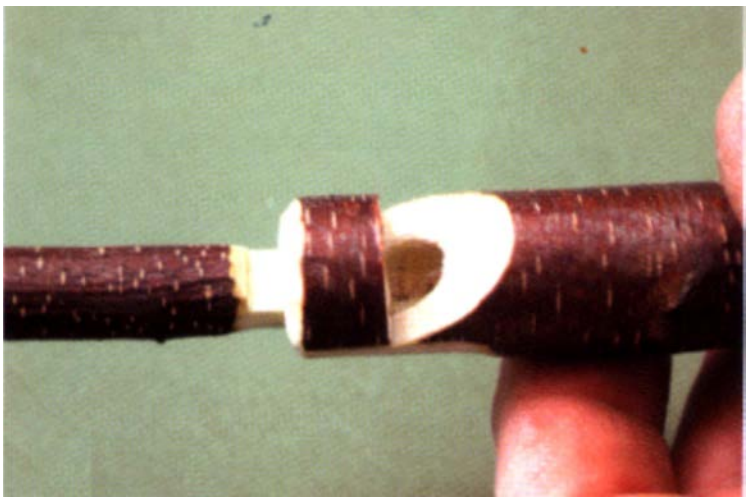

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Figure A-9 Fitting the Dowel

9. Cut the dowel piece flush with the mouthpiece of the whistle, as seen in Figure A-10.



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Figure A-10 Cut Dowel

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10. Fill in any cracks with wood glue. Let the glue dry. Once the whistle is dry, test it by blowing the whistle. If the hole is smooth and clean, it should work. Sometimes, the wood may need to dry longer before it will "whistle".

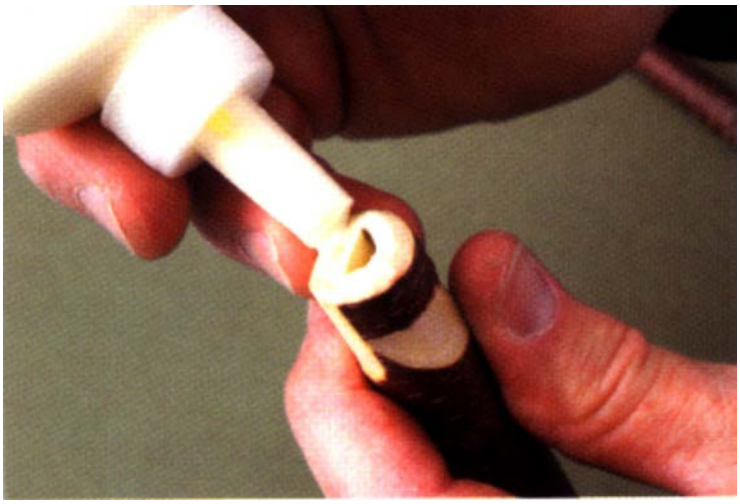

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Figure A-11 Glue Cracks

11. Ensure the whistle looks similar to Figure A-12 and produces a sound when air is blown through the end.

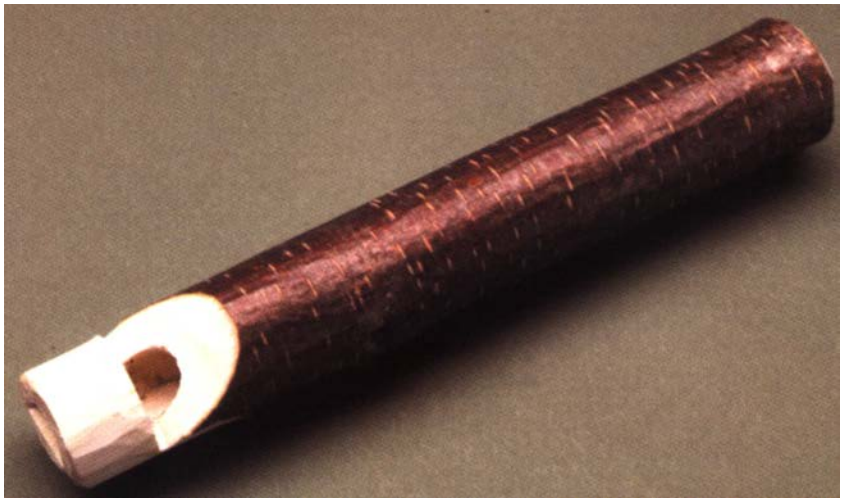

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Figure A-12 Finished Whistle

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