



On a chilly December night (13-15th to be precise), ALT took a group of "well-seasoned" guys and girls down to Castlewellan for an open Canadian canoeing training weekend. Even the ducks thought they were "quackers", but the team members didn't mind a few feathers being ruffled.



Instructor Stevie Brown prepares the equipment, before setting out on the lake



As in any journey, planning and preparation should not be taken lightly.



Teamwork is essential on the canoes, both canoeists must be able to rely on each other fully at all times



Having good equipment and clothing to keep you warm in the water is definitely a life-saver.



Demonstrating how to get back in the canoe, with the help of a team mate, balancing the boat



Of course there are always friends nearby in this case, should the worst happen.



Safety is of prime importance on the water and keeping calm in the presence of danger is the golden rule.



Being able to recover quickly is also important, a tired and struggling canoeist is more likely to suffer harm.



Once on board, keeping balance in the canoe is necessary, and conditions may not always be as favourable as this.



Knowing the rules about avoiding collisions is essential, especially if carrying passengers which are not trained canoeists themselves.



Being able to empty a fellow canoeists vessel without capsizing your own is an important lesson to learn.



There is safety in numbers...



Canadian hats are of course, optional.



Knowing the water you are navigating is essential, both where you are and what currents you may face.