A group of strangers travels into the outback with a guide to gain a survival/walkabout type of experience.

The strangers had come from different backgrounds, and had left their families behind to partake in this experience.

The four individuals in the group consisted of a businessman, an ecologist, a veterinarian, and a computer programmer, plus their guide of course. After a brief introduction, they set out on their multi-week adventure.

After the first few days went by uneventfully, the group woke up on night to discover their guide is gone. All that was left was a cryptic note: “In order to learn to survive, you must first learn to depend on one another.” As morning approached, their guide had still not returned.

The four strangers, concerned about their livelihood once the desert heat of the morning arrived, began to debate their options.

The computer programmer spoke first. He explained, “At my job, writing code is tedious, long work. It is vital to be organized and eliminate any unnecessary steps. We should make a list of our needs, and accomplish them stepwise.”

The businessman continues the discussion. He states “In my profession, proper resource allocation is vital to company success. We should ration out our water and food so we do not waste it needlessly.”

The veterinarian contributes next. He adds, “I’ve treated many animals that have succumbed to the elements. If we are to survive the heat of the desert, we need to build a shelter to stay cool.”

Finally, the ecologist chimes in, “My profession has taught me that in order to survive, plants and animals are always capitalizing on their environment. We need to utilize our surroundings for food, water, and shelter as much as possible, whenever possible.”

At last the next day came, and with it the heat of the desert. The group determined that shelter and water should be priorities, as the heat could dehydrate them quickly. As such, they divvied themselves between the two tasks.

The ecologist and the veterinarian went searching for water. The ecologist, being familiar with the outdoors, noted that their best chance of water was to keep traveling downhill. Lo and behold, they found a tiny creek!

The computer programmer and businessman were tasked with building a shelter. Both being organized individuals, they drew out a structure design first that utilized the landscape (as the ecologist had
suggested), then went in search of the best materials. Soon they had a functional enough shade to hide from the sun.

All throughout the next few days, the four strangers continually overcame small challenges that they were confronted with, including shelter, water, and bugs; they even found some food!

Come the evening of the third day, the guide suddenly reappeared.

Initially angry, the group frantically began to harass him on his whereabouts during their struggles.

The guide replies, “You came out here to learn to survive and explore. You did not need me for that experience. I’ve kept a close eye on you all, and you were never in any real danger.”

The guide asks the group of strangers, now well acquainted with one another, to reflect for a moment. “You have constructed what it means to survive amongst yourselves. You have overcome together what you likely would not have been able to on your own. Your individuality has brought you together and taught you the art of survival.”