

Physical Fitness Plan

Introduction

Physical fitness involves activities that address strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, and body composition. The following activities address all five of these components, with an emphasis placed on cardiovascular endurance. This is a key component in improving one's health and maintaining a healthy body composition.

These activities are designed to be used over a 10 day period using one activity per day. This cycle can then be repeated providing an organized and effective plan for fitness.

Two important principles of exercise should be incorporated into the implementation of these activities. These are the principles of preparation for exercise and progression.

A warm-up is a whole body activity designed to raise one's body temperature in preparation for exercise. Before beginning any of the activities listed here, a warm-up activity should be performed. Easy warm-up activities include walking, marching, or jogging as well as basic calisthenics. Even low levels of dance could be used for the warm-up activity. The *Health Songs* CD for grades K–2, and the *Workout Songs* CD for grades 3–8 provide warm-up activity ideas, as well. The warm-up should not be strenuous, and should last from 5–10 minutes. At that point the body is ready for more rigorous activity.

The second principle of exercise that should be incorporated is that of progression. The body adapts best, and with least risk of injury if a slow and steady progression of exercise activities are incorporated into the fitness plan.

The goal of the program, performing one activity per day for ten days, should be achieved during the first two weeks of implementation. This goal should be achieved from a reasonable progression of activity.

Initially one may use the activities at a frequency of three times per week, preferably every other day. This may include an initial schedule of 5 minutes of warm-up, followed by 5 minutes of activity. Progression would then dictate increasing

the time on a weekly basis. Depending on the activity, you may increase it 3–5 minutes per week until a total of 30 minutes of activity is achieved. The more strenuous the activity is, the slower the rate of progression. At this point your next progression would be to increase the frequency from three days per week to five days per week. Thus, you would eventually reach the goal of one activity per day for ten days. This cycle would then iterate every two weeks. You could then change the order to produce variations in the cycle. A sample chart of this progression is illustrated below.

Following are more detailed descriptions of the five components of fitness. A basic understanding of these components is essential to an effective fitness plan.

Cardiovascular endurance is the ability of the heart and lungs to function efficiently over time without fatigue. Activities that improve cardiovascular endurance involve continuous whole body or large muscle group movements.

Muscular endurance is the ability of a muscle or group of muscles to work repeatedly without fatigue. Improvement in this area of fitness involves using a muscle in repetitive movements.

Muscular strength is the ability of a muscle or group of muscles, to produce force during one maximum contraction. Improvement in this area requires near maximum exertion or use of a muscle or muscle group.

Flexibility is the ability to move a body part freely, without pain around an articulation of the body. Gentle stretching or taxing of one's range of motion will result in improved performance in this area.

Body composition is the amount of body fat as compared with lean mass for an individual. Generally speaking, healthy bodies have a large majority of lean tissue. This component is a result of diet, exercise, and genetics.



Promotes Coordinated School Health Program



Sample Progression Chart (Time in minutes)

DAY	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
WEEK	Warm Up	Activity	Warm Up	Activity	Warm Up	Activity	Warm Up	Activity	Warm Up	Activity
1	5 min	5 min	—	—	5 min	5 min	—	—	5 min	5 min
2	5 min	7 min	—	—	5 min	7 min	—	—	5 min	7 min
3	5 min	10 min	—	—	5 min	10 min	—	—	5 min	10 min
4	5 min	12 min	—	—	5 min	12 min	—	—	5 min	12 min
5	7 min	15 min	—	—	7 min	15 min	—	—	7 min	15 min
6	7 min	17 min	—	—	7 min	17 min	—	—	7 min	17 min
7	10 min	20 min	—	—	10 min	20 min	—	—	10 min	20 min
8	10 min	20 min	10 min	20 min	10 min	20 min	—	—	10 min	20 min
9	10 min	20 min	10 min	20 min	10 min	20 min	10 min	20 min	10 min	20 min

Fitness Activities



Activity 1: Freeze, Crawl, and Stretch

Fitness Components: Cardiovascular Endurance, and Flexibility.

Equipment: None.

Formation: None.

Description: This is a tag game with a few variations. When you are tagged you must stand with your legs apart and your hands either high over your head or with your legs apart and your fingers touching your toes. You must stay in this position until a classmate crawls through your legs. Once this happens you are free to run again. The game continues until the last person is frozen or until the teacher changes the person who is “it”. In the former case, that person is then “it.”



Activity 2: Cats and Dogs

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Endurance.

Equipment: None.

Formation: Two teams with lines at opposite ends of the playing area.

Description: The “cats” stand behind one line and the “dogs” stand behind the other line. The dogs turn and face with their backs to the cats. The cats quietly walk toward the dogs. The teacher waits until the cats are close to the dogs and then calls out “There are cats in the yard!” The dogs turn around and chase the cats back to their line. Any cats that are tagged before reaching the line must become dogs. The roles now switch with the cats chasing the dogs.



Activity 3: Race Car

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Endurance.

Equipment: A handkerchief or small flag, if available, otherwise none.

Formation: Lines drawn at opposite ends of the playing area. One line is the starting line and the other line is the turning line.

Description: All players are considered to be “race cars.” One student will be chosen to be the “starter.” If available, the starter will hold the flag or handkerchief over his/her head. If no equipment is available he/she will raise his/her arm high over his/her head. All other children will be behind the starting line. The starter will countdown “Three, two, one.” At this point he/she will lower his/her arm/flag and the race will begin. The race cars will run to the turn line, turnaround and run back to the starting line. The winning car will now become the starter. You may change the activity using walking, galloping, or hopping.



Activity 4: Survivor

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Endurance.

Equipment: None.

Formation: Two players facing each other with hands above their heads, touching the hands of their partner forming a house or cave. Another person, the survivor, crouches or stands in the cave. Two players are chosen as “tigers.” One student will be chosen as the leader. When the leader gives the signal, the survivors must run out of their cave and find a new cave to hide in, without being tagged by the tigers. Once tagged you must freeze. The teacher picks two of the survivors who are tagged to become tigers.

Fitness Activities *(continued)*



Activity 5: Fitness Day

Fitness Components: Strength, Flexibility, and Muscular Endurance.

Formation: Two lines facing each other or large circle.

Description: Cards are made in advance showing an exercise and a picture illustrating the exercise written on them. They can include some or all of the following. (Some of these are included on the *Health Songs CD*):

Planks



Leg Raises



Pointer



Donkey Kicks



Start



Finish

Open/Closed Pike



Open



Closed

Sit-n-Stretch



Start



Finish

Table/Crab



Flyer (half)



Legs Up

Flyer (whole)



Arms and Legs Up

Reach For the Sky



Students will take turns being the leader. The leader will move to the middle of the circle or lines and pick a card. He/She will then do that exercise along with the class. A new student will then be chosen by the teacher to be the leader. You may have the leader choose more than one card depending on the size of the class.



Activity 6: Aliens and Astronauts

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Fitness.

Formation: Two lines are drawn in the center of the playing area approximately three to five feet apart (depending on grade level, the older the students the further apart). Goal lines are drawn at each end of the playing area parallel to the center lines.

Description: The class is divided into two groups. One group is the “aliens” and one group is the “astronauts.” They line up on their respective center lines facing each other. The teacher calls out “Astronauts” and the astronauts turn and run toward their goal line. The aliens chase them and try to tag as many as possible before they reach their goal line (spaceship). When a player is caught he/she must join the other team. The teacher should drag out the name to create suspense and initiate quick reactions. The process is repeated with the new team alignments.



Activity 7: Crab Relay

Fitness Components: Strength and Muscular Endurance.

Formation: Two lines 10–20 feet apart depending on grade level. One is the starting line and one is the turnaround line. Four to five single file lines consisting of five to six students each. The first student in each line is in crab position (See diagram from Activity number 5 on the previous page). Upon hearing the start command, the student is to crab walk (i.e., traverse the floor by staying in the crab position) to the turnaround line and then back to the starting line where he/she must high five the next student who then crab walks to the turnaround line and back. This process iterates until all team members in the line have completed the task. The first team to have all team members complete the crab walk wins. The teacher can change teams and repeat the activity.



Activity 8: Jungle Ball

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Endurance.

Equipment: 3–7 soft stuffed animals (jungle animals preferred).

Formation: A large circle with all children sitting and facing toward the center of the circle. Students are numbered 1–10 depending on the size of the class. (The smaller the class the lower the number). The stuffed animals are placed randomly in the middle of the circle. The students are told that when they are called they will enter the jungle and be attacked by wild animals. The teacher will then call out a number and all of the students with that number will run into the circle and grab a stuffed animal. Once they have an animal their goal is to throw it at another student whose number was called and is inside the circle. They must hit him/her below the waist otherwise it will not count. If you are hit you must sit back down in circle formation. When two people are left they are declared the jungle survivors (winners). The teacher then starts over by calling out a different number.



Fitness Activities *(continued)*

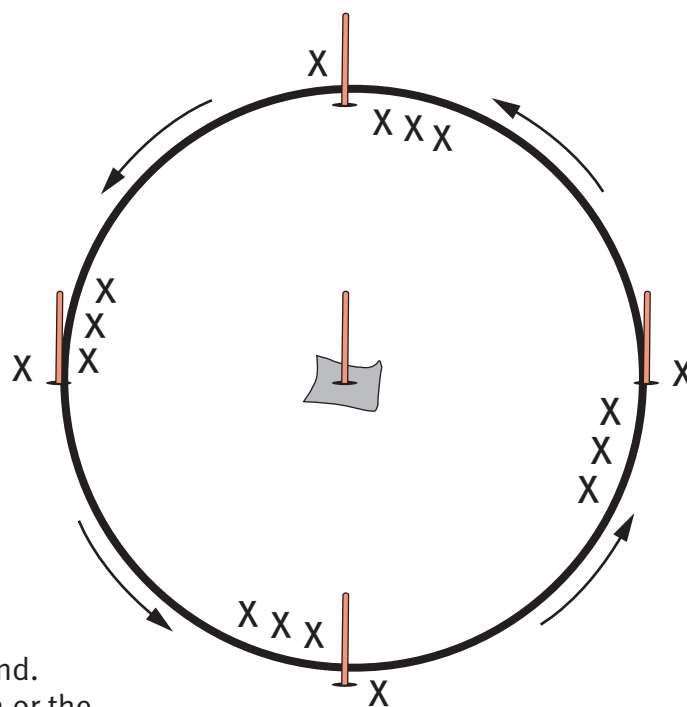


Activity 9: Bean Bag Balance

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Endurance and Balance.

Equipment: Four bean bags, five different colored pins, one scarf.

Formation: A large circle needs to be drawn on the playing area. Four pins are placed equidistant around the circle. One pin is placed directly in the center of the circle, on top of the scarf. The class is divided into four teams of four students each. Each team begins at a pin with the first player standing outside the circle, next to the pin. The rest of his/her team is standing inside the circle in a single file line behind the first player (see diagram). The first player places a bean bag on his/her head. When the teacher gives the start command the first player in each line walks quickly around the outside of the circle balancing the bean bag on his/her head. If it falls he/she cannot catch it but must let it hit the ground and then pick it up, place it on his/her head and continue. When he/she gets all the way around the circle he/she gives it to the next person in line and then sits at the back of his/her line (inside the circle). The last player on the team will complete the circle and continue around his/her pin, holding the bean bag in his/her hand. He/she will then run into the center of the circle to grab either the pin or the scarf. Grabbing the pin wins first place. Grabbing the scarf wins second place.



Activity 10: Frozen Obstacle Course

Fitness Component: Cardiovascular Endurance.

Formation: Large Circle with students facing toward the middle.

Equipment: None.

Description: The teacher numbers the students 1–10, or greater depending upon the size of the class. The teacher then calls out a number and those students run into the middle of the circle. They continue running inside the circle until the teacher yells “Freeze”. They then stop where they are and stand straight with the arms at their sides. The teacher then calls out a second number and that group must now walk quickly and cross the circle to a spot opposite of where they are standing, without touching any of the “frozen” obstacles. You can vary this activity by having them run instead of walk.