

“Learn how fitness and cooperative learning go hand in hand!”
Share The Wealth National PE Conference
Jekyll Island, Georgia

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Session Description:

Many educators see the route toward teaching health-related fitness concepts as an individual journey that each student navigates on their own to find the balances and personal interests along the way. However, cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance and flexibility can all be enhanced through cooperative learning opportunities. Reaching the affective domain while teaching health related fitness provides students an opportunity to excel with, rely on, and benefit from others. For example, a recent study conducted by Jelalian et al. (2006) found a connection between weight loss of adolescents and social interaction, citing participants involved in adventure therapy lost more weight and maintained that weight loss much longer than those in the cognitive behavioral weight control program which was combined with aerobic exercise. The results from the study indicated that the reliance on peers to support change was a major contributing factor to the outcome. With this in mind and as we prepare students for the future, providing opportunities for cooperative learning to demonstrate the power of 21st century Life and Career skills becomes a must in any physical education program.

During this session, participants will have the opportunity to experience several different activities which target health-related fitness components and promote cooperative learning. Participants will experience engaging activities as well as come away with motivational strategies that will enhance the learning of health-related fitness concepts for students in grade levels 6-9. Session attendees will participate in activities that reach NASPE Standards 3 and 4, but also reach deep into NASPE Standards 5 and 6.

In summary, participants will leave this session with new tools and a greater understanding of how cooperative learning and the “teaching for” the affective domain can be used to enhance the learning of health-related fitness concepts through engaging activities that promote students to learn with, by, and for each other.

Activities:

Run for the Colors and Muscles*

**Run for the Colors and Run for the Muscles are two similar activities however for simplicity purposes; Run for the Colors will be explained fully while the variations for Run for the Muscles will be expanded on once Race for the Colors is explained.*

Description: Students work together in groups against other same-sized groups to search for colored markers placed under dome-shaped cones.

Goal: To increase communication between teammates, promote fairness, increase and cardiorespiratory endurance for a 10-15 minute period.

Equipment: Around 100 dome-shaped cones (other cones work yet these work best), different colored markers, marking sheets

Directions: Spread out hundred dome cones throughout a designated area (the larger the area the more moving). You can use any amount yet we prefer to place 10 different markers under 10 random cones spread out in the area. Split students into their groups (group size can range from 3-8). Each team receives a team marking sheet with one starting color that is different than all other groups (prep-work you will have to do ahead of lesson). The directions will say..."your task is to find the ___marker; once you find it, gather ALL of your group members and meet the teacher for your next color. The team that finds the most colors within ___ minutes wins!"

● Variations:

- Team that finds all 10 colors first is declared the winner. All remaining places are determined accordingly.
- Increase or decrease the number of markers.
- Add exercise tasks or things for team to do under cones to earn additional points. This works well with the timed version since teams aren't only focused on getting colored markers (provides some strategizing for teams to consider).
- If you want to avoid giving students paper all together, you could have students leave a streak on their arm for the colors are they are expected to find (in their team's proper order) by having each team member get 1-2 colors each and then require the team to line up to show they have the correct colors and correct order. Then again, this might make some students mad for having to leave marker prints on their arm!
- Have students perform a wall sit for 10 seconds while they wait for the teacher to give them their next color. Teammates have to count out loud together.

● Extension:

- Have teams pick up the cones and award points for most cones picked up and/or markers.
- Teams will eventually figure out to not spread out so much however this only occurs when teamwork, leadership, and cooperation among team members is present. To promote these key qualities, consider playing this game and then discussing what made a team successful. Or, consider offering key guiding questions which allows each group to consider the strategy for the next game.

● Helpful Tips:

- This works well as an introductory activity since most of the fun of this game is figuring out where the markers are. As far as preparation goes for the teacher, he/she needs to have a code sheet which designates different teams to find different colors. Be prepared for mass organized chaos...consider using student assistants to help out with keeping track of each team's color order.
- By requiring the team to come back to the teacher together, this forces teams to work together and prevents "group splitting". Remember this and don't give the next color out unless all teammates are present. It's okay for groups to split up while looking, yet once the color is found the only way to receive their next color is to make sure that all team members are present when meeting the teacher.
- Can be used at most grade levels (exclude K-2 learners and potentially 3rd graders if not developmentally ready).

Race for the Colors Team Sheet

Directions:

Your first task is to find the _____ marker

Once you find this marker, highlight the area here

Then gather ALL of your group members and meet the instructor for your next color.

Marker Color #2

Marker Color #3

Marker Color #4

Marker Color #5

Marker Color #6

Marker Color #7

Marker Color #8

Marker Color #9

Marker Color #10

The team that finds the most colors within 10 minutes or is the 1st team to find all 10 markers is declared the winner!

Run for the Muscles:

- Same concept as Race for the Colors however rather than simply filling in bubbles, have a body chart with muscles listed and have each group attempt to find not just the color but also identify the muscle by coloring it in with that particular color.

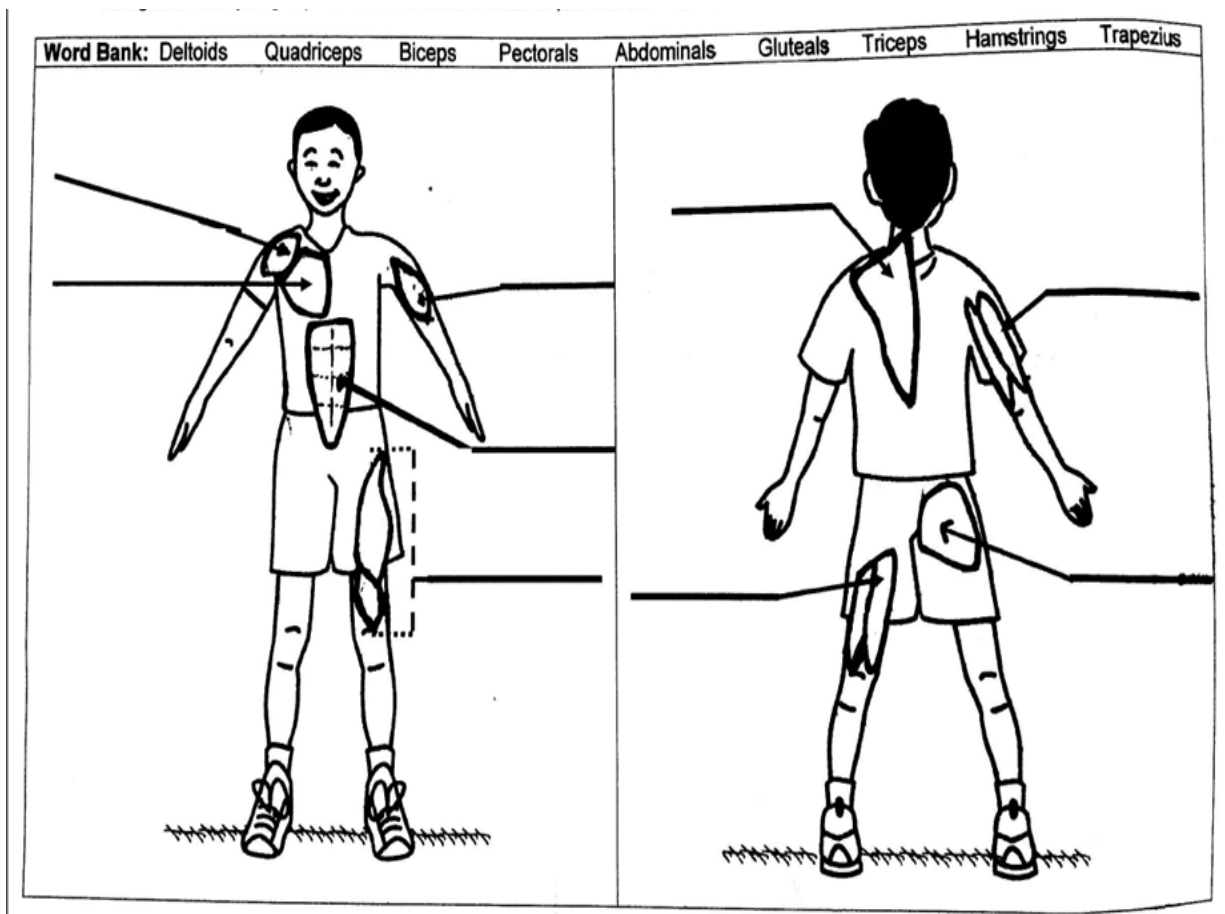
Race for the Muscles

Directions:

Your first task is to find the _____ muscle group.

Once you find this muscle group, highlight the area on the body pictured below with the marker you found.

Then gather ALL of your group members and meet the instructor for your next muscle group.



Muscle Hunt

Description: Students will work together in groups and race against other groups to find muscle names and then identify them on a wall chart before other groups are able to do the same thing.

Goal: To increase cardiovascular and muscular endurance as well as verbal communication skills and teamwork.

Equipment: For 6 teams...108 envelopes (6 sets of 9 different muscle groups and 54 different exercises), 6 human body posters (see human body picture in the Race for the Muscles description), 1 large basket (for holding the envelopes), and 1 smaller basket for each team (used to keep all completed exercises)

Directions: Place students in teams of 3-5 per group. Provide each group with a wall poster and small basket and have them find their own "home base" area. Place a basket in equidistant to all groups (i.e. middle) with the envelopes in the basket. On go, one person per team will move to the basket, take one envelope and open it up when he/she returns to group. Then, one of two things will occur:

- If the group's envelope is an exercise, the entire group performs the exercise together and places the envelope in their small basket.
- If the group's envelope is a muscle group, the group determines if they need it to complete their muscle chart and places it on the chart.

At this point, a new teammate will either go and get a new envelope while carrying the old envelope (only if it's a muscle envelope) and place it in the in the large basket or just get a new envelope and take it back to their team. This process is repeated until a team is able to complete their muscle wall chart first. The teacher needs to verify that the muscles are correct before ending the game. This is the base game.

- Variations:
 - Have various ways to earn points (all three of these variations can be used in game and played multiple times):
 - First to fill in muscle chart
 - Team that completes the most exercises together
 - Team that worked together the best (teacher's choice)
 - Have teams fill in the front side of the body before the back side or vice versa.
 - End the game after the first 3 teams complete the muscle wall chart instead of just the first team that does that.
 - For secondary levels, have teams place their exercises into categories and then show another team how those exercises workout particular muscle groups.
- Extension: Allow the teams to take back exercise envelopes to trick other teams into thinking they are returning muscle cards when in fact they aren't! This could easily backfire though since they are giving up their own exercise envelopes which count toward points at the end of the game. Each team should ponder this decision in the extended version.
- Helpful Tips:
 - Consider providing learners unfamiliar with muscle groups a word bank.
 - Example exercises: Penguin walk, V-sit, Hearty laugh, Wall push-up, push-up, wall sit, knee slaps, tuck jumps, line jumps, straddle jumps, alternating lunges, burpies, slide through cones, curl-ups, mountain climbers, Stork stands, Yoga poses, group balances (only if practiced in Ed. gymnastics unit prior), movement around area, jump rope with no rope, grapevine in unison, any cards from FitDeck, etc.

Look Up, Look Down and Run

Description: A fast-paced anaerobic activity in which students sprint from group to group after playing an extremely quick elimination game

Goal: To maintain a fast pace within the activity so that students experience anaerobic activity

Equipment: 1 polyspot per group of six

Set-up: Divide students into teams of about six and give them one polyspot to indicate their place. After the framing of the activity, the groups should be spread quite a distance apart so that there is good sprinting distance between groups.

Framing: Say to students: This activity is best done quickly! We will practice Look Up/Look Down here in small groups before we spread out. The goal is for each person to do a series of running sprints and for the class to stay as active as possible."

- 1 One person in each group is the caller. When that person says, "look down", everyone looks down. While looking down, they choose someone else in the group, without letting them know. Immediately, the caller says, "Look up!" Everyone looks directly at their chosen person, and tries to make eye contact. No averting of eyes or changing targets. Look and stare at your chosen person.
- 2 If a pair makes eye contact, they are both deemed "out". Only these individuals who were caught looking at each other they must immediately cry out and sprint to another group and join in to play another game.
- 3 If the caller of a game gets out, get a new caller...very simple!

Helpful Hints:

- Have the small groups spread out around the play area and not jumbled up. Complete one round for practice without changing groups to ensure everyone understands the rules.
- If one group gets too small, have them run in place until more people arrive or recruit new members.
- Keep the activity going for as long as possible.

Donkey Rodeo

Description: Students race other groups the distance of the gym as they attempt to throw a hula hoop over their partners' legs as they do a Donkey Kick.

Goal: To fatigue core and upper body muscles doing Donkey Kicks and to promote collaboration between teammates

Equipment: 1 hula hoop per 2 people

Framing:

Say to students: "Have you ever been to a rodeo? What are some rodeo events? (Bull Riding, Barrel Racing, Calf Roping, Bronco Busting...) Today we'll be doing our own version of a lassoing event - Donkey Hooping. Here is how it goes. The intent of this session is to get a good upper body workout while racing to win the rodeo competition. It is also important that you take personal responsibility for the type of donkey kick you can safely do with your body."

- 1 Teach the following moves to the class, and give them time to practice each:
 - Donkey Pose: Both hands on the ground, one leg pointed up in the air and held up in the air

- One-armed Donkey Pose: One hand on the ground, opposite leg in the air Modified Donkey Kick: Kick the legs up one at a time, instead of with both feet at the same time.
 - Donkey Kick: With two hands on the ground, kick both feet together into the air.
- 2 Divide the class into pairs, and give each pair a hoop.
 - 3 Challenge the students to throw the hoop over the legs of their partner as they do the Donkey Pose or the One-Armed Donkey Pose.

DONKEY HOOPING - NOVICE ROUND

- 1 Competition begins with pairs standing behind the start line. Set the finish line a moderate distance away (25 yards or so).
- 2 The event is played just like Hoop me Rhonda, one student from each pair runs forward, gets into their Donkey Pose, while their partner hoops their leg. If successful, the Donkey who was lassoed stays put, the thrower runs ahead, and they change roles.
- 3 When a hoop misses the Donkey, the Donkey stays in the pose while the thrower tries again.
- 4 The thrower can't move any closer.
- 5 Play continues until the teams reach the finish line.
- 6 If a Donkey is not hooped, the hoop must return to the last tossing point. The Donkey may move closer if necessary.
- 7 To begin the relay, one partner will enter the play area, while the other remains behind the start line with the hoop. The hoop is tossed over the Donkey's leg. Once a successful toss is made, the thrower runs past the Donkey and prepares to receive the hoop.
- 8 When pairs have had a chance to practice, announce the first four- minute round.
- 9 The goal is to see how many lengths of the play space can be covered by each team over a four-minute period.
- 10 Before beginning, ask each partnership to decide on a goal for their first round. Have them record their goals.
- 11 This is a good time to remind students that setting STAR goals is important when engaging in a fitness routine or plan. Teach or review STAR goals at the start of this lesson (Specific, Trackable, Achievable, Relevant)
- 12 After each round, give students a chance to record how they did, brainstorm and practice improvements, and revise their goals.
- 13 Complete as many fast-paced rounds with short rests between as time allows.

DONKEY HOOPING - ADVANCED ROUND

- 1 Repeat as above, this time using the Donkey Kick instead of the Donkey Pose.
- 2 Give pairs a chance to practice the technique, and explain that their scores may be much lower due to the degree of difficulty for this event.

VARIATIONS:

Donkey kicks provide great core muscle and upper body exercise. Any activity that gets students doing them can be useful. Additional ideas include:

- Donkey Kick Baseball: one partner pitches a soft beach ball to another who tries to Donkey Kick it out of the park.
- Students see how many Donkey Kicks they can do in one minute.
- Donkey Toss: Donkey Pose is held until the partner misses three throws of the hoop. After each throw, the; thrower must step back at least one full stride.

Closure:

Ask students to reflect on their own ability to hold the Donkey Poses, and to do the Donkey Kick. Have them record this in their journals.

- What muscles did you rely on in this activity?
- Did you manage to do the appropriate type of Donkey Kick for your body?
- How would you rate your arm strength in comparison to a year ago? Do you think you could have done a Donkey Kick then? How many Donkey Kicks do you think you accomplished today?

Circle the Wagons:

Description: 6-8 students hold hands in a circle with one person standing unattached in the middle of the circle. Students must use verbal communication and teamwork to complete the relay race against other groups.

Goal: To increase cardiovascular endurance as well as verbal communication skills and teamwork.

Circle the Wagons (Race Blindfolded)

- 1 6-8 students form a circle by holding hands. One student stands in the center of the circle unattached. The person in the center of the circle is blindfolded.
- 2 The group will be racing other groups down to the end of the gym. The students in the circle must use verbal communication skills to effectively and safely reach the other end of the gym.
- 3 Rotate through until all students have had a chance to be blindfolded in the center of the circle.

Circle the Wagons (Relay Race/No Blindfold)

- 1 6-8 students form a circle by holding hands. One student stands in the center of the circle unattached.
- 2 The group will be racing 6 laps (same number of students in group) of the gym back and forth.
- 3 Students work together to safely and effectively get to the other end of the gym.
- 4 Once they make it to the end of the gym, the student in the middle switches places with someone in the circle, and they run the next lap.
- 5 Students keep switching students to be in middle (everyone should be in the middle only once) and run the designated relay laps.
- 6 If numbers are uneven, one student may need to be in the middle again so that all students run the same number of laps for the relay race.

Closure

Students may reflect on these questions:

- How many steps did you get on your pedometer during this activity?
- Was it more fun to do this relay race than just running sprint line drills? Do they both accomplish the same fitness goal?
- What communication strategies did you need to use to safely reach the other end when one student was blindfolded?