Adventure Activities to Achieve Fitness
Health and Physical Activity Institute
JMU, July 23, 2008

Presenter: Barry Trent
Coordinator of Health, Physical Education and Driver Education
Roanoke County Public Schools
5937 Cove Road NW
Roanoke, VA  24019
540-562-3900 ext. 10255
btrent@rcs.k12.va.us

This workshop will provide an opportunity to experience a variety of adventure based activities, for middle and high school students, designed to enhance the health related fitness components. Participants will be actively involved in activities taken from the Project Adventure book:

Achieving Fitness, An Adventure Activity Guide,
Middle School to Adult
by Jane Panicucci
with Lisa Faulkingham Hunt, Ila Sahai Prouty and Carolyn Masterson.
ISBN: 0-934387-29-x

This book may be purchased through Project Adventure: http://www.pa.org

The notes below are a summary of the activities. For complete details and many more activities I recommend the book!

Nemeses and Guardian Angel  (not in book)

In a random formation participants are asked to choose one person (without telling anyone) in the group that will be their Nemeses and another to be their Guardian Angel. The object is to always keep your guardian angel between you and your nemeses as the group moves around in general space.

Sumo Greeting

Procedure:
1. Explain that a proper Sumo greeting should serve as a warm up for what's coming up next in class - more work out of the muscles!
2. Students will feel their legs working if they are doing the activity properly.
3. Demonstrate the Sumo Greeting: With feet shoulder width apart, hands on hips, back straight and pelvis tucked in, the "sumo" takes one wide step out with the right foot, then one wide step out to the left with the left foot, then pulls the hips toward the floor, in a squat position, all while making an appropriate Sumo sound (grunt).
4. Give everyone a chance to channel their inner Sumo by practicing as a group.
Encourage the role play and serious theatrical antics of a proper Sumo Greeting!

Variation: To add more action to this warm up, introduce the "Sumo Wave." Remaining in a circle, one student begins the greeting, which is then passed both left and right around the circle. Each student passes the greeting, with the goal of not being caught between two Sumos. Once someone is cornered between two Greetings (inevitably!) that student must then make his or her way — Sumo style across the circle to someone else to begin the wave again in a different spot. They may not pass the greeting to their neighbors in the circle.

Challenge Circles

Challenge by Choice is a core concept for Project Adventure, and states simply that it is the responsibility of each individual to set his/her own level of challenge in every activity, with a goal of stretching themselves.

Goal: For students to learn the concept of Challenge by Choice, and of identifying one's individual stretch zone, comfort zone and stress zone.

Materials: Two boundary ropes

Setup: Lay one rope in a circle, and lay the other rope in a larger circle around it, making two concentric circles or a donut shape.

Framing:
Say to students: "Let's learn a bit about each other, and how we stretch during this warm-up activity."

Procedure:
1. Invite the group to stand around the outside circle. Place yourself in the center circle, in the middle of the donut.
2. Explain that the inner circle represents the comfort zone. For example: "When I'm in my comfort zone, I am not challenged, nor am I doing anything new. Watching TV might be in my comfort zone."
3. Next, take a step into the area between the two ropes. Explain that this area is the stretch zone and represents a place where one is not comfortable, but not stressed either. For example, going to your first dance lesson might cause butterflies in the stomach, but they are manageable.
4. Finally, explain that the outer circle will represent the stress zone, or panic zone. The stress zone represents a place where one is very uncomfortable, and stressed. For example, speaking at the microphone in front of the whole school might cause sweating and a rapid heartbeat.
5. Explain that you will make a series of statements. Ask the students to decide in which zone each statement places them - their comfort zone, their stretch zone, or their stress zone - and to place themselves in the circles accordingly.
6. As each new statement is made, ask students to move as needed.
7. Ask students to perform the tasks without talking.
8. Before beginning, tell students that there are only two guidelines: To go with their gut responses to the topic, and to be concerned only with themselves, and not other people in the group. Remind students to be respectful of where people choose to go, and observe the movement in the room.

9. Suggested beginning topics are:
   - Cooking a meal at home
   - Sharing your feelings with a friend
   - Seeing a spider

10. Next, move to some health-related fitness topics, such as:
   - Running a road race
   - Doing karate
   - Participating in a conditioning class
   - Trying to control your weight
   - Fitness testing at school!
   - Playing basketball
   - Riding your bike

11. Continue to mix in topics as needed, to keep students focused:
   - Skipping in public
   - Wearing dress clothes
   - Speaking in front of the class
   - Speaking in front of the school
   - Joining a fitness center
   - Sweating from a workout
   - Drinking water
   - Doing a cartwheel
   - Swimming in a pool
   - Swimming in the ocean
   - Doing 100 sit ups
   - Wearing workout clothes

12. Ask participants to reflect. “Were we ever all standing in the same zone at the same time? What were the differences that you saw? Were you surprised by the similarities and differences in the group?

Closure:
Ask students:
Where do you think we all learn the most, when we are in our comfort, stretch, or stress zones?
In what zone do we gain the most fitness when exercising? Emphasize that our stretch zones are individual and different, and that working toward fitness requires us to be in our physical stretch zones most of the time.
What does a stress zone look like for health-related fitness? (over-exertion, in the stress zone)
What does a comfort zone look like? (under-exertion, in the comfort zone).
Fill the Basket (Set Goals)

Description: Students set group goals and collaborate to toss balls into a basket.

Goal: For students to practice the concept of Setting Goals while practicing throwing skills

Materials: Box or bucket, enough balls to fill the bucket

Setup: Place a bucket in the center of a designated play area, the equivalent of half or all of a gym. Use lines on the gymnasium floor, rope or cones to mark boundaries for the throwers. Have players stand outside the boundaries. Place the balls, also out-side the boundaries, in front of the players. Place a bucket in the center.

Framing: "In this activity we need to set realistic goals so that we can monitor our progress. We will use STAR goals to think about this."

Procedure:
1. Introduce the STAR goal model that is included in the introduction of the book. Inform students that as this game progresses, they will have to set STAR goals.
   - S Specific   T Trackable   A Achievable   R Relevant
2. Explain that the object of this game is to have the group get as many balls as possible into the bucket in a two-minute time period.
3. There are two types of players: the throwers and the retrievers. Ask the class to decide how many throwers and how many retrievers they will have for each round. Throwers must remain behind the established boundaries.
4. The retrievers may stand wherever they wish, but they may not "help" the balls into the bucket in any way. Their job is simply to retrieve missed shots and run the balls back to the throwers. They may not throw or roll the balls back; they must be delivered hand to hand.
5. Throwers may attempt to throw the balls directly into the bucket, or to bounce them, depending on the ball being used.
6. Players may not trade positions during a round. Retrievers must remain retrievers, and throwers must remain throwers, for the round.
7. At the end of the first round, allow players to make adjustments to their positions, and discuss changing their tactics.
8. Note the number of balls in the basket, and challenge the group to set a STAR goal for Round 2.
9. Continue with rounds until the goal is achieved or time runs out. If it seems that the group has set an unrealistic goal, ask if they would like to reconsider their goal and set a new one. If the team has set a goal that is too easy, ask them how this fits into the concept of working in their "stretch" zones. A Relevant Goal is one that will stretch them relative to their last attempt.

Closure:
Review the goals set during the activity. Ask students:
• Were our goals Specific? Trackable? Achievable? Relevant?
• How can using STAR goals help us to achieve our fitness goals?
Opposites Contract

Goal: For the group to understand the concept of muscle contraction and the function of opposing muscles

Materials: 1 small block, about 1” x 1” per participant. Balls may work but not as well.

Setup: Gather the class in a circle, clearing a play area behind the group.

Framing: Ask students: "What does it mean for a muscle to contract? Can a muscle also expand? (no). Give examples of muscle contraction in every day movement (leg bend, leg straighten, arm bend, jaw drop, heart beat, breathing, fist clenching). If a muscle can't expand, how does an arm straighten out, for example, after the bicep has contracted?"
Remind students that for most areas of our body, there are opposing muscles to enable us to bend and straighten our arms or legs, such as the bicep and tricep in the arm. (We are going to build a delicate model for contraction and opposing muscles contracting.)

Procedure:

CONNECTION
1. Distribute the blocks, one per person.
2. Demonstrate the connection method, where two students apply pressure to either side of a block using only their index fingers.
3. Begin with partners or triads, then challenge the group to gradually increase the number of people linked together.
4. Challenge the group to connect everyone together into a circle, index finger to block to index finger.
5. Increase the challenge by asking them to press only on either side of the block, and not the top or bottom. For example, Ryan presses one side of a block with his left index finger against Tara's right index finger, and so on around the circle. Even pressure must be applied to avoid dropping the blocks.
6. If the group is having difficulty, pause and ask them to share ideas that are working.

CONTRACT AND CONTRACT
7. Once the group has connected in a circle with blocks balanced between index fingers, challenge the group to 'contract and contract,' much like working muscles.
8. Explain that the next step is for the circle to contract together, without dropping any blocks!
9. Give time for the group to brainstorm strategies that work, and encourage them to practice in smaller groups if necessary.
10. Attempt to expand the circle without dropping the blocks. This is similar to what happens when an opposing muscle contracts.
11. Continue the cycle until the group has a reasonable amount of success.

VARIATIONS:
• For a more challenging version, add more blocks between index fingers.
• For a less challenging version, allow the group to expand and contract while touching any side of the cube with their index fingers.
• Challenge the circle to move from one place to another, while connected.

Closure:
• What strategies did you find that helped you balance the blocks?
• What changed when you worked with the whole group?
• Review the concept of muscle contraction and opposing muscle groups.
• What other principles of fitness did the group end up working on during this activity? (Agility, Coordination, Balance)

All Together Now

Goal: The class will learn about reps and sets through a synchronized jumping activity that requires muscular strength and endurance.

Materials: None needed
Setup: None needed
Framing:
Say to students: "I have a series of challenges for us to accomplish as a class! Ready?"

Clap Round

1. Say to class: "When I say, 'Go,' I want the class to do a group clap. That means
2. that everyone must clap at exactly the same time, so it sounds crisp, as though only one person
clapped."
3. Give the class as many opportunities as they need to accomplish this task.
4. Challenge the class to do three to five group claps in a row.
5. Ask the group to develop a rhythm for the claps. Try again to do it together.

JUMP ROUND:

6. Say to the students: "For the next challenge, let's try to do a group jump. This means that we
jump together, and all land at exactly the same time so as to make only one landing sound!"
7. "If we do only one jump, how many reps is that?" Explain to the class what a repetition is.
8. "Now, as a class, can we do five reps of this group jump?" 8. "What would five reps equal? (A
set!)
9. Have the group try to accomplish the clap rhythm using jumps. If time permits, try a few other
rhythm suggestions from the group.

WORKOUT ROUND:

10. Now ask the class to do three sets of five reps each, choosing one of the rhythm patterns to
repeat. Emphasize that a series of sets equals a workout!

PATTERN ROUND:

11. Ask the group to brainstorm a number of small moves to use in building a routine, e.g., jumps,
hops, steps, claps, spins, push-ups, knee bends, sliding steps, etc.
12. Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to create a workout using at least two
moves, and a distinct rhythm. The workout must include three sets of five reps each, and be
performed in unison by every member of the group.
13. Ask each group to choose a name for their group, and a name for their work out!
14. Have each group perform and then teach their progression to the other groups.

VARIATIONS:
1. Ask each small group to pair up with another group, then revise and lengthen their routines by choosing the best parts to combine into a new routine. Give ample time for practicing, before performing the steps.
2. Keeping the small groups intact, have them all form a large polygon, with each group on one side of the figure. Ask the groups to spend a short amount of time choosing one of the routines to perform, by predicting which routine every group will choose. The goal is for all groups, without conferring, to perform the same routine at the same time – All Together Now, A number of rounds may be necessary to accomplish this goal.
3. Begin the next class by having the small groups assemble and do their routines.
4. Add in call and response chants to go along with the rhythms.

Closure:
Ask students:
- Think back to when we were jumping as a group, how did we solve the problem?
- What helped or hindered this process?
- How did we build on this skill (jumping together) to create a workout?
- What defines a workout?
- What can help make a workout fun?
- How many times would you have to repeat your pattern to increase muscular strength and endurance?

**Donkey Rodeo**

Description: Students attempt to throw a 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

Materials: 1 hula hoop per 2 people

Setup: Gather the class together for the briefing. Set up a start and end line for the Donkey Rodeo, and have one hula hoop per pair of students.

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."

Procedure:
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?

Popsicle or Group Push-ups

Description: Students support each other's legs in a four-person puzzle to do a series of group push-ups.
Goal: For individuals to accomplish several push-ups while working with others

Framing: Say to students: "We all know that push-ups can be tough. What makes them so hard? It's helpful to have people working with you for support and motivation, or is it? Let's try it out."

Procedure:
1. Divide the class into groups of four.
2. Explain that the challenge will be for all four students to remain connected while only their hands touch the ground or floor. (8 hands, no feet)
3. If appropriate, give students time to solve the challenge on their own, or simply explain the task to them directly.

BASIC POPSICLE
1. The first student lies down on his or her stomach.
2. The second lies down perpendicular to the first, with his or her shins/ankles placed over the lower back of the first student.
3. The two attempt to do a push-up at the same time, keeping their bodies straight, like popsicle sticks.
4. Alternate positions, and try again!

CLOVER LEAF - FOUR PERSON ARRANGEMENT
1. As before, the first student lies down on his or her stomach.
2. The second lies down perpendicular to the first, with shins/ankles placed over the lower back of the first student.
3. The third follows suit by placing their ankles on the lower back of the last student who just did the same, forming the third side of a box (The legs of the people will form the box).
4. Finally, the fourth student gets into position by placing his or her ankles on the lower back of the last student who just did the same. (This requires the first student to lift his or her legs so that the third student can weave their way to the first.)
5. The first student then puts his or her legs onto the back of the fourth student. Confused yet?
6. All four students should form an interlocking square, where each student is supporting the shins/ankles of another.
7. Once ready, have the Clover(s) attempt to do a simultaneous push-up. Some adjusting may be necessary!
8. Challenge the Clovers to complete five push-ups in a row without dropping to the ground!
9. For extra challenge, invite the Clover(s) to rotate clockwise, while in a push-up position.

**VINE ARRANGEMENT**
1. For a culminating event, challenge the group to connect everyone together for a large group push-up!

**Closure**:
Ask students:
- How many push-ups did you individually perform during class?
- What are some ways to get better at doing push-ups?
- (Introduce a number of modified stances - leaning against a wall or table, resting on knees, gradually moving down a set of steps over time, or simply doing lots of push-ups)
- Set a goal for how many Popsicle push-ups your group of four will be able to perform when we come back to this activity at the end of the month.