

Health and Physical Activity Institute

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K-8 Games and Activities To Build Basic Skills

FAKE OUT! (skill theme: dodging, chasing)

This is a one vs. one game. One player (the defender) plays between two hot spots, which are placed about 5-10 yds apart. The other player (offense) faces the defender about a step away. The objective of the game is for the offense to step on one of the hot spots before the defender. The offense initiates the movement. The defense must try to touch the hot spot that the offense is trying to reach. If successful, the offense may shout out "FAKE OUT!"

GUARD DOG (skill theme: dodging, game strategies)

This game is similar to Fake Out. The defender starts in the space between and in front of the two hot spots. The offense has a ball. The offense must carry the ball through the two hot spots without being tagged by the "guard dog" (the defense).

TRAFFIC JAM - Basketball-style (skill theme: striking)

Give each student a ball to dribble. Position each of the students around the perimeter of the room. The first challenge is to cross to the opposite side without losing control of the ball. If successful turn around and go back. For the second challenge, appoint 3 or 4 players to be taxi drivers. The taxi drivers attempt to cause the other players to lose control of the ball by trying to hit the ball (a fender bender).

3 VS 0 COOPERATIVE KICKBALL (skill theme: kicking)

The class is set up in groups of three. The game has 3 positions: the kicker, pitcher and fielder. The pitcher rolls the ball to the kicker. The kicker TRIES to kick the ball to the fielder. If the ball is caught in the air, the group scores 5 points. If the ball is caught after 1 bounce, 3 points are scored. The group receives 1 point if the ball is caught after 2 or more bounces. Zero points if the ball stops before being caught or is bobbled and missed. The group rotates after every kick. Pitcher to kicker, kicker to fielder, fielder to pitcher. Designate spots for the kicker and the pitcher. Add a time limit such as 3-5 minutes to speed up play and make it very aerobic! Rotate teams after the time limit or have each team try for a better score.

3 F's Of Highly Successful Games and Activities

(Fast set up, Few rules, Fun)

HIP TAG (Percy Hill)

Partners join hands and face each other. One is the tagger. The tagger releases one hand and attempts to tag partner's hip. The tagger may not release 2 hands. Switch roles.

PARTNER TAG

From the *New Games* collection by Karl Rhonke, this is a one vs. one tag game that can be played in very limited space and expanded. One player is the tagger and the other player is fleeing. When the tagger tags the other player the roles are reversed. Before becoming a tagger the player must do a "northwest turn", that is, the player must turn in place from right to left (be careful not to turn left to right for that would be a northeast turn and who knows what havoc that may wreak!). After the turn is complete, the chase continues.

PAIRS SQUARED

Similar to partner tag but instead of 1 v 1, it's 2 v 2! Have the students form groups of 4. Within each group the students hook elbows with a partner. One partner group chases the other partner group. Follow the rules of "Partner Tag".

SUMO TWO TAG (Garry Bowyer, OH)

Each student has a partner to play this game. Using a grid square as the playing area, each student is a tagger. The object is to tag the partner before being tagged. Players start in separate corners of the grid square. Each player takes three "Sumo Steps" toward the middle of the square. Specify where the tag must be made (ex. on the arm or below the knee). If a tag is made, the partners take a step back and begin again. This game may be played while dribbling a basketball or soccer ball.

DOVES AND HAWKS (China)

In groups of three, the players join hands. The player in the middle is known as "Chinese Child". The other two players are designated hawk and dove. The "Chinese Child" releases the dove, who takes off running. After 2 or 3 counts hawk is released. Hawk tries to tag dove before dove is able to return to "Chinese Child". Rotate spots after each round.

SMAUG'S JEWELS (from New Games Foundation)

Scatter 4-5 bean bags around the playing area. Designate a player to guard each of the treasures (bean bags) - one dragon per bag. The object is for the other players to try and grab the bean bag without being tagged. If tagged, the player must go to different treasure. If successful, the player becomes the dragon and the previous dragon attempts to grab another's treasure.

EXTINCTION

Divide your class into 4 teams. Everyone is tagger. If a player is tagged by someone on another team, the player kneels on one knee and raises a hand in the air. To become unfrozen the kneeling player must receive a high five from a teammate. If all the players from one team are frozen, the team becomes *extinct!* A time limit of 1-2 minutes is usually adequate.

HYPER-SPACE (Dave Jenkins, NJ)

Split the class into two groups. The playing area is divided in half with "safe zones" created at each end of the playing area. The objective is to be the first team to have all of its players reach the "safe zone" behind the opposing team. If tagged while on the opposing team's side a player must return to his/her own side. Players may leave the "safe zones" to help out on defense or help to distract the opposing team. Safe zones can be any size or shape.

SUCCESS / TRY AGAIN (aerobic version)

Create 2 playing areas: a jogging track such as an oval (use cones for boundaries) and inside the jogging track. The "success side" is located inside the jogging area. The "try again side" is on the jogging track. While inside the track, the students challenge others to contests. While on the track students must jog while challenging others to contests.

JUMP AND TURN MATH: Students stand back to back (a little separation) with a partner. At the same time both players bounce up and down 3 times. On 4, the players turn and hold up 1-10 fingers. The first player to add all the fingers together wins! This can also be done with subtraction (use higher number first rule) and multiplication.

JUMPING RPS (ROCK/PAPER/SCISSORS): Players bounce up and down 2 times. On the 3rd bounce they land in one of three positions: together (rock), straddle (paper), or scissors (scissors). Rock beats scissors; scissors beat paper; paper beats rock.

ODDS/EVENS: Players face each other and decide who will be odds and who will be even. Players pump their fists 2 times and on the 3rd pump they show any number of fingers (1-5). The players add up the fingers shown. If the total is an even number, even wins. If the total is an odd number, odd wins.

Taking Kids To Task: Task Card Activities

EGGS-ERCISE!

**You will need the plastic eggs that can be separated in half for these activities.

Spin Version - Students can work alone or with a partner for this activity (with a partner is more fun!). Pick out a task, such as straddle jumps or mountain climbers, that each student can perform. Spin the egg on end and perform the task until the egg stops spinning. If done with a partner, partner A spins and partner B performs the task. The roles are then switched;

Scrambled Version - Before the class enters, place numbers on pieces of paper and place the paper inside the eggs. Students grab an egg out of the "basket" and go back to their own spaces. Students open the eggs and perform a predetermined task the number of times that is written on the paper inside the egg. You might try writing the task on the paper along with the number of repetitions as something different.

DOUBLE TROUBLE (adapted from a game by Jim Rich, N.C.)

This is actually two games which take place simultaneously. Divide the playing area into two sections. In each section, a separate tag game is played. If tagged, the tagged player crosses over to the other game and continues playing! How the tag game is played is optional. I usually have one tagger in each game who tries to tag (not throw) the runners (or other locomotor movement) with a ball. When the tagger tags three players, the third player tagged becomes the new tagger.

Variations:

- 1) Designate one end of the playing area as the entrance to each game. For example, the entrance to Game A is at the north end of the playing area and the entrance to Game B is at the south end. Mark the entrances with cones or a flat mat;
- 2) Have the students perform a task to enter the next game. If working on rolling, for instance, have the students perform a forward roll to enter the next game. Other examples might be: specific exercises, a static balance, an inverted balance, dribble a ball 15 times with one hand, or jump rope 10 times.
- 3) Add dribbling a ball with the hands or feet.

CARD SHARKS

Each player starts with 1 card. When the music begins, the tag games start. If tagged, the players swap cards. When the music stops, the tag game stops. The students look at their cards and perform an exercise/activity the number of times indicated by the card (face cards = 15, ace = 1).

FITNESS TAG

Write different exercises on cards (heart shaped cards are cool!). Any player with a card is a tagger. The taggers chase the other players. If tagged, the player is given the exercise card by the tagger and performs the exercise. After performing the exercise, the player rejoins the game as a tagger.

LOCOMOTOR TRAILS

Make signs that can be placed on cones. On the signs write various locomotor skills (ie running, walking). Place the signs along a jogging track (any trail). On a start signal, the students travel along the track. When a cone is reached, the students perform whatever skill is written on the cone. They perform the skill until reaching the next cone where they perform the next skill. Add a few stops along the way such as straddle jumps with a partner, quad stretch, or hopping in place.

RING MY BELL RUN-AROUND

Divide the class into groups of 2-3. Give each group a pack of task cards on which each is written a locomotor skill. Students shuffle up the pack of task cards. On the go signal, each group turns over the top card. The first player travels across the room performing the locomotor skill and rings the bell. When the second player receives a high five from the first, s/he travels to ring the bell and so on. Each group has 2 minutes to ring as many bells as possible. Set a goal for each group and/or a class goal for total number of bells rung.

LOCOMOTOR CAROUSEL

Students are given a space station, 1 die, 1 pack of cards (A-10) and a list of locomotor skills numbered 1 through 6. Numbered cones are scattered around the room. Students are in groups of 2-3. On the signal, one card is flipped over indicating the numbered cone the students will be traveling around. The die is rolled indicating which locomotor skill the group will perform. When the music starts, the first student in each group travels around the cone and back. After receiving a high five, the second player travels and so on. Groups have 1 minute (teacher determined) to score as many high fives as possible.

• BOX JUMPING

Tape a box with four sections on the floor. Give each section a number (or color). Make up cards with different number patterns (for example: 1-2-3-4 or 2-3-1-4). Tell the students what type of jump you want them to perform. Give each student or group a card. Each student performs the pattern on the card for a specified time limit.

CUE CARD CONUNDRUM

Write action words on poster paper (1 word per poster). This activity may be done in general space or within a defined boundary such as a track. Show the students the first card, holding it up for all to see. The students must perform the action written on the card. If it is a non-locomotor skill have the students stop and perform the skill. Give the students 5 seconds to respond to the cue card. Change cards every 30 seconds to 1 minute. This serves as a good warm up and/or assessment activity. Partner activities may also be mixed in with the action!

"200"

Split the class into small groups - 2's and 3's work best. Give each group a ball and an information sheet prepared ahead of time. On the sheet write the words "ground ball" and "fly ball" next to the numbers 1-6. To start the game, each group decides who will start as the "batter" and fielder. The teacher rolls the die. The batter throws a ball that indicated by the number on the info sheet (1 might be a fly ball, 2 might be a ground ball...). If the the fielder catches the ball s/he receives points - 50 for a ground ball, 100 for a fly ball. Play continues until the fielder scores 200 points and then roles are switched.

DYNAMIC WARM UP LINES (Melanie Champion, NC)

Create 6 lines (grid squares, hot spots, squad lines). Assign each "line" an exercise, stretch or activity. For example, one line might be the forearm balance, another line might be jumping rope. Have the students pick a starting line. On the "go" signal (music works great) the students begin to perform the activity assigned to the line they are in. At the end of 45 seconds, the students rotate to a new line. Continue until the students have rotated through all of the lines.

Dynamic activities/functional training ideas:

- giant steps (lunges)
- balancing on one foot
- carioca (grapevine step)
- jumping ladder (think the old tire stepping activity)
- forearm balance (push up position but resting on forearms not hands)
- v-sit (legs in the air)
- push ups
- any jump rope pattern
- sprint with slow down to a stop
- back pedaling
- line slides
- speed skaters (walking forward, slide the back leg behind the stepping leg)
- jumping over short hurdles

Activities For The Four Seasons

SLEIGH RIDE (Dave Jenkins, NJ)

Regular clap (with beat 8 times)

Music: "Jingle Bells" (Hamsters)

Clap up high (with beat 8 times)

"It's getting bumpy" (over a bumpy trail)

"Going around the bend" (lean to the side) (also may use up and down a hill)

"Uh-oh! Going the other way" (lean to opposite side)

"Which way do we go?" (point right and left)

"I don't know!" (shrug shoulders)

Whoop and Shout (hands up with a shout)

Galloping horse (slap knees right-left-right-left, etc. for 8 counts)

Ring the bells (3 rings with a clap on the 4th count - do 4 times)

REPEAT

CASTLE WALLS

Assign 3-4 players to each side of a net. Each group should be opposite another group. The task is to volley a "birdie" as many times in a row as possible. The two groups work together. After hitting, the player travels to the opposite side of the net to get in line.

SLIDING DOORS (Craig Mahler, NJ)

On each line assign a pair of students who are connected by a rope (8-12 feet long). The students connected by the rope are the defenders. Each pair of defenders must stay on its line. The pair may slide back and forth, but may not cross over each other. Starting at one end of the playing area, the other students attempt to dribble to the opposite end. The dribblers may not go over or under the rope. The dribblers must maneuver around each set of defenders. If a dribbler loses control of the ball or stops dribbling, s/he must go back to the start. If a dribbler successfully reaches the opposite end of the playing area, s/he does a quick "victory dance" and then runs back to the start to try again.

VARIATIONS:

1. Try this game with different skills (dribble a basketball, dribble a soccer ball, running with a football, using a hockey stick and puck, etc...
2. Students may want to keep track of the number of successful trips.

3 ON A TREE (Chip Candy, NJ)

This is a tag game. Give each tagger a ball or bean bag that helps identify him/her as a tagger. Give out 4-5 golf tubes or foam noodles. These are the "trees". A player is safe when holding on to a tree. However, the tree only holds 2 players. If a third player holds on to the tree, the first 2 must leave. If tagged while off a tree, the player switched roles with the tagger.

VARIATIONS:

- Use different color or size noodles to designate trees that hold more than 2 players!
- Allow the trees to move around!

Non-Traditional Field Day Activities

BUBBLE BALL

Divide the class into groups of 4-5. Each group makes a circle joining hands. In the middle of the circle is a ball. The group's objective is to move the ball from one end of the playing area to the other, without losing shape and without letting the ball leave the circle.

SPACE SHUTTLE (inspired by Chip Candy)

The class divides into smaller groups. The groups make a shuttle craft by joining hands. Each shuttle needs a pilot. The pilot stands inside the shuttle. On a "go" signal the shuttle craft must travel across the playing field and back in the shortest amount of time possible. The pilot **MAY NOT** touch the shuttle (and vice versa). If contact is made the shuttle must begin again (or penalize the group by adding seconds).

Variations:

- Combine times of the whole class. Challenge them to record a faster time.
- Set a timed goal for the whole class.
- Add a co-pilot.
- Blindfold the pilot.

BALLOON TROLLEY

Students attempt to transport balloons from one area to another designated area. The balloons are carried between students (stomachs and backs) without using hands. Students start by walking in pairs - one behind the other. Next they are challenged to pick up a balloon using only the heads (elbows, knees, "heiniies", etc...). Finish the warm-up by challenging the students to stand front to back and hold a balloon in between them. Students may turn in a circle, move from a stand to a squat and back up, or balance on one foot - all while holding the balloons (no hands). Finally, the students are challenged to walk (jog, skip, etc...), keeping the balloon between off the ground.

Variations:

- How long of a trolley can the entire group make (4's, 8's, 16's, etc...)?
- Create an obstacle course for the trolley to travel over.
- How fast can the trolley move and still hold the balloons?

ALPHABET SOUP

The entire alphabet is scattered around the playing area. The task is not very complex: Very simply - find the fastest way to touch the alphabet in order.

Rules:

- 1) Each player must touch at least one letter.
- 2) No one may touch 2 letters in a row.
- 3) The alphabet must be touched in order (A-Z).

Variations:

- 1) How fast can the group touch all the letters from Z-A?
- 2) The letters must be touched by 2 players at a time, in order, and no player may touch two letters in a row.
- 3) Use the regular rules, but blindfold one or more players

MAT MAZES (inspired by John Helion, West Chester University)

Create a grid of taped squares on a plastic tarp. Make a maze by coloring in selected squares from one end of the tarp to the opposite end. Select one student to be the "Maze Master". Provide the Maze Master with the answer sheet. The group's task is to successfully travel through the maze. Only one group member may be on the tarp at one time. When a correct square has been chosen, the Maze Master says nothing. When an incorrect square is chosen, the Maze Master indicates so and the student must go to the end of the line. The correct squares must be chosen in order. The entire group must cross for the group to be "successful".

LAP SIT and THE LAZY CATERPILLAR

Students in the group form a circle. Each student must be close enough so there is no space between any students. On the given signal, each student sits back slowly onto the thighs of the student behind him/her. On the second signal, all students take a step with the outside foot. The group tries to take as many steps as possible before the circle becomes broken.

MASTERMIND

Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair 2 sets of markers (marker set = 3-4 different colors), 1 for each partner. Partner A sets up a pattern of three colors using the markers. Partner B must try to guess the pattern. Partner A may not reveal the pattern but instead answers by telling how many colors are in correct order. For example, if the pattern is red-blue-yellow and Partner B guesses blue-red-yellow, Partner A would respond with "One is correct" (yellow). After which Partner B would guess another pattern. When Partner B guesses correctly, the roles are switched.

PUZZLE PLACE

- The objective of this activity is for the students to work together to complete the puzzles.
- Divide the group into smaller groups.
- Give each subgroup a puzzle to look at for 1-2 minutes
- Mix up the pieces (keep the puzzle pieces from each puzzle separate) giving the pieces to one player.
- Give all the other players a blindfold to wear.
- When ready, the pieces are handed out to each blindfolded player.
- The player without the blindfold directs the rest of the players on how to put the pieces together, but s/he may not touch any pieces or any of the players.
- The players may not handle the puzzle at anytime until the blindfolds are on.
- If there is time challenge each group to try a new puzzle or to do a puzzle with everyone blindfolded.

Equipment: Wooden Puzzles Blindfolds

TREASURE TOSS

Your group of explorers have been very successful and are returning with many fine artifacts. However you have reached a large ravine. In order to continue your journey home your group must use nets to toss the artifacts over the ravine and catch them safely in the baskets on the other side. If your group catches 5 or more artifacts, you are rewarded with a magic math puzzle.

- Break up the entire group into smaller groups of 4.
- There are 4 jobs: 2 tossers, 1 catcher and 1 transporter.
- Using the fling-it nets, the tossers "toss" the artifacts (nerf balls) across the playing area where the catcher waits to catch. If the ball is caught in the basket, the transporter takes the "artifact" to a "collection area".
- If the artifact is not caught, it is returned to the beginning and the group tries again.
- Switch jobs as often as needed.

AIR - LITES

"EARTH ORBIT"

Divide the class into multiple groups. Groups are stationed in a circle around the playing area. One group launches an air-lite toward an adjacent group. The 2nd group keeps the air-lite moving toward the next group and so on. The objective is to keep the air-lite circling the playing area without having it stop or touch the ground.

"DON'T CATCH ME!"

Divide the class into multiple groups. Groups are stationed in a circle around the playing area. One group launches an air-lite toward an adjacent group. Add a 2nd air-lite which starts at the opposite side of the playing area. The group must keep both air-lites moving without allowing the 2 to meet (or touch the ground or stop). Try adding a 3rd!

"TOXIC STUFF"

Make small groups (5-7), giving each group an air-lite. The air-lite is filled with "toxic stuff". If a group can keep its air-lite up in the atmosphere long enough the toxic stuff will disappear forever and they will have done their part to protect the environment!

Variations:

- (1) If a hand touches the air-lite for longer than 1/2 a second, the air-lite will "POP!";
- (2) If someone touches the air-lite twice before everyone touches the ball once, the material making up the ball will disintegrate and holes will develop;
- (3) The ball must be struck a specific amount of times for the toxic stuff to disappear.

SHRUNKEN HEADS!

Your group of explorers has been caught by a tribe of people who like to shrink heads! They like to play games also. The chief of the tribe will give your group freedom (and spare you from having a really, really small head) if you can transport all of the treasure orbs (balls) from the fields to their secret treasure chamber - but you have follow the special rules!

- Split the main group into 3 smaller groups (based on 20-ish to a group).
- There are 2 check points along the trail to the chamber. Position 2 players at each of the check points.
- The first 2 players pick up 1 ball using just 1 finger each and travel to the 1 st checkpoint.
- The orb is then passed to the 2nd group who must use one elbow each to transport the orb to the 2nd checkpoint.
- At the 2nd checkpoint, the ball must be transported with just the heads to the treasure chamber!
- The groups stay at the new checkpoint after delivering the orb. After dropping the orb in the chamber, the duo runs to the beginning and picks up a new orb.
- If an orb falls to the ground while being transported, it goes back to the beginning.