

Individual Physical Fitness Project

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The idea behind this project is to motivate children to want to improve their fitness level. It is based on the 5th Grade State Testing for physical fitness, the National Physical Fitness Program, and the Healthy Kids Survey from the CA Department of Education.

The fitness project is designed to work on speed, strength, agility and flexibility. The project takes approximately six weeks and is divided into three major parts: Gathering of baseline data, fitness training and goal setting, and final assessment.

Phase One, gathering of baseline data, requires that children perform each event at a "comfortable, no stress level" after a warm up and followed with a cool down. Students and teacher record performance on pull-ups, sit-ups, push-ups, mile run, shuttle run and 50-yard dash.

Phase Two, fitness training and goal setting, includes setting goals and a six week training schedule to meet the selected goals.

Key activities in which students will be involved

Initially the students will have to be introduced to the different events, with demonstrations as to the proper technique. Next, a practice period of time will be given for the students to familiarize themselves with the

activities. Following that, baseline data will be collected in each of the events for each child. They will have a record sheet of their effort, and the teacher will record results for each child on a master list.

After one week of training it's time to set goals. They have gathered their baseline data, and the children have had a chance to practice the events an additional time or two. (See the attached sheet used for individual goal setting.) After talking over with the class what is reasonable as far as expected improvement, collect the goal sheets and look them over to see if the children's goals are reasonable. As much as possible stick with what the children have set unless grossly above or below what might be attainable. Include the child in the process of modifying any goal. (This is a great time to discuss the Presidential Physical Fitness Award and the levels needed in each event to attain the award. Some children will use the information to set their goals.)

On training days you may or may not record performances in the main events. Training is done with a partner, who should provide encouragement and feedback. Testing should be done by the teacher (see below), and those results are recorded and checked against the individual's goals.

Materials

No special apparatus is needed other than what is currently available to the school. For record keeping, each child will require a record-keeping sheet stating their goals to be kept in their binder, and a master poster to be kept by the teacher. This poster will not have each child's goals on it, but would show which goals have been met by each child, thereby keeping each student's goals private.

Student impact/assessment

Phase three, the final phase, involves testing. After the third week of training many will be eager to see how much they've improved. Reselected events are tested on fitness days with each student's results recorded. If a goal has been achieved, it is starred on the class master list in the classroom. This schedule continues until a previously set percentage of class goals have been met. Generally when 75% of the overall class goals have been met, the program is over. In this way it is not necessary for each child to reach all of his/her goals.

Integration of this program into other disciplines is simple. Dietary guidelines, math percentages, graphs and charts are all natural follow-ups. In fact, the more the program is integrated, the more enthusiastic the children become!