

Application and Reflection on E-QYP

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Fitness Obstacle Course

Age of Participants:

- Older Children (Ages 9-11)

Domain of Development:

- Fostering Physical Development

Area of Development Addressed:

- Physical Needs and Energy Level

Goal(s)/Purpose for activity:

- To involve students in a fun activity that keeps them moving for an extended period of time.
- Improve cardiovascular Endurance
- Improve strength and agility
- Improve movement quality and coordination

Type:

- The Fitness Obstacle Course is designed for a group of youth, such as those attending an afterschool program or participating in a physical education class.

Time:

- 15-20 minutes for set up
- 10-15 for explanation to students
- 25-30 minutes active engagement in course--2 minutes and 30 seconds to 3 minutes at each station
- 5-10 minutes for cool down and wrap-up

Materials:

- Whistle
- 4 Jump Ropes
- 4 Pool Noodles
- 8 Chairs or Stools
- 6 Plyometric or Jumping Boxes
- 6 Gymnastic/Safety Mats
- Pull up Bar
- 8 Hula Hoops
- CD Player/Sound Equipment

Overview

Equipping Quality Youth Development Professionals; Improving Child and Youth Program

Experiences states, "Older children possess a high level of energy and activity; they cannot stay confined beyond a short period of time" (Kearney, 2012, p. 41). Allowing them the experience of continuous

physical activity through the obstacle course provides with them the opportunity to burn off some of that energy. It also allows them to get up and move around, instead of doing an activity that may keep them in one spot for a length of time. The Fitness Obstacle course is also a good activity for older youth because it is good to “plan activities that engage both the gross and fine muscle groups...” (Kearney, 2012, p. 41). The multiple stations involved in the obstacle course will work both of those muscle groups. William B. Strong, MD and his colleagues state that, “Increasing the level of habitual moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity in youth is a health promotion and a disease-prevention strategy” (Evidence Based Physical Activity for School-Age Youth, 2005, p. 737).

Practitioners can expect students to engage in the different stations at their own pace, and approach each activity differently. Careful attention should be paid attention to each station to make sure that students are performing each station correctly. Some students will be able to perform the continuous activity while others will need breaks; allow students to have rest periods and take water breaks. Also expect students to ask multiple questions and ask for assistance with stations and activities.

Instructions:

1. Gather all materials
2. Set up obstacle course stations
 - Station 1: Hurdle Happy- 4 hurdles in a vertical line using pool noodles and chairs
 - Station 2: Jump Rope Jam- Jump Ropes
 - Station 3: Plyo Power- 3 plyometric boxes in a vertical row (column)
 - Station 4: Mat Madness- 1 Gymnastic Mat unfolded and laid out vertically
 - Station 5: Vaulting Obstacle-2 Gymnastics Mat folded up and stacked on one another, and placed horizontally.
 - Station 6: Step Up-2 to 3 plyo boxes evenly spread out
 - Station 7: Hoop Hopping- 4 hula-hoops in a row. Two columns. Make sure each hoop is touching the one ahead of it and the column next to it.
 - Station 8: Crunch Craze- 1 gymnastic mat unfolded and laid out horizontally
 - Station 9: Pull-Up Place-Pull Up bar, stool/chair or 2 folded up mats to use as a step to reach the bar.
 - Station 10: Stretch Station-No materials.
3. Explain to students that continuous activity for twenty-five to thirty minutes can help them to develop a healthy heart and strong muscles.
4. Explain each station in order of movement (clockwise). Make sure to note any safety concerns, and proper use of all equipment.

Station 1: Hurdle Happy- Students army crawl, or hop over the hurdles. If they touch a hurdle or knock it over they have to go back and start again.

Station 2: Jump Rope Jam- Students jump rope any way desired

Station 3: Plyo Power- Using two feet students jump up on to one box, down to the floor and then up to the next box.

Station 4: Mat Madness- Students may move any way they desire down the gymnastics mat. (Remind them that no flipping of any kind is allowed)

Station 5: Vaulting Obstacle- Students have to get up and over the gymnastics mat without their knees or elbows ever touching the mat. (Remind them that they may not use any risky or unsafe moves getting up, over and off of the mats, such as flips)

Station 6: Step Up- Students step up and down onto the plyo boxes as many times as they moving only one foot at a time.

Station 7: Hoop Hopping- Students move through the two columns of hoops using only one foot to land in each hoop; like a tire agility run in football.

Station 8: Crunch Craze- Students lie on the mat and have a partner hold their feet. Perform 20 curls ups, then switch with their partner. Keep switching until time is up.

Station 9: Pull-Up Place-Students perform as many pull-ups as they can or, tuck knees up to belly button and hold as long as they can.

Station 10: Stretch Station-Students perform various stretches of their choice, holding each one for ten seconds. Demonstrate stretch options; butterfly, pike stretch, straddle stretch, hurdler stretch, etc.

- 5. Explain how when the music begins the students start moving through the stations of the obstacle course. Inform them that if they hear the music stop, they are to stop what they are doing. At any time throughout you have any concerns or feel the need to reiterate safety, stop the music. Have students go back and complete a station correctly if you feel that they did not follow the guidelines.**
- 6. Inform students that stay at each station repeating the activity and only switch stations when they hear you blow the whistle (2:30 to 3 minutes at each station).**
- 7. Divide the students into groups of two to three and give each group a team number.**
- 8. About ten to fifteen minutes into the activity stop the music and allow the students to rest and have a water break.**
- 9. Each team continuously goes around the course until the twenty-five to thirty-minute time period is complete. When the time is up stop the music and announce “Fitness Finish, Huddle Up!” and signal for the students to all meet in front of you.**
- 10. Lead a cool down and stretch for five minutes**
- 11. Wrap up the activity asking students to share their favorite parts of the course and which areas of their bodies they felt were used the most; areas used the least.**

Colleague Evaluation

Activity Evaluation (Please provide to your colleague/co-worker via questionnaire or interview)

Thank you very much for agreeing to evaluate the activity that I have provided to you. Can you please read over the activity and rate it on the following items as well as respond to the questions below?

How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The activity is developmentally appropriate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
2. The activity is well-planned.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
3. Youth would find the activity engaging.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The activity should meet the intended goal(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The activity is consistent with best-practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Please respond to the questions below.

1. What do you see as the strengths of the activity? Why?

I think there are several strengths in this activity. First off, I believe it's extremely important that it was stressed that it was acceptable to take breaks. In any activity of this nature it's important the children are learning but also enjoying themselves as that creates the best environment for learning to take place. Given water breaks and understanding that the children will perform at different levels is so important. I also feel the number of stations is appropriate. It allows the children to take their time and master the activity without feeling rushed or having too much time and getting bored.

2. What are your concerns with the activity? Why?

The only real concern I would have is supervision. How many adults would be supervising the activity? Although I think the stations are attainable and age appropriate there are risks when the children are doing pull ups, box jumps, etc. The age bracket being 9-11, a 4th grader may need a spotter when doing pull ups and with different levels of athletic abilities I would be concerned with the box jumps and step ups. I would make sure there are several adults to mingle amongst the stations, keep an eye out, and be available for spotting if needed.

3. What suggestions do you have to enhance the activity?

The only real suggestion I have, I addressed above. Just making sure there are enough adults to be available to spot and oversee the various stations. Stressing the importance of safety to the children and pushing themselves but also staying within their physical means. I would also make sure to have upbeat music to keep the tempo fun!!

Julie Riddle missjriddle@comcast.net
Teacher at All About Kids Learning Center

Julie Riddle

Activity Reflection

1. Why did you pick/create this focus activity?

As stated earlier, “Older children possess a high level of energy and activity; they cannot stay confined beyond a short period of time” (Kearney, 2012, p. 41). I wanted to create an activity that would allow the older youth to get up and move around for an extended period of time and have fun while doing so. I had four goals for this activity. The first being, to involve students in a fun activity that keeps them moving for an extended period of time. The second is to improve cardiovascular endurance and lastly the third is improve strength, agility, movement quality and coordination. I chose these goals because they are all important in relation to the physical development of older children. All of the goals also go hand in hand with one another. Movements like crawling, jumping, stepping up on to plyometric boxes, doing the basics of a pull up or actually performing a full pull up will all work to increase lower and upper body strength. Getting children moving at a higher intensity can help to improve their cardiovascular endurance, strength, agility, movement quality and coordination. The different stations introduce the children to a variety of different movements and exercises in a fun way that can help to encourage them to continue to be physically active. The amount of different stations and movements involved will all push the children’s bodies in new and fun way which will in turn work to develop them physically and help to accomplish the goals of the activity. The *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* states, “Muscle strengthening activities include exercises that make your muscles work harder than during daily life, such as doing push-ups, playing tug-of-war, or climbing monkey bars” (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2008, p. 19). I believe the stations included in this activity provide the opportunity for the children to be involved in those strengthening activities.

2. How does this activity meet the development needs of the target age group?

The E-QYP states, “Plan activities that engage both the gross and fine muscle groups, from running and jumping to cutting, taping and fitting items. Encourage older children to move around and use their bodies” (Kearney, 2012, p. 41). The many stations of this activity are all involved in a total activity time of at least 25 minutes of continued physical activity. The stations vary from running, to jumping, climbing, crawling, and basic exercises like crunches. This allows the older youth to experience a movements that will engage gross and fine muscle groups. The stations involving running, jumping and climbing will enhance the majority of their gross muscle groups.

3. Was the E-QYP content relevant and useful for structuring and shaping the activity? Why or Why not?

The E-QYP content was very relevant and useful. I based everything that I planned around what was laid out in the E-QYP. I took cues from the content such as suggesting physical challenges and engaging the gross muscle groups. The content also stated how older children have higher energy levels. This suggested to me that the activity needs to be packed full of continuous movement and involvement for the youth so that their energy can be directed and used in a positive manner.

4. Please reflect on the evaluation of your activity. Provide an overall synopsis of your colleague/coworker’s thoughts.

My colleague Julie Riddle, believed that the activity had the strengths of appropriate number of stations, and that the importance of taking breaks and allow for water breaks was stated. She was concerned with the availability of supervision. She believes that the activities are age appropriate but feels that there definitely needs to be a decent amount of supervision for all of the stations. She suggested making sure there was plenty of supervision and always stressing the importance of safety.

5. Do you agree with evaluation? Why or Why Not?

I completely agree with everything that was stated in the evaluation. I believe that she made some very valid points that I had not even really thought about and definitely should have been in the forefront of my mind when planning the activity. I believe that her evaluation was consistent with the content of the E-QYP because she focused on giving suggestions and thoughts in relation to the age bracket that I planned the activity around.

6. What changes or modifications would you make to the activity based on this evaluation?

Based on this evaluation I would make sure to state that there needs to be at least one adult present by each of the stations to make sure that everything is being done safely. Also I would add into the description to those conducting the activity that they need to be prepared to spot the children on certain activities and that it is ok to offer help to them due to wanting to keep the child safe.

7. Are there any tips for adjusting the activity according to the size of the group, the ages of the youth, and other characteristics that may be relevant to the activity?

Julie stated how we need to be aware that with this age group some of the children, such as a 4th grader may need a spotter when doing pull-ups and that there may be a concern with the box jumps and step ups since there are going to be many varying athletic abilities. She also suggested that the music be upbeat and fun, which is very relevant because you want the music to help keep the kids interested and keep their energy up.

References

Kearney, W. B. (2012). Fostering Physical Development. In W. B. Kearney, *Equipping Quality Youth Development Professionals; Improving Child and Youth Program Experiences* (pp. 37-43). iUniverse LLC.

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2008). *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

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