

Grade 2: Exercise

Lesson 4: Start Now, Stay Fit

Objectives:

- ✓ Students will identify the important contributing factors to physical fitness in health.
- ✓ Students will develop a personal fitness plan.
- ✓ Students will understand the importance of making healthy choices in physical fitness.

Materials:

- Paper and pencils
- Aerobic and Strength Activity Sheet (**See Figure 1**)
- Parent Letter (**See Figure 2**)

Activity Summary:

This lesson explores the concept and practice of physical fitness for health. Students create a personal fitness plan.

Background information for the teacher:

Heart disease is the #1 killer in the country. Up to 40% of all deaths occur from cardiovascular- related causes. The **choices** that children learn to make when they are young can have a significant impact on their overall health throughout their lives. Setting healthy (or unhealthy) patterns early in life increases the likelihood of those patterns continuing into adulthood. This lesson focuses on teaching children how to make and implement healthy physical fitness choices.

Healthy lifestyle choices include both *active* choices (what to do) as well as *unintentional* choices (consequences of NOT doing what you should do.) People actively choose to become more active or remain sedentary, and make nutritional choices to eat to foods that support (or harm) health. People may also choose to engage in harmful behaviors (such as smoking) or refrain from doing so.

Obesity is a major contributor to heart disease, and the rate of childhood obesity has increased dramatically in recent years. The American Heart Association reports:

- About 15% of children and adolescents are overweight.
- There are four times as many overweight children and adolescents as there were 40 years ago.
- It is projected that if childhood obesity continues to increase, the average lifespan could actually *decrease* by two-five years, possibly resulting in a day when, for the first time, we could see a generation of Americans living shorter lives than their parents.
- Four million children have above-normal blood pressure.
- Twenty-seven million children have high cholesterol.

Included in The American Heart Association's "**Top Ten Ways to Help Children Develop Healthy Habits**," are recommendations that may be helpful in the classroom:

- Be a positive role model.
- Encourage physical activities that children enjoy.
- Be supportive. Focus on the positive, not the negative.
- Set specific goals and limits.
- Don't reward with food, especially candy and snacks.
- Encourage children to consciously limit their TV, video game, and computer time.

For children, the **President's Challenge** recommends 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity FIVE times a week, ideally in time blocks of at least 15 minutes. (**Note:** *Information for this lesson was taken from the websites of the American Heart Association and the President's Challenge. Website addresses are listed in the Web Resources section of this lesson.*)

Vocabulary:

Fitness – Good health or physical condition, especially as the result of exercise and proper nutrition; being in shape

Aerobic – Activity that makes the heart beat faster, enhancing respiratory and circulatory efficiency

Strength – The quality or state of being strong; bodily or muscular power; vigor; capacity for exertion or endurance; being strong, with healthy muscles that can lift, throw, and run

Choice – The act of choosing or selecting

Engage:

1. Have students stand, forming a circle. Explain that they will be playing a "name game" in which they are to think of a **physical activity** they like to do. This can be a game they like to play with other children, as a team or individually, or a physical activity they like to do by themselves.
2. Have each student say "**I like to . . .**" and the name of the activity, then act out or do a pantomime of that activity. (Example: student says, "I like to throw a ball," then mimes the action of bringing their arm up and throwing a ball.)
3. Have the rest of the class say together, "We like to throw a ball" and mimic the throwing action, too.
4. Repeat, moving from one child to the next. Half way around the circle, ask: "**How many of you can remember what your classmates like to do?**"

5. Start with what each child said in the *first* half of the circle, saying, “**We like to . . .**” and mimicking that action.
6. Start again where the circled stopped, repeating the sequence until all students have participated.
7. Have the students repeat the statements and actions for all the children, starting with the last child and going back through the circle to the first child.

Explore:

Print out the lists of Strength and Aerobic activities (**See Figure 1**), giving each pair of students a list and instructing them to cut out each word. Now have the students group things that are **alike** together, and let them group the words any way they choose. Next have them name each group, explaining why they grouped those things together.

Discuss their ideas about the group names and what makes them similar. Find someone who categorized with the idea of aerobic (students may have used a different term, but one that has similar meaning to aerobic) and strength activities. Have students present their ideas about strength and aerobic activities, then have them regroup, according to aerobic and strength activities. Draw conclusions. List correct groupings on the board.

Explain:

Write “**Aerobic**” and “**Strength**” on the board at the top of the appropriate activity list. Have students clarify their understanding of these two vocabulary words.

1. Ask: “**What does ‘aerobic’ mean?**” (*An activity that makes our heart beat faster, etc.*) “**Activities like running, jumping rope, dancing, playing soccer, climbing and the things you like to do that we’ve listed on the board ALL help our hearts beat faster.**”
2. Ask: “**Why do we want our hearts to beat faster?**” (*It makes our heart strong.*) “**The heart is a muscle. The heart muscle gets stronger when we are very active. This kind of activity is called AEROBIC activity.**”
3. Ask: “**What does ‘strength’ mean?**” (*Being strong with healthy muscles.*) “**Strong muscles help us hold and lift things, run, and stay active for a long time. When our heart and our muscles are strong it means that we are physically fit.**”
4. Ask: “**Imagine if I sat in one chair all day and ate donuts, cookies, and pop. What would happen?**” (*I’d gain weight, feel sick, etc...*) “**Now**

imagine if I sat in one chair all day BUT I ATE ONLY HEALTHY foods- fruit and vegetables, and drank milk. Would I still gain weight and be unhealthy?” (Probably—just sitting all day would likely still result in weight gain and other health problems.) **“Finally, imagine if I did start exercising, but I still ate only donuts, cookies, and pop. What would happen? Would I still gain weight and be unhealthy?”** (Yes – eating poorly causes health problems.) **“What does this mean? What can we conclude about exercising and eating? What will keep you and me healthy?”** Let students respond, then say, **“It is important and essential to do BOTH. You must eat healthy foods AND be active/exercise.**

5. Ask: **“What are some positive things that happen when we are physically fit?”** (We feel alert and energetic. It helps us keep the right amount of weight on our bodies. These are very important for good health.) **“Besides being active, what else can we do to help ourselves stay fit and healthy?”** (We can make smart **choices**. We can eat healthy foods and choose NOT to smoke.)
6. Ask: **“How will eating healthy foods help?”** (Eating healthy foods helps our Digestive System create the best possible FUEL for our bodies so we will have plenty of ENERGY.)
7. Ask: **“How does NOT SMOKING help us stay physically fit?”** (Staying SMOKE-FREE helps our lungs BREATHE BETTER and our HEART be STRONGER. When we have a healthy Respiratory System we can play longer, and have more energy.)
8. REPEAT FOR EMPHASIS: **“It is very important to make the RIGHT CHOICES for our physical fitness and health. Some healthy choices we make are about WHAT TO DO, and some choices are about what NOT to do.”**
9. Ask: **“What is something we can CHOOSE TO DO to stay physically fit and something we can choose NOT TO DO that will help us be more fit?”** (We can choose to spend MORE time playing games and exercising outside. We can also choose to spend LESS time watching TV and playing video games. Less time sitting and more time using our heart, lungs, and muscles helps make our bodies stronger and physically fit.)
10. Ask: **“What is important to always do BEFORE we start exercising?”** (We need to WARM UP slowly. This gets our body ready to move.) **“And what do we need to do when we FINISH exercising?”** (COOL DOWN. We spend four to five minutes GRADUALLY slowing down. This helps our hearts and our breathing return to normal.)

Extend:

Personal Best Fitness Plan: Tell the students they are going to create their own Personal Best Fitness Plan. There are three important things to remember about making a Fitness Plan and they already know a lot about how to do it.

1. Plan to **warm up** for 3-4 minutes.
2. Plan at least **two activities**. These should be things you REALLY LIKE TO DO. Make one activity AEROBIC (which makes the heart beat faster) and one for STRENGTH (which makes muscles stronger.)
3. Each activity will be done for 15 minutes.
4. Plan what you will do to **cool down** for 4-5 minutes.
5. It is important to focus on doing your **personal best**; you don't need to compete with other students.

NOTE: Have students draw and/or print out their fitness plan. Make sure they include elements 1 through 3.

Evaluate:

Have the students write a report to add to their Personal Fitness Plan. In the report they need to explain: a) what the main contributing factors for physical fitness in their plan are; and b) how the choices they made for their plan achieve those factors.

When added to their plan this report serves as a complete assessment for this lesson.

Optional Enrichment Activities: Putting the Fitness Plan into Action

Have the students put their plan into action. If time and resources are available, this can be done at school supervised by the teacher, the physical education teacher, or at home with parents/caregivers.

This can be done 2 to 3 times a week over a period of 2 – 4 weeks.

At School: Time the students for each activity (warm-up, aerobic and strength exercises, and cool-down) then have students chart time and other observations. These records should track the results of each activity period. Have students note changes as they repeat the activity. (Students may work with a partner. One student can clock the time while their partner completes the routine.)

At the conclusion of this series have each student record their observations about how their bodies feel, commenting on their energy levels, how they are resting at night, their alertness, changes in endurance, breathing, strength, etc.

At Home: Another option is doing this activity at home as either homework or extra credit. This can be a great opportunity to include families and encourage them to spend time together in health-promoting activities.

Send home a note explaining that the goal is for students to exercise for 45 minutes, two-three times a week. Include the background health information that appears at the beginning of this lesson. **(See Figure 2)** Using a notebook to record students' activities/feelings as indicated above, have both the parent and the student sign it each time they exercise.

Additional activities may be found on the American Heart Association website at: www.americanheart.org.

Jump Rope for Heart/President's Challenge: Have students work individually or in teams to research the following websites and determine ways to participate, either individually or as a class:

- www.presidentschallenge.org - Features information regarding activities and includes a tracking log. Fitness activities and guidelines are age-appropriate. Students can sign up individually or an entire class can register.
- <http://www.americanheart.org> – Includes information about the *Jump Rope for Heart* activity for children, which may be used as a classroom or a school-wide activity.

Missouri Standards:

Health and Physical Education

II. Health Maintenance and Enhancement

A. Personal and Family Health

What All Students Should Know:

2. Regular physical activity, adequate sleep and balanced nutrition contribute to health maintenance and enhancement.

What All Students Should Be Able To Do:

- a. Apply knowledge about physical activity and care of the body to daily personal health habits.

V. Physical Activity and Lifetime Wellness

A. Personal Fitness/Wellness

What All Students Should Know:

1. Gaining basic knowledge of the components of health-related fitness is essential to understanding that exercise contributes to good health.

What All Students Should Be Able To Do:

- a. Identify the components of health-related fitness and relate their importance to individual well-being.
- b. Differentiate between aerobic and anaerobic exercise when performing routines.
- c. Select and participate regularly in physical activities for the purpose of improving skills and health.

C. Injury Prevention/Treatment and Rehabilitations

What All Students Should Know:

1. Prevention techniques for exercise-related injuries, including warm-up and cool-down activities.

What All Students Should Be Able To Do:

- a. Distinguish between the terms “warm-up” and “cool-down.”
- b. Recognize appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities and the importance of each for injury prevention.

Figure 1:

running

sit-ups

weights

jumping rope

skating

skiing

swimming

push-ups

Figure 2:

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Obesity is a major contributor to heart disease, and certainly the rate of **childhood obesity** is cause for concern.

The American Heart Association reports:

- About 15% of children and adolescents are overweight.
- There are **FOUR TIMES** as many overweight children and adolescents as there were 40 years ago.
- It is projected that if childhood obesity continues to increase, the average lifespan will actually decrease by two-five years. For the first time we could see a generation of Americans living shorter lives than their parents.
- **FOUR MILLION** children have above-normal blood pressure.
- **TWENTY-SEVEN MILLION** children have high cholesterol.

The American Heart Association recommends the following “**Top Ten Ways to Help Children Develop Healthy Habits**”:

- Be a positive role model.
- Encourage physical activities that children enjoy.
- Be supportive. Focus on the positive, not the negative.
- Set specific goals and limits.
- Don't reward with food, especially candy and snacks.
- Encourage children to consciously limit their TV, video game, and computer time.

Healthy lifestyle choices include both active choices (what to do) as well deliberate choices about what NOT to do. Choosing to be active or sedentary, making nutritional choices regarding what to eat that supports health, and choosing not to engage in harmful behaviors such as smoking are just some of the ways we can be proactive in caring for the health of our bodies.

We want children to make healthy choices. To help your child establish good habits, please **exercise with your child two-three times this week** for about 45 minutes each time, then help your child will keep a record of what activity they engaged in and how they felt after each session of exercise. (They may record the information on the back of this letter.) After completion of the activities, you and your child should sign the sheet and return the sheet to me by _____.

Thank you for encouraging a healthy lifestyle for your child!