

projectgreenchallenge

pgc
2013

CURRICULUM

LESSON PLANS
FOR A
conscious
lifestyle

FITNESS

Introduction

Exercise is an essential aspect of healthy living and it too can be approached from a conscious frame of mind. Outdoors is a great place to start! Walking, biking, climbing, hiking, surfing, kayaking and playing soccer all leave behind a minimal carbon footprint and provide a free dose of Vitamin D. Studies show that exercising in nature, even for as little as 5 to 10 minutes, has plenty of mental health benefits. Compare that to sitting on a stationary bike or running on a treadmill indoors - using large amounts of electrical energy which is probably non renewable and polluting, and all the while breathing stagnant air.

And what about your workout gear, equipment, and snacks? Not all gear is created equal. Many companies use PVC plastic, synthetic materials, and conventional cotton to create the items you use on a daily basis. What's in that energy bar you eat to fuel your body and how about the water bottle you drink from post workout? Chances are they are made from synthetic materials, often with ingredients you can't even pronounce. When approached consciously, organic, reusable, and nutritious choices will not only enhance your well-being but contribute to a healthier planet.

Resources

- [*Pinterest Board*](#)
- [*Project Green Challenge 2011 Resources*](#)
- [*Project Green Challenge 2012 Resources*](#)

Objectives

In today's lesson, students will:

- Explain the health benefits of exercise
- Practice goal-setting
- Recognize the overlap between the principles of fitness and environmental sustainability

Materials Needed

- computer lab
- space to move around
- snack ingredients

Lesson Plan

Start of Class: 5 minutes each day for a week, ending the week with a 10 minute discussion on Friday

Yoga continues to gain popularity in the United States, and is beneficial for the mind, body, and soul. Students experience a variety of stressors in both the school and home environment. By incorporating some simple exercises (the standard “vinyasa” sequence of poses) into the classroom routine, students will learn to de-stress and realize that yoga can be practiced anytime and anywhere. Ask the students to do a five-minute yoga sequence at the start of the day for a week, in an open space in the classroom, school gym, or outside. Use this video as a **guide**. Emphasize the importance of concentrating on their breath.

On Friday, or the last day of the yoga sequence, following yoga, ask your students how they felt about yoga during their week. Ask them how the yoga made them feel and if they noticed a difference in their mood or attention levels during the day. Lastly, ask them if they would like to continue with yoga as a regular part of the morning routine in the future.

Be Wise & Exercise Activity: 20 minutes

Begin the lesson by showing the students this **infographic**. After going through the infographic, engage students in a discussion using the following questions.

1. What are 3 things you learned from the infographic?
2. How does being outside benefit your health?
3. What are some goals you could set for yourself?

After the discussion, ask the students to collectively brainstorm all the different forms of fitness they can think of. To help them get started, suggestions include:

- Biking instead of driving short distances
- Recreationally biking
- Jogging
- Swimming
- Baseball

After your class has brainstormed a big list, ask each student to pick one form of physical activity that

they would most enjoy doing and pledge to commit to that activity daily, either individually or with a group. Students should set their goal for a specific and reasonable length of time for their lives, whether it is for one week, one month, or something longer. The length of time should be something that the student will not be overwhelmed in completing, and one that gives them the chance to succeed, and build a healthier, more active future for themselves.

DIY Snacks to Fuel Healthy Bodies and Minds

15-30 minutes

There are countless energy bars and snacks on the market that claim to fuel your body during workouts, but these are often candy bars pretending to be healthy. Help inform students about good nutrition and inspire them to make their own version of a healthy snack. Ahead of time, take an inventory of your students so you know if there is anyone with allergies or dietary restrictions. Search for no-bake recipes for granola bars with wholesome and healthy ingredients that match your budget. Or, purchase items that could be mixed together for a delicious trail mix. Work with you students to help make the snack, and ensure that everyone has a “hands on” role. Enjoy the snack with your students and provide the recipe or ingredient list with health benefits to take home.

To reduce out of pocket costs, ask each student, or students who are able, to contribute \$1 for this activity.

Double Your Impact Activity: 15 minutes of preparation and one day of class

Exercise can be fun, but can also contribute to a healthy environment. Give the class five minutes to brainstorm ways that physical activity can have an environmental impact. This could be as simple as hiking and picking up trash on a trail, or playing a game of basketball to raise money to plant trees. After the five minutes are up, go around the room so that students can share their ideas. As they are sharing, ask a classroom representative to write the ideas on the board. Then, students can work together to decide which idea they will take part in during their next day of class, to exercise their minds and bodies, and make

Lesson Plan cont.

a difference for the planet! Then, during the next day of class, break out of the normal classroom routine and see how much change you and your students can create! Be sure to take photos of your event to share with the students' families and other teachers and students at your school.

Assessment/Checks for Understanding:

Athletics Gone Green? 1 day of class followed by a homework assignment

Did you know that the pro sports industry is going green? Many major league sports teams or large sporting events such as the Olympics are integrating environmental initiatives in a big way. In small groups of three or four, ask students to research the sustainability initiatives that one of your local pro sports teams has in place (MLB, NBA, NFL, NHL, or other) or what large sporting events, like the Olympics, did to reduce their environmental impact. Ask students to identify at least five things that these professional organizations are doing that impress them. Have them write down their ideas in an easy to read font on the board or pieces of paper. Students will briefly present their findings to the class.

For homework, students can use the information they learned about teams doing the right thing to encourage teams (that they might be part of), that do not yet have sustainability initiatives in place to green their practices. Using concrete examples of what a team is doing, ask your students to draft a 1-2 paragraph letter to the owner or management of the team, requesting that they create or improve their environmental initiatives. Give students at least ten minutes at the end of class to work with each other, ask questions, and get started.