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# Daily Physical Activity Catalogue of Activities

## Kindergarten to Grade 9

This resource is based on the Alberta Education resource *Daily Physical Activity: A Handbook for Grades 1–9 Schools* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education, 2006), and was adapted with permission from Alberta Education.

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# Introduction

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This resource is intended to provide a starting point for teachers and DPA supervisors to use with their students.

## ► Selecting Activities

Many of the activities outlined in this resource take only a few minutes to complete. However, as identified in the prescribed learning outcomes for DPA, activities need to be conducted in blocks of a least 10 minutes time segments adding up to a minimum of 30 minutes per day. Therefore, when planning a program using shorter activities, repeat the activity or combine with other activities to ensure at least 10 minutes of continuous student movement. In addition, when conducting activities that have students waiting their turn (e.g., relays), have those waiting engage in activity such as hopping, flexing, or jogging on the spot so that their physical activity is continuous.

**Endurance activities** help the heart, lungs, and circulatory system stay healthy and provide increased energy. Activities that increase cardiovascular endurance should be moderate to vigorous:

- *moderate physical activity* causes some increase in breathing and/or heart rate, but not enough to prevent an individual from carrying on a conversation comfortably during the activity. Examples of moderate physical activities include brisk walking, dancing, swimming, and biking.
- *vigorous physical activity* is aerobic activity, which increases the breathing and heart rates enough for cardiovascular conditioning. This type of activity may, depending on fitness level, cause “huffing and puffing,” so that talking is possible but the ability to carry on a conversation is limited. Examples of vigorous physical activities include jogging, basketball, aerobics, fast dancing, and fast swimming.

**Flexibility activities** help bodies to move easily, keeping muscles relaxed and joints mobile, and decreasing the risk of injury. Regular flexibility activities can help us to live better, longer, so that quality of life and independence are maintained. Flexibility activities include gentle reaching, bending, and stretching of all muscle groups. Activities that help increase flexibility include stretches, pilates, dancing, gymnastics, and swimming.

**Strength activities** help muscles and bones stay strong, improve posture, and help to prevent diseases like osteoporosis. Strength activities are those work muscles against some kind of resistance, like pushing or pulling hard to open a heavy door. To ensure good overall strength, include a combination of activities that exercise the different muscle groups –upper body and lower body, right and left sides, and opposing muscle groups (e.g., both the front and back of the upper arm). Examples of activities that build strength are rope or stair climbing, bat and racquet games, push-ups, weight training, rowing, and skating.

Teachers are also reminded to select a balance of activities that increase students’ strength, flexibility, and endurance.

Whenever possible, increase and prolong the students’ moderate to vigorous activity to increase their cardiovascular endurance benefits. The following are strategies for increasing students’ activity levels:

- Have students move as soon as they enter the activity area (e.g., gymnasium). This is easiest if a variety of equipment is available to them. Stress the importance of safety and awareness and respect of other students’ physical spaces.
- Having sufficient equipment available for every student will minimize wait time and line-ups.
- Small teams increase the opportunity for more movement by more students (e.g., 3s volleyball creates more opportunity than 6s volleyball).
- Try to create a work-to-rest ratio of 2:1 when it is not conducive for the entire class to move at the same time. A relay team with two people will create twice as much movement opportunity as a relay team with four people.
- Modify the rules and equipment so students increase the intensity of their activities and can measure progress and achievement.
- Have students identify ways to allow for more movement time and less management and transition time.

To assist selecting a balance of activities, the Index of Activities (later in this section) categorizes each activity.

Note that the activities included in this resource represent only a small fraction of the possibilities for meeting DPA requirements. The emphasis is on simple and fun activities that can be delivered by any teacher or adult and with a minimum amount of equipment. Physical education activities such as formalized games and sports (e.g., hockey, basketball, soccer, canoeing, rock climbing, swimming, skating), various forms of dance, gymnastics, and training programs (e.g., aerobics, tai chi, pilates) can also be used to satisfy DPA requirements, but are not described here. For support in using those activities, consult the IRPs for Physical Education and Dance, available online at [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp.htm](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp.htm)

For more ideas for implementing DPA, visit the ActNow! BC web site:

[www.actnowbc.ca/EN/home/](http://www.actnowbc.ca/EN/home/)

## ► Index of Physical Activities

The activities included in this resource are categorized in a number of ways:

- by location (although the activities are organized by the space to which they are best suited, many of them can be adapted and used anywhere)
  - Classroom or Small Space Activities
  - Gym or Open Space Activities
  - Outdoor Activities
- by physical benefit (activities that increase strength, flexibility, or endurance; some activities address two or all three areas)
- by grade level – activities appropriate for primary, early intermediate, and/or late intermediate.

The following index categorizes each activity included in the body of this resource. Each individual activity is also coded to indicate the appropriate grade levels, and by physical benefit (whether it helps develop students' endurance, strength, and/or flexibility).

	<b>E</b> Endurance	<b>S</b> Strength	<b>F</b> Flexibility	K-3	4-6	7-9
<b>Classroom or Small Space Activities</b>						
Activity Cards	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Body Spelling			✓	✓	✓	
Desk Wake Up			✓	✓	✓	
DPA Leadership	✓	✓	✓			✓
Follow the Leader	✓			✓	✓	
Indoor Circuit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Language Lights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lego Moves	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Memory Match	✓			✓	✓	✓
Moving Body Parts	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Musical Hoops	✓			✓	✓	✓
Over Under	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Sitting Aerobics	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Sketch Relay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spelling Relay	✓			✓	✓	✓

	<b>E</b> Endurance	<b>S</b> Strength	<b>F</b> Flexibility	K-3	4-6	7-9
Stretches		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trivia Relay	✓	✓			✓	✓
True or False Simon Says	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Gym or Open Space Activities</b>						
Action Stories	✓			✓	✓	
All in a Day's Work	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Birds of a Feather Flock Together	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Core Strength Activities		✓	✓		✓	✓
Creative Dance	✓			✓	✓	
Exercise Balls		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exercise Bands		✓		✓	✓	✓
Fitness Frenzy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Four Square Jumping Pattern	✓			✓	✓	✓
Loose Caboose	✓				✓	✓
Move to the Music	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Numbers Run	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scrabble Fitness	✓			✓	✓	✓
Skiping	✓			✓	✓	✓
Tag Games	✓			✓	✓	✓
Travel Your Name	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Vowel Catcher	✓			✓	✓	
<b>Outdoor Activities</b>						
Alphabet Walk/Run/Wheel	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Amazing Asphalt Activities	✓			✓	✓	✓
Capture the Flag	✓				✓	✓
Field Circuit	✓				✓	✓
Jolly Jumping	✓				✓	✓
Jumping Jack Rabbits	✓	✓			✓	✓
Meet in the Middle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Memory Orienteering	✓				✓	✓
Merry-Go-Round	✓			✓	✓	✓
Orienteering	✓				✓	✓
Outdoor Activity Circuit	✓	✓	✓			✓
Outdoor Relay Races	✓	✓				✓
Passball	✓				✓	✓
Playground Challenges	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Playground Circuit	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Running Fun	✓				✓	✓
Snow Relays	✓	✓			✓	✓
Tantalizing Co-Operative Tasks	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Walk and Talk	✓				✓	✓
Walk/Run/Wheel Challenge	✓				✓	✓
Walking Programs	✓			✓	✓	✓
Winter Tag	✓			✓	✓	



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## Classroom or Small Space Activities

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The activities included in the section can be completed with students at their desks, in an open space in the classroom or in a common space in the school. Students can create a larger classroom space by moving desks to the side or in a circle. Generally, these activities require a minimal amount of space, but they could also be completed in a gym, other open space, or outdoors. Adapting the activities for larger spaces also allows a greater capacity for building students' endurance (e.g., running instead of walking, incorporating skipping ropes).

These activities require the least in terms of equipment and set up, and can often be completed using basic classroom supplies.

### ***Tips for the Classroom or Small Space***

- Keep simple equipment easily accessible in the classroom or nearby for the students to use during breaks or as a reward.
- Consider joining up with another class.
- Make physical activity such as stretching or desk energizers part of your daily routine.
- Consider your space, and adapt the activity if required (e.g., in a classroom with desks or other obstructions, running as part of the activity may not be practical or safe).
- Have students keep track of their progress and improvement over time and log their activity minutes.
- Review concepts learned as part of a physical activity rather than on paper.
- Prior to a quiz or test, encourage your students to reduce stress by increasing their physical activity. A 10-minute brisk walk before a quiz or test can help students breathe easier and get the blood circulating.
- For older students, challenge them to find ways to modify the activity or reinvent a game to help maximize participation by all, and to encourage student engagement and interest.
- Encourage students to recognize fair play as essential components of physical activity. Students should learn to play by the rules and show respect for themselves and others.
- Have students volunteer to teach the rest of the class a game or sport from their own cultural backgrounds. Make a class collection and share it with the rest of the school.

► ► **Activity Cards**

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** deck of playing cards, activity station cards or posters

Create a set of activity station cards or posters that depict endurance, strength, and flexibility activities. Assign each either a heart, diamond, spade, or club. Post the cards around the classroom, ensuring there is enough room in front of each.

Place a deck of deck cards face down on a central table or desk. Have students take turns to run to the deck, select a card, and then run to the activity station that corresponds to the symbol on their card, then complete repetitions of the activity based on the number indicated on their card (e.g., 5 of diamonds means run to a station that has a diamond on it; if the station poster card indicates jumping jacks, the student completes 5 jumping jacks). The student and then runs back to the centre and chooses another card from the centre.

If possible, have more two or three decks of cards in different locations so that all students can be moving at once. If there is not enough space, have students should jog in place while they wait their turn.

For older students, have them select the activity station tasks and design the card/posters themselves.

► ► **Body Spelling**

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** none required

Have students stand in an open area of the classroom.

Call out a letter and have the students form that letter by shaping their bodies into the letter. Letters that work well are: A, X, S, C, F, J, I, L, U, V, K, Z. Encourage students to stretch long and hold the stretch for a count of eight. Try counting in a different language.

Have students work with a partner to each form a different letter and then form a two-letter word. Suggestions for two-letter words include: on, it, of, to, oh, so, hi, do, go, no, by, is, ox, an, at, in.

In groups of three to four, have students form their bodies to spell a word (e.g., the name of an animal, a girl's name or a boy's name).

As a variation, have the students walk around in the shape of the letter called.

## ▶ ▶ Desk Wake Up

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** none required

Have the students sit comfortably and place their hands on their desks in line with their shoulders, fingers pointing slightly inward.

Students then rest their foreheads between their hands and inhale deeply, feeling their breath flowing into the body like a fountain of energy.

Students slowly lift the forehead first, then the neck and torso so that they are sitting in an upright position, keeping their shoulders and lower body relaxed.

Students then exhale while tucking in their chins to their chests to pull the head forward, lengthening the back of the neck.

Have students relax and breathe deeply as their foreheads are brought back to rest on their desks. Have them repeat this three times.

## ▶ ▶ DPA Leadership

K-3	4-6	7-9
		✓



**Equipment:** video equipment (optional)

Have students work in small groups to design a 10-15 minute DPA routine. Students routines should include a variety of endurance, strength, and flexibility activities. Have groups take turns leading the rest of the class through their DPA routines.

As an extension, video students as they lead the class through their routine, and make these videos available for the rest of the school to use. Alternatively, students can lead large groups or the whole school through their routine.

► ► Follow the Leader

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** music, audio equipment

Divide students into partners and have them determine who will lead first.

Review various locomotor movements (skip, leap, hop), changes of direction (forward, backward, sideways), shapes, levels (travel upright, bend down low), pathways (straight ahead, zigzag, curved, diagonal) and speeds (fast, slow). Pay particular attention to body awareness and spatial awareness.

Have the leader perform various movements as the follower mimics the leader’s actions.

Use a signal such as a change in music or a whistle to indicate a switch: the follower is now the leader and vice versa.

► ► Indoor Circuit

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** hoops, benches, exercise bands, pylons, paper, music (optional)

**Around the Room**

Set up a variety of stations around the classroom that will help students develop strength, target, agility and co-operative skills. For example:

- Station 1: hoops (throwing, jumping)
- Station 2: beanbags (throwing, balance)
- Station 3: exercise bands (strength, flexibility)

Have students work through the stations, allowing a set amount of time for each station. Students can work individually or with a partner. Play music to provide additional motivation for the students.

**Mission Possible Circuit**

Prepare a list of several different missions or activities related to selected class content (from mathematics, science, music, etc.) and divide the students into groups of six or seven. Assign each of the groups to a station.

On a signal, have one student read out the task for the group and then have them work together to perform the activity.

Students complete as many of the tasks as possible within a set amount of time or until a song has finished playing.

## ► ► Language Lights

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	

**E S F**

**Equipment:** none required

Assign students consonants or vowels, adjectives or verbs, nouns, and so on and then assign different movements to each word type.

Call out a colour of a streetlight and have students move as the colour dictates. For example, red light means stop and yellow light means jog on the spot. When you call out “green,” students must move according to their word type; e.g., vowels do jumping jacks, consonants bend over and touch their toes.

If you call out “Pit Stop,” students stop and complete a stretch, holding it for eight seconds.

## ► ► Lego Moves

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	

**E F**

**Equipment:** none required, sticks or musical instruments optional

Bang two sticks together, clap your hands, use a tambourine or keep a strong rhythm in another way while the students move around the room in a manner that reflects the beat.

Call out “Lego” and students must stop and make an interesting shape with their bodies. Encourage the students to make the shapes wide, narrow, twisty, curvy or round in a high, medium or low body position.

Start the beat again and call out “Lego” and a number to indicate the size of the grouping, e.g., “Lego 2,” “Lego 3,” “Lego 4” and so on, and have the students make shapes in pairs, threes or fours.

## ▶ ▶ Memory Match

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** cards or paper plates

Write rhyming words, synonyms, vocabulary & definitions, equivalent numbers or operations, or other pairs of words/phrases on the bottom of paper plates or cards and divide students into groups of two.

Scatter half the paper plates or cards turned upside down around one side of the classroom. The matching paper plates or cards are scattered on the other side of the playing space.

Have each group start at a different spot and, using a specific locomotor pattern (e.g., hopping on one foot, skipping, twirling), move to one side to pick a paper plate or card. Then they move, using the same locomotor pattern, to the other side of the playing area to find their matching word. If they turn over a card that matches, they bring it back. If it doesn't, they place it back on the floor upside down for the other teams to find. Partners must stay together and can only turn over one card at a time.

## ▶ ▶ Moving Body Parts

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** music, audio equipment

Students move in groups of three throughout the play space, starting and stopping with the music. While moving together, the group follows challenges provided by the teacher:

- feet touching the ground with hands on ankles
- five body parts on the ground
- some body parts at medium level and some at a low level
- making noise without using feet or mouths
- three students with their backs touching
- using body parts to look like a spider.

After players successfully accomplish a specified number of challenges, try increasing the number of players in each group. To add to the challenge, introduce various pieces of equipment for use in accomplishing a challenge. For example, players, without use of their hands, hold a rope and move in a curvy pathway. Vary the distance and pathway groups must travel to add to the challenge.

Ask students to create new challenges.

## ▶ ▶ Musical Hoops

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** one hoop per student, clipboards, markers, index cards with letters written on them, music

Place one hoop per student randomly on the floor of a cleared area of the classroom. Place a clipboard with a blank sheet and a marker inside each hoop.

Play music and have students move about this cleared space using a specific locomotor skill (e.g., skip, hop), or have students walk in a variety of ways (e.g., baby steps, backwards, crab walk, side step, quick steps, long strides).

When the music stops, have the students move to the closest hoop. Using the paper and clipboard, students write the letter, word or shape that is currently indicated on the front board or is called out by the teacher. Alternatively, teachers orally ask a question and the students write the answer. For example, “In what part of the body will you find a chamber?” For younger students, place beanbags in the hoops with numbers, letters or shapes marked on them. When students get to the hoop they write the shape they see on the beanbag on the paper. Give students time to finish and while waiting they can perform a stationary skill, such as marching or jogging on the spot.

Upon a signal, the students place the clipboard down in the hoop and move again to continue the activity with a new letter, word or shape that will be indicated.

## ▶ ▶ Over Under

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** a small, sturdy object for passing

Have students stand in a row, one behind the other in groups of five or six.

Have the students pass the object down the line, alternating high over the head and low between the knees.

When the object gets to the end of the line, the last person runs to the front and starts passing it again.

After students practise passing the object, add alphabet challenges. Have students say a letter of the alphabet as they pass the object. Students say a word that starts with each letter of the alphabet (e.g., first person says “apple,” second person says “banana,” third person says “cat,” fourth person says “dog”).

Another variation is saying a two-letter word and when the person runs to the front of the line, the group must say a three-letter word, then a four-letter word. Continue to the appropriate level of skill.

## ▶ ▶ Sitting Aerobics

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓

**E**

**F**

**Equipment:** music, audio equipment

Have the students position their chairs so that they have enough room to stretch out their legs while sitting on the edge of their chairs and keeping their back straight.

Play music with a strong beat and have the students do actions such as the following:

- swing their arms and reach left and right while tapping their toes and lifting their knees as if walking briskly
- move their arms as if swimming the front or back crawl and kick their legs in a flutter kick
- pedalling their legs as if riding a bike
- using an imaginary paddle to paddle a canoe (call out “switch” to have them paddle on both sides)

## ▶ ▶ Sketch Relay

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓

**E**

**S**

**F**

**Equipment:** index cards, whiteboards or chart paper, markers

Divide students into groups of four to six and have them line up at one end of the classroom. Place a pile of eight to ten activity cards in line with each group at the other end of the classroom.

Have one student from each group hop on one foot, lunge walk, or power walk to their group’s cards, choose one, and return to their groups to begin drawing the activity word or phrase from the card on a whiteboard or chart paper.

The group must then guess what activity is drawn and then perform the activity ten times (e.g., jumping jacks, hops, leg lifts, lunges, toe touches, arm circles).

The next person from the group then goes and the game continues until all team members have had a turn drawing.

## ▶ ▶ Spelling Relay

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** wooden ice cream sticks, or cards of letters of the alphabet

Divide the students into teams and assign each team an equal number of ice cream sticks, which are placed on a table across the room. Alternatively, use cards of letters of the alphabet.

Call out a vocabulary word for the teams to spell. On a signal, the first players in each team hop on one foot to their piles, grab a stick or card, and bring it back to their teams. The other players in each team should be engaging in physical activity while they wait their turn (e.g., hopping on the spot). Variations: have students use other locomotor movements to obtain their sticks, such as lunge walking or crab walking.

Upon returning, the runners tag the next students and they run and collect another stick. Meanwhile, the team mates work together to spell out the words with the sticks. Students are not allowed to break the sticks.

As a variation, have students work in rows and walk down the row or around the classroom to the pile of sticks and bring one back to their team.

Variation: instead of spelling words, have students collect objects or word cards to form sets based on curriculum topics (e.g., the four food groups, the provinces and territories, different categories of animals or plants, denominators of a given number).

## ▶ ▶ Stretches

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** none required

### Stretch Wave

Divide students into groups of six to eight and have them stand in a circle.

Have one student start by performing a stretch and holding it. One at a time, moving in a clockwise direction, the other students perform the same stretch.

Once it has been passed around the circle, the student to the left of the first student performs a different stretch and the wave continues.

### Tight Body Stretch

Note: Perform while lying down or sitting down.

Have the students make their whole body as tight and stiff as possible. Hold this for a count of five and release. Breathe in and out slowly. Tighten one body part at a time in the following order: one hand, both hands, one arm, both arms, one leg, both legs, buttocks, whole body.

Conclude this stretch by repeating the activity, this time releasing one body part at a time in the following reverse order: whole body, buttocks, both legs, one leg, both arms, one arm, both hands, one hand. Breathe in and out slowly through the nose.

### ► ► Trivia Relay

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** trivia cards, paper, markers

Divide the students into groups and have them line up at one end of the classroom. Place a pile of trivia cards in line with each group at the other end of the classroom.

Have one student from each group jog, skip, hop, side-step, walk backwards, or walk on tiptoes to their group's cards, choose the top one and write the answer on the front board. The remaining students in each group should engage in activity (e.g., hopping on the spot) while they wait their turn.

The student then checks his or her own answer and, if correct, marks a check on the board and returns to tag the next person on the team.

The next person in line takes a turn and the game continues until they have all participated.

### ► ► True or False Simon Says

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** none required

Choose a student to lead the class as Simon. The remaining students should jog on the spot beside their desks.

Have the leader say "Simon says..." then give an activity suggestion, such as:

- If water is a healthy drink, skip around your desk.
- If skateboarding is a strength activity, hop up to the front of the room and touch the teacher's desk.
- If stretching is a good stress management technique, reach for your toes.

If the answer is true, the students complete the suggested activity. If the answer is false, they remain jogging on the spot.

True or false statements related to other curriculum content can also be used (e.g., If forestry is a renewable resource, do 5 lunges." "If the square root of 144 is 12, do 10 crunches.").



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## Gym or Open Space Activities

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The activities included in this section can be completed in the gymnasium or any open space. If gym access time is limited, consider using an empty classroom, hallway, other open indoor space, or the playground.

These activities often require some equipment and set up. Consult with your school's administrator or physical education teacher about the equipment available and consider organizing an equipment sign-out system. Although these activities may require more work on the part of teachers in terms of set up and organization, they offer students greater benefits physical activity opportunities.

### Tips for the Gym or Open Space

- In addition to the activities listed in this section, select activities from the Classroom and Small Space section of this resource and adapt them for use in larger spaces to focus more on building students' endurance (e.g., running instead of walking, incorporating skipping ropes).
- Use activities that also support the physical education or dance curricula to make full use of gym time.
- Consider joining up with another class to share gym time.
- Have students keep a log of their progress and improvement over time.
- Take turns with other teachers setting up the room for a weekly activity.
- Consider moving these activities outside if the weather is nice.
- After students participate in a physical activity, ask them to modify the activity or re-invent a game to help encourage student engagement and interest.
- Encourage students to recognize fair play as essential components of physical activity. Students should learn to play by the rules and show respect for themselves and others.
- Have students volunteer to teach the rest of the class a game or sport from their own cultural backgrounds. Make a class collection and share it with the rest of the school.

► ► **Action Stories**

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** none required

Tell a simple story that contains many different types of actions and characters and have the students act out the characters and their actions, such as:

- animals: elephant, gorilla, kangaroo, horse, bird, alligator, rabbit
- machines: cars, planes, helicopters, spaceships, robots, elevators, toasters
- nature: trees, grass, growing flowers, lightening, wind.

Themes to use for story lines include:

- a trip, or travelling to a destination
- a visit to the zoo, farm, factory
- a quest or adventure

As a variation, have students act out walking conditions and respond to safety obstacles as they walk to the school or park (e.g., walking in long grass, looking both ways before crossing street).

► ► **All in a Day's Work**

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** benches, crash mats, tray or box, objects, pylons, skipping ropes, whiteboard and markers or papers and pens, small tote bag

Divide the class into groups of four to eight. Walk through each station with the entire class so everyone knows what is expected. Emphasize the need to work together and be respectful of each other while completing the circuit. Sample stations are listed below. Encourage students to add to the list. Create new stations that capture the abilities and interests of all students. Impose a time limit for each station or have groups complete each station before moving on to the next.

- Overheated car: The whole group pushes a crash mat between pylons 8–10 metres apart.
- Third floor class: Each member of the group steps up and down on a bench one foot at a time to simulate climbing a set of stairs. The average staircase has approximately 15 stairs. They pretend their class is on the third floor so they must climb 45 stairs to get to class.
- Part-time job as a waiter or waitress: This station is done as a relay. One person starts by carrying a tray or box with one hand to a pylon 6-8 metres away and back. There are several objects on the tray; e.g., beanbag, hockey puck, textbook. The tray is then handed to the next student in the group.

Continue until all group members have had a turn. If an object falls off, the student must start over. Consider placing objects on the tray that require students to concentrate on balance and timing.

- Skipping classes: The group jumps rope for one minute, individually with short ropes.
- Detention: This station is done as a relay. The first student in each group skips, hops, wheels or gallops to one end of the activity area where there is a blackboard, white board or paper and pens. With their non-dominant hand, students write their first and last names on a piece of paper, and then return to their group in the same manner.
- First in line at the canteen: The entire group runs from one pylon to another and lines up. The group is then challenged to line up one behind the other, without talking, from shortest to tallest, lightest hair to darkest hair, or the month of the year they were born.
- Catching your spring break flight: The first student runs with a piece of luggage (use something to weigh down a small bag) to a pylon and back, then hands the luggage to the next student in line. Continue until all group members have had a turn.

One station group could act as the “supervisors” and this group would be responsible for monitoring other groups to ensure they are performing their “work” tasks properly. Depending on your time frame, this would be a good resting station.

To add another challenge, write the station names on cards and place them in the middle of the play area. When the whistle sounds, a group supervisor from each group runs, from an equal distance away, to the middle of the play area to grab one card and return to the group to explain the task to them.

## ► ► **Birds of a Feather Flock Together**

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** music, audio equipment

Choose music with a strong 2- or 4-beat rhythm.

Divide the class into groups of 3-5. Each group needs to find a space and stand in a circle.

Have one student in each group be the first leader and create a sequence of moves. Establish the criteria, for example, they must combine one strength move (e.g., 1-foot balance) and two flexibility moves (e.g., stretch, bend, twist) in their sequence, for a total of 16 counts. Leaders lead their groups through their dance sequences in time to the music. The last move is a rotation of the group, establishing a new leader.

Have groups flock by travelling throughout the gym while keeping in time with the music. Encourage groups to listen and move to the music with smooth, flowing transitions from leader to leader. Sometimes groups may pass directly through other groups during their sequence.

## ► ► Core Strength Activities

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** one ball per student (basketball, volleyball, soccer ball, medicine ball), folding mats, skipping ropes, masking tape, ribbon sticks, scarves, pom-poms, exercise bands

After warming up, students choose a ball (e.g., basketball, volleyball, soccer ball, playground ball, stability ball, or medicine ball), and a partner. Review the following core strength and stability exercises. Consider students' injuries or physical limitations and provide variations or have students suggest variations for each of the activities.

### Crunches:

- Back and feet flat on floor. Curl head and shoulder up and off floor to bring rib cage closer to pelvis. Arms can be held at sides, crossed over chest, placed loosely behind head or extended above head.
- Back flat on floor, feet 90 degrees off floor. Curl head and shoulder up and off floor to bring rib cage closer to pelvis.
- Cross-over crunch: Back flat on floor, left leg bent and crossed over bent right knee. Curl head and shoulders up to bring rib cage closer to pelvis. Rotate elbow to opposite knee without pulling on head.

**V-Sits:** Lie on back with arms at sides. Bend at hips and bring legs and torso towards midline to form a V. Legs and back remain straight at all times. Allow as much bend to legs as necessary to avoid back strain.

**V-Sit Twists:** Lie on back with arms holding a ball at stomach. Bend at hips and bring legs and torso toward midline to form a V. Twist side to side with ball. Legs and back remain straight at all times. Legs can bend as needed to avoid back strain.

**Heel Touches:** Back and feet flat on floor, arms at sides. Curl head and shoulder up and off floor to bring rib cage closer to pelvis. Extend right arm to touch right heel, alternate side to side.

**Bike Pumps:** Back flat on floor, knees bent at 90 degrees. Curl head and shoulder up to bring rib cage closer to pelvis. Hold position. In a bicycle motion, reach elbow to touch opposite knee and alternate side to side. Do not allow feet to touch floor. Keep straight leg fully extended.

**Hip Raises:** Back flat on floor with legs extended up, perpendicular to floor. Contract abs and butt and raise hips off of floor while raising heels to ceiling. Do not use hands to lift up hips. This is a very small motion, so do not swing legs.

**Dolphin Kicks:** Lie on side with bottom thigh completely elevated off the floor, lower leg about three inches off floor. With both legs straight and tight together, move legs 12 inches forward and back while keeping thigh off floor. Alternative: Use one leg at a time.

**Side Planks:** Lie on side with body in a straight line. Raise hips toward ceiling and support body with only feet, elbow and lower arm touching the floor. Relax and return to start position. Repeat on both sides. Try supporting body with an extended arm along the floor and over the head instead of using a bent elbow, raising opposite arm straight up in the air, or lifting top leg in the air.

**Leg Lowering:** Lie on back with legs bent at 90 degrees to the floor. Keep stomach pulled up and in. Lower back should remain in contact with floor at all times. Lower one bent leg at a time towards the floor. Stop movement if back or pelvis begins to move. Do not let heel touch the floor. Alternate legs.

**Superhumans:**

- Alternate arm and leg: Lie face down on the floor with arms and legs fully extended. Keep hips in contact with floor and abs tight. Raise opposite arm and leg, alternate sides. Do not arch back and lift using gluteal muscles.
- Legs only: Repeat, but keep hands on ground. Raise both legs off of floor. Initiate lift with gluteal muscles.
- Both arms and legs: Repeat, but lift both arms and legs off floor at the same time.

Have the students practise the exercises. While one partner performs, the other gives feedback about technique and rests. Circuits can be designed to rotate students from station to station by posting a written explanation to assist proper technique. Students should continue repeating the exercise until the muscle group begins to feel fatigued or roll a pair of dice to determine the number of repetitions.

Have students individually record the activities and the number of repetitions they are able to complete. Refer to these records when completing core stability exercises throughout the school year. Some students will benefit from the use of ribbon sticks, scarves, exercise bands, and pom-poms to extend their movements.

Discuss opportunities for students to participate in core strengthening activities, such as pilates or kickboxing. Consider inviting a variety of certified instructors to school to lead a “smorgasbord of core” at lunch or after school. Challenge students to practise their favourite core strength activity for 30 seconds every 15 minutes while they are watching television, at the computer, or doing homework.

**► ► Creative Dance**

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** pathway signs, music, audio equipment

Review direction and pathways (e.g., combining directions and locomotor movements). As students enter the gym, call out a direction such as forward, backward or sideways for students to follow while moving around the gym. Then, add a locomotor pattern with a direction (e.g., forward galloping, backward walking, or sideways skipping). Post these patterns on the wall on pathway signs.

Point to a picture of a straight pathway. Ask students to move in a straight pathway using two body parts, then three body parts. Point to a picture of a zigzag pathway. Ask students to move in a zigzag pathway around the gym. Point to a picture of a curved pathway. Ask students to move around the gym using a curved pathway, first making small curves, then larger curves. Point to a picture of a spiral pathway and ask students to move in a spiral pathway, first a small spiral and then a large spiral. Lead students around the gym, creating a large spiral pathway.

Divide the students into pairs and have them travel together using a pathway of their choice. Have some pairs demonstrate their pathways.

Have the students create their own “movement stories” by putting together three (or more) pathways and directions; e.g., forward spiral, backward curved, sideways zigzag. Remind students to be aware of the movement around them and avoid others. Instruct them to “shoulder check” often while moving backward.

Have students demonstrate their stories, while others identify the pathways and directions used. Play music with a strong beat while students are creating and presenting their movement stories.

Have students add different patterns (e.g., circular, rectangular, square, triangular, figure eight, a favourite letter) to their stories to make them more complex.

## ► ► Exercise Balls

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** large exercise balls (stability balls)

Have the students perform various movements using large exercise balls, such as sitting on the ball, side toe touches or a prone balance (lying on your back). Other examples could include:

**Belly Busters:** Divide the students into pairs and have them stand beside each other with the ball between them at their waist or chest level. Have the students move around the room, keeping the ball between them without letting it fall to the ground. Start with the ball between them on their sides and then have them rotate to have the ball trapped between them in the front of their body and then the back of their body.

**Buttocks Bust:** Divide students into groups of four and give each group a ball. Their goal is to work together to lift the ball off the ground and hold it for a certain amount of time. Four students will sit in a circle, facing each other with the ball in the middle. Upon a signal, all the members in the group will attempt to lift their buttocks off the floor, supporting their weight with their hands and keeping their feet on the ball. Count how long they can hold this position. Remind the students that it is easier if they bend their knees. Vary this activity by using more or fewer students.

**Prone Balance:** Have students kneel behind the balls and place their stomachs on the balls with their hands on the floor in front of the ball. Have them complete actions such as: lift one arm up, then the other; lift one leg off the floor; lift one leg and the opposite arm; create a rocking motion using hands and feet.

**Assisted Hold-up:** Have students kneel behind the balls and place their stomachs on the ball. Have them extend their legs straight, balancing on their toes and raising their arms out to the sides like an airplane with their chests off the ball.

**Prone Walkout:** From the prone balance, have the students walk their hands out from the balls, letting the balls roll down toward their feet (hands remaining on the floor). This is like a push-up performed with the ball under the quadriceps of both legs.

Extension: An exercise ball could be kept in the classroom for students to use when they have completed their work (e.g., sit on the ball and read a book, use the computer). This will help to improve core strength and stability.

## ► ► Exercise Bands

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** exercise bands per student (a variety of lengths and tensions are best), pool noodles

Provide each student with two exercise bands. Most fitness stores sell exercise bands and many sell bulk rolls, which are ideal for cutting into various lengths. Low cost alternatives like pantyhose and strips of old sheets or towels are also effective.

Once students have their exercise bands, have them find a space and face the front of the room. Students who are allergic to latex should be provided latex-free equipment. Store this equipment separately to avoid cross-contamination. Students unable to use exercise bands may use alternate equipment, such as food cans, wrist weights or beanbags.

Review each exercise, highlighting the correct way to do the exercise to avoid injury. Allow students time to practise while circulating and encouraging proper technique. Stress the importance of control and technique with each movement to isolate target muscles rather than speed. Sample exercises include:

- Push-ups with band across back: Place one end of the band under right hand and extend it across the back, holding the other end with left hand. Perform push-ups.
- Back row with bands sitting on floor or step: Sit with legs extended in front of body, wrap band around feet and hold end with both hands. Keeping back straight, squeeze shoulder blades together and down.
- Front raise with two bands: Stand with one band under each foot, holding the other ends with hands. Keeping back straight and abdominals tight, raise one arm in front of body to shoulder height. Lower while raising other arm.
- Lateral raise with two bands: Stand with one band under each foot, holding the other ends with hands. Keeping back straight and abdominals tight, raise both arms out to the sides up to shoulder height.
- Bicep curls with band: Stand on the band and, holding the other ends with hands, curl fist toward shoulders while keeping elbow close to body. Alternate the arms.
- Triceps extensions with band: Stand on the band and hold it with right hand at the base of neck. Keeping right elbow up and close to head, extend right arm in the air. Repeat on left side.
- Step touches: Stand with a band tied around each ankle or just above each knee, take one large step to the right and close left foot to right. Alternate by taking one large step to the left.
- Hamstring curls: Stand and secure a band around back of the ankle, holding both ends in one hand. Curl foot with the band back to buttocks. Use a wall or bar for support. Switch ankle and repeat motion.
- Dorsi flexion of ankle: Stand and secure band around the ball of the foot, holding both ends in one hand (use a partner, if necessary). Point toe and then pull back foot toward the body.

- Back extensor: Secure band to ankle, holding the end with opposite hand. Start on all fours and elevate opposite arm and leg. Hold for three seconds, move the band to other ankle and switch arm and leg raised.

Have the students partner up and use each other as additional resistance. Have the students use different lengths or tensions of exercise bands to adjust the resistance provided. After movements have been learned and practised, have groups choreograph a routine to a song and present it to the class. Exercise band circuit stations could be completed once a week.

Exercises developed by and adapted with permission of Marjorie O'Connor, Fit International, Edmonton, 2000.

## ► ► Fitness Frenzy

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** mats, music, audio equipment

Discuss and reinforce the three physical activity components: flexibility, strength and endurance. Have the students brainstorm a list of activities that would fall into those three categories and record on a wall chart.

Demonstrate flexibility activities (to lengthen the muscle, hold the stretch for 20 seconds and release, allowing the muscle to relax), such as:

- Tight Body: Students make their whole body as tight and stiff as possible, hold and release.
- Stretch: while breathing in and out slowly. Begin by tightening one body part at a time. Start with one hand, then both hands, one arm, then both arms, one leg, then both legs, the buttocks and then the whole body. Breathe in and out slowly through the nose.
- Calf Stretch: Place your palms against the wall, put your right leg back, toe forward and keeping the foot's heel on the floor, hold and stretch. Switch to left leg and hold.
- Squat Stretch: Squat down on your toes and hold. Attempt to stand while keeping your fingertips on the floor, bending your knees a little if necessary and hold.

Demonstrate strength activities, such as:

- Push-ups: Perform a safe push-up against the wall. By putting one's knees on the floor
- you can modify push-ups. Opting to hold a front support position for
- 10–30 seconds is another way to adapt the activity.
- Sit-up or crunch: Always bend the knees when performing sit-ups and crunches. To modify, clasp hands behind head, cross arms over chest or place arms at side.
- Wall Sit: Sit with your back against the wall and your feet bent at 90 degrees with no use of the hands and hold for 20 seconds.

Demonstrate endurance activities such as jumping jacks, jogging on the spot, skipping, lunges and any activities that elevate the heart rate to a working level. Have the students try one of these activities until exhausted and then rest for an equal length of time.

Divide students into groups of three or four and have them design a 10-minute workout that includes activities from the three fitness components (and warm-up and cool-down activities).

Once the workouts are designed, play the music and set the stop-watch for 10 minutes. Allow the individual groups to lead the class through their workouts.

## ► ► Four Square Jumping Pattern

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** floor tape or skipping ropes to mark the area

Have students work in pairs to lay out a four-square pattern on the floor using skipping ropes, lines on the floor or masking tape.

Demonstrate and have the students practise the following jumping patterns:

- Regular jump: jump with feet together on the spot, five times.
- Side-to-side (square 4 to square 3 and back) five times, feet together.
- Up and back (square 4 to square 1 and back) five times, feet together.
- One foot jump up and back (square 4 to square 1 and back) five times each foot.
- Side to side one foot (4 to 3) five times, each foot.
- Triangle (square 1 to square 2 to square 4) five times, feet together.
- Four square (1-3-2-4) five times, feet together.

Some students may need to use a wall for guidance and balance. Instructional posters with clear graphics may enhance understanding for students.

Have one partner try to complete the jumping patterns in order, doing as many jumps as possible. Then the other partner takes a turn. Encourage quick jumps for each pattern and verbal support for one another.

Once completed, challenge students to create their own patterns of jumps.

## ► ► Loose Caboose

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** none required

Divide students into groups of three and have the groups form trains by placing their hands on the shoulders of the person in front.

Identify “loose cabooses,” who are individual players that are not assigned to a three-person train (just a few students will be enough).

Have the “trains” all run around the gym, staying in formation. The “loose cabooses” must run around the play space and try to link on to the end of a train. When a loose caboose is successful at joining the end of a train, the student at the front of the train now becomes a new loose caboose. Trains communicate and work together to try to avoid being caught by loose cabooses.

### ► ► Move to the Music

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	

**E**

**F**

**Equipment:** music, audio equipment

Have students scatter throughout the gym and move to music with a strong two-beat or four-beat rhythm.

Have the students use different locomotor and non-locomotor movements and move to the beat of the music, such as walk, sway, shuffle, gallop, skip, double gallop, twist, and use arm movements.

With a partner or in small groups, students find the beat to the song and move to it. Vary the music to stimulate different types of movement.

As a variation, incorporate other elements such as stories, characters, or animals.

### ► ► Numbers Run

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓

**E**

**S**

**F**

**Equipment:** none required

Have students spread out randomly around the play area.

On a signal, the teacher calls out a locomotor skill (such as running, jumping, hopping, skipping, galloping, leaping) and have all students move around the play area performing this skill.

After 10-15 seconds, the teacher calls out a number. Students then have five seconds to arrange themselves into groups of that size. Once students have arranged themselves into a specific group size, they must then perform an endurance, flexibility, or strength exercise that is called out by the teacher (e.g.,

groups of 6, jumping jacks, students then do 6 jumping jacks before beginning to move around the play area again).

## ► ► Scrabble Fitness

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** index cards with the letters of the alphabet written on them, chart paper, markers

Divide the class into small groups of two or three. Using index cards with letters of the alphabet on them, spread the cards face up on one half or quarter of the playing area.

Have the students stand in their groups an equal distance from the cards and spread out in a safe manner. The first student in each group will start.

On a signal, students hop, jump or skip one at a time to collect one card and bring it back to their partner or group. The remaining students should jog on the spot in their groups to maintain continuous activity. Students alternate turns in getting the letters. Once each student in the group has a card, the students try to form words from the cards they have brought back (they don't have to use all of them).

Once a word is formed, the students have the teacher verify that it is indeed a word. If it is a word, the students write it on a piece of paper or chart paper posted on the wall, gather all the letters and spread them back out on the floor at the other end of the playing area. All words less than four letters score one point for each letter in the word. All words with five or more letters are worth two points per letter. Total the points for a class total. Allot bonus points for words from weekly spelling lists or vocabulary lists. Vary the game by using specific vocabulary terms from science, French, music, etc.

## ► ► Skipping

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** skipping ropes, music/audio equipment (optional)

### Short Rope

Have the students perform various moves, such as one-foot skip, two-foot jump, straddle skip, scissor skip and double side swing. Have the students combine the moves and create routines individually or in groups.

**Long Rope**

Divide the students into groups of four or more and have them use two skipping ropes to skip double rope. Have two students hold the end and gently swing the rope from side to side (but not over). Other students take turns jumping the rope and count how many times they can jump without touching the rope.

Each student takes a few turns trying to break his or her own record.

Have two or three students jump at the same time. Make sure all students take turns swinging the rope.

Try the following skipping moves:

- **Class Skip:** Tie a number of skipping ropes together to form one gigantic rope. Lay the long rope still on the ground. Have all the students line up on the same side of the rope. On a count of “one, two, three, jump,” two people turn the rope and all students attempt to jump together and clear the rope as a group.
- **Twister 360 Degree Turn:** Skip forward, side swing and turn around, skip backwards, turn around, skip forward and so on.
- **Triangle Skip:** Skip with three students turning three ropes in a triangle formation.
- **Double Jump Rope:** Have students turn two ropes perpendicular to each other so that the ropes cross in the middle to form a plus sign. Students attempt to move to the centre to jump both ropes at once.

**▶ ▶ Tag Games**

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** three or four clothespins for each student, pinnies of three different colours, “tails” with clips, pool noodles, coin

**Chase the Horse**

Choose one student to be the “horse” and give this student a 10-second lead to run anywhere in the activity area (the larger the area, the better).

On a signal, the rest of the class chases after the horse in a galloping motion, trying to tag them. When the horse is tagged, the entire class returns to the teacher and the game starts again with a new horse. Vary the lead time if necessary. Reduce the distance the horse may gallop if necessary to involve more students. Consider providing additional horses to a smaller field.

Follow the game with two minutes of active stretching; e.g., arms circles, ankle rotations or leg swings.

**Clothespin Tag**

Discuss the rules of the game and brainstorm with the class ways to actively include everyone in this game; e.g., some students may extend their reach by using a pool noodle.

Give each student three or four clothespins and have them clip the pins onto the backs of their clothing. Students with long hair should clip the pins further down their backs to avoid tangles, or tuck their hair into their shirts.

Give the start signal and have the students attempt to take one pin at a time from the backs of others. If they get a pin, they kneel down on one knee and pin it to the front of their shirts. They are safe until they stand and begin running again. Pins on the front of shirts cannot be taken.

Continue playing until the time is up or all the pins have been taken from students' shirt backs.

### **Donkey Tag**

Choose five students to be "it" and give them green pinnies. The remaining students take red or blue pinnies and tuck them in their waistbands like tails.

Have the students in green pinnies stand in the centre of the activity area. On a signal, have the rest of the students run throughout the activity area. The students in green try to capture the tails of the others. If they succeed, they place the tails in the centre and try to capture another.

Students who lose their tails must crab walk to the circle, retrieve their tails and rejoin the game.

### **Heads or Tails**

Have students space themselves throughout the play area. Demonstrate two positions for the game. One is with a hand on top of your head, "Heads," and the other is a hand on your hip, "Tails." Have students close their eyes. On command, they must assume one of the two positions.

Toss a coin and call out the side that lands face up. Heads will chase tails or vice versa depending on coin toss.

Students keep one hand on either their head or hip. When tagged, students assume the other position and join the tagging team.

### **Heel-Toe Tag**

Choose two or three students to be "it." They must walk with one foot in front of the other, heel to toe, while they are attempting to tag others.

The students avoiding the tag must hop or jump around to safety.

Once tagged, that student becomes it and will walk in a heel-toe manner.

After the tag game, do a group stretch focusing on calves, quadriceps and hamstrings.

### **Follow-the-Leader Tag**

Have students choose partners and take turns leading a variety of movements, such as running, hopping, skipping, galloping or jumping, moving in a variety of directions, speeds and pathways.

The front person of each pair is "it" and tries to tag the other front people only.

Partners switch being the leader and the game continues. The students in the back of the pairs have to keep up with their leaders and can help to avoid being caught by turning and changing directions.

**Other Variations**

Create variations on tag games based on current course content from social studies, science, English language arts, French, mathematics, etc.

**▶ ▶ Travel Your Name**

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** alphabet cards, music (optional), pylon

Create a set of alphabet cards. On the bottom of the laminated letter, write a type of endurance, strength or flexibility activity (e.g., jumping jacks, burpees, front support, 1-foot balance, squat, lunge). Tape alphabet cards to the walls around the gym.

Play music and have the students skip in a straight pathway to the first letter of their name. Have them touch the letter and then travel to the next letter using the kind of locomotor movement called out by the teacher (e.g., skipping, hopping, sliding, jumping, galloping, running). They continue until the music stops or they have spelled their name. For double letters (e.g., Shannon), they must travel to the pylon in the middle of the gym, do the locomotor movement specified there, and then head back to the letter. For children with very short names, ask them to continue spelling a pet’s name or the school name.

For older students, have the students spell various vocabulary words, or use the events in a story and have students travel to them in the order in which they happened.

**▶ ▶ Vowel Catcher**

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** pinnies or foam balls

Divide the class into two equal groups. Have the groups line up on an end line at either end of a playing area.

Assign each student a vowel and identify two taggers (they can wear pinnies or hold a small foam ball). Have the taggers stand in the centre of the playing area.

Call out a word. If a student’s vowel is contained in that word, they try to move across the gym using a specific movement (skipping, side steps, galloping, walking) without being tagged or hit with a foam ball.

If the vowel runner is tagged or hit, they become a tagger and the previous tagger becomes the vowel. If vowel runners cross the line on the other side without being tagged, they continue to be vowel runners.

Change the game by using content, such as parts of a sentence, story or paragraph.



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# Outdoor Activities

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## ***Winter Outdoors Tips***

Frostbite and hypothermia are the most serious threats from exposure to cold. Frostbite occurs when so much heat is lost that water in tissue close to the skin freezes. The ears, face, fingers and toes are most susceptible. Early signs include tissue that is waxy, white, numb, tingly and cold.

Hypothermia is a potentially fatal condition in which core body temperature falls dangerously below the normal 37° C. The earliest signs include numbness in the hands and feet and slight shivering. Continued exposure to the cold can lead to more intense shivering, slurred speech, drowsiness and feeling of exhaustion.

When any of the above symptoms appear, it is crucial to seek shelter, get into dry clothing and have a snack (preferably a hot drink). Serious cases require immediate medical attention.

- **Dress for the weather.** In cold weather, layers of loose-fitting clothing trap air and provide good insulation. The inner layer should be absorbent wear: the middle layer(s) warm and the outer layer water repellent and wind resistant.
  - hat (warm, close-fitting and covering ear lobes; not a “fashion” hat or baseball cap)
  - mittens (gloves do not keep hands warm as effectively as mittens)
  - loose layers (an absorbent synthetic fabric next to skin, a warmer middle layer and a water resistant/repellent outer layer)
  - socks (a single pair of socks, either wool or a wool blend with silk or polypropylene is better than cotton, which offers no insulation when wet; avoid extra thick socks, as they can cause cold feet by restricting blood flow and air circulation around the toes)
  - boots (be sure boots are dry and not too tight).

Students should get out of wet clothes and shoes as quickly as possible as they are the biggest factors in frostbite. Jackets should be zipped up. To avoid strangulation during play, use tube-shaped neck warmers instead of scarves. If scarves must be used, tuck them into jackets. Remove drawstrings on hoods and jackets, as they are also a safety hazard.

- **Get set.** Warm up and stretch indoors before going out in the cold.
- **Beware of the wind.** Take the wind chill factor into account, and plan routes so that the wind is at your back near the end of the session.
- **Watch for fatigue.** Do not push yourself in extremely cold weather.
- **Use the buddy system.** Try to be active with a companion, and keep your eye on one another.
- **Do not dally.** When activity is finished, come in from the cold and change into dry clothing as soon as possible.
- **Be sun safe.** Even in winter, you can still get a sunburn. Reduce sun exposure when the sun is highest in the sky.

## ***When is it too cold to walk or play outside?***

- If the temperature falls below -25°C (-13°F), regardless of the wind chill factor.
- When the wind chill factor is reported as -28°C (-15°F) or greater (this is the temperature at which exposed skin freezes in a few minutes).

## ► ► Alphabet Walk/Run/Wheel

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓

E

F

**Equipment:** paper and pencil/pen for every pair of students

Divide students into pairs and give them each a sheet with the letters of the alphabet or ask them to write the letters down the side of the page. You may want to exclude the letters Q, X and Z.

Have the pairs work together to find objects during their walk, run, or wheel that begin with each letter of the alphabet, or each partner may complete half the alphabet. Some students may be asked to cover the area closest to the school. Some students may require the assistance of a buddy who can scan the area for debris or safety hazards. Set ground rules to increase the challenge for students.

While students stretch their calf muscles, leg and back muscles, discuss their ability to maintain their working heart rates during the walk, run or wheel.

## ► ► Amazing Asphalt Activities

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓

E

**Equipment:** paint, chalk, skipping ropes, utility balls, rocks, sticks or small objects to use as markers, marbles

Encourage students to play activities on the school's blacktop play areas and sidewalks. Permanently paint lines on the tarmac so that students can enjoy the various games anytime. Chalk can also be used to allow a group to create, play and teach their game to another group. Some hopscotch activity ideas include:

**Basic Hopscotch:** The first player throws the marker to square number one. They hop on one foot over square number one, continue through the hopscotch, picking up their marker on the way back. The marker is then thrown to square two. They hop on one foot to square one, hop over square two and hop through the hopscotch, picking up their marker on the way back. Players lose a turn by stepping on a line, hopping into a square occupied by another marker, touching the ground with any part of their body other than their feet, touching another player's marker, tossing their marker into the wrong square or having it fall on a line or outside the hopscotch markings.



**Create a Hopscotch or Share a Hopscotch:** Students work together in groups to create a hopscotch game following the rules of basic hopscotch. The group determines the layout of the hopscotch pattern, how to move through the pattern (hop, jump, straddle left foot, right foot), in what direction to move

(forward, backward, sideways) and any special rules. A group member remains at their own game to explain their hopscotch to the other teams as they rotate through all the games.

**Hopscotch Tag:** Define the play area by using pylons in close proximity to the hopscotch patterns. Choose several students to be “it.” The “its” move around the play area trying to tag the rest of the students. When students are tagged, they go to the hopscotch patterns and hop and jump through the pattern. Players cannot be tagged while they are completing the hopscotch. Once a student finishes jumping the patterns, he or she is back in the game. Change the students who are “it” often so that all get a chance to tag others.

## ► ► Capture the Flag

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** flags or other objects, two sets of different coloured pinnies, pylons

Divide students into teams. Give each team 10 flags out around the field (a different coloured flag is used for each team). Each team is on their side of the field wearing different coloured pinnies. Each team place a hula hoop on the far back side of their area.

Students must try to capture their opponent’s flags and make it safely back to their side without being tagged; however, if they are touched on the other team’s half of the field, they must go to their team goal area and remain there as a prisoner. Assign an activity for them to do while they are prisoners (e.g., jumping jacks).

To be set free, a team-mate will need to try and rescue their team-mate by tagging them while they are waiting in the hula hoop. If they are rescued, both team-mates receive a “free run” back to their side. The teacher may also call a “jail break” where prisoners from both sides are granted “free run” back to their side.

The game is over once a team captures all 10 flags from the opponents. Use fewer than 10 flags if time is limited or if the participants are young.

In winter months, this game can be played using snowshoes.

## ► ► Field Circuit

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** skipping ropes, hoops, pylons

Have the students complete a circuit that includes the following five stations:

Station One: Lay two lanes of three hoops each on the grass an even distance apart. Students are to hop from one hoop to the next. Complete twice.

Station Two: Space two, three-foot pylons four feet apart and lay a plastic golf tube across the top. Students are to crawl underneath the tube once.

Station Three: Set out a course using six pylons. Students are to run zigzag through the pylons once.

Station Four: Lay skipping ropes in pairs across the grass. Students are to jump over the lines of skipping ropes. Graduate the distance the lines are apart and encourage students to challenge themselves to jump the widest section possible. Complete 10 times.

Station Five: Lay down three skipping ropes on the grass or mark with pylons (a start line, a change line and a finish line). They should be 10 metres apart. Students start hopping on their left foot at the start line. They switch to their right foot at the change line and continue hopping to the finish line. Complete three times.

Points are scored if the ball cannot be returned by the receiver, if it bounces more than once or if it is caught.

## ► ► Jolly Jumping

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** skipping ropes and long elastic jump ropes

Provide groups of three to four students with one elastic jump rope (a loop of ½ inch elastic two to three metres long with the two ends tied together to form a large circle). Students unable to skip may hold one end of the elastic while another student jumps. Some students may find it easier to use large hoops and demonstrate a more traditional jumping action. Other students may participate in alternate challenges; e.g., throwing beanbags over or in between ropes hung at different heights. Some students may be challenged by simply stepping over or on a rope placed on the floor.

Have two students hold the ends slipped around their ankles while another student takes a turn jumping in the middle of the ropes. One jumper goes at a time. The holders stand five to six feet apart so the rope is fairly taut and forms the shape of a rectangle. The jumpers complete a predetermined jumping routine or jumping jingle (including jumping inside, outside, an on the rope).

When successful, the rope is moved to the mid-shin height, then up to the quads or hips.

Have students take note of their increased heart rates and breathing rates while jumping.

Have each group member create a jumping routine that includes 10 jumps. Elements include jumping with each foot on one rope, jumping with both feet on the same rope, jumping with both feet straddling one rope then the other, jumping between both ropes or outside both ropes.

Have students share their jumping patterns with other groups to music of their choice.

Increase the level of difficulty by introducing the use of props or a ball. For example, students could do their jump routines while trying to dribble a basketball.

## ► ► Jumping Jack Rabbits

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓

**E S**

**Equipment:** pylons or skipping ropes to create the jumping arena

In a level area, measure off a length of 10-20 metres, depending on the age and abilities of the students. Have a start line and an end line.

With toes touching the start line, students jump to the end line and count how many jumps it takes them to cross the space. Students should bend their knees and keep their weight on the balls of their feet. Arms are bent at the elbows and brought back in a pumping action. Begin each jump from a standing position and from the exact spot where they landed from the previous jump.

Have students jump without using their arms or bending their legs. Ask them how it affected the distance achieved.

Have students do a brief running start to the jump and then jump using only one leg. Have them compare the results.

Have students team up in partners and take alternate jumps in a forward motion or have jumping relays in which each partner jumps only in one direction and tags his or her partner to jump back home.

## ► ► Meet in the Middle

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	

**E S F**

**Equipment:** none required

Help students choose partners. Have the partners stand on opposite sides of the activity area facing each other.

On the signal to begin, partners run forward toward each other to meet in the middle of the activity area, where they give each other a “high five” and return to their original positions. Consider the abilities of the students and adjust the distance to be travelled accordingly.

Have the students try other variations, such as meeting in the middle and return to their original positions running backward; meeting in the middle, circling each other and returning; meeting in the middle, do-si-do-ing (square dance move) and returning moving backward.

Have the students complete an activity when they meet in the middle, for example:

- 10 jumping jacks
- hold a plank position (prone push-up) for 15 seconds
- 10 crunches or curl-ups
- 360-degree jump turn in each direction
- touching toes and holding for 10 seconds.

## ▶ ▶ Memory Orienteering

<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** master map of the school, controls (pieces of tape with letters), student score cards, coloured pinnies

Place several markers (controls) with letters or symbols on them throughout the field and school yard. Each control is given a point value depending on its distance away from the starting point and its accessibility.

On a map of the school grounds, accurately mark where the symbols are located to create a master map called the control map. Provide each pair of students with a scorecard. During the game, upon arriving at a control, students record a description and the clue letter or symbol of each control on their scorecard before moving on to find the next control. Make sure there are many more controls than students could possibly locate in the given time period.

On the signal to start, students study the control map and memorize as many different locations as possible before setting out to find the controls. Students can choose to start with any of the controls so they do not need to be located in a specific order. Staying together, pairs locate as many controls as possible and return to the start before the predetermined time limit is up (20 minutes). Pairs can return to the start to review the control map at any time.

## ► ► Merry-Go-Round

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** whistle or other signal

Players position themselves around a track. Blow a whistle and tell the students how they must move around the track (e.g., skip, gallop, hop). Everyone moves in the same direction.

Select movements to suit group requirements and balance strenuous and less strenuous activities. Ideas for “laps” may include:

- Jog slowly for one minute.
- Walk with high knees for 30 seconds.
- Walk normally for 30 seconds.
- Run fast for 15 seconds.
- Walk slowly for 30 seconds.
- Walk with hands on knees, right on right, left on left, for 30 seconds.
- Walk with hands holding lower shins for 30 seconds.
- Walk backward for 30 seconds.
- Walk backward with long strides for 30 seconds.
- Walk forward with giant strides for 30 seconds.
- Touch the floor with one hand at each step for 30 seconds.
- Crab walk for 30 seconds.

## ► ► Orienteering

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** small red flag, whistle, clue sheet, treasure (pencils, snacks, stickers), snowshoes (optional)

Note: This activity can be completed on foot or on snowshoes.

Hide a small red flag somewhere on school grounds. Give verbal or written clues that lead students throughout the school grounds. Every three to four minutes, blow a whistle to provide a clue. Encourage students to move quickly when following clues. Each clue directs students closer to the flag.

After each clue, have students place their hands over their chests to feel their hearts and take note of their heart rates. Emphasize that their hearts should be beating faster than when they started (be sensitive to students’ differing fitness levels). A modified course on the tarmac may be offered or an additional flag may be hidden in a more accessible location for some students.

The student who finds the flag brings it to the teacher and wins a treasure for the entire class.

As an extension, challenge students to create or follow a map of the walking trails in the community.

## ► ► Outdoor Activity Circuit

K-3	4-6	7-9
		✓



**Equipment:** poster boards, pens

Have students work in small groups to create one basic outdoor activity station that is part of a circuit located on the school grounds. Each group should be designated to design a activity station that focusses on developing endurance, strength, or flexibility (e.g., 20 jumping jacks, 20 toe taps on the bench, 10 lunges). If available, students can incorporate simple equipment such as skipping ropes, medicine balls, or exercise balls. Have students use poster board to create signs for their stations.

Work with students to set up the circuit on the school grounds, and then to complete the circuit.

## ► ► Outdoor Relay Races

K-3	4-6	7-9
		✓



**Equipment:** none required

Have the students work in pairs and design various outdoor relay races. Set criteria, such as students should incorporate two endurance activities (e.g., running, side stepping, grapevine), and two strength activities (e.g., plank, squats, modified push-ups) when designing their relay race. Have student pairs take turns demonstrating their relay race to the class and then leading the students through the relay outside.

## ► ► Passball

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** one small, soft, foam ball; two buckets, boxes, or milk crates

Designate a safe play area that has two end lines and one centre line. Place a bucket on the end lines of each of team's play areas.

Divide the class into two teams. One team receives possession of the ball and the game begins. The point of the game is for the students to pass the ball (underhand or overhand throwing only, no kicking of the ball) amongst their team-mates and try to successfully get the ball in the opposing team's bucket to gain a point. Establish rules such as students are not allowed to run while in possession of the ball, or they may only take three steps while in possession of the ball. Once a point is scored, the game restarts at the centre line and the other team has possession of the ball.

## ► ► Playground Challenges

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** none required

Consider the abilities and challenges of the students and create personalized playground challenges. Consider a supervised visit to the playground when fewer students are present, allowing the students to explore the apparatus more safely.

Have students line up side by side along the edge of the playground equipment. On a signal, students move onto the playground equipment to complete a challenge and then return. Challenges may include:

- run around two objects or pieces of equipment
- go under three objects or pieces of equipment
- step or jump over four objects or pieces of equipment
- complete an up and down on four things (mount or dismount)
- hang from four things in the playground holding body weight for a count of four
- make two bridges on the playground – one tummy up and the other tummy down.

Modify challenges for some students and allow the assistance from a buddy or aide.

Have the students develop a sequence using the challenges; e.g., run to the equipment and go around one thing, jump over one thing and mount and dismount from something else.

## ► ► Playground Circuit

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** hoops, pylons, flags, playground equipment

Organize a walk or run through the schoolyard. On a signal, have the students walk or run through the schoolyard, encountering obstacle challenges that they complete before continuing on their way. Mark the course and set up obstacle challenges, such as:

- Hanging Out – involves hanging from a part of the playground equipment to a count of four.
- Slalom Run – involves running around pylons in a zigzag pattern.
- Slide Run – involves running through the creative playground and climbing up the slide and sliding down.
- Balance Beam – involves balancing on three body parts on a piece of playground equipment to a count of four.

Older students or parent volunteers may be used at obstacle challenges to ensure that the obstacles are reset or assistance provided if needed. For larger groups, double the sets of obstacles to decrease overcrowding and move students quickly and safely through the obstacles. Have the students design and draw the circuit during classroom time.

As a variation, identify a route in your community that students could follow, such as a trail, local park, wooded area, or garden. Have students check in at stations manned by volunteers as they cover the route. Additional obstacles can be included at any check point to increase the challenge and to add variety.

## ▶ ▶ Running Fun

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** none required

Divide the students into groups of four to six and have them move through the activity space in single file, following a leader’s walking, jogging or running pace.

On a signal, have the students at the back of each line run to the front and become the leader. Encourage varied footwork; e.g., a crossover step, shuffle, skip, moving forward and backward.

## ▶ ▶ Snow Relays

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** beanbags, snowshoes (optional), buckets, tennis balls, hoops

## Snowshoe Relay

Divide the class into teams of four students. Each team will have a bucket of 20 tennis balls or beanbags.

The first student on the team hops, jumps, or runs through the snow a predetermined distance to the bucket and throws five balls to the hoop hanging or laying a set distance away. The remaining team members should jog on the spot. Upon completion of the task, the student runs back to the start and the next student takes a turn. They continue the task until the last person returns to the start line.

At the end of the relay, the team counts the number of balls or beanbags that they successfully threw in to the hoop and the activity is repeated to try to improve the score.

Try this activity using two hoops as targets. Throwers could use various objects, such as beanbags, tennis balls or rings.

Variation: have students complete the relay wearing snowshoes or cross-country skis if a class set is available.

## Snowball Relay

Divide the students into groups of three. Give one upside down pylon to each group of three students.

Line up each group at a starting line to begin the snowball relay. Each team of three students will need to make a snowball large enough to fit on the opening of the pylon (like a snow cone).

On the signal, the first student places the snowball onto the pylon. He or she runs with the pylon and snowball to a designated line, touches the line with a hand, and turns around and runs back to the start line. The first student then passes the pylon and snowball to the next student in line. Then the second student runs to the line and back and so on. If the snowball falls off the pylon or inside the pylon, the student must stop, pick it up, repair it and place it back on the pylon to continue.

## ► ► Tantalizing Co-Operative Tasks

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** juggling balls, blindfolds, beanbags

Examples of co-operative games include:

### Co-op Tag

The player who is “it” tries to tag other players while they run (skip, hop, walk) to avoid being tagged. A player is safe when involved in a designated co-operative behaviour, such as:

- **Back-to-back** – students are back-to-back with another player, separating after five seconds.
- **Elbow** – students link elbows with a player.
- **Ball balance** – students balance a ball between each other with a designated body part, such as heads, sides or backs.

**Human Chair**

All the students stand facing in one direction, one behind the other with their hands on the waists of the people in front of them. The objective of the activity is to sit at the same time on the knees of the people behind them. The last person tries to hold this position on his or her own. Upon the direction “1-2-3 sit,” everyone sits down at the exact same time to create a stable human chair. To add to the challenge, have the students remove their hands from the waists of the people in front of them. Students can do this activity with their hands on the shoulders of the people in front of them as well.

**► ► Walk and Talk**

K-3	4-6	7-9
	✓	✓



**Equipment:** none required

Prior to taking the entire class out for a walk, pose series of questions to the class that have to be answered by the end of the walk that relate to a current topic/subject matter that the class is currently covering (e.g., review questions for an upcoming test, French vocabulary words, math problem solving).

Students begin walking along side one other person in the class, following a route as designated by the teacher, and answering the question(s) posed in class. Periodically, call “switch” and the students will then have to find a new partner to walk alongside and continue to work on answering the question(s) posed in class.

Upon returning to the classroom, give students a response to complete the answers based on the information they gathered on the walk.

**► ► Walk/Run/Wheel Challenge**

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** four cones, audio equipment, music with a fast beat, counters (optional), stopwatch

Have the students set individual goals and try to improve their cardiovascular endurance. They can choose to run, walk, or wheel laps for 10 minutes, or use a combination of activities.

Have the class do their laps, using counters to record their total number of laps. If counters are not available, have students pick up a bead or other small object at the end of each lap (position them so that they can pick them up without stopping). The goal is for every student to complete at least four laps of the

course within this time frame. Students will then have to determine whether they can run, walk, or run and walk the course in order to complete this goal.

Have each student record their own results and goal sets based on their individual results. The teacher can progressively add more laps or time to the challenge, but has to take into account that this activity needs to be done regularly in order for students to achieve success and improve their total number of completed laps.

## ► ► Walking Programs

K-3	4-6	7-9
✓	✓	✓



**Equipment:** pedometers (optional), walking logs, flags, hoops, playground equipment

### Pedometer Challenge

Have students participate individually or collectively in a “pedometer challenge” in which individuals or groups set goals and challenge their personal bests. Have the students use pedometers to record the number of steps taken in a day, week or month.

Have students log the minutes or distance they walk. Display the logs along the hallways to promote physical activity. Have parents join the activity by colouring in their own shoes and display them along side their children’s.

Have students log their steps, distance or minutes walked to and from school every day for a week. Calculate the total for the classroom. Try and improve the total achieved for next week or challenge another classroom.

### Adapted Walking

Have the students adapt their walking by taking backward steps, sidesteps, walk three-legged with a partner, carry a backpack, wear snowshoes or wear inline skates. Also vary the number of participants, the length of the walk, the intensity (run, walk) and the objective (flat for speed, hilly terrain or staircase for training).

### Walking Tour of Canada

Have students go to the “Walking Tour of Canada” Web page (<http://www.goforgreen.ca>) and record the distances walked. As the students “walk” through each province or territory, they will find information that relates to history and social studies. They will also be able to use the Travel Mode Calculator to compare how various modes of transportation impact climate change and the health of our environment.

### 25-km Club

Create a line drawing of a caterpillar, snake or other suitable character with 25 body sections. Every time a student completes a kilometre of walking, they colour in one section. When the picture is coloured in, the student becomes a member of the 25-km Club. For older students, challenge students to represent kilometres in various types of graphs.

**Lap the World**

Choose a province or country that the students can “travel” across. Before beginning, have the class walk one lap and count the number of steps, average the whole class’ results and arrive at an average number of steps per lap. Have the students walk, jog, run or wheel around the track or course and record the number of steps completed. Each week, tally up the number of kilometres travelled by the class and mark their progress on a map of the world. A “lap” of the world would be 80 150 000 steps

**Wall of Walking**

Pick a wall in the school that can be easily viewed by everyone and label this the “Wall of Walking.” Make cut-outs of shoe prints or footprints and distribute to all students involved in the walking program. Allow students to decorate and colour the cut-outs. Make sure the name of the participant is included on the footprint. Post the footprints on the “Wall of Walking.”

Over time you can watch the “Wall of Walking” grow as more students get involved with the walking program.

► ► **Winter Tag**

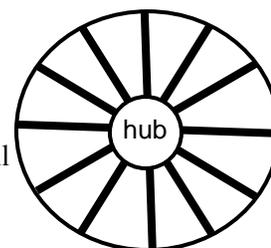
<b>K-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>
✓	✓	



**Equipment:** snowshoes (optional), hoops

The following tag games can be played with or without snowshoes.

**Fox and Geese:** Make the shape of a big wheel with your feet in the fresh snow using paths to represent the spokes and a flattened down area of snow for the hub. Designate one student to be the fox and the rest of the class become geese. The fox tries to catch the geese, who once caught becomes the fox. Remind students keep moving at all times. If a goose steps out of the snow path, they will also become the fox. The only safe area for a goose is the centre hub, but only two geese are allowed in the hub at one time. Students in the hub must also maintain activity while there (e.g., stretches, jumping jacks).



**Snow Angel Tag:** One or more students are “it” and they try to tag other students. Once tagged, the student must create a snow angel and continue to make it while they wait for someone to free them by touching them.