

# Enhancing SEL through Physical Activity

*10 Lessons that can be Implemented Immediately*



# Fitness – Group Ball Toss

**SELF-AWARENESS**

**Grades 2-8**

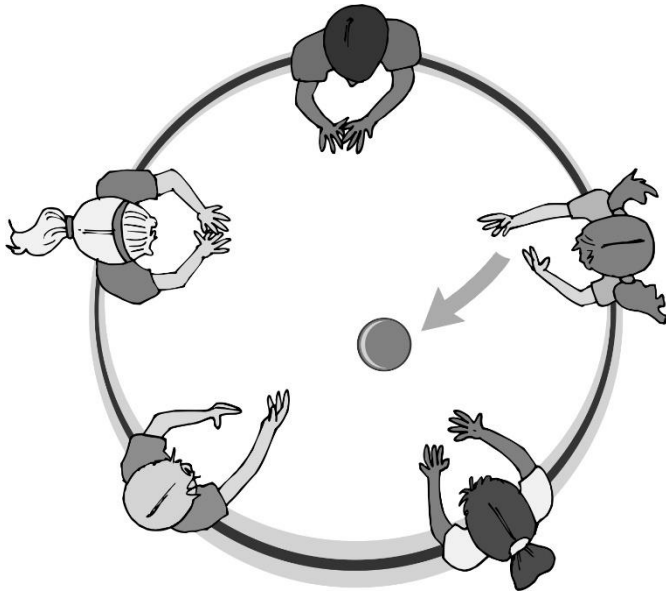
**Activity:** *Group Ball Toss*

**Overview:** A simple, fun activity that develops hand/eye coordination and allows children to get to know each other.

**Equipment:** One ball (Any size ball works. Best: tennis ball or beanbag).

**Set Up:**

- 1) Everyone is in one large circle.
- 2) The instructor is also in the group, holding the ball.



Options:

-  Ball
-  Bean Bag
-  Tennis Ball

**How to Play:**

- 1) The instructor will toss the ball to someone and the student that catches the ball will say their name and their favorite hobby.
- 2) This student will then pass the ball to another student, and the student that catches the ball will repeat the process.
- 3) The goal is for every student in the circle to have a turn to say their name and their favorite hobby.

**CHALLENGES:**

Make sure to emphasize that the ball needs to be tossed to everyone in the circle.

Students need to state their name and hobby loud and clearly, so everyone can hear.

Ball needs to be tossed lightly, which allows everyone the best opportunity to catch it.

**CUES:**

- Tossing the ball with dominant hand.
- Catching ball with two hands.

# Fitness – Track Mash-Up

**SELF-AWARENESS**

**Grades 2-8**

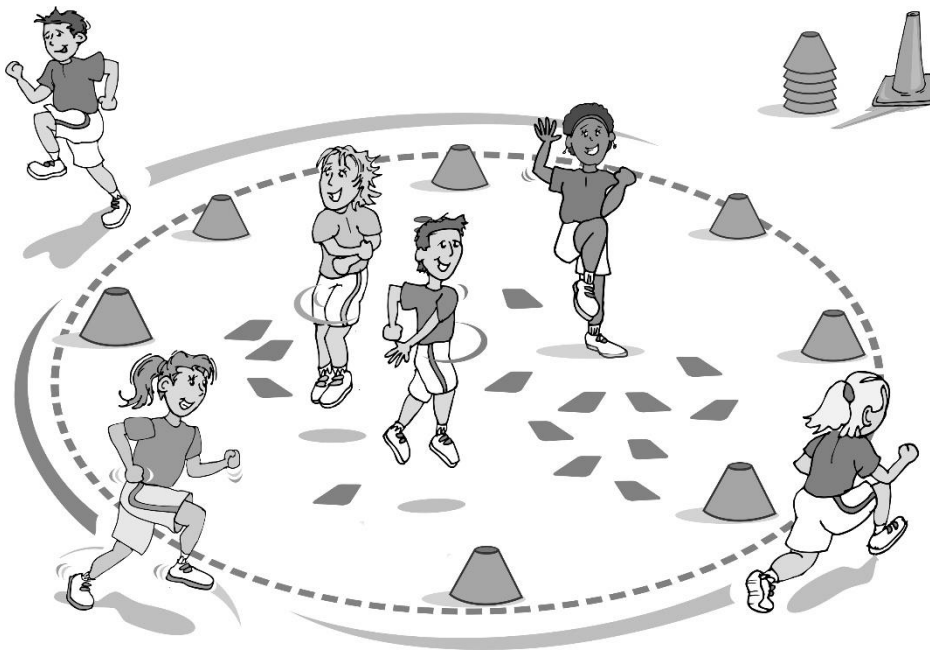
**Activity:** *“Fitness Track Mash-Up”*

**Overview:** Fun activity that increases MVPA and familiarizes the students with Fitness Skillastics® Activities.

**Equipment:** 26, Fitness Skillastics® Task Cards  
Cones or Poly Spots

## Set Up:

- 1) Place cones in a large circle on the playing surface to characterize a “track”.
- 2) The Fitness Skillastics® Activity Cards are scattered inside the “track”.
- 3) Half of the students are inside the “track” and half of the students are lined up around the “track”.



## How to Play:

- 1) On the signal, the “track” students jog or power walk in a counter clockwise direction around the “track”.

- 2) The students on the inside of the “track” choose one of the Skillastics® Task Card Activities to complete. They must complete the assigned amount of repetitions from the instructor prior to play (blue – beginner, red – intermediate, green – advanced).
- 3) When he/she completes the activity, they move on to another Skillastics Activity Card inside the “track”.
- 4) On the signal, the groups switch places and continue to repeat as desired.

### **CHALLENGES:**

Students inside the “track” might be confused on how many repetitions to complete of each activity. Make sure you are clear on the colored level of repetitions prior to start (located on the bottom of each activity).

### **CUES:**

- “Track” created by cones or poly spots outlining the “track”.
- Students walk or power walk around the “track”.
- Students inside the “track” complete each of the Fitness Skillastics® Task Card Activities at random.

# Fitness – Thumb & Index Finger **SELF-MANAGEMENT**

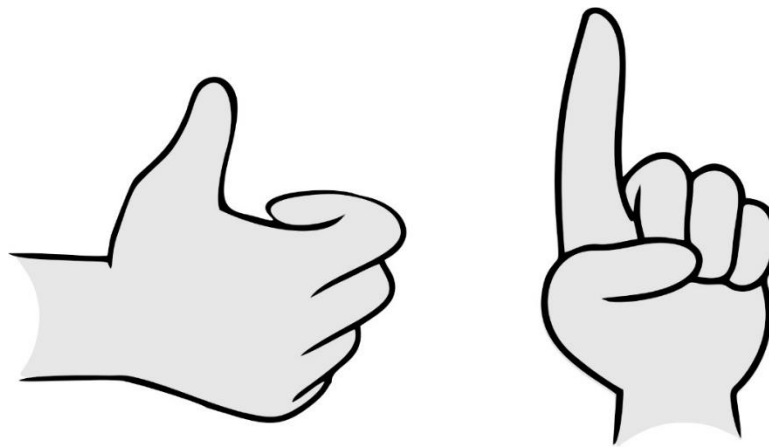
Grades 2-8

**Activity:** *Thumb & Index Finger Challenge*

**Overview:** A simple, fun activity that activates the brain.

**Equipment:** No Equipment

**Set Up:** No set up



## **How to Play:**

- 1) Everyone gives a “thumbs up” with their right thumb.
- 2) Everyone points their index finger with their left hand.
- 3) On the signal (“go”), the students will simultaneously switch right hand to pointing the index finger and left hand giving a “thumbs up”.
- 4) Continue to repeat the signal (“go”), allowing the students to continue to switch “thumbs up” and index finger pointed on each hand.
- 5) Start slow and speed up as everyone gets more familiar with the movement.

**CHALLENGES:**

Children will find this difficult. Emphasize that this does take practice and that the point of the activity is to “activate” the brain. Explain to the children that they can do this activity when they are feeling sleepy while doing homework. Just taking a short break and doing this activity will invigorate them to get back to their studies.

**CUES:**

- Thumb up.
- Index finger pointed straight out.

# Fitness – Quick Hands

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

Grades 2-8

**Activity:** *Quick Hands (Scarf Activity)*

**Overview:** A simple, fun activity that improves quickness and cross-lateral movement.

**Equipment:** Activity Scarves

### Set Up:

- 1) Divide group into partners.
- 2) One scarf distributed to each pair.
- 1) If you have an odd number of children, have the three form a triangle with the scarf placed in the center of the triangle.



### How to Play:

- 1) Partners are seated cross-legged facing each other. The scarf is placed on the floor between the partners.
- 2) The instructor will call out “ready”, and the students will then place their hands on their thighs.
- 3) When the instructor calls out either “right”, “left” or “both”, the children react quickly by reaching for the scarf with their right hand, left hand or both hands.



4) The objective is to see who grabs the scarf first.

**Options:**

On the command “ready”, instruct the children to place their hands on the option location below and reach for the scarf from that position.

- a. Place hands on hip.
- b. Place hands over eyes.
- c. Place hands behind their back.
- d. Stretch arms straight up above head.
- e. Stretch arms directly out from body.

**CHALLENGES:**

Conflict from both grabbing scarf at the same time.

- a. Solution: Quick game of *Rock, Paper, Scissors* will determine the winner.

Children reacting too quickly.

**CUES:**

- Sitting cross-legged
- Hands on thighs
- Back straight

# Fitness – Quick Hands

## SOCIAL AWARENESS

Grades 2-8

**Activity:** *“Human Bridge”*

**Overview:** An activity that highlights the character trait, Responsibility. Responsibility is defined as the state of being responsible, answerable, or accountable for something within one’s power, control, or management.

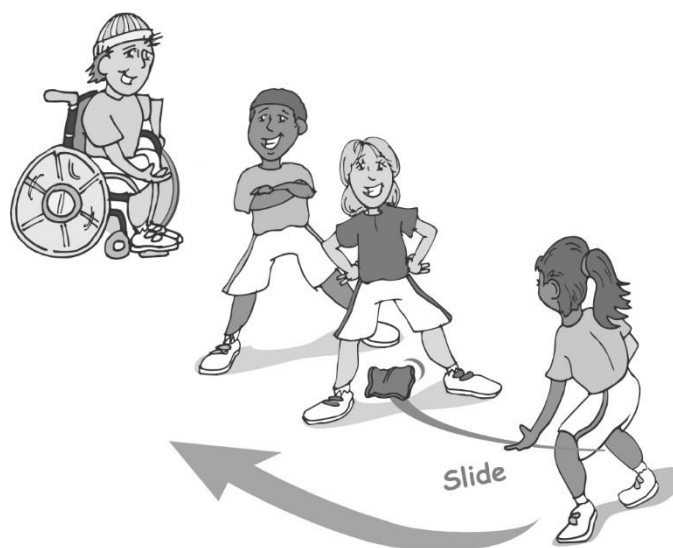
**Objectives:** To understand the importance of responsibility through movement.

**Equipment:** Square Beanbag for each team (Found in Character is Cool Skillastics®).

(Use the Character is Cool Skillastics® Task Card or DVD for additional instruction).

### Set Up:

- 1) Divide a group into six teams (approximately 4-6 children on each team).
- 2) Each team forms a line, with 2-3’ between each person.
- 3) The 4<sup>th</sup> child in line has the beanbag.
- 4) The 1<sup>st</sup> child in line turns and looks at his/her teammates.
- 5) The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Child face the 4<sup>th</sup> player with their feet spread.



## How to Play:

- 1) On the signal, the 4<sup>th</sup> student in the line slides the beanbag between the feet of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in line students to the 1<sup>st</sup> student in line.
- 2) When the 1<sup>st</sup> student catches the beanbag, he/she jogs to the 4<sup>th</sup> student in line and hands him/her the beanbag. They then go to the end of the line.
- 3) Everyone rotates and repeat the process.
- 4) Continue activity until instructed to stop.
- 5) The goal is for the beanbag to get through the “tunnel” without touching anyone. Emphasize to the students that they are responsible to slide the beanbag through the “tunnel” at a slow speed. The beanbag **does not** lift off the floor.

## CHALLENGES:

Some students may throw the beanbag instead of sliding it.

Some students may slide the beanbag too fast.

Some students have a hard time jumping over the beanbag.

## Physical Activity Alignment with Character Trait (Talking Points)

Every student is “responsible” to do their part to make this activity safe and successful.

Ask the students to share their definition of responsibility. Then ask them to define this quote; *“Responsibility finds a way. Irresponsibility makes excuses”*.

Questions for students to answer after activity:

- 1) Did I participate in the activity in a responsible manner?
- 2) What other ways can I show responsibility?

# Fitness – Circle the Wagon

**SOCIAL AWARENESS**

**Grades 2-8**

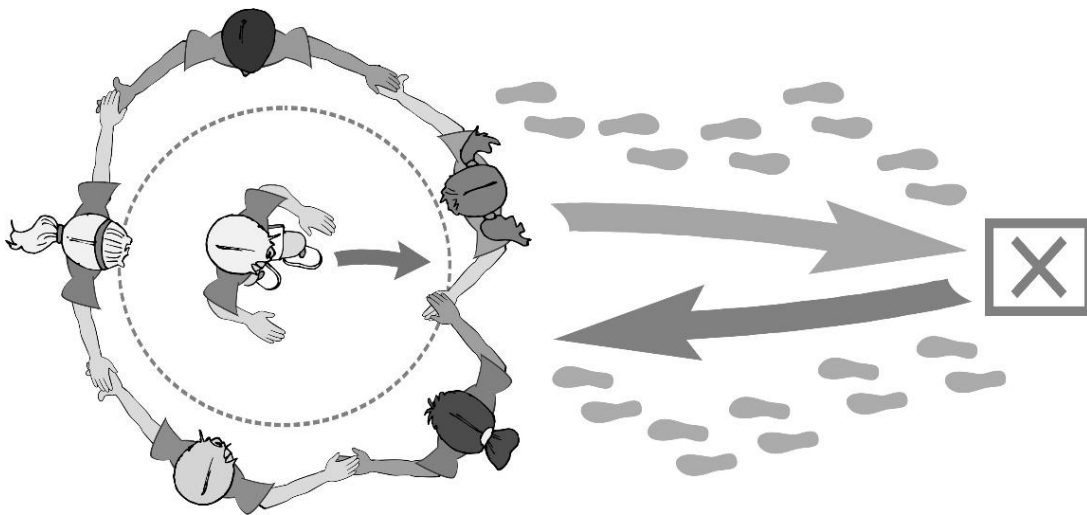
**Activity:** *“Circle the Wagon Relay”*

**Overview:** A simple, fun cooperative activity that increases MVPA.

**Equipment:** No Equipment

## Set Up:

- 1) Divide into equal teams of 5 or 6 students.
- 2) The teams form a circle by holding hands, with one student in the middle of the team’s circle.
- 3) The teams are lined up at one end of the playing area.



## How to Play:

- 1) On the signal, the teams move together (quickly) to the other end and back of the playing area (location to be clearly defined before start of play).
- 2) When the teams get back to their original spot, another student from the team exchanges spots with the student in the middle of the circle, and the team repeats the process.

- 3) The goal is to finish first after **everyone** on the team has been in the middle of the team's circle.
- 4) Students cannot unlock hands while traveling down the playing area and back.

### **CHALLENGES:**

Students might feel uncomfortable holding hands. This feeling will go away as soon as they begin the activity. If not, students can hold wrists.

It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that the children take care and not trip while doing this activity. Everyone is moving closely together which increases the risk.

Make the distance between back and forth short (20-30 yards). This is an intense MVPA activity.

### **CUES:**

- Teams holding hands in a circle.
- One teammate inside the circle.
- Racing back and forth to determine the winner.

# Fitness – Toss & Introduce

## RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Grades 2-8

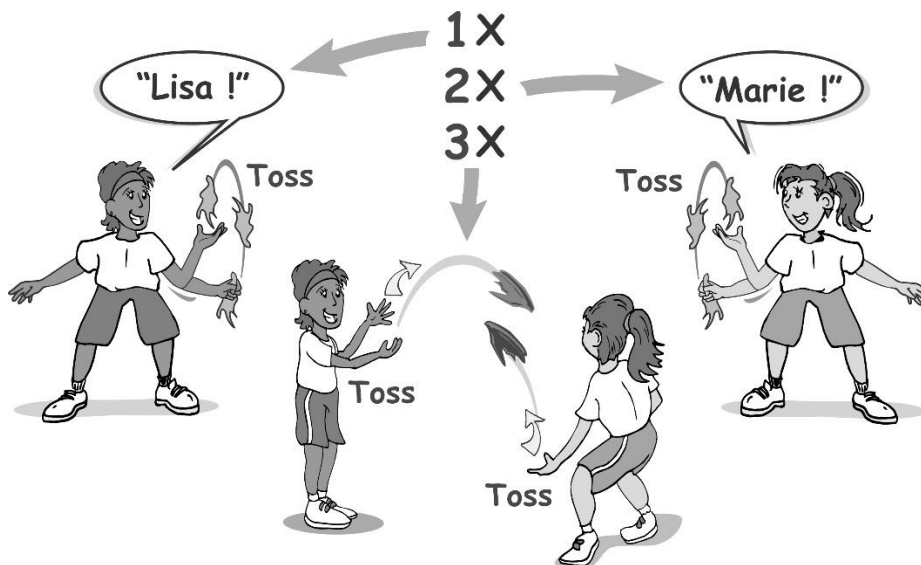
**Activity:** *Toss & Introduce (Scarf Activity)*

**Overview:** A simple, fun icebreaker that allows participants to get to know each other in an active way!

**Equipment:** Activity Scarves

**Set Up:**

- 1) Everyone is standing, scattered throughout the playing area.
- 2) Each participant receives an activity scarf.



**How to Play:**

- 1) On signal, everyone begins to walk and toss their scarf with their dominant hand.
- 2) At one point, two participants meet each other (face to face).
- 3) The two toss their scarves in the air simultaneously 3 times.
- 4) On the first toss, one student says their name.
- 5) On the second toss, the second student says their name.

- 6) On the third toss, they grab the other's student's scarf and then looks throughout the playing area for another student to repeat the process.
- 7) The goal is to talk to someone different every time – hoping that everyone introduces themselves to everyone in the group at least once.

### **CHALLENGES:**

Windy conditions. Solution – toss very low or go inside.

Students only toss and catch with other students they like. Encourage diversity and mixing it up.

### **CUES:**

- Walking and tossing scarf up in the air simultaneously.
- Tossing and catching scarves simultaneously with partner.
- Grab partners scarf on third toss and rotate.

# Fitness – Beanbag Push-Ups

## RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Grades 2-8

**Activity:** “*Beanbag Push-Ups*”

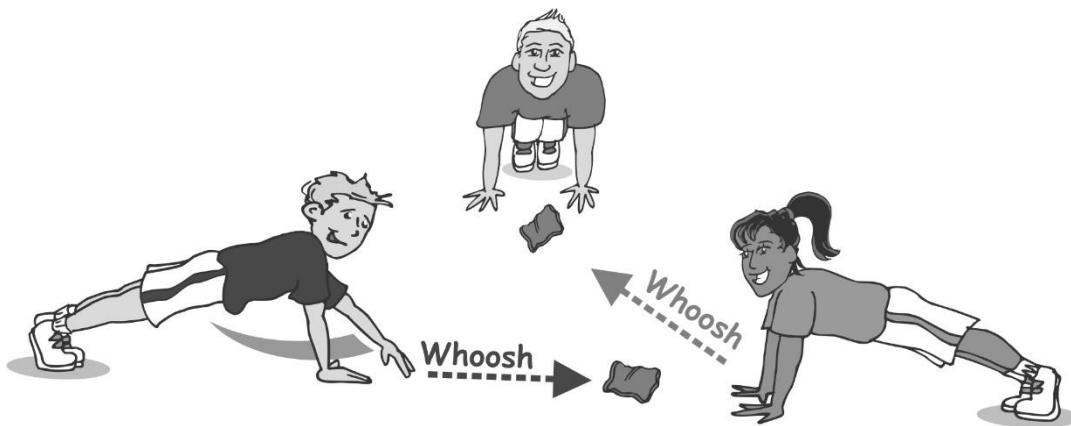
**Overview:** An activity that highlights the character trait, honesty. Honesty is defined as speaking and acting truthfully.

**Objectives:** To understand the importance of honesty through movement.

**Equipment:** Six square beanbags (located in Character is Cool Skillastics® Activity Kit).  
  
(Use the Character is Cool Skillastics® Task Card or DVD for additional instruction).

### Set Up:

- 1) Divide group into 6 teams.
- 2) Teams form a circle, with everyone in a push-up position facing the middle of the circle.
- 3) The team decides on who will start with the beanbag first.



### How to Play:

- 1) On the signal, the student with the beanbag slides the beanbag to another member of his/her team.



- 2) This student stops the beanbag with one hand while remaining in the push-up position and then slides it to someone else.
- 3) The objective is to slide the beanbag quickly without letting it leave the circle.
- 4) Stop the activity on the instructor's signal.

### **Challenges:**

Some students may slide the beanbag too fast for others to stop. Emphasize this is a team activity, and to be successful you must slide the beanbag the speed that works for all of the members of the team.

Students may get tired on their hands and feet. Those who get tired can go in a modified push-up position (on hands and knees).

### **Physical Activity Alignment with Character Trait (Talking Points)**

#### **Examples of Honesty:**

- 1) Honesty means you don't say things about people that aren't true. You are not being honest if you make up rumors about someone or if you share rumors someone else made up.
- 2) Being honest means that you admit to your actions even if you'll get in trouble. You are not being honest if you deny you did something wrong when you really did it.
- 3) Honesty means you explain how a situation really happened. You are not being honest if you say something happened one way when it really happened another way.

Talk about how important it is to tell the truth. Then talk about this quote; *"I have never been hurt by anything I didn't say."*

Ask the students if there are times when they can be honest by not saying anything (for example, not repeating a rumor).

Questions for students to answer after activity:

- 1) Did I slide the beanbag so that everyone could catch it on my team?
- 2) What is being honest with yourself mean?

# Fitness – Find Your Partner

## RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

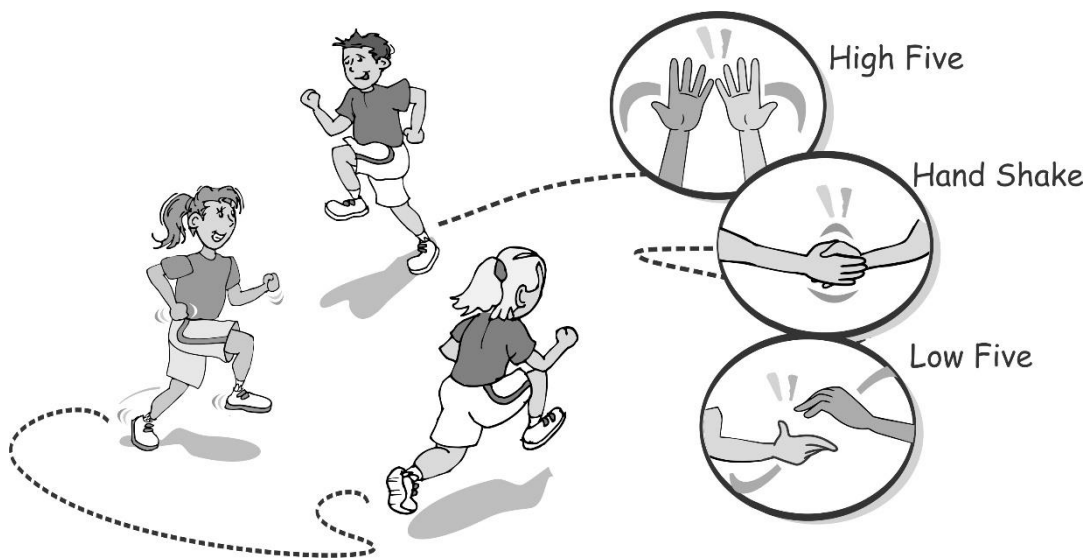
Grades 2-8

**Activity:** “*Find Your Partner*”

**Overview:** Fun cooperative activity that increases MVPA.

**Equipment:** No Equipment

**Set Up:** The children are scattered throughout the playing area.



### How to Play:

- 1) On the signal, everyone begins moving around the playing area in a designated manner (i.e. walking, jogging, sliding, etc.).
- 2) On the signal, students quickly find a partner. This partner will be their “***high five partner***”.
- 3) They give each other a “high five”.
- 4) The twosome decides on a Fitness Skillastics® Activity to do. They continue to do the activity until a signal from the instructor.

- 5) Everyone begins moving around the playing area once again.
- 6) On signal, children quickly find another partner. This partner will be their "**hand shake partner**".
- 7) The two shake hands and decide on a Fitness Skillastics® activity to do other than what they did previously.
- 8) Everyone begins moving around again from instructor's signal
- 9) On another signal, everyone finds a third partner who will be their "**low five partner**".
- 10) They do a "low five" and once again the two agree on a Fitness Skillastics® Activity to do together until signaled by the instructor.
- 11) After each child student has had at least three different partners, the instructor will then call out a partner to find (i.e. high five partner, hand shake partner, low five partner).
- 12) When the instructor calls out on one of the "partners" (i.e. high five, handshake, or low five), the students quickly find that partner and complete the Fitness Skillastics® Activity they had done previously together.
- 13) Repeat the process.

#### **CHALLENGES:**

Students may forget who their partners were. Remind them that it is important that they remember each partner.

Students may forget the Fitness Skillastics® Activity they did previously together.

#### **CUES:**

- High Five
- Shake Hand
- Low Five
- Complete various Fitness Skillastics® Activities

# Fitness – Fitness Scramble

## RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Grades 2-8

**Activity:** *“Fitness Xtreme Scramble”*

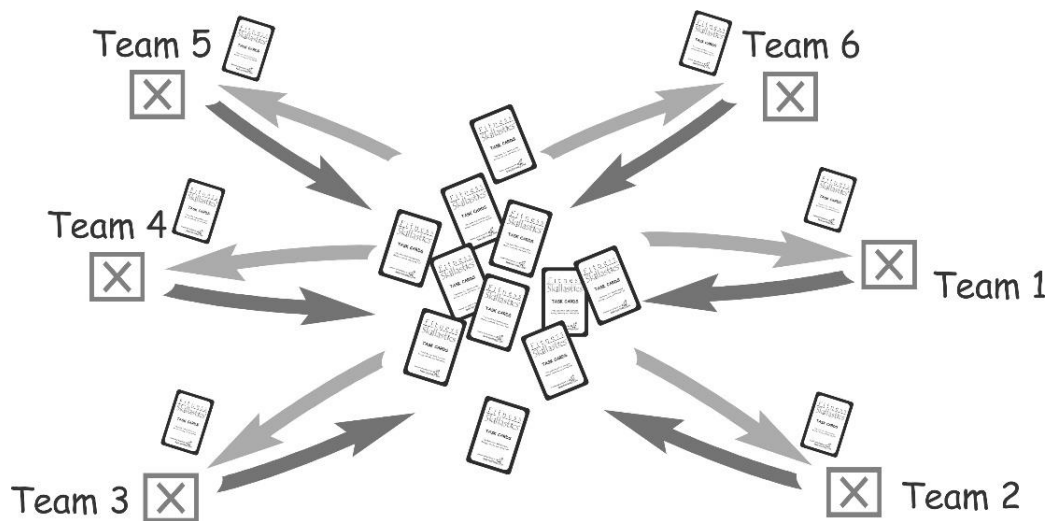
**Overview:** Fun activity that increases MVPA and familiarizes the students with the Fitness Xtreme Skillastics® Activities.

**Equipment:** 26, Fitness Xtreme Skillastics® Task Cards

**Set Up:** Divide group into 6 teams and scatter the teams throughout the playing area.

Teams number off.

Scatter the 26 Fitness Xtreme Skillastics® Task Cards in the middle of the playing area (teams are surrounding the Task Cards).



**How to Play:**

- 1) On the signal, one student from each group runs to the middle and picks up a Task Card and brings it back to his/her team.

- 2) The students complete the activity the number of reps determined by the instructor prior to start.
- 3) When repetitions are completed, another student from each team repeats the process.

**Option:**

Students can keep the Task Card with their team. When all Task Cards are gone from the middle, the team with the most Task Cards in their team area, wins.

**CHALLENGES:**

If you make it a competition, students tend to “cut corners” on the amount of repetitions they are required to do. If you see any team “cheating”, put the Skillastics® Task Cards that they have in their team area back in the middle.

**CUES**

- Teams divided into 6 teams.
- Students take turns jogging to the middle, retrieving an activity for the whole team to execute.

For More Information Visit:

[www.skillastics.com/after-school](http://www.skillastics.com/after-school)