

PLAY-TIME CONSIDERATIONS

- Prior to beginning play, **check shoes and attire**. Shoes need to be appropriate for running and dodging and attire needs to be non-restrictive and free from dangling objects such as jewelry, chains, or belts. It's a good idea to send a note home to inform parents of physical education days and policies. Some students may want to keep an extra pair of athletic shoes inside the classroom.
- As a general rule of thumb, select activities that have about the same **number of rules** as the grade level of the students. First graders do GREAT with ONE rule, while fifth graders can handle about five rules. Kindergarteners can repeat the action that you are doing NOW.
- Keep your student's attention by keeping things **moving** and by keeping things **FUN**.
- **Change the activity** while the students are still having fun playing this one. Do not wait until they get tired of it. As soon as you see one or two students exhibiting signs of fatigue or burn-out, call in the students and move on to the next activity. This will ensure that they will WANT to play that game again tomorrow!
- If **YOU** are excited about your activities, **THEY** will be too! Your **energy** (or lack thereof) is contagious!
- **Get involved** in the PE games/activities WITH students when possible. Be sure that if you are playing, you do not neglect to watch the students at the same time.
- Students think that they can get "**cooties**." Nip that in the bud from day one. *"In THIS class, no-one has cooties. If we are playing in groups or partners it is NOT acceptable under any circumstances to make a negative comment about anyone! If the game or activity calls for a partner you will partner up with the person closest to you with NO hesitation and NO complaints! We are all a team in this class - and teammates support each other."*
- When faced with **conflict on the field** – we support "**do-overs!**" When in doubt, do it over! Kids totally understand this concept and it will alleviate many hard calls.
- Your students will push you as far as possible to see where your breaking point is. You need to **establish your classroom policies** and be consistent with them. Don't wait until the whole class becomes unruly and then yell and get angry. If you have established your classroom policies for acceptable behavior, a quick reminder to the class or an individual that "that behavior is not acceptable in this class" will do wonders.
- **Mix it up!** Although mixed groups are always best, sometimes it might be nice to play girls vs. girls and boys vs. boys. Girls might play harder and be less intimidated – especially in the middle school years – when they play on a field with just girls. It is never a good idea to play girls vs boys – just think about it. No matter how you slice it, it does not end up win/win. Keep the playing groups small and diverse.
- **Surface selection:** If outdoors, try to play on the grass as much as possible. If you must play on blacktop, do not play any games that involve running or dodging - like tag! Change your lesson plan from dodging games to more straight forward activities, such as throwing, dribbling, and catching. **Do not play any games that involve tag of any kind on blacktop.** (Do not. Don't do it. Don't even think about it. Thank you. And your student's knees thank you!)