STAYING FIT & HAVING FUN IN THE OUTDOORS

THE AMAZING ECO-TREK RACE

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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I. *Enduring Knowledge:*

In order to live a healthy life in a healthy environment, students should have a familiarity with basic safety rules of outdoor activities, know and practice good nutrition and exercise essentials, and understand the environmental impact of human activity on the natural world through a respectful interaction with nature.

Curricular Overview:

This DVD features an exciting eco-trek race between two groups of students as they participate in outdoor activities (kayaking, archery, caving, and mountain biking), investigate the natural world by identifying rare plant species and environmental threats (deer ticks associated with Lyme disease and poison ivy plants), and reflect on the importance of a exercise (*Play60*) and nutrition (*MyPlate*).

Three separate curricula have been prepared, one for each of the three areas reflected in the DVD, with separate Learning Targets, Viewing Guides, and Extended Learning activities. The following materials focus on Health and Nutrition.

II. *Learning Targets:*

1. Students will understand that being active contributes to good health and quality of life.
2. Students will learn about good nutrition choices.
3. Students will be familiar with national programs: *Play60*, *MyPlate* and *Let's Move*.

III. *Teacher Background Materials:*

In this DVD about outdoor activities (kayaking, archery, caving, and mountain biking), students also reflect on the importance of good nutrition to their health. Drawing on three important national programs for helping children improve their health and maintain appropriate weight, the teacher can build a lasting program for their students around these ideas.

Several online resources offer complete teaching programs:

- www.nflrush.com/play60
- www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Educator/Fortheclassroom/NFLPlay60challenge
- www.fueluptoplay60.com *(student and educator sites, sponsored by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)*
- www.choosemyplate.gov
- www.Let'sMove.gov

IV. *Before Viewing the Video:*

Have students write a short report or article in their notebooks about the relationship between good nutrition, exercise, and health.

V. *Viewing Guide:*

Have students take notes on all the different things they see in the DVD that relate to good health.

VI. *Discussion Guide:*

Have students make a master list of the different health-related things they viewed.
(safe sporting activities, choosing nutritional snacks, avoiding dangerous plants and insects, the relationship of respect and sharing to mental health.)

VII. *Evaluation:*

Depending on the amount of time you spend on this study, assessments will vary greatly. If it is going to be an introductory program, perhaps an assessment of the student's note taking and participation in discussion is adequate. If extensive activities are going to be part of this unit, each activity should carry a rubric or set of points and guidelines that can help with assessment.

Suggestions for extended learning:

1. ***PLAY60*** is a program sponsored by the NFL and the American Heart Association related to children having at least 60 minutes a day in active play or exercise.
    - Have the students keep an exercise journal for a week to see how many minutes they are engaged in activity. They might also keep records of the time each day they spend watching TV or playing video games.
2. Research how exercise is related to good health.
    - Students might start with a study of obesity in children today as it relates to diabetes. They could compare modern activity statistics to their parents' experiences.
3. Students can develop an activity program for themselves.
    - Emphasize the ways of being able to be active even if you cannot afford to have kayaks, mountain bikes, etc.
4. Student should keep a journal of what they eat every day for a week.
    - Using *MyPlate* as a guide, as well as package nutrition charts, have students analyze the how much of the daily requirements they are getting.
5. Have students keep a personal (and private) calorie list of foods they consume in a day. See if they can find out how many calories per day is appropriate for their ages, height, etc.
6. Research the new government guidelines for nutrition: *MyPlate* shows a proportional amount of each basic category, as opposed to the traditional pyramid.
7. Make posters or displays encouraging other students in the school to get active and to eat right.
8. Have students check in with the school lunch program to see what steps are being taken in their school to improve nutrition. Have them check out other programs around the country that are working on this (e.g. Jamie Oliver's programs on school nutrition in the USA).

The following Wisconsin Student Proficiency Standards can be met by teaching *Staying Fit & Having Fun in the Outdoors*:

SCIENCE

1. Connections: How evidence explains phenomena
2. Inquiry: Understanding how questions direct research
3. Earth Science: Earth history & structure of earth
4. Physical Science: Motion & Forces

NOTE: Because student learning standards for science and physical education are now being processed in relation to national Core Curriculum Standards, a pertinent document is not available at this time.

Wisconsin Teacher Standards which can be met with this curriculum, including rationale:

STANDARD 1: ***Subject matter***
This curriculum provides information not readily available in other forms.
A teacher using this material will be well-informed about the subject matter.

STANDARD 3: ***Adapt instruction***
The curriculum provides suggestions for learners with a variety of intelligences and levels of ability.

STANDARD 4: ***Instructional strategies***
The curriculum includes the use of technology to gain information and suggestions for using research in extending learning.

STANDARD 5: ***Individual and group motivation***
Both the use of prior knowledge and carefully designed group projects promote motivation for students to learn.

STANDARD 6: ***Verbal and nonverbal communications***
Instructional media and technology that promote active learning are key parts of this curriculum.

STANDARD 7: ***Organizes and plans systematic instruction***
The curriculum is organized to support teacher knowledge, to draw on and motivate students to engage in active learning, and promotes active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

STANDARD 8: ***Formal and informal assessments***
Suggestions for a variety of assessments, both formal and informal, are offered in the curriculum.