

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

K-5

Cooperative Games & Team Building

A 3-week unit to build a positive class culture, plus a 1-week January reset.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 3 weekly lesson plans + 1 reset week (8 lessons)
- K-2 and 3-5 versions of every lesson
- Illustrated unit overview with vocabulary
- Teamwork rubric + class scoring sheet
- Aligned to the 2024 SHAPE America standards

Cooperative Games & Team Building



BIG IDEA

“Great teams listen, include everyone, and encourage each other.”

STUDENTS WILL

- Follow class routines and respond to the stop signal
- Work with partners and small groups to solve challenges
- Use encouraging words and play fairly

VOCABULARY

personal space

stop signal

cooperation

encourage

fair play

teamwork

WEEKS IN THIS UNIT

WEEK 1

Routines & Personal Space

Standards 3

WEEK 2

Cooperation & Communication

Standards 3

WEEK 3

Teamwork & Encouragement

Standards 3, 4

EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Poly spots (1 per student) | ☐ Cones for boundaries |
| ☐ Music | ☐ Whistle |
| ☐ Parachute | ☐ Bean bags |
| ☐ Hoops (1 per group) | ☐ 3 soft balls per group |
| ☐ Poly spots | ☐ Cones |
| ☐ Hoops | ☐ Pool noodles |

UNIT ASSESSMENTS

Week 1: Whole class freezes within 3 seconds of the signal.

Week 2: Exit question (thumbs or verbal answers).

Week 3: Teamwork rubric on 3–4 students per class.

Routines & Personal Space

Goal: Students enter, start, stop, and move safely in the gym.

Standards: 3 (2024 SHAPE America)



EQUIPMENT

Poly spots (1 per student), cones for boundaries, music, whistle

TEACHING CUES

Eyes up • Find open space • Freeze on the signal

	GRADES K–2	GRADES 3–5
Instant Activity 5 min	Find a spot: walk to any poly spot and copy the teacher's stretch.	
Skill Focus 8 min	Teach the stop signal (whistle + hand up + "Freeze!"). Practice 5 times: walk, freeze, hands on knees, eyes on teacher.	Build class expectations together (safe, respectful, responsible). Write 3–5 on chart paper and post them.
Practice Game Day 1 • 15 min	Red Light, Green Light across the gym. Add "yellow light" for a slow walk.	Mirror Partners: the leader moves slowly and the partner copies. Switch every 30 seconds.
Practice Game Day 2 • 15 min	Bubble Space: arms out like a bubble; move at different speeds without popping anyone's bubble.	Everybody's It tag: soft one-hand tags on shoulders or back; tagged players do 5 jumping jacks and rejoin.
Fitness Finisher 5 min	Station Cards 1, 5, 6 (30 seconds each)	
Closure 3 min	<i>"Show me what you do when you hear the stop signal."</i>	

DIFFERENTIATION

Easier: Visual signal with the whistle; walking only.

Harder: Add changes of direction and level on the teacher's call.

SAFETY

Boundaries 10 feet from walls; no tagging near walls.

ASSESSMENT

Whole class freezes within 3 seconds of the signal.

TEACHER NOTES

WEEK 2 • UNIT 1: COOPERATIVE GAMES & TEAM BUILDING

Cooperation & Communication

Goal: Students work with partners and small groups to solve simple challenges.

Standards: 3 (2024 SHAPE America)



EQUIPMENT

Parachute, bean bags, hoops (1 per group), 3 soft balls per group

TEACHING CUES

Use names • Take turns • Say one kind thing

	GRADES K–2	GRADES 3–5
Instant Activity 5 min	Partner high-ten: jog, find a partner, do 5 jumping jacks together, then find a new partner.	
Skill Focus 8 min	Model a good partner: looks, listens, takes turns. Pass a bean bag back and forth 10 times without dropping it.	Discuss what good communication sounds like. Teach calling a teammate's name before passing.
Practice Game Day 1 • 15 min	Parachute games: Popcorn (bounce bean bags), Mushroom, and Cat and Mouse.	Hoop Pass: the class holds hands in a circle and passes a hoop all the way around without letting go.
Practice Game Day 2 • 15 min	Partner bean bag pass while walking side by side; if it drops, both do 3 jumps and restart.	Group Juggle: circles of 6–8 learn a passing pattern with 1 ball, then add a 2nd and 3rd.
Fitness Finisher 5 min	Station Cards 2, 3, 4	
Closure 3 min	<i>"What did your group do that helped?"</i>	

DIFFERENTIATION

Easier: Groups of 3–4; larger, softer objects.

Harder: A no-talking round, or add a time challenge.

SAFETY

Parachute: overhand grip; no one goes under unless called.

ASSESSMENT

Exit question (thumbs or verbal answers).

TEACHER NOTES

Teamwork & Encouragement

Goal: Students show encouragement and fair play during group challenges.

Standards: 3, 4 (2024 SHAPE America)



EQUIPMENT

Poly spots, cones, bean bags, hoops, pool noodles

TEACHING CUES

Plan first • Everyone has a job • Cheer for effort

	GRADES K–2	GRADES 3–5
Instant Activity 5 min	Team shapes: groups of 4 make a letter or shape on the floor with their bodies.	
Skill Focus 8 min	Teach encouraging words ("Nice try!" "You can do it!"). Each student says one to a partner.	Teach a 3-step team plan: Plan (30 seconds), Try, Talk about what worked.
Practice Game Day 1 • 15 min	Bridge Tag: tagged players make a bridge; a friend crawls under to free them.	Island Crossing: move the whole team across the gym using only 3 poly spots as islands.
Practice Game Day 2 • 15 min	Team Treasure Hunt: collect bean bags one at a time from hoops around the gym and build a team pile.	Cone Tower Relay: each runner adds one cone to the team tower; if it falls, the team rebuilds together.
Fitness Finisher 5 min	Station Cards 7, 8, 9	
Closure 3 min	<i>"Name one teammate who encouraged you today."</i>	

DIFFERENTIATION

Easier: 4 poly spots instead of 3; a shorter distance.

Harder: One teammate can't talk; add a time limit.

SAFETY

Poly spots stay flat; step, never jump, between spots.

ASSESSMENT

Teamwork rubric on 3–4 students per class.

TEACHER NOTES
