



## *Think Breakfast!* Lesson Plan for grades 4-6.

Physical activity can have a profound impact on our minds and bodies as we grow. That is why it is essential that we incorporate healthy habits into our everyday lives. One particularly easy and resourceful form of physical activity is walking.

As part of the *Think Breakfast!* Campaign, we have included a few pedometer activities you can do with your class. By incorporating the health benefits of daily physical activity as a research project, students can better understand its importance in their lives. We suggest breaking the class up into groups of two and asking them to identify, describe and present research regarding the benefits of walking and the use of a pedometer.

### I. LEARNING CONTEXT

*Learning Objective:* This lesson is designed to make students aware of the benefits of walking and to help them develop a better understanding of how accessible it is as a form of physical activity. By exploring the content area, writing a short report and presenting it to the class, students will enhance their research, written and oral skills as a result.

*Content Areas:* English Language Arts  
Health/Nutrition

*Grade Level:* 4-6

*New York State Learning Standards:*

- Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences
  - Standard 1: *Personal Health and Fitness*  
Students will have the necessary knowledge and skills to establish and maintain physical fitness, participate in physical activity, and maintain personal health.

- English Language Arts
  - Standard 1: *Language for Information and Understanding*  
Students will listen, speak, read, and write for information and understanding. As listeners and readers, students will collect data, facts, and ideas; discover relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and use knowledge generated from oral, written, and electronically produced texts. As speakers and writers, they will use oral and written language that follows the accepted conventions of the English language to acquire, interpret, apply, and transmit information.
- English Language Arts
  - Standard 3: *Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation*  
Students will listen, speak, read, and write for critical analysis and evaluation. As listeners and readers, students will analyze experiences, ideas, information, and issues presented by others using a variety of established criteria. As speakers and writers, they will use oral and written language that follows the accepted conventions of the English language to present, from a variety of perspectives, their opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information and issues.

## II. PROCEDURE

- 1.) Discuss with students that eating breakfast and incorporating daily physical activity into their lives is important for overall health. Emphasize that both play a critical part in their performance in school, sports or other extra-curricular activities. Give some examples of these, such as doing better on a test, and let the class give you some examples of their own.
- 2.) Explain to students that walking is one of the easiest forms of physical activity. It is neither painful nor inconvenient and it can be incorporated into daily activities with little effort. Give them some examples of how they can increase their walking activities (stairs instead of elevators, walking/biking to school instead of busing, etc.) Have them volunteer their own examples and urge them to commit to additional walking where possible.
- 3.) Break students into groups and explain to them that they will receive a list of questions to research regarding physical activity and health. You may choose the number of research questions, either by using examples included in this lesson or by creating your own. Explain that they will be researching these questions and presenting them to the class as a group. Emphasize individual effort as essential to group success.
- 4.) Explain how to use the pedometer. Reiterate the positive effects that walking and other forms of physical activity have on their minds, bodies and overall health. Pedometers and heightened awareness of their benefits become an incentive for students to incorporate more physical activity into their daily lives.

### III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Physical Activity\*
  - Why is it important for good health?
  - Who should participate in physical activity?
  - What are examples of physical activity and how do they benefit you?
  - How much/often should you participate in physical activity?
  - Can you be too physically active?
  - What are some health/safety issues to consider?
  
- Walking and pedometer use as a form of physical activity
  - Why is walking a good form of physical activity?
  - How can you increase your walking habits?
  - How can you make walking more fun?
  - How many steps a day does the average person walk?
  - How many steps a day *should* the average person walk to maintain their health?
  - How could you use the pedometer to increase your walking habits?

\* When researching physical activity on the web, you may need to use “exercise” as a more suitable term.

- Weight
  - Why is it important to maintain a healthy weight?
  - How does daily physical activity help us achieve a healthy weight?
  - Explain why walking is a good form of physical activity to maintain good health.

### IV. TIME REQUIRED

Teacher presentation should take no longer than 10-15 minutes. May take longer due to student input/discussion regarding physical activity performance and ideas for walking. Class research should cover each groups specific question areas, which may take the rest of the class period, so plan appropriately.

*Follow-up activity-*

Have the class record their number of steps on a school day and on a weekend day.

- When do they walk more?
- What can they do to increase their physical activity on a day when their activity is less?

### V. RESOURCES

*Research portion:*

- School health books available locally
- Online resources

*Presentation portion:* Poster board, pedometers, markers.

VI. ASSESSMENT PLAN

What are some health/safety issues to consider when planning your physical activities?

V. REFLECTION

Maintaining a healthy body and mind does not come without effort. It is important to continue emphasizing this to children as they, in turn, continue to grow. As teachers, your encouragement for specific physical activity, such as walking, and incorporating pedometer use can help students attain success in these areas.