

Name/Title: Gym Maps

Purpose of Event: Students will learn to read maps and map legends (keys) and identify a variety of symbols that may be found on maps. This is a cooperative activity in which partners must communicate effectively to navigate from place to place using locomotor skills. Reading maps and keys is a Social Studies Standard of Learning (SOL) in Virginia at the elementary level.

Prerequisites: Before beginning this lesson students must be able to perform basic locomotor skills.

Suggested Grade Level: 3-5

Materials Needed: 1 [Gym Map](#) and 1 [Gym Maps Legend Key](#) per pair, 8 hula hoops, 6 orange cones, 2 folding mats, 10 poly spots, floor tape of different colors, 9 poly stars, music...(or whatever equipment your school has available as you design your own maps on a word document).

Description of Idea

Players form pairs and use 1 gym map and 1 map legend (or "key"). Partners decide who will hold the map while traveling together and who will be responsible for carrying the map legend. Partners work together to find the starting place (each map is different), move in the right directions, and use the correct locomotor skills to travel through general space. All groups are moving at the same time through different parts of the room following their own uniquely designed map. Equipment is used as landmarks to help students get their "bearings." When the course has been completed students hold the map in the air, switch maps with another group and begin again. At this point, partners change who will carry the map and the legend (carrying the map seems to be a favorite so we switch each time). Trading legends with other groups is not necessary as these are all identical. A wide variety of maps are included ranging from easy to complex. The teacher can provide additional maps later in the game once groups begin to repeat completed maps.

Critical Thinking Variation: (if time allows) Students can create their own gym maps by drawing alternate movement responses on blank maps provided by the teacher using the same symbols already used on the map legends. If the teacher is impressed with their creativity and neatness, these will be laminated and used with other classes. After creating their own gym maps they try them out, modify them if necessary and then share with other groups.

[Gym Maps Sample](#)

[Gym Maps Template](#)

[Gym Maps Legend Template](#)

Assessment Ideas:

The teacher can randomly ask student groups to describe the pathways and locomotor skills used after completing their maps.

The teacher should listen to partner conversations about which movement should be used and watch to see if student movements match those marked on the maps/keys.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities can use specially designed maps with the "your choice" symbol only displayed.

Submitted by **Steve Shelton** who teaches at Christiansburg Elementary School in Christiansburg, VA. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 2/14/2011.**

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