Name/Title: Tennis Ball Health Test Review Activity

Purpose of Event: To have a fun way for reviewing for a test in any health topic.

Suggested Grade Level: 6-8

Materials Needed: Shallow kiddie wading pool (I use a $10 plastic one that's 8" deep and 45" wide), 100-200 tennis balls. If a pool isn't possible, several jump ropes placed to form a circle can be substituted. I also use a wireless speaker that plays music from my iPhone.

Description of Idea

Students are put into teams and put in an area of the room designated with a tape line/polyspot/etc. Each team numbers themselves into a "batting order".

In the middle of the room is a kiddie pool filled with tennis balls. Each tennis ball has 2 different letters written on opposite sides of the ball. (I wrote the letters with a sharpie using the Scrabble letter distribution - see below for link). The more tennis balls the better. If you write 2 different letters on a ball, you double the number of letters available in a round.

I will ask a question relating to their unit test. Students will have 5 seconds to quietly talk out the answer with their team. Then, once the music starts, teams will send 1 team member at a time to fetch a ball and return with it in order to spell out the answer on their tape line/polyspot. When the one team member returns with the ball, the next one is sent out.

Students may only bring back 1 ball/trip. The first team to correctly spell the correct answer raises their hands. I stop the music and everyone freezes while I check the answer AND its spelling. The first correct answer wins that round.

At the end of the round, students walk the balls back to the kiddie pool. There is no set number of rounds in the game.

Click here for Scrabble letter distribution.

The goal is full student engagement. Even if it's not your turn yet, you're watching to see what letters your teammates have brought back and what letters are still needed. Before the first student fetches a ball, all of them are huddling up to figure out the answer and to x2 check the spelling. When 1 student is at the kiddie pool, the others are communicating where they see a letter or what letters are needed.

NOTE: I need to thank my former mentor teacher Kevin Carroll who teaches in Roselle Park, NJ. I found this lesson when looking back on my (very old) student teaching notes and I'm using it in my 8th grade Health classes. He used it with elementary aged students in P.E. class. I've tweaked some things along the way. Thank you, Kevin!

Variations:

Kevin did a variation with the elementary aged students where instead of going to the kiddie pool, they were allowed to steal a letter from another team once/round. The upper elementary kids got very strategic about whether to steal a tough to find letter or whether to steal a letter from a team that was nearing completion of the word.

At the elementary PE level, this activity can be a great "rainy day" backup or something that can be done in a classroom on days when the gym isn't available (election day, etc).

Assessment Ideas:

As it is a test review, good class averages on the test are evidence of the game's effectiveness as a review.

Submitted by **Michael Harnett** who teaches at Churchill Jr High School in East Brunswick, NJ. Additional authors for this idea were Kevin Carroll. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 4/15/2022**.

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