Name/Title: Scooter Ships

Purpose of Event: To develop/improve cooperation and team work skills. To understand early physics concepts, such as push/pull, friction, speed, and stopping distance. To teach children about consequences for their choices. To promote fitness development.

Suggested Grade Level: K-2

Materials Needed: rigid gym mats, folded up into a rectangular shape; two large scooter boards per mat; large, open gymnasium space; lively music

Description of Idea

The scooter ships are "built" by putting two scooter boards underneath a folded mat. Each ship has a team of 3-5 students. (Ideally, there should be four students per ship, but three or five students will also work.) Older students can "build" their own ship, and, by doing such, they will learn the best placement of the scooter boards to provide optimum rolling and balance for their ship.

Before the activity begins, and/or during breaks in the activity, remind students of the components of teamwork. Questions can include, “What does a team look like?” “How do they communicate?” “Do they argue?” “If a mistake is made, do they place blame or do they make the best of it?” The teacher can culminate this activity by questioning students about the strategies they used to meet the challenges.

Two students are riding the ship, and two are steering. Their job is to drive all over the "ocean" (gym) while the music is playing, without coming into contact with any other "ship" or object(s). (They may not touch another ship, the walls, etc.) When you stop the music (after about 1 minute), have the drivers and the riders switch places. During the activity, the riders could be assigned an upper body movement exercise to perform to the music.

If they do touch another ship, that team loses one of their scooter boards. (Teacher removes it.) They quickly learn that one scooter board is not nearly as easy or fun as two. If the team has another incident, they lose the other scooter board. Pushing a mat along the floor, without wheels, is quite difficult.

After a couple of rounds of "missing their wheels," the teacher may return their scooters to the teams that lost them. Generally, those teams become extremely cautious, not wanting to be grounded again!

When the class becomes skilled at avoiding each other, challenges can be added, such as additional obstacles on the gym floor. Students can also be challenged to see how many obstacles they can circumnavigate or how long they can continue without losing a scooter. Just

about any piece of equipment you have can be used for an obstacle. For additional difficulty, some obstacles can move, i.e., rolling playground balls.

Teaching Suggestions:

During the activity, the teacher observes the students' ability to change direction, work together and correct their mistakes.

Submitted by **Emily Huntington** who teaches at Glickman Elementary School in Springfield, MA. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 12/19/2008**.

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