



Tennis Ball Jog

KEY SKILLS(S) and CONCEPT(S): Keeping fitness fun, hand eye coordination, spatial awareness

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL(S): Grades K-8

OBJECTIVES(S): Students will be able to:

- Combine jogging and playing with a ball

SUPPORT NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION (NASPE, 2004):

4 - Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.

5 - Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

6 - Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 tennis ball per person and an area to run

DESCRIPTION:

1) Tell the story (true, by the way) of a runner who one day found a tennis ball while running. Thinking to take it home to his dog, he picked it up. After a short while he grew tired of carrying the ball so he began tossing the ball and sometimes he had to sprint to catch the ball. Sometimes he would bounce the ball. He continued this playful running until the end of his run. When he checked his watch he found he had run his fastest time ever on that particular course. He realized that since he was having fun, he didn't realize how hard he was running. His name was Ken Martin, America's fastest marathon runner that year (1989).

2) Distribute one tennis ball to each person.

3) Instruct participants to jog and play with the tennis ball on their run. Students may choose to dribble their ball, play catch with themselves or with a partner.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS/TIPS:

- Debrief this warm-up with a discussion of how we tend to repeat activities that are enjoyable, so try to make fitness activities playful.
- Stagger the starting position for students
- Stress spatial awareness-make sure students all travel in same direction

VARIATIONS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS:

- This activity works best on a hard surface.

REFERENCES:

Harrison, James C. *Hooked on fitness!: fun physical conditioning games and activities for grades K-8*. Prentice Hall PTR, 1996.