

Walking the Walk: Learning with Pedometers

Pedometers are great tools for measuring physical activity levels and motivating students. Some PE departments may have funds for these or companies may be willing to make a donation for a healthy school initiative.

SUBJECTS



PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY



SOCIAL
STUDIES



MATH

GRADE LEVEL

4-5

TIME

30 min

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Objectives

- Students will explain the importance of physical activity
- Students will calculate the number of steps taken during physical activity
- Students will identify and describe cultures, foods, and physical activities from other countries

Materials & Preparation

- At least one pedometer
- “Passports” for all of your students
- A map, posted somewhere in your classroom
- A “Destination Guide” or a list of cities, monuments, heritage sites or other attractions your class decides to reach as their mileage goals
- A “Travel Journal” or place for recording the number of steps and their mileage equivalent
- As the teacher, you decide how many steps read on the pedometer will equal a distance traveled. For example, 10 steps equal one mile. Have students round to the nearest tenth or mile. Have a world map hung near the Destination Guide so students can see where they’re headed next. Near the map and Destination Guide, the Travel Journal will indicate how many steps you’ve taken so far, and how many you need to make it to the next destination.

Common Core Standards

- 5.NBT. Understand the place value system. Round decimals to any place.

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Lesson Introduction

1. Introduce the lesson to the students. You can wear the pedometer yourself and demonstrate various physical activities. Show them how many steps are recorded by walking around the room, doing jumping jacks and walking to the cafeteria. Show the students where the Destination Guide is hung next to the map, or a list of cities, countries, landmarks or heritage sites you decide as a class to “visit.” Ask students which cities in the United States or around the world they would like to “visit.” Make a graph and tally the votes for five to 10 different destinations! Introduce the Travel Journal, where the steps from the pedometer will be recorded.

Body of Lesson

2. Each day, you will also choose one student (or all, depending on the number of pedometers available for your classroom) to wear the pedometer. At the end of the day, the student wearing the pedometer can record in the Travel Journal the number of steps tracked and determine the mileage equivalent. The Destination Guide will also include facts about the destination, how many miles away the destination is from the school and the number of steps needed to reach the destination. As the students are recording more steps and about to reach a new destination, start exploring the facts.

Conclusion

3. There are several great ways to celebrate your accomplishments. Upon arrival to a destination, students can also journal or draw a picture about the journey they took to reach their mileage. What activity did they do to obtain mileage? What do they think about the place to which they traveled? What is something new they learned about their travel destination?

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Extension

- Get parents involved! Send home a newsletter informing parents and guardians of your pedometer adventure. Ask them to get involved by recording their steps throughout the day and during physical activity as a family. Brothers and sisters can participate too! You can also post in the school newsletter or on the class bulletin when your students reach a destination. This will also be a great way for other students and classrooms to learn about your project. Finally, an excellent way to celebrate the accomplishments of the students and families and acknowledge their hard work in physical activities is to plan a themed party with games, crafts and healthy food centered around one of your destination's cultures! Remember to round miles to the nearest tenth or mile.

Example "Destination Guide"

- Destination reached: _____ (location name)
- Distance to the city (miles away from the school): _____ miles
- Number of steps taken to reach that distance: _____ steps
- Geographic Location (write or draw a picture about the destination, its geographic highlights and how the location looks)
- Traditions or Customs (write or draw a picture about a tradition or custom, unique to this geographic location)
- Activities (write or draw a picture of the destination's major sports and describe what people there do for fun)
- Food (write or draw a picture of the types of food people near this destination eat)

Stem Alignment

- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information
- Model with mathematics
- Attend to precision