

the class and therefore improve student performance. Initiative activities can help students at the individual level increase personal confidence, physical coordination, and mutual support within a group (Rohnke, 1984).

The purpose of this article is to give physical educators some direction for setting up an orienteering course that incorporates adventure education and an outdoor pursuit through the use of problem-solving games. These activities focus on communication, cooperation, and problem solving. They are meant to inspire new creative ways of teaching traditional map and compass skills. Orienteering with adventure components provides an enjoyable experience for students while connecting the four domains of physical education: cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and health related physical fitness (Claxton, Grube, & Young, 2001).

Creating an Adventure Orienteering Course

Setting up a wilderness orienteering course requires a large recreational area, preparation, and precision in marking the control points (Laubach, 1998). If the school does not have access to a wooded natural area, then a course can be set up easily using the school campus area. Start by finding a map of the area, such as one that may be in a school handbook (Laubach, 1998). Or, if you just want your students to focus on their compass skills, leave the map out of the activity. Depending on the area, a permanent orienteering course might be able to be set for continued use. There should be five to ten control points set in the course depending on difficulty level. The control points should be a reasonable distance away so that the participants cannot see the next station (see figure 1). When the students "orient" themselves and begin to travel in the correct direction, they should come to a control point that is noticeable by a flag, cairn (a small pile of rocks), or something as simple as a handkerchief. Outdoor

companies sell specific orienteering equipment for a small cost, but physical education teachers can easily make their own from supplies within the school.

Using pedometers is a good way to count the steps of the orienteering activity (Beigle & Darst, 2004). The participants travel with an orienteering card to show proof that they have made it to each station in the correct order. At each station there should be either a unique hole-puncher to mark on the orienteering card or a code to write down that is specific to that site (see figure 2). The participants mark the orienteering card at each station and then give it to the teacher at the end of the event. At each control point the students receive the bearings to the next station. Periodically at specific control points, students are faced with an initiative such as "blind forms," "spider web," or "electric fence" to complete before receiving their hole-punch or code. These activities are described later in this article.

Ideas to Consider

When it comes to team-building activities, Rogers (2004) says it best with "creativity is the key." Taking some initiatives that you already know, and adding a creative twist is what this is all about. The adventure course needs to be set up in an intentional, sequential fashion that positions students for success. For example, putting easier problem-solving initiatives toward the beginning of the course will create less frustration early on. Students will get the most out of each station if it is challenging, but not too time consuming (10-25 minutes).

Task Cards

Using task cards before and after each station allows the students to have clear directions about the initiative and travel destinations. Rather than have the teacher give all the instructions, empower the students to take a leadership role in reading off the task cards.

Figure 1. Sample Map with Control Points

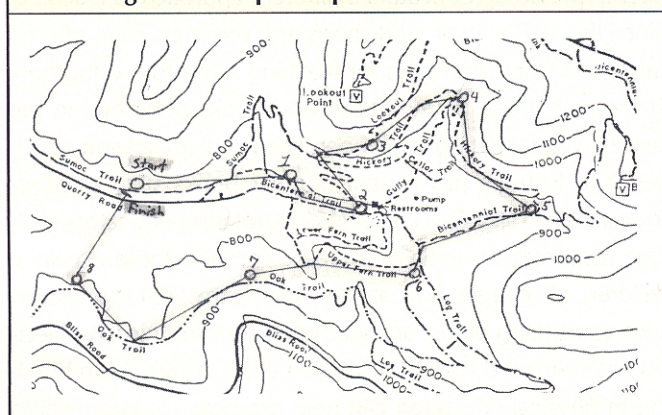


Figure 2. Hole-punching the Orienteering Card

