



# High 5 for Fitness Lessons

*Ages 8-11*

**Special Olympics**





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## Introduction



High 5 for Fitness (“High 5”) is a collection of resources ([here](#)) designed to help youth ages 8–21 take charge of their fitness by making healthy choices about physical activity, nutrition, and hydration. To complement these resources, Special Olympics developed a series of structured fitness lessons to support teachers in delivering effective, school-based programs. These lesson plans can empower educators and school staff to create inclusive and engaging fitness experiences for youth with and without intellectual disabilities using the High 5 materials. Beyond the classroom, the lessons can also be used in community programs and sports settings to encourage healthy habits and active lifestyles among young people.

### HIGH 5 FOR FITNESS:

High 5 is designed to increase knowledge and awareness of healthy behaviors, and to promote youth engagement in physical activities that improve flexibility, strength, and endurance. The program offers an inclusive approach to teaching students with and without intellectual disabilities across three age groups: 8-11, 12-14, and 15-21 years.

For youth between the ages of 8-11, High 5 focuses on three healthy lifestyle goals:



### HIGH 5 RESOURCES:

In addition to these lessons, High 5 for Fitness includes the following materials:

1) **Health Guide** that provide information on how to be healthy including nutrition tips, ways to stay hydrated, and exercises for health and sport performance,



- 2) **Cards** that include a variety of exercises that target flexibility, endurance, and strength, and progress through three levels (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) to challenge youth to engage in more complex exercises while meeting their current ability level,
- 3) **Videos** that serve as a supplementary resource and provide demonstrations of each exercise, with music by Hip Hop Public Health and a timer/counter so that students can keep track of how long they perform each exercise,
- 4) **Educator's Guide** with simple tips that describes how to use High 5 resources in schools or community settings, and
- 5) **Caregiver's Guide** that provides simple tips on how to use High 5 resources at home.

(\*\*\*For links to each of the bolded resources listed above, see Appendix E\*\*\*)

### HIGH 5 LESSON PLANS OVERVIEW:

The **High 5 Lesson Plans** consist of twelve 15–30 minute lessons designed to be implemented twice per week over a six-week period. Requiring minimal equipment and space, these lessons are flexible and can be used in various settings as part of physical education classes, movement breaks, structured recess, or community-based after-school programs.

The inclusive, exercise science-based approach to the fitness lessons provides the opportunity for all youth to develop physical activity knowledge, apply key fitness concepts, and build self-efficacy as part of their physical literacy journey.

#### Physical Literacy is...

"...the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge, and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life." (IPLA 2017)

### UNIQUE FEATURES:

The High 5 lessons were designed to promote exercise participation and build fitness among students with and without intellectual disabilities in inclusive settings. Youth with intellectual disabilities may face barriers to physical activity that limit their participation and results in low fitness levels and increased risk for adverse health conditions. As such, these youth can benefit from individualized instruction that meets their diverse needs. High 5 lessons offer the following unique features that promote fitness and inclusive participation for all students:



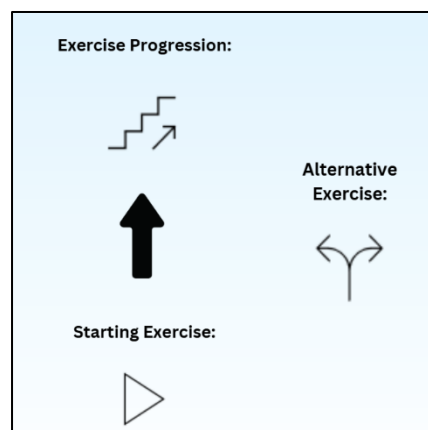
- **Variety of Fitness Formats:** Lessons give students the opportunity to experience multiple types of fitness training, including circuit training, interval training, Unified Partner/Teammate workouts, and more.
- **Exercise Modifications:** Each lesson provides detailed teaching progressions and regressions for strength exercises to accommodate varying levels of coordination, cognitive ability, and fitness.
- **Facilitator Prompts:** Sample spoken prompts are included to guide educators in delivering clear, supportive instructions that enhance student understanding of lesson objectives.
- **Progression Challenges:** “Progression Challenges” give students a chance to try advanced exercises aligned with higher skill levels or older age groups.
- **Educator Exercise Science Tips:** Each lesson features “Educator Exercise Science Tips,” which offer insights into exercise training principles and physiological responses. These tips help educators build foundational knowledge and awareness of key exercise science concepts.
- **Make It Fun Activities:** Select lessons include a “Make It Fun” section that provides optional games or activity add-ons to boost student engagement during exercise instruction.
- **Standards Alignment:** Lessons align with components of the fitness concepts and physical activity knowledge outlined in SHAPE America’s Health and Physical Education Standard 2.
- **Health Education Activities:** Each lesson includes health education components that equip students with knowledge to support healthy nutrition and hydration habits at school and at home.
- **Visual Learning Supports:** Ladder-style visuals illustrate the teaching progression and key lesson themes, helping students and educators track learning pathways.
- **Inclusive Environment Strategies:** The resource offers strategies for fostering inclusion, including suggestions for peer and para-educator support, as well as guidance on adapting learning progressions for diverse needs.



## HIGH 5 LESSON ICON LEGEND:

Icons are used in the High 5 Lessons to draw attention to several unique features. Use this icon legend to assist navigation through the lessons:

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Videos:                |  |
| Teaching Progression:  |  |
| Starting Exercise:     |  |
| Exercise Progression:  |  |
| Alternative Exercise:  |  |
| Progression Challenge: |  |
| Facilitator Prompt :   |  |



**\*Use the above icon template to navigate Activity B images.\***

## HIGH 5 LESSON TARGET AUDIENCE:

The fitness lessons are intended to be delivered in an inclusive (Unified) environment, meaning youth with and without intellectual disabilities participate together. The activities, instructions, themes, and formats in this version of the High 5 Lesson Plans are suitable for youth between ages 8-11. Considering that one size does not fit all, the lessons can be (and should be) modified to meet the diverse abilities and learning styles of all youth.

We want to hear from you! Please consider completing the High 5 Lesson Plan Feedback Form (using the QR code to the right) so we can consistently improve our resources to align with your preferences.

### High 5 Lesson Plan Feedback





## USING HIGH 5 LESSONS:

Each lesson is designed with flexible timing to accommodate different schedules and settings. While lessons typically average about 20 minutes, educators are encouraged to adjust the duration as needed. This might involve completing only *Activity A* for a quick movement break, implementing all activities during fitness clubs, or even combining two lessons for extended physical education periods. Incorporating warm-up and cool-down activities is strongly recommended (see Appendix E for relevant resources). For warm-ups, choose movements that mirror the main lesson activities to help students prepare for the specific skills they will practice. Cool-downs provide an opportunity to focus on static stretches that promote flexibility.

High 5 exercise cards are organized into Levels 1 through 3, providing a structured progression from foundational to more advanced fitness skills. Level 1 activities are simpler and less physically demanding than those in Levels 2 and 3. Educators may adjust the sequence as needed to match students' current abilities and goals. While each lesson builds upon the previous one, the lessons can also be used independently or in any order.

Exercise progressions and regressions are not strictly tied to fitness level and are not inherently positive or negative. Factors like mobility, coordination, cognitive ability, and core strength can influence which exercise is best for each student. For example, if a student is learning to progress from a bodyweight squat to a weighted squat, they may first need to refine their form by practicing sit-to-stand exercises with weights. Shifting focus to foundational movements can often be an essential step in mastering new skills and building strength.

The tips below may be helpful in supporting students of all abilities:

### Communication:

- Use concise and simple language during exercise instruction.
- Demonstrate/model activities and provide visual cues (e.g., High 5 for Fitness cards & videos).
- Provide simple verbal cues (e.g., instructions on the High 5 for Fitness cards).
- Provide opportunities for students to ask questions and seek clarification as needed.

### Activity Implementation:

- Use Unified Teammates where a student with an intellectual disability is partnered with a student without a disability.
- Break activities into small steps and allow for practice or “walk through” for complex activities.
- Reduce wait time and provide continuous feedback during activities.
- Use repetition & multiple opportunities for practice to support skill development.





We want to hear how you are using High 5 Lessons. Use the QR Code to access a resource library that includes materials created by educators and PE professionals who have piloted these lessons. Please share any resource that you have created or use the existing resources at your school or in your community.



## LESSON THEMES:

Inspired by the [SHAPE America Health and Physical Education Standards](#), each lesson provides a suggested teaching progression to meet a range of cognitive abilities, foundational knowledge, and fitness experiences. Each theme is covered in two lessons.

**The Benefits of Staying Active:** Students will learn the importance of regular physical activity, identify ways to incorporate activity into their daily lives, and understand how activity supports a healthy transition into adulthood.

**Your Heart in Action:** Students will explore how physical activity strengthens the heart, learn how to monitor their heart rate, and apply this knowledge to improve fitness and ensure safety.

**Exercise, Rest, and Recovery:** Students will understand how exercise affects their body, the role of rest in recovery, and how to create a balanced physical activity routine that promotes overall health.

**Fueling Your Body:** Students will recognize how food and hydration choices impact energy levels, understand the relationship between nutrition and physical activity, and identify snacks and foods that affect performance and recovery.

**Stretching for Success:** Students will recognize the importance of stretching, understand the need for warm-ups and cool-downs, apply dynamic and static stretching techniques, and design a flexibility training plan.

**Setting Fitness Goals:** Students will identify physical activities that contribute to fitness, set goals for fitness development, monitor progress through self-assessment, and create a practice plan to improve a self-selected skill.





## Fitness Components and Training Formats

### THREE FITNESS COMPONENTS

High 5 for Fitness, and the lesson plans, focuses on building three components of health-related fitness through targeted exercises that become progressively more challenging. The three components of fitness are defined below:

**Strength:** The goal of strength exercises is to build muscle strength while also improving endurance and power, key components that support motor skill development, daily functioning, and athletic performance. Learning strength exercises progressively helps students develop proper form, coordination, and technique, reducing injury risk and building confidence. Each lesson introduces progressive variations of one High 5 strength exercise. When selecting which variation a student should perform, consider factors such as coordination, confidence, mobility, cognitive ability, and core strength.

**Endurance:** Aerobic endurance is the ability to perform moderate intensity exercise for extended periods of time. The goal of endurance exercise is to improve how long the body can sustain physical activity without fatigue. Endurance training emphasizes gradually increasing the duration or distance, intensity, or frequency of an aerobic activity. A step-by-step progression of form and technique is not typically part of endurance training, so detailed variations of endurance exercises are not provided as they are for strength exercises.

**Flexibility:** Flexibility is defined as the range of motion of a joint or group of joints. The goal of flexibility exercise is to increase the range of motion of the joints and improve overall muscle elasticity. Flexibility training focuses on gradually deepening stretches and extending the duration of holds, rather than the step-by-step progression of form and technique, so detailed variations will not be provided in these lessons.

### SIX TRAINING FORMATS

The lessons incorporate a variety of exercise training formats, presented in developmentally appropriate ways.

**Circuit Training:** A series of exercises performed in sequence with minimal rest, with students moving between stations to target different muscle groups or skills.

**Intervals:** Alternating periods of work and rest, with exercises designed to build endurance and strength, ranging from relays to structured High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) workouts.

**Sports Skill Training:** Using practice of specific sports-related skills in a way that mimics fitness training, such as 30 seconds of dribbling and 30 seconds of rest to mimic intervals.



**Challenges:** Activities where students work individually or in teams to complete as many repetitions or rounds as possible within a set time, fostering goal setting, perseverance, and a sense of accomplishment.

**Supersets/Giant Sets:** Pairing two or three exercises back-to-back with little to no rest, designed to enhance strength and endurance by targeting different muscle groups or the same group in diverse ways, in an efficient amount of time.

**Unified Partners:** Exercises or activities completed in pairs, emphasizing teamwork, communication, and mutual support.



## High 5 for Fitness Lessons

### Lesson 1 – Flexibility, Warm-ups, Cool-downs

#### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Develop body awareness and control during movement, (2) Reduce muscle tightness and risk of injury during physical activity, and (3) Learn to properly transition from rest to activity.

**Equipment:** High 5 Flexibility Videos, High 5 Cards, and High 5 Guides

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 3-5 minutes

#### Activity A: Introduce High 5 Flexibility (4-5 minutes)

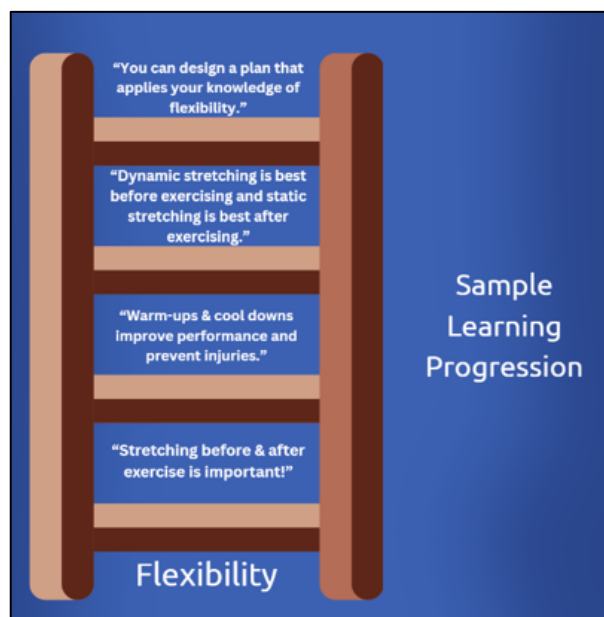


Educator script is presented in quotations and/or denoted by the icon to the left.

"Today we're going to learn why it's important to stretch before and after exercising. We'll practice different types of stretches that help our muscles warm up, stay flexible, and cool down."



Use the following prompts to discuss flexibility before completing the circuit. Prompts align with the sample learning progression to the right →



#### Activity Prompts:

"Why do you think we need to stretch before and after exercising?"

**Instructions:** Ask students to list examples of dynamic stretches. Sample stretches are listed below each answer.



**Before Exercising Answer:** “We need to wake our muscles up and get them ready for movement. Before exercising you should always do some dynamic stretching to improve performance.”  
Leg Swings or Arm Circles & Cross Body Shoulder Stretch or Straddle Stretch  
(Examples: **Arm Circles, Leg Swings, Triangle Pose**)

**After Exercise Answer:** “We need to cool our muscles down after we move. After exercising you should always do some static stretching to assist with muscle recovery.

(Examples: **Downward Facing Dog, Warrior 2, Ragdoll Pose**)

**“Which stretches are best before playing a sport or running? Which ones are best after a game?”**

“Dynamic stretches help prevent injuries by warming up muscles, while static stretches are for cooling down and improving flexibility.”

“Different activities need different stretches—dynamic stretches are best before jumping and running, while static stretches are best after a game.”

### Activity B: Flexibility Circuit (10-15 minutes)

Place one flexibility exercise from Level 1 or 2 at each station.



“During this activity, we’ll rotate through a circuit of six stations. You will have 30-60 seconds at each station to perform your flexibility exercise.”

“Remember to take deep breaths and control your movements when you stretch.”

“Wait for my signal to move to the next station.”



**\*\*TIP:** Use High 5 video demonstrations (links in Appendix D) of each exercise to ensure students use correct form.\*\*

### Sample Flexibility Circuit

**Station 1**



Ragdoll

**Station 2**



Cat/Cow

**Station 3**



Upward Facing Dog

**Station 4**



Warrior 2

**Station 5**



Downward Facing Dog

**Station 6**



Warrior 1

### Unified Teammate Support

Reach to props like yoga blocks instead of the floor. Remind students to breathe deeply and slowly to help them relax into the stretch. If a student struggles to reach, have them modify the exercise by bending their knees or using a strap to extend the stretch.



### *Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Students with cerebral palsy or spastic muscle conditions can have increased muscle tightness, which can cause involuntary contractions if stretched too quickly. To avoid this, use slow and gentle static movements to allow muscles to gradually relax.

### *Make it Fun!*

#### **Game Title : “Yoga Zoo Adventure”**

**Objective:** Students explore different animal-inspired yoga poses while learning about flexibility in a playful and imaginative way.

#### **How to Play:**

1. **Set the Scene:** Tell the kids they’re going on a trip to the zoo, and each stop features an animal that they’ll imitate with a yoga pose.
2. **Pose Stations:** Set up 6 stations around the space, each with a picture of an animal and a corresponding yoga pose:
  - Cat-Cow Pose - “Stretch like a cat waking up”
  - Cobra Pose - “Slither like a snake”
  - Downward Dog Pose - “Stretch like a puppy before it goes to sleep”
  - Frog Pose - “Bend your knees to squat down and touch the ground between your feet.”
  - Spider Pose – “Stretch like a spider weaving a web”
  - Jellyfish Pose - “Lie on your back and stretch your arms like a jellyfish!”
3. **Explanations:** Ensure that students understand how to perform each pose before station rotation begins.
4. **Station Rotation:** Kids stay at each station for 2-3 minutes, rotate until all children get to each station. The full station rotation will take approximately 12-18 minutes.
5. **Bonus Challenge:** At the end of the rotation challenge the kids to create their own animal pose and name it.



## Lesson 2 – Circuit Training

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Understand what circuit training is and why it's beneficial for fitness. (2) Practice transitioning between stations in a circuit. (3) Understand the importance of listening to your body when rest is needed.

**Equipment:** High 5 Strength and Flexibility Cards, High 5 Videos

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 5-7 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Introduce High 5 Level One Hand Pushes



"Today we are going to perform a **High 5 Hand Push**."

"Find a space to stand (or sit), giving each other space."

"Put your hands together in front of your chest with your elbows bent. Push your hands together as hard as you can as you count to 5."



### Activity B (7-10 minutes): Small Group Superhero Circuit Training

Set up 4-6 stations. One station should be dedicated to the **High 5 Hand Push**. The remaining stations should include a mix of flexibility and endurance exercises. Each station should have a Level 1 and a Level 2 exercise from the same fitness category, so students can self-select based on their comfort and skill level.



"Today, we are going to train to be superheroes! We are going to move from station to station earning our superpowers. After you complete all 4, you get to share your superhero name with the class."

"When you get to your training station perform the exercise listed. When the music starts, begin training, and when the music stops, you should freeze to earn your powers. I'll tell you when to move to the next training station."

### Unified Teammate Support

Support the selection of appropriate exercises at each station. Repeat instructions/demonstrations. Ensuring a smooth transition to the next station.

### Educator Exercise Science Tip

Did you know that students struggling to keep their heels down during a squat may have reduced ankle mobility or need to improve core strength? Incorporate ankle circles/calf stretches, and planks into lessons or have them perform a different version.



*Make It Fun!*

Include “**Superhero Simon Says**” as one of the 4-6 stations. Add Level 1 or 2 exercises to a game of Simon Says. Increase difficulty and work on endurance by having students step, jog, or hop in place between Simon’s instructions!





## Lesson 3 – The Benefits of Staying Active & Circuit Training

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Understand why regular physical activity is important for a healthy body and mind. (2) Recognize how staying active can be part of a daily routine. (3) Identify healthy habits that you can practice into adulthood.

**Equipment:** High 5 Guides

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 2 minutes

### Activity A (5-10 minutes): Small Group Circuit Training

See lesson two. Keep the **High 5 Hand Push** exercise so students can continue to practice. For variety, select a different endurance exercise, like Two-Foot Jumping, or a different flexibility exercise like Upward Facing Dog. For more practice select exercises that students have already learned.

**\*LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY\*:** Choose a few students to select and demonstrate the exercises for the circuit.

### Activity B (5-10 minutes): Physical Activity Reflection



Activities are listed in this sample learning progression diagram → based on the suggested steps toward physical literacy.



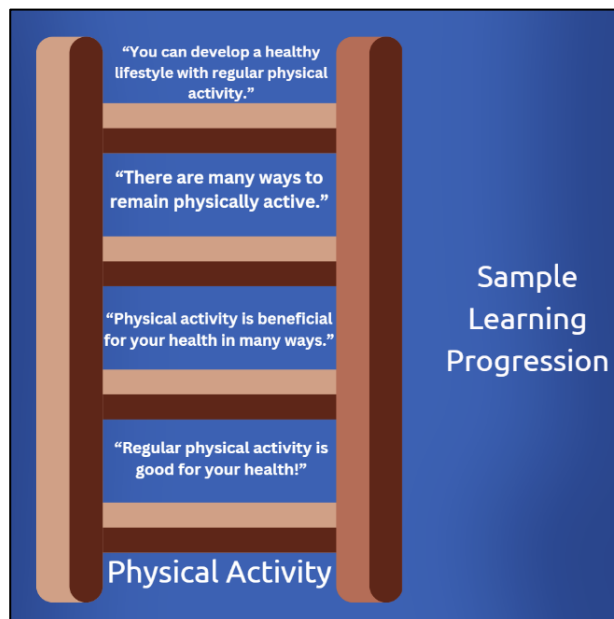
**\*\*TIP:** Show High 5 Lesson Plan Videos (featured in Appendix E) to illustrate examples of physical activity!\*\*\*

**Activity Instructions:** Choose one of the four activities below. Determine whether students will be working as a class, small groups or pairs based on the activity you choose. Decide how you will provide examples and how you want students to respond/identify their answers.



#### Activity Prompts:

1. "All of you will start seated. I will state an activity. Stand up if it is a physical activity (jumping rope, skipping, push-ups, etc.). Stay seated if it is not a physical activity (i.e. washing your hands, reading a book, drawing a picture, etc.)."





2. "I'm going to give you an example of physical activity. Hold up one finger if you think that activity is an endurance activity (running, walking, or biking), two if you think it is a strength activity (squats, push-ups, or lunges) , or three if you think it's a flexibility activity (toe touch, inch worms, arm circles)."
3. "Think about your daily routine. Come up with two activities that you can try to include during your day. Choose one to demonstrate and have group members guess what kind of activity it is. ."
4. "When you become an adult, you may not have the same opportunities to be active. What two physical activities that you participate in now will you be able to continue with as an adult? What are two new activities that you may want to try as an adult? Choose one to demonstrate and have your group guess the activity."

#### *Unified Teammate Support*

Assign groups or Teammates different prompts (selected based on ability). Teammate or Para-Educator can answer the question first to provide an example. Provide visual cues for the physical activities stated (broom for chores, soccer ball, etc.).

#### *Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Did you know that you can increase the challenge of a circuit without changing the exercises? You can increase the work time and decrease rest time, select exercises that work the same muscle groups at back-to-back stations, or increase the number of times you complete the circuit.

#### *Make It Fun!*

**Fitness Charades:** End the survey activity with a game of charades to allow students to practice what they learned. Split students into teams of 3-4. One team of students will be fitness leaders, rotate until each team leads at least once. Fitness leaders demonstrate one exercise together without speaking. Other teams raise their hands and guess which activity they are doing. Bonus points if the team can identify why the activity is beneficial for their body!



## Lesson 4 – Sports Skills Training

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Practice basic motor skills within a sports context. (2) Recognize the importance of practice to improve sports skills over time.

**Equipment:** 3 Soccer Balls, 6 Bean Bags, 3 Hula Hoops, 10-12 Floor Spots, 4 Kick Balls

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 7-8 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Introduce the High 5 Level One Inchworm



"Today we are going to perform a **High 5 Inchworm**."

"Find a space not too close to other students. Start in a kneeling position."

"Lean forward and place your hands on the floor in front of you. Walk your hands forward until your back is flat. Pause."

"Now walk your hands back toward your legs and end in a kneeling position."



### Activity B (5 minutes): Inchworm Exercise Modifications



"Now that you know how to perform a High 5 Inchworm, let's keep practicing so you feel comfortable trying it on your own!"



"If you can perform the **Kneeling Inchworm** and would like to keep practicing it, you can perform 2 sets of 8 repetitions (2x8).



"If you feel confident in your **Kneeling Inchworm** and want to try a **High 5 Inchworm**, you can inch your way like a worm around the space."



"If you would like to strengthen your abs without doing an **Inchworm**, you can do 3 sets of 10 **Seated Crunches**"



**Progression Challenge: High 5 Plank** – "Set up to perform a **High 5 Modified Plank**. Lift your knees off the ground and hold your back straight."

Exercise Progression:  
High 5 Inchworm



Starting Exercise:  
Kneeling  
Inchworm



Alternative:  
Seated Crunches



“Now, we are going to use sports drills to improve both our skills and fitness. A strong core helps athletes perform better in sports, and practicing sport-specific skills will help improve your overall fitness.”

Select one or more sports. Create 4-6 stations with drills that simulate fitness training, involving 30 seconds of skill practice followed by 30 seconds of rest. Ensure at least one station is dedicated to core strength. Multiple students can work at a single station or establish a few circuits that feature the same stations.

**Station examples** - work 30 seconds, rest for 30 seconds (mimicking intervals):

Wall Pass Station - “how many times can you kick the ball against the wall and trap it?”

Target Toss - “how many times can you get the beanbag in the hula hoop?”

Partner Catch - “how many times can you and your partner catch a ball?”

Jump to spots - “see how fast you can jump to all 10 spots. Rest and do it again”

#### *Unified Teammate Support*

Remove cones and allow straight line dribbling for students as needed. Use lower hoop options for lay ups if needed. Consider adding a tactile marker (e.g., a foam block) under the abdomen to provide sensory feedback on maintaining alignment.

#### *Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Small-sided games, like 3v3 soccer or basketball, mimic high-intensity interval training (HIIT) by combining bursts of activity with rest, while also improving sports skills. Have students play for 3 minutes, then rest for 3 minutes.

#### *Make It Fun!*

Conclude station rotation with a 3-4 minute **Sports Skill Relay**. Divide students into teams of even numbers and choose sports skills from a station in Activity B. Each team member races to perform a sport skill (i.e. dribbling a soccer ball), for a specific distance, as quickly as possible. Repeat 2-3 times with different skills (basketball dribbles, track baton pass, etc.) if time permits.



## Lesson 5 – Sports Skills Training & Your Heart in Action

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Understand the role of the heart during physical activity. (2) Identify ways to measure heart rate before and after exercise

**Equipment:** 3 Soccer Balls, 6 Bean Bags, 3 Hula Hoops, 10-12 Floor Spots, 4 Kick Balls

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 7-8 minutes

### Activity A (10-12 minutes): Small Group Circuit Training

Set up the sports skills training circuit like lesson 4. Keep the **Hand Push** exercise so students can continue to practice. For variety, select different sports skills or training exercises, for more practice select the same exercises.



**Before the circuit:** “Before we begin the circuit, let’s try to feel your heartbeat. During the circuit we’ll check for it again to see if it’s faster or slower than before we started.”

Here are some simple and direct speaking cues for guiding students to feel their heartbeat. Choose the most appropriate for your class or provide a couple of options.

**Chest:** “Place your hand over the left side of your chest, right below your collarbone. Press gently and stay still. Can you feel a soft ‘thump-thump’ under your hand? That’s your heart beating!”

**Neck:** “Using two fingers, gently press the side of your neck, just below your jawline and next to your windpipe. Don’t press too hard—stay still and feel for a pulsing sensation.”

**Wrist:** “Hold out one arm with your palm facing up. Using two fingers from your other hand, place them just below your thumb on the inside of your wrist. Press gently until you feel a steady beat.”

### Activity B: Your Heart in Action (5-7 minutes)



After the circuit, students gather for a group discussion. Ask students if they noticed anything about their heartbeat during the circuit using the following prompts ordered in a learning progression at the bottom of this activity.

- **Question 1:** “When you were dribbling the basketball or running between cones, did you notice what happened to your heartbeat? Did it start to beat faster or slower?”
  - **Teacher Response:** “That’s right, it beats faster because your heart is working hard to send more blood and oxygen to your muscles so you can keep moving!”

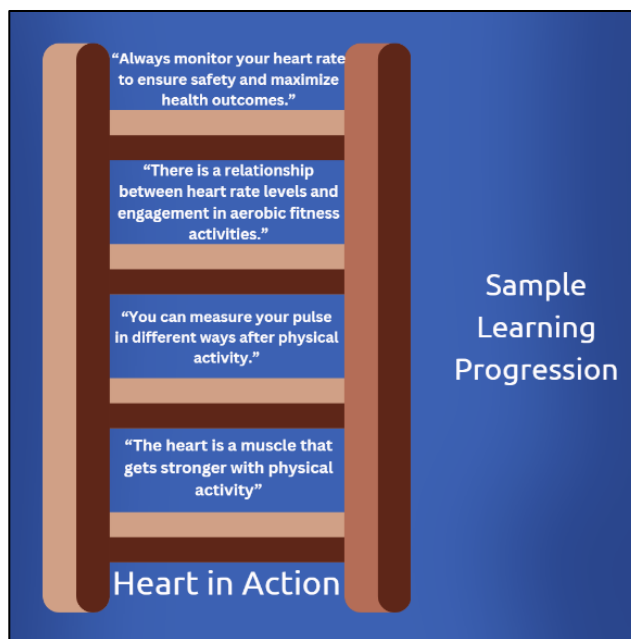


- **Question 2:** “Think back to when you were doing the lay-ups. Why do you think your heart was beating faster during these exercises? How does a faster heartbeat help you during sports?”

- **Teacher Response:** “A faster heartbeat helps your muscles get the energy they need, which is why your heart speeds up when you’re doing something active.”

- **Question 3:** “How did your body feel when you were dribbling compared to when you were doing the Plank?”

- **Teacher Response:**  
“Monitoring your heart rate shows how steady-state activities keep it consistent, but high-intensity intervals cause spikes that your body can’t sustain for as long, which is why you need rest between bursts of effort.”



#### *Unified Teammate Support*

Assign groups or Teammates different prompts (selected based on ability). Teammate can answer the question first to provide an example.

#### *Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Heart rates over 200 beats per minute are normal and expected when healthy children participate in active play, fitness training, or sport. During high-intensity bouts of physical activity, the target should be for youth should be performing exercises in an “all out” fashion (meaning your heart will be beating fast and you’ll be working as hard as you can).

#### *Make It Fun!*

**Heart Rate Red Light, Green Light:** Have students spread out evenly across the activity area. Tell students that when they hear “Green Light” they should run/jog in place. When they hear “Yellow Light” they should march in place. When they hear “Red Light” they should stop moving. Have students try to measure their pulse after each time hearing “Red Light”.



## Lesson 6 - Interval Training

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Discover how interval training helps build endurance and support heart health. (2) Experience how the body feels during low and high intensity movements.

**Equipment:** High 5 Strength Cards, High 5 Calf Raise Video, 10 Cones

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 5 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Introduce the High 5 Level One Calf Raise



"Today, we are going to learn an exercise that strengthens the muscle on the back of our lower leg, **Calf Raises**."

"If you already know how to do a **Calf Raises**, you will have the opportunity to improve and challenge yourself."

"Find a space not too close to other students (can use poly spots or cones). Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your arms at your sides."



"Raise up onto your tip toes as high as possible and pause at the top. Lower your heels down"

### Activity B (5-6 minutes): Calf Raise Exercise Modifications



"Now that you know how to perform a High 5 Inchworm, let's keep practicing so you feel comfortable trying it on your own!"



"If you can perform the **High 5 Calf Raise** and would like to keep practicing it, you can do 2 sets of 10 repetitions with a 20-second rest in between."



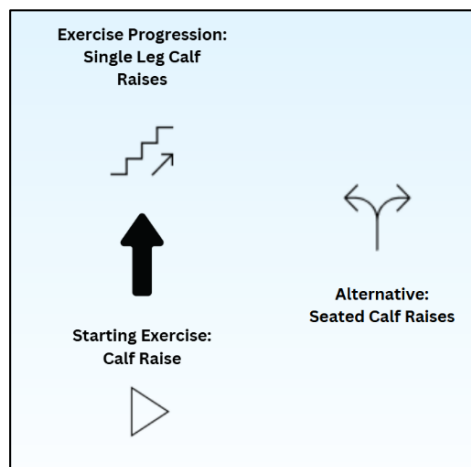
"If you feel confident in your **High 5 Calf Raises** and would like to try **Single Leg Calf Raises**, you can do 2 sets of 10 repetitions for each leg."



"If you would like to strengthen your calves from a seated position, you can do 2 sets of 10 repetitions of **Seated Calf Raises**."



**Progression Challenge:** "Hold single leg calf raise for as long as possible with each leg."



### Activity C (7-10 minutes): (Interval) Relay Challenge



**Activity Setup:** Choose three High 5 Level 1 or Level 2 exercises and assign one exercise to each of the three students in the team. Have students stand in a line with enough space between them to do the exercise. Use cones as markers for each team.



### Activity Prompts:

"We're going to work on endurance with interval training, which means doing short bursts of hard exercise followed by a break. This strengthens your heart and improves your endurance, so you can exercise longer and at higher levels."

"Today we'll do a relay challenge."

"In this relay, each person will perform their exercise while the rest of the team cheers them on. When you finish your exercise, you'll high-five the next person in line, and they will go. The relay ends when everyone on your team finishes."

"The first person in line will start by doing their exercise while the rest of the team cheers them on. When you finish your exercise, give the next person a high-five, and they'll start their turn. We'll keep going until everyone on your team finishes."

### *Unified Teammate Support*

Because this is self-selection, para-educators may choose an exercise related to IEP goals. Demonstrate positive comments and encouragement for teammates.





## Lesson 7 – Interval Training, Changes to the Body and Recovery

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Learn about the importance of recovery in exercise. (2) Practice gentle movements that help the body and heart slow down after exercise

**Equipment:** High 5 Cards

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 2-3 minutes

### Activity A: Practice High 5 (L1) Calf Raises or Introduce High 5 Modified Plank (L2)

The exercise(s) that you practice here will serve as the “active rest” exercises during the interval game in Activity B. If you have the time, teach the new exercise (Modified Plank), if not, spend a couple of minutes reviewing the **Calf Raise**.



“Today, we are going to learn an exercise that strengthens your abdominal and back muscles, which we call your core, called the **Modified Plank**:

“Find a space not too close to other students (can use poly spots or cones). Start on your hands and knees: Place your hands on the ground under your shoulders and your knees on the floor under your hips.”



“Move your knees back a little so your body forms a straight line from your head to your knees, like a long table. Keep your back straight and your tummy tight, holding the position without letting your hips drop or rise, like a statue!”

### Activity B (5-10 minutes): Exercise, Your Body and Rest



You'll see three questions for discussion below. Use these prompts to connect fitness concepts to interval training. Choose one or more for a quick discussion before beginning the training (interval instructions are below prompts). After the discussion, using the four exercises from lesson 6, your students will perform interval training, 30 seconds of work and 30 seconds active recovery.

- **Question 1:** “Do you notice your heart beating faster when you exercise?”
  - **Explanation 1:** “As you move, your heart works harder to pump blood to your muscles so they can keep moving. In interval workouts, your heart beats faster during the hard parts, then slows down during rest to help you recover.”
- **Question 2:** “Do you know why your heart beats faster and you breathe harder when you exercise?”
  - **Explanation 2:** “When you exercise, your body needs more oxygen to fuel your muscles, so your heart pumps faster and you breathe harder to deliver that



oxygen. In interval workouts, this happens during the intense parts, and during rest, your heart slows down to help you recover."

- **Question 3:** "How does taking short breaks during an interval workout help you perform better?"
  - **Explanation 3:** "Rest in interval training gives your muscles and heart time to recover, so when you start the next intense interval, you can work at full effort again."

**Interval Instructions:** Choose 3-5 High 5 level 1 or 2 endurance exercises. Use the core exercises for active rest.



#### Activity Prompts:

"We are going to practice our endurance exercises again, but this time we are going to work for 30 seconds and then do an active rest exercise for 30 seconds."

"Active rest is when you perform low-intensity movements or a different type of exercise during a rest periods, rather than stopping completely."

"After you do the endurance exercise for 30 seconds you will do your **Modified Plank** that you learned at the beginning of the class for 30 seconds. This keeps strengthens your muscles while allowing your heart rate to recover for the next high-intensity exercise."

#### *Unified Teammate Support*

If there are a range of cognitive abilities, consider assigning small groups or pairs and giving appropriate questions to each group/pair.

#### *Make It Fun!*

**Interval Freeze Tag:** Complement/conclude interval training with a game of freeze tag. Teach students the difference between high intensity and low intensity movement with a fun and familiar game.

#### Game Rules:

- **Timed Intervals:**
  - Game rounds last approximately 1 minute
  - 30 seconds of high intensity movement (running)
  - 30 seconds of low intensity movement (walking)
- **Recovery Zone:**
  - Mark a square with cones to serve as a recovery zone



- Students that get tagged will go to this zone to perform a recovery exercise (deep breathing or stretching) for 30 seconds before rejoining the game
- **Tagger Rotation:**
  - After each round a new tagger should be chosen
- **Game Over:**
  - End the game with a few minutes of stretching or walking for recovery
  - Discuss how students' hearts felt before and after movement/recovery



## Lesson 8 – EMOM (Every Minute on the Minute)

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Practice how to complete simple movements during timed intervals. (2) Understand how to balance effort and rest to perform successfully in each minute.

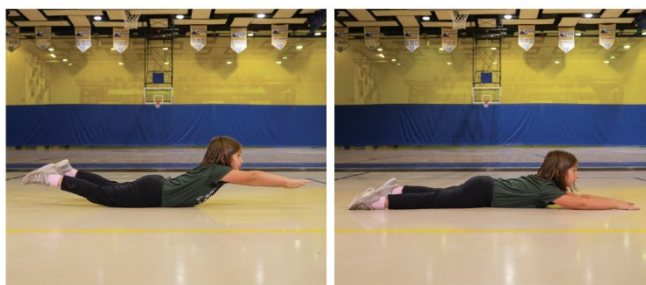
**Equipment:** High 5 Cards, High 5 Guides

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 4-5 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Introduce the High 5 Level Two Superman



"Today, we are going to learn a lower back strength exercise, **High 5 Superhuman**. If you already know how to do the Superman, you will have the opportunity to improve and challenge yourself."



"Find a place along the wall or bench.

Put your hands on the wall or bench with your shoulder in line with your wrists."

"Keep your body in a straight line from head to heels by using your core muscles. Bend your elbows and lower your chest toward the surface. Do not reach with your head."

### Activity B (5-6 minutes): Superman Exercise Modifications



"Now that you know how to perform a High 5 Inchworm, let's keep practicing so you feel comfortable trying it on your own!"



"If you can perform a **Superhuman** and would like to keep practicing it, you can do two sets of ten repetitions with a 30-second rest in between."



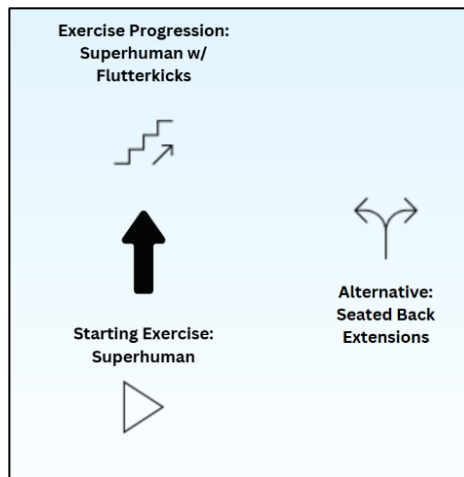
"If you feel confident in your Superman and want to try a **Superhuman with Flutter Kicks** you can move to the floor and do two sets of 20 kicks, with a 30-second rest in between".



"If you would like to strengthen your muscles from a seated position, you can do two sets of ten **Seated Back Extension**".



**Progression Challenge:** Superman Swimmers – "While holding the superman pose, alternate lifting opposite arms and legs in a swimming motion."



### Activity C (4-5 minutes): Every Minute on the Minute



"To get the benefits of exercise, you need to challenge your body. Today, you'll challenge yourself with an EMOM workout. It's normal for your heart to beat fast, your muscles to get tired, and to sweat a bit - that's your body adapting!"

### Activity Instructions:

Use a variety of strength and endurance level 1 or 2 High 5 cards, focusing on exercises like **Two-foot jumping, Inchworms, and Superman**, which allow for set repetitions. Consider your students' abilities when choosing exercises, break into small groups if needed, or let students pick from a provided list.

### Prompts:

"Now we are going to do an **EMOM workout** (Every Minute on the Minute),' meaning you have 1 minute to complete each exercise, and any time left in the minute is your rest."

"In the first minute, you'll do 20 (**Jumps**). If you finish before the minute is up, you get to rest for the rest of the minute. When the second minute starts, you'll do 10 (**Inchworms**). In the third minute, you'll do 12 (**Superman**)."

### *Unified Teammate Support*

Assign an exercise to each pair of Unified Teammates to lead for the class, with one student demonstrating the High 5 exercise and the other an alternate version (e.g., superman or seated ack extensions) so the rest of the class can follow the exercise that they choose.

### *Make It Fun!*

**Color Dash Challenge:** End this lesson with a fun game that allows students to practice color recognition while exercising. Place four colored objects around the game play area. Assign a High 5 exercise and repetition number to each color. Have students start in the center of the area. Call out a color to begin the game. Students have 1 minute to run to the correct color, complete the number of exercise repetitions, and return to the starting place before the timer runs out!



## Lesson 9 – Supersets/Food & Hydration

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Understand the role of food and water in ensuring the body functions properly.  
(2) Identify the five different food groups and provide examples.

**Equipment:** High 5 Cards, High 5 Guides, Printable Nutrition Content (Appendix F)

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 7-8 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Practice or Introduce High 5 Level Two Modified Plank



"Today, we are going to learn/practice an exercise that strengthens your abdominal and back muscles, which we call your core, called the **Modified Plank**."

"Find a space not too close to other students (can use cones). Start on your hands and knees: Place your hands on the ground under your shoulders and your knees on the floor under your hips."



"Move your knees back a little so your body forms a straight line from your head to your knees, like a long table."

"Keep your back straight and your tummy tight, holding the position without letting your hips drop or rise, like a statue!"

### Activity B (10-15 minutes): Fuel Your Body Racetrack

"Today we will be doing an activity called 'Fuel Your Body Racetrack' to learn how some types of food and water help us during physical activities. Just like a car needs the right fuel to run, our bodies need the right food and water to stay active and healthy."

"There are many food groups and nutrients that support our health, but today we're focusing on just three: Carbohydrates, Protein, and Water. This doesn't mean the others aren't important, but these three have a big impact on exercise and performance."

"The Carbohydrates corner represents foods like bread, rice, pasta, and fruits, which give us quick energy to keep moving."

"The Protein corner represents foods like chicken, beans, and yogurt, which help build and repair muscles after exercise."

"The Water corner represents plain water, which keeps us hydrated and helps prevent muscle cramps or fatigue."

**Instructions:** "I'll ask a question, and you'll 'drive' to the corner you think is the best answer and get into a Modified Plank (or alternate exercise). The exercise is going to give your car gas so



that you can speed back to the starting line when I say “race”. When you get back to the line we will talk about the answer you chose and then I’ll ask another question.”

### Questions ordered based on this learning progression visual →



(sample answer is provided, but others may not be incorrect):

**Q1. If you’re about to run a race and need quick energy, which corner will give you the best fuel? (Answer: Carbohydrates – provides quick, easily accessible energy.)**

**Q2. After playing soccer, which corner will help repair and strengthen your muscles? (Answer: Protein – helps rebuild and repair muscle fibers. Water/Carbohydrates, play a role too.)**

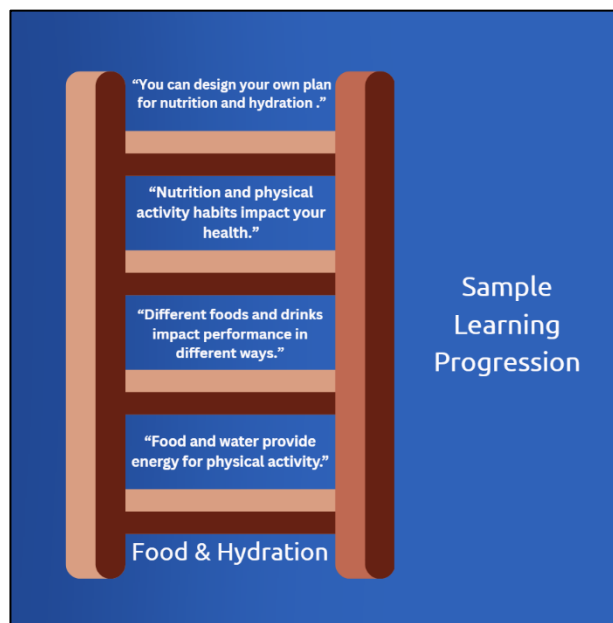
**Q3. It’s a hot day, and you’re sweating a lot playing a game. Which corner is best to visit throughout the game? (Answer: Water – prevents dehydration)**

**Q4. If you’re feeling tired and your muscles are cramping, which corner should you visit? (Answer: Water – hydration prevents cramps and keeps muscles functioning properly.)**

**Q5. If you’re training for a long-distance run, which corner gives you the best fuel to keep going? (Answer: Carbohydrates – steady energy for endurance activities.)**

**Q6. Which corner would you pick to build muscle after lifting weights? (Answer: Protein – helps muscles grow stronger and repair after resistance training. Some might choose Carbohydrates if thinking of energy replenishment or Water if considering hydration for recovery.)**

**Q7. If you snack on watermelon between games, which corner would it fall into and what benefit would it provide? (Answer: Both Carbohydrates and Water – watermelon offers natural sugars for quick energy (Carbs) and the high-water content to help with hydration)**



### Alternative Activity B (10 minutes): Meal Match Up

“Today we will be doing an activity called ‘Meal Match Up’ to learn how some types of food and water help us during physical activities.”



"There are many food groups and nutrients that support our health, but today we're focusing on just three: **Carbohydrates, Protein, and Water**. This doesn't mean the others aren't important, but these three have a big impact on exercise and performance."

"The **Carbohydrate** corner represents foods like bread, rice, pasta, and fruits, which give us quick energy to keep moving."

"The **Protein** corner represents foods like chicken, beans, and yogurt, which help build and repair muscles after exercise."

"The **Water** corner represents plain water, which keeps us hydrated and helps prevent muscle cramps or fatigue."

**Instructions:** "I'll assign each of you one of these nutrients, make sure to remember which one you are. On my signal you must find a classmate from each of the other two groups. Once you form a team of one carbohydrate, one protein, and one water, each of you must think of an example of that nutrient (students assigned water can pick a healthy beverage alternative) Students will then share their example with the group."

\*\*Repeat 2-3 times. Assign different nutrient types until all participants have been assigned to each group.\*\*

**\*\*\*USE THE PRINTABLE CUT-OUTS IN APPENDIX F TO SUPPORT THIS ACTIVITY\*\*\***

#### *Unified Teammate Support*

Offer students multiple ways to reach the corners, such as walking, rolling, or skipping. Pairs or Paras should demonstrate these different options.

#### *Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Muscular strength and coordination are crucial for performing motor skills like moving our bodies or objects. These two elements work together to make movements strong and accurate. Developing both helps children perform various physical activities energetically and proficiently.





## Lesson 10 – Supersets

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Notice how heart rate, breathing, and muscles are impacted by superset exercises. (2) Build teamwork through partner-based superset exercise activities.

**Equipment:** High 5 Cards, High 5 Guides

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 7-8 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Introduce the High 5 Level Two Seated Leg Lift



“Today, we are going to learn a lower body strength exercise, the **Seated Leg Lift**. If you already know how to do a **Seated Leg Lift**, you will have the opportunity to improve and challenge yourself.”



“Start seated with your right leg out straight and your left leg bent with your foot flat on the ground. Hug your arms around your bent leg.”

“Raise your right leg up a few inches and pause. Lower your leg down and repeat. We’ll switch to the other leg when we finish the exercise on this one.”

### Activity B (5-6 minutes): Leg Lift Exercise Modifications



“Now that you know how to perform a High 5 Leg Lift let’s keep practicing so you feel comfortable trying it on your own!”



“If you can perform a **Seated Leg Lift** and would like to keep practicing, you can do two sets of eight lifts on each side”



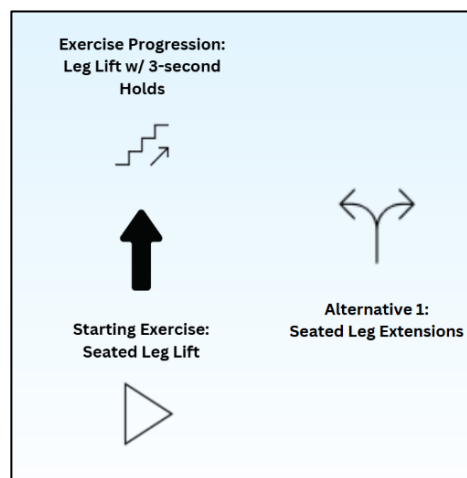
“If you feel confident in Seated Leg Lifts and want to try **Leg Lifts with a 3-second Hold**, you’ll count to three after you lift your leg and then lower it down. Don’t lean your body back”. Do 2 sets of 5 repetitions.



“If you’d like to strengthen your legs without sitting on the floor, you can do two sets of ten **Seated Leg Extension**, focusing on squeezing your leg muscles each time.”



**Progression Challenge:** Add a flutter kick to the Leg Lifts with a 3-second Hold for added difficulty



### Activity C (10-15 minutes): Superset Workout in Pairs



“To build strength and fitness, you need to push your body a bit more each time - whether it’s doing more reps, lifting heavier weight, or holding a position longer. Today’s **superset workout** will be a chance to see how much more you can do! If it feels tougher than usual, that’s good - it means your muscles are working harder, which is how you get stronger over time!”

Each pair of Unified Teammates will complete both exercises in each superset twice (two sets per exercise) before rotating to the next station. Multiple pairs may be working at each station simultaneously; ensure pairs take turns and maintain adequate space for safety and ease of movement.

### **Superset Station 1:**

Teammate 1: **8 Seated Leg Lifts each leg**

Teammate 2: **15 Hand Pushes**

*After completing it twice, rest for 30 seconds before moving to Superset 2.*

### **Superset Station 2:**

Teammate 1: **15 Calf Raises**

Teammate 2: **6 Inchworms**

*After completing it twice, rest for 30 seconds before moving to Superset 3.*

### **Superset Station 3:**

Teammate 1: **30-Second Modified Plank**

Teammate 2: **10 Superman**

*After completing the stations, ask students if station 3 felt more difficult because the superset worked the same muscles in each exercise.*

### **Unified Teammate Support**

Use rest times to briefly review proper form. Adjust rest times if needed based on students’ fitness levels.

### **Educator Exercise Science Tip**

Youth with disabilities face a higher risk of health problems like diabetes and heart disease in part due to low physical activity and high sedentary time. Similarly, adults with disabilities are less active and have higher rates of chronic diseases, which is why building healthy habits early can help youth stay active and lower these risks as they get older.



*Make It Fun!*

**Superset Color Code:** End the superset workout with a game that works on student memory while exercising. Assign an exercise to each of three colors (i.e. Red = Hand Pushes, Yellow = One Foot Hopping, Blue = Triangle Pose). Call out combinations of colors (i.e. Blue, Red, Yellow) to form a superset. Keep adding an additional color to the color code for increased difficulty. Have partners help each other to remember the exercise that aligns with each color.



## Lesson 11 – Frog Squat and Teammate Challenge

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objective: (1)** Discover how you can build skills in cooperation, encouragement, and teamwork while exercising.

**Equipment:** High 5 Cards, High 5 Guides

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 3-5 minutes

### Activity A (2-4 minutes): Introduce the High 5 Level Three Frog Squats



"Today, we are going to learn a lower body exercise called the Frog Squat. If you already know how to do a Frog Squat, you'll have the opportunity to improve and challenge yourself."

"Start by standing with your feet wider than shoulder width apart and your arms at your sides. Bend your knees to squat down and touch the ground between your feet. Keep your chest up and bottom down if you can. Return to a stand."



### Activity B (5-6 minutes): Frog Squat Exercise Modifications



"Now that you know how to perform a High 5 Leg Lift, let's keep practicing so you feel comfortable trying it on your own!"



"If you can perform **High 5 Frog Squat** and want to keep practicing them, you can do two sets of ten repetitions."



"If you feel confident with **Frog Squat**, try adding a **jump** up, rather than just standing after you touch the floor."



"If you'd like to strengthen your legs in a seated position, try two sets of ten repetitions of the **Seated Leg Extensions**."

Exercise Progression:  
Jumping Frog Squats



Starting Exercise:  
Frog Squats



Alternative:  
Seated Leg Extensions

### Activity C (10-15 minutes): Teammate Challenge

Divide the class into pairs of Unified Teammates. Each pair receives a set of High 5 cards.

One teammate in each pair picks a card, decides the number of repetitions (e.g., 10 **Frog Squats**, 15 **Two-Foot Jumps**), and then challenges another pair to complete the same exercise.

Both pairs do the two exercise together, cheering each other on.



After finishing the second exercise, both pairs separate and find new pairs to challenge.

*Unified Teammate Support*

Assist pairs with choosing exercises and exercise variations that match their skill levels.

*Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Youth with disabilities can often do more than expected and can learn new skills, though they may have low fitness levels and fatigue quicker. Tailor programs to include low- to moderate-intensity activities with frequent rest periods, gradually increasing intensity over time.



## Lesson 12 – Reflection and Fitness Goals

### Lesson Objectives, Equipment, and Estimated Set-up Time

**Objectives:** (1) Reflect on improvements made in strength, flexibility, and endurance during the past 6-8 weeks. (2) Discuss how to implement these habits into daily routines.

**Equipment:** High 5 Cards and High 5 Guides

**Estimated Set-up Time:** 5 minutes

### Activity A (2-3 minutes): Introduce Level Three High 5 Crab Kicks (OPTIONAL)



"Today we're going to learn our last core exercise called the **High 5 Crab Kick**."

"Sit with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground. Place your hands on the ground behind you with your fingers facing backward. Raise your hips until you are in a crab position. Kick your right leg up, lower it down, and then kick your left leg up."



### Activity B (5-7 minutes): Create Your Own Workouts!



"Today, we're going to use what we've learned to create our own small group workouts! You can choose a focus - strength, flexibility, or endurance - based on a fitness goal or sport you want to get better at. At that station, you'll pick a level and do all the High 5 exercises in the deck for 30 seconds each. Encourage your group and work hard!"

Set up three stations, one for each fitness component (strength, flexibility, endurance). Choose one or two exercise(s) for each station for students to perform. Have multiple sets of cards to reduce confusion. Include **High 5 Crab Kicks** as one of the exercises at the strength area.

### Activity C (10 minutes): Reflection and Goal Discussion



"Let's reflect on what we've accomplished using High 5 cards and how you can continue to improve your fitness and set personal goals."

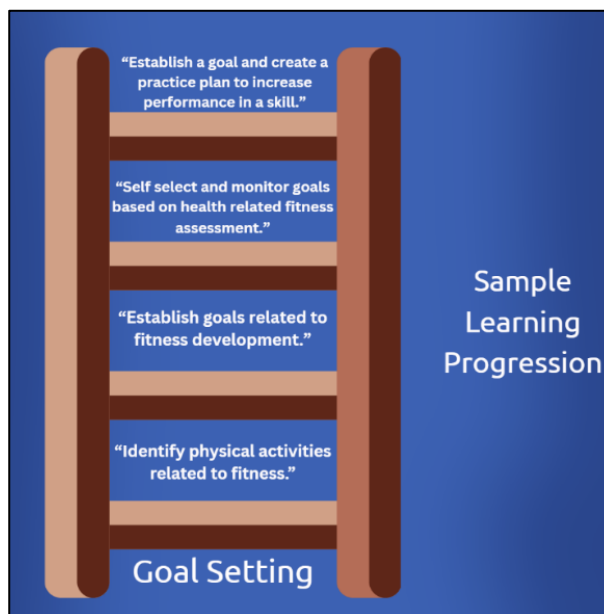


Use the questions listed below for a group discussion. Prompts are ordered in the sample learning progression at the bottom of this activity.

1. "Which High 5 exercises did you enjoy the most, and how did they make your body feel?"
2. "Think about a few High 5 exercises that help with endurance, strength, or flexibility. Can you tell me how each one helps your fitness, like building strong muscles or making your heart healthier?"
3. "What's one High 5 exercise or activity that you'd like to get better at? Is it related to endurance, strength, or flexibility?"



4. "If you want to improve a specific High 5 exercise or a skill in another sport you enjoy, what small steps could you take each week to get better?"
5. "Looking back at the High 5 unit, which area of fitness—endurance, strength, or flexibility—do you want to continue working on and why?" How would improving in this area help you in other activities or sports you like?"
6. "What strategy will you use to monitor your progress? Would you use a fitness log, keep track of your High 5 card exercises, or ask a friend to help you stay on track?"



#### *Unified Teammate Support*

Use "goal buddies" so students set and talk about goals together.

#### *Educator Exercise Science Tip*

Physical activity is a powerful way to boost cognitive function in youth. Studies show that regular exercise can improve memory, attention, and overall brain function in individuals with and without intellectual disabilities.

#### *Make it Fun!*

**Reflection Freeze Dance:** Finish off with a dance party! Add music and dancing to the reflection and goal discussion. When music stops, pick a few students to answer one of the above questions. Continue until all questions have been asked and answered.



## **Appendix A: Strength Exercise Progressions and Modification Options**

This section includes Level 1, 2 and 3 strength exercises.

### **Curl Up (Level 1)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Assisted Curl-Up:**

Provide students with assistance by allowing them to use their hands to push off the ground slightly as they curl up or by anchoring their feet under a stable object.

#### **Progression-Sit-Up:**

Instruct students to lie on their back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Have them cross their arms over their chest or place their fingertips behind their ears. Guide them to engage their stomach and lift their entire upper body off the ground, reaching towards their knees in a controlled motion. Once they reach an upright seated position, they should slowly lower back down to the starting position.

#### **Alternate Exercise- Seated Abdominal Contractions (for students with neck discomfort or those with an inability to lie on the ground):**

Have students sit upright in a sturdy chair with feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to place their hands on their abdomen, take a deep breath, and as they exhale, contract their abdominal muscles, pulling their belly button towards their spine. Hold the contraction for 3-5 seconds, then relax.

### **Arm and Leg Raises (Level 1)**

#### **Difficulty Modification- Arm or Leg Raises:**

Have students begin by raising only one arm or one leg at a time while keeping the other limbs on the ground for stability. Instruct them to raise their arm or leg, hold briefly, and then lower back down with control.

#### **Progression -Same Side Arm and Leg Raises:**

Instruct students to raise their right arm and right leg together, maintaining balance and control. After holding briefly, they should lower back down with control.

#### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Arm and Leg Extensions:**

Have students sit upright in a chair with feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to extend one leg straight out while reaching the opposite arm forward. After holding briefly, they should return to





the starting position and repeat on the other side. This alternate exercise is suitable for students who have difficulty kneeling or balancing.

### **Plank Hold (Level 1)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Knee Plank:**

Have students begin by performing the plank on their knees instead of their toes. Instruct them to keep their body in a straight line from their head to their knees, with their core engaged and back flat.

#### **Progression-Forearm Plank with Alternating Leg Lifts:**

Instruct students to lower down onto their forearms rather than hands, keeping their body in a straight line. To increase the challenge, they can lift one leg slightly off the ground, hold briefly, and then alternate legs, maintaining core stability throughout the exercise.

#### **Alternate Exercise- Seated Resistance Hold:**

Have students sit upright in a chair with their feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to hold a light weight with their arms extended straight out in front of them at shoulder height, keeping the arms parallel to the floor. Guide them to engage their core muscles and maintain an upright posture while holding this position. Hold for 10-30 seconds, then relax. This alternate exercise is suitable for students who have difficulty kneeling.

### **Squat (Level 1)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Sit to Stand:**

Have students sit on the edge of a chair with their feet slightly wider than shoulder-width apart. Instruct them to stand up using their leg muscles, keeping their body weight right around where their shoes are tied. Then, guide them to slowly sit back down, maintaining control throughout the movement.

#### **Regression-Wall Squats:**

Ask students to stand with their back against a wall, feet shoulder-width apart and positioned about two feet away from the wall. Instruct them to slowly slide their back down the wall by bending their knees, lowering their body until their thighs are parallel to the floor or as low as comfortable. Ensure their knees stay aligned with their ankles, not extending past their toes. Hold the squat position for 5 seconds, then press through their heels to slide back up the wall to the starting position.



### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Leg Extensions:**

Students will sit in a chair with feet flat on the ground. Instruct them to lift one leg, extending it straight out in front of them. Ensure their leg is fully extended, with the knee straight but not locked. Hold the extended position for 2-3 seconds, focusing on engaging the quadriceps. Then, guide them to slowly lower their leg back to the starting position, controlling the movement as their foot returns to the floor. Repeat with the other leg. This alternate exercise is suitable for students with limited joint mobility or non-weight bearing.

### **Plank Hold with Straight Arm Raise (Level 2)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Wall, Incline, Knee, or Full Plank:**

Have students stand facing a wall with their hands placed flat against it at shoulder height. Instruct them to walk their feet back slightly, creating a diagonal line with their body. They should engage their core and hold the position, ensuring their body remains in a straight line from head to heels. This can also be done with hands on a bench or floor with shoulders above the wrists.

#### **Progression - Forearm Plank with Reaches:**

Instruct them to perform the plank on their forearms and, while maintaining the position, lift and extend one arm forward to tap the floor in front of them. Alternate arms while keeping the hips stable and core engaged.

### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Core Hold:**

Have students sit upright in a chair with their feet flat on the floor and hands gripping the sides of the chair. Instruct them to lean back slightly while keeping their back straight and core engaged, lifting their feet an inch or two off the floor. They should hold this position while maintaining a straight back, simulating the engagement of the core muscles in a plank. This alternate exercise is suitable for students unable to do the exercise on the ground.

### **Knee Push-Ups (Level 2)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Incline Push-Up:**

Have students perform push-ups with their hands placed on an elevated surface like a bench or wall. Instruct them to keep their body in a straight line from head to heels, engaging their core and maintaining proper form as they lower their chest toward the surface.



### **Progression-Full Push-Up (on Toes):**

Instruct them to start in a plank position on their toes, with hands directly under their shoulders and body in a straight line from head to heels. Have them bend their elbows to lower their chest toward the ground, then push back up to the starting position, maintaining core engagement and proper form throughout.

### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Shoulder Press:**

Have students sit upright in a sturdy chair with their feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to extend their arms out to the sides and bend their elbows at 90 degrees, so their hands are at shoulder height. Guide them to press their arms upward until they are fully extended overhead, then slowly lower their arms back down to the starting position. Ensure they engage their core to maintain a stable posture throughout the exercise. This alternate exercise is suitable for students who cannot perform a push-up with a rigid core or if they are non-weight-bearing.

\*resistance/dumbbells optional

### **Side Leg Raises (Level 2)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Knee Bent Side Leg Raises:**

Have students lie on their side with their bottom leg bent for stability and their top leg slightly bent as well. Instruct them to lift their top leg upward, keeping it slightly bent, and then slowly lower it back down with control.

### **Progression-Standing Side Abduction Pulses:**

Have students stand upright with their hands resting on a wall or chair for balance. Instruct them to lift one leg straight out to the side, keeping the leg extended and toes pointing forward. Once they reach the top of the movement, they should perform small, controlled pulses by lifting and lowering the leg slightly. Repeat on the other side.

### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Clamshell:**

Have students sit upright in a sturdy chair with their feet flat on the floor and knees bent. Instruct them to place their hands on their knees and press their knees outward against their hands, creating resistance. Hold the position for a few seconds, then relax. This exercise focuses on the outer thighs and hips, providing a seated alternative that still targets similar muscles. This alternate exercise is suitable for students with limited hip range of motion or those unable to stand or lay on the ground.



### **Backward Lunges (Level 2)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Kneel to Stand:**

Instruct students to start by kneeling on the floor with one knee up and the other knee down. Have them press through the front foot to stand up, bringing the back foot forward to meet the front foot. Then, guide them to step back into the kneeling position with control.

#### **Regression-Stationary Lunges with Optional Balance Support:**

Have students start in a split stance with one foot forward and the other foot back, keeping the front foot flat on the floor and with weight on the ball of the back foot. Instruct them to bend both knees, lowering their body straight down until their back knee is just above the ground. They can use a wall or chair for balance if needed. Once they reach the bottom of the movement, guide them to push back up to the starting position.

#### **Progression-Forward Lunges:**

Instruct them to stand upright and take a step forward with one leg, lowering their body until both knees are bent at 90 degrees. Ensure that the front knee stays above the ankle. After reaching the bottom of the movement, they should push through the front heel to return to the starting position.

#### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Leg Extension Pulses:**

Have students sit upright in a sturdy chair with their feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to extend one leg straight out in front of them, keeping the leg straight and toes pointing up. Once the leg is fully extended, guide them to perform small, controlled pulses by lifting and lowering the leg slightly. Repeat with the other leg. This exercise targets the quadriceps and helps to build lower body strength without the need to stand or bear weight.

### **Side Plank (Level 3)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Forearm and Knee Side Plank:**

Have students start by lying on their side with their forearm directly under their shoulder and their knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Instruct them to lift their hips off the ground, keeping their body in a straight line from their head to their knees. Guide them to hold this position while maintaining core engagement and balance.



### **Progression-Side Plank with Leg Lift:**

Have them perform a side plank and then lift the top leg while maintaining the side plank position. Instruct them to keep the leg straight and control the movement, focusing on maintaining balance and core stability.

### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Rotations:**

Have students sit upright in a sturdy chair with their feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to cross their arms over their chest or hold a light object in front of them. Guide them to engage their core and slowly rotate their upper body to one side, then return to the center, and rotate to the other side. This exercise targets the obliques and core, providing a seated alternative that still focuses on core stability and strength. This alternate exercise is suitable for students whose shoulders or wrists hurt during side planks or are unable to be on the ground.

### **Wall Sit Hold (Level 3)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Wall Squat (Sliding Back Down the Wall):**

Have students stand with their back against the wall, feet shoulder-width apart. Instruct them to slowly slide their back down the wall into a squat position, then slide back up, maintaining control throughout the movement.

### **Progression-Wall Sit with Arms Raise:**

Instruct them to raise and hold their arms overhead or in front of them while maintaining the squat position.

### **Alternate Exercise - Seated Leg Extensions:**

Have students sit in a chair with their back against the chair and feet flat on the ground. Instruct them to extend one leg straight out in front, hold briefly, then lower it back down. This alternate exercise is suitable for students who are non-weight bearing or have knee discomfort squatting.

### **Hip Bridge (Level 3)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Hip Bridge with Wider Feet and Hands on Ground:**

Have students lie on their back with their feet wider than hip-width apart and hands flat on the ground. Instruct them to lift their hips off the ground, engaging the glutes and lower back, while maintaining balance with the wider stance.



### **Progression-Single-Leg Hip Bridge:**

Students can progress to lifting one leg off the ground while performing the bridge. Instruct them to keep their hips level.

### **Alternate Exercise-Seated Abduction:**

Have students sit upright in a chair with feet flat on the floor. Instruct them to press their knees outward into their hands (placed on the outside of their knees).

### **Squat Jumps (Level 3)**

#### **Difficulty Modification-Squats:**

Instruct them to stand with feet shoulder-width apart, bend their knees, and lower their hips as if sitting back into an imaginary chair. Stand back up, engaging the core and glutes.

### **Progression-Deep Arms Up Squat Jumps:**

Instruct students to lower into a squat position holding their hands behind their heads. They should go as low as they can and explosively jump upward. Have them land softly, immediately going into the next squat, focusing on maintaining control and depth.

### **Alternate Exercise - Seated Leg Extensions:**

Have students sit in a chair with their back against the chair and feet flat on the ground. Instruct them to extend one leg straight out in front, hold briefly, then lower it back down. This alternative exercise is suitable for students who are non-weight bearing or have knee discomfort squatting.



## Appendix B: Sample Learning Progression Explained & Key Messages

### The Benefits of Staying Active

**Key Messages:** (1) Recognize that regular physical activity is good for health. (2) Explain the benefits of physical activity. (3) Identify ways to be physically active. (4) Discuss the benefits of physically active lifestyles in young adulthood.

### Your Heart in Action

**Key Messages:** (1) Recognize the heart as a muscle that strengthens with regular physical activity. (2) Identify pulse locations and give examples of activities that raise heart rate. (3) Explain heart rate and its connection to aerobic fitness. (4) Apply heart rate concepts to exercise safely and improve fitness outcomes.

### Changes to the Body and Recovery

**Key Messages:** (1) Recognize physiological changes in their body during physical activities. (2) Recognize and explain how physical activity influences physiological changes in their body. (3) Examine how rest impacts the body's response to physical activity. (4) Apply the knowledge of rest when planning regular physical activity

### Food & Hydration

**Key Messages:** (1) Recognize food and hydration choices that provide energy for physical activity. (2) Describe the impact of food and hydration choices on physical activity. (3) Explain the relationship among nutrition, physical activity and health factors. (4) Identify snacks and food choices that help and hinder performance, recovery and enjoyment during physical activity.

### Flexibility, Warmups, & Cool Downs

**Key Messages:** (1) Recognize importance of stretching before and after physical activity. (2) Identify the need for warm-up and cool-down relative to various physical activities. (3) Apply knowledge of stretching, warm-up, cool-down, flexibility, and endurance activities. (4) Design and implement a plan that applies knowledge of flexibility training exercises.

### Fitness Goal Setting

**Key Messages:** (1) Identify physical activities that contribute to fitness. (2) Establish goals related to enhancing fitness development. (3) Self-select and monitor goals based on self-selected health-related fitness assessment. (4) Establish a goal and create a practice plan to improve performance of a self-selected skill.



## Appendix C: Terminology

**Active recovery** – a rest period that involves performing low-intensity movements or a different type of exercise, rather than stopping completely.

**Core exercise** - any exercise that involves the use of the stomach muscles and back muscles in a coordinated way. Core exercises are designed to strengthen and stabilize the trunk and hip muscles that surround the spine and pelvis.

**Intellectual disability** - a condition characterized by significant limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Intellectual functioning refers to general mental capacity such as learning and reasoning. Adaptive behavior refers to the conceptual, social, and practical skills learned and performed by people in their daily lives. These limitations begin early in development, typically before age 22.

**Progression** - Adjusting an exercise to make it more challenging or complex, allowing students to advance in their skills and fitness levels. Progressions help meet individual needs, enabling each student to experience success as they grow.

**Difficulty Modification** - Modifying an exercise to make it easier or more accessible, ensuring that all students can participate meaningfully. Regression allows students to practice at their own level without feeling discouraged. It recognizes that everyone's fitness journey is unique, and moving back in difficulty can be a valuable step toward inclusion and personal growth.

**Sets x Repetitions** – in many of the lessons, you will see two numbers expressed like an equation such as 3x12 or 2x10. These numbers represent exercise sets and repetitions (reps). The first number refers to sets and the second number refers to reps. So, 3x12 means that students should complete 3 sets of 12 repetitions of an exercise.

**Unified programming** - a program that includes activities for students of all abilities. In the case of this resource, Unified means students with and without disabilities coming together on equal terms with ample and appropriate support through fitness activities.

**Unified teammate** – a student peer with or without a disability who provides reciprocal support to another student. A teammate is not a tutor, but an equal partner in an activity.





## Appendix D: High 5 for Fitness Resources

**Educator Guide:** [High-5-Educators-Guide.pdf](#)

**Caregiver Guide:** [High-5-Caregivers-Guide.pdf](#)

**Ages 8-11:**

**Cards:** [High5Cards\\_8-11](#)

**Guide:** [High5Guide\\_8-11](#)

### Video Links

- Level 1 Flexibility – (Cat/Cow, Downward Facing Dog, Warrior 1):  
<https://youtu.be/RnKW0IzNzjs>
- Level 1 Endurance – (Walking, Jumping, Sliding):  
[https://youtu.be/JHz3q\\_Qynvs](https://youtu.be/JHz3q_Qynvs)
- Level 1 Strength – (Hand Pushes, Calf Raises, Inchworms):  
<https://youtu.be/xiFc7BwXEO8>
- Level 2 Flexibility – (Upward Facing Dog, Ragdoll Pose, Warrior 2):  
<https://youtu.be/8nq5P1L4Ve4>
- Level 2 Endurance – (Jogging, Galloping, Hopping):  
<https://youtu.be/EVdT46hDL04>
- Level 2 Strength – (Seated Leg Lifts, Superman, Modified Plank):  
<https://youtu.be/Y94soFN0vFU>
- Level 3 Flexibility – (Spider Pose, Triangle Pose, Table Pose):  
[https://youtu.be/\\_gbkDqItcSo](https://youtu.be/_gbkDqItcSo)
- Level 3 Endurance – (Running, Leaping, Skipping):  
<https://youtu.be/ECVbJFR0kVg>
- Level 3 Strength – (Crab Kicks, Dead Bug, Frog Squat):  
<https://youtu.be/oN-3DWnExjl>

**High 5 Resource Webpage QR Code:**





## Appendix E: Additional Resources

The following links to additional Special Olympics resources may be helpful to educators.

- Sport Specific Warm-Up/Cool-Down Resources - The full list of Special Olympics' sport specific warm up and cool down resources can be accessed here [Sports & Coaching](#)
  - Athletes:
    - Warm Up: [Athletics WU](#)
    - Cool Down: [Athletics CD](#)
  - Sport Specific Example: Basketball
    - Warm Up: [Basketball WU](#)
    - Cool Down: [Basketball CD](#)
- [Young Athletes Year Long Lesson Plans](#) – These lesson plans are designed with the elementary school classroom in mind as it is an opportunity for students of all ability levels to come together to grow and develop in friendship, leadership, and sports skills.
- [Junior Athletes](#) – Junior Athletes is a non-competitive, multi-sport play program for children with and without intellectual disabilities from ages 6 to 12. Junior Athletes focuses on the development of a child's physical literacy prior to competitive or recreational Special Olympics sport participation and supports the development of key social and emotional skills, like teamwork, cooperation, and self-management. Resources currently offered for Junior Athletes include an introduction guide and lesson plans.

**\*\*\*The SOI Fitness Team acknowledges that the target age group for Special Olympics Junior Athletes programming (6-12), partially overlaps with the target age group of this lesson plan (8-11). While Junior Athletes programming can involve fitness components, High 5 for Fitness is meant to serve as the primary Special Olympics fitness resource for the 8-11 age group.\*\*\***

- [Special Olympics Unified Schools](#) – Special Olympics learning portal with a variety of courses:
  - Introduction to Unified Champion Schools for Educators – A course that allows learners to experience real-life implementation examples of each of the SOUCS components and gain resources for building and championing Unified Champion Schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
  - [Building Inclusive Communities Through Unified Champion Schools](#) - A brief and engaging information tool to build awareness of the Unified Champion Schools strategy and its power to spread inclusion from schools to the larger community.
- [Special Olympics Unified Sports®](#) - resources for inclusive sports or fitness programming to assist individuals who are just beginning to learn about how Special Olympics Unified Sports can become part of the Unified Champion School strategy at their school.



## Appendix F: Nutrition Cut-Outs

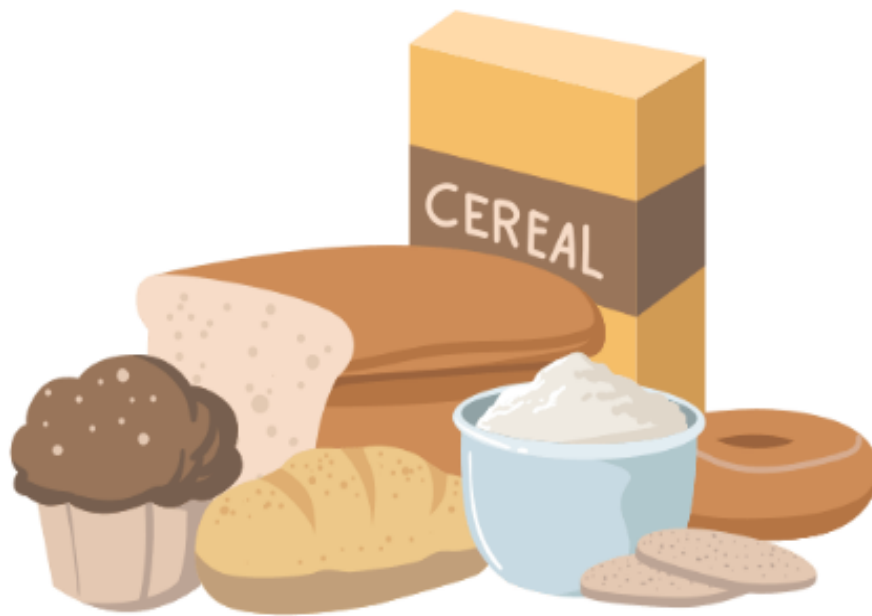
These images support the implementation of Alternative Activity B (Meal Match Up) in Lesson 9. Print these images out and distribute them to participants in accordance with activity instructions.



# Water



# Proteins



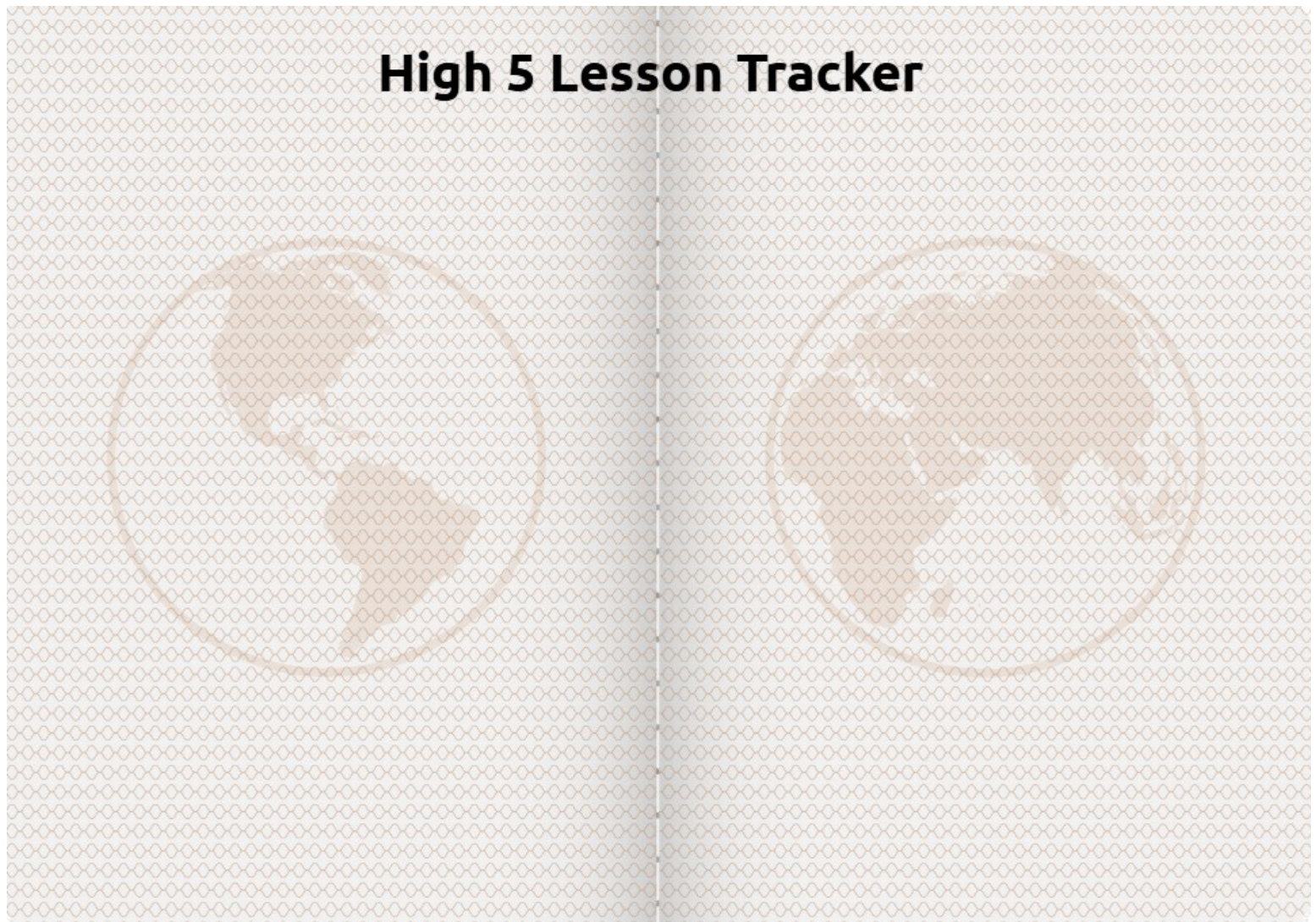
# Carbohydrates





## Appendix G: Lesson Progress Tracker & Badges

The printable images below are High 5 Lesson Plan Trackers and Badges. The badges can be cut out by students upon the completion of a High 5 lesson, and glued or taped to the Lesson Tracker to monitor a student's progress towards their fitness goals. This tracker can also be used in tandem with incentive systems in each school (i.e. completing all 12 lessons allows a student to receive a reward that is common within their school such as an item from a prize box).





## High 5 Lesson Badges

