Sports Assistant

Training

Worksheet

**Lesson 3:** Special Olympics Sports Training

**Sports Assistant Training**

Worksheet

**Instructions**

1. Explore what it will take to prepare you for the Sport Assistant role.
2. Complete the activities in the worksheet.
3. Review the format and elements of a Special Olympics sport practice.
4. Review Fit 5 materials and how to help athletes improve their fitness levels.
5. Understand why divisioning is important to the mission of Special Olympics.
6. Complete the activities in the worksheet.

**Resources**

* Special Olympics Fit 5 - <https://resources.specialolympics.org/health/fitness/fit-5>
* Special Olympics Fitness for Sport Coaches - <https://resources.specialolympics.org/health/fitness/fitness-for-sports-coaches>

**Elements of a Special Olympics Sport Practice**

1. Warm-up
2. Review of Previously Learned skills
3. Introduce New Skills & Drills
4. Competition preparedness
5. Cool Down

**Activity**: Put the letter from above next to the description that corresponds to the correct practice element. Work alone or with your mentor only to complete this activity.

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| **Letter** | **Description of Activity** |
|  | Break into groups and scrimmage or play a short game. |
|  | Stand in a circle and run in place for 30 seconds. Follow this with stretching activities while marching in place. These are called dynamic stretches. |
|  | Ask an athlete in the group to demonstrate a skill from last week's practice. Have the whole team perform the skill several times. |
|  | At the end of practice, before everyone leaves, do some light stretching. This is a good time to review what we learned at this practice and hear announcements for upcoming practices. |
|  | Watch a coach demonstrate a skill. Then all athletes repeat what the coach just showed you. Break into groups and practice the skill. |

Compare your answers with others in your group. There is only one right answer for each, so if there are differences, discuss with your group to see if you can pick the right answer and understand why.

**Fitness**

Fitness is an important part of sport training and overall health. The Fit 5 program provides athletes with guidelines to incorporate into their daily lives to improve their fitness levels. Increased fitness levels have a positive impact on sports performance. By fueling and hydrating your body well and by improving your conditioning, flexibility and balance and maintaining a healthy weight you can perform better in your sport.

1. As a Sport Assistant, what are some ways that you can be a role model for your athletes, showing good fitness habits?

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1. As a Sport Assistant, what are some ways you can encourage athletes on your team to incorporate fitness into their day?

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**Divisioning for Special Olympics Competition**

According to the mission of Special Olympics, athletes competing in SO sports must be given an equal and fair chance when competing against other athletes. To ensure fair competition, Special Olympics divisions athletes into separate groups based on:

* Age
* Gender
* Ability level

As a Level 1 – Sport Assistant you will not be responsible for assessing or divisioning your athletes or teams for competition. However, it is important to understand how your athletes are grouped for competition so that you can help them and their families and caregivers to understand this. Divisioning means that every athlete has the opportunity to compete in a fair competition, with other athletes of similar ability level. This means that even when the athletes you coach has very different ability levels, they will still ALL have the opportunity for fair competition. As part of the coaching team, Sport Assistants can play an important role in encouraging and motivating their athletes.

Special Olympics **Divisioning**

Like all athletes, Special Olympics athletes love **the thrill of competition**

and pushing their limits to achieve a new personal best



Special Olympics uses a unique system called **‘divisioning’** to give athletes of all abilities the chance for exciting competition.

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| **Stage 1**  **Usually happens ahead of World Games Competition** | |  | **Stage 2**  **Usually happens in the opening of World Games Competition** | | | |
| **Logotipo, Icono  Descripción generada automáticamente** | **Icono  Descripción generada automáticamente** |  | **Icono  Descripción generada automáticamente** | **Icono  Descripción generada automáticamente** | Gender |
| **Icono  Descripción generada automáticamente** | Age |
| **Icono  Descripción generada automáticamente** | Ability Level |
| Coaches **submit a time** or distance for each athlete in individual sports. | For team and judged sports, coaches submit **athlete or team ratings** and/or skills assessments. | Divisioning races, judged events or short team matches are held to assess the athletes’ or teams’ **ability levels** in competition. |  | | |

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| **How many athletes or teams are in a division?** | |  | **How are divisions set?** |  | **Why divisioning?** |
| **Minimum of** | **Maximum of** |  | **There should be no more than a**  **15%**  **difference between the most highly skilled athlete or team and the lowest skilled athlete or team in each division** |  | **Divisioning makes Special Olympics competitions fair, empowering and exciting** |
| **3** | **8** |

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| Logo  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | An evenly matched competition makes athletes and teams try harder -- and push farther. It’s about athletes rising to a challenge – and giving it their all!  **All they need to do … is THEIR very best.** | A qr code with white squares  Description automatically generated |