

Strategies for teaching and learning

Many teachers incorporate fitness tests and test results in their teaching about the concepts of fitness. Having practical experience of the tests helps students to understand broader concepts, such as the nature of fitness, how it is developed, its links to health and how progress can be monitored.

Tests for health-related fitness are important for developing students' understanding of the benefits and critical issues related to health-related fitness. However, for most schools the annual unit on fitness testing is seen as accomplishing this and is the major strategy for doing this. Given the concerns outlined earlier about fitness testing on a whole-class or year basis, we need to consider whether there are better or other ways in which fitness tests can be incorporated into PDHPE teaching programs.

Is the unit on fitness the only and most suitable place for teaching fitness concepts and issues of fitness testing? Have you tried integrating fitness testing across a range of units? For example, when teaching an athletics unit, you might also teach about muscular strength when undertaking the activity of shot-put or discus. You could include a test on muscular strength as part of this activity. Students could identify and discuss ways of improving strength and record their individual results as part of their self-monitoring process.

Or similarly, when teaching a gymnastics unit, you may introduce the concept of flexibility. Students could complete an individual pre-test at the start of the unit. The focus of teaching would be on developing this component during the unit and emphasising how this component of fitness contributes to gymnastics. Students could also complete a post-test at the end of the unit to monitor any change.

Collecting data on body composition, as previously discussed, must be handled with extreme sensitivity. While such data can be used, they need to be integrated into a relevant teaching and learning context. For example, in a growth and development unit, you may like to investigate how body composition differs between males and females or examine differences in body composition with age. This does not require students to participate in any practical testing themselves. You could use some students to provide practical demonstrations of the tests, but this should only be on a voluntary basis, and the results should not be publicly recorded or compared in any way.

Suggestions for developing students' self-monitoring skills

Encouraging students to plan and monitor their own fitness and physical activity is an essential part of teaching and learning about fitness concepts in PDHPE. It is important that fitness testing is used to develop students' skills in self-monitoring and encourage them to plan and monitor their own progress, rather than being used to report publicly on student achievement.

Here are some ways you can do this.

- ✧ *Progress charts*: Students can monitor their progress on charts, recording information on fitness and physical activity. For example, students may develop individual progress charts on skill development across a range of PDHPE units. They can report on their improvement and the things they need to work on. These can be shared with parents and caregivers in an effort to encourage support in the home environment. An example of a progress chart for Years 7 and 8 can be found on page 168.
- ✧ *Contracts*: These are formally signed agreements between the teacher and student which show what work is to be done by the student by a specified date.

Sample

Fitness and physical activity contract

I, _____ agree to _____
(insert student name)

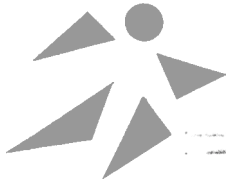
(outline the task related to fitness and physical activity)

for one month starting on _____ and finishing on _____ .
(insert starting date) (insert finishing date)

I agree to keep written records of my task and submit these on the finishing date to

(insert teacher's name)

Signed _____
(Student's signature) (Teacher's signature)



- ❖ *Diary or journal:* These can be written or taped or be an oral reflection on a particular issue or focus area. In this situation students are encouraged to provide personal reflections rather than simple descriptions.

This works well when teaching about fitness concepts and recording personal information. Students have the opportunity to record their results privately and write about any feelings or comments they may have.

- ❖ *Portfolio:* This may be a collection of items relating to fitness and physical activity. It may include such items as a gym program, details of participation in local sporting clubs or dance groups, a personal activity diary, evidence of encouraging others to participate e.g. coaching a junior team or playing with younger siblings. Generally portfolios are longer-term projects and teachers must give clear guidelines on what they are looking for.

Examples of contents of a portfolio

Activity
diary

Family
physical
activities

Little
Athletics
Program

Peer
dance
assessment

Fun Run
Certificate

Sample diary or journal

This term in PDHPE we will be completing a range of activities where you will collect particular information on your fitness and physical activity experiences.

These will be pointed out to you as we work through various PDHPE units this term.

You will be required to record the information as we go and make comments on the information collected, your feelings about this, things you need to work on, how you plan to do this and ways you can monitor changes.

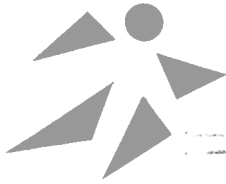
Your diary will not be collected, but at the end of the term you will be required to write a record of your activities.



- *Self-reporting measures:* These could be given to students once or twice a year to help them monitor changes to fitness and physical activity patterns. It is also a good way to detect any changes in students' attitudes towards physical activity. Self-reporting measures can also give you some insight into why these changes in attitude are occurring. Some examples of self-reporting measures for students in Stages 2 and 3 are at the end of this section. The student questionnaire in the *NSW Schools Fitness and Physical Activity Survey, 1997* includes some self-reporting questions which could be used with students in Stages 4 and 5.

THINKING IT THROUGH

1. What self-monitoring opportunities already exist for students in your PDHPE program?
2. What other strategies could you include? Where in the PDHPE program would they go?
3. What do you think is the best approach for teaching students about fitness concepts?



Sample progress chart

Keeping track of me




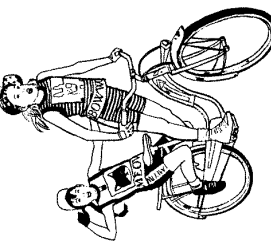
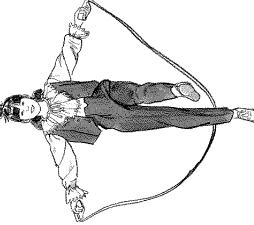

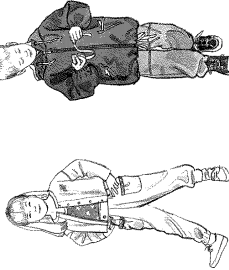
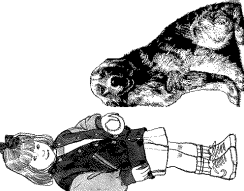
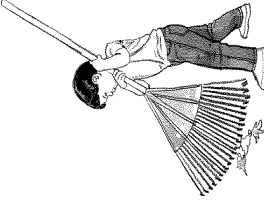
This is your tracking sheet of some health-related fitness components. Record these as we come to them and fill in the comments section.

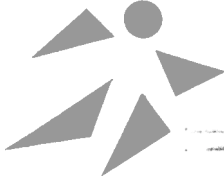
<p>Aerobic capacity</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1st </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd </div> </div>	<p>How I went the first time _____ _____</p> <p>How I can improve this _____ _____</p> <p>How I went the second time _____ _____</p>	<p>When it could be measured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a unit prior to the school cross-country carnival • As a rotation at the school athletics carnival
<p>Flexibility</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1st </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd </div> </div>	<p>How I went the first time _____ _____</p> <p>How I can improve this _____ _____</p> <p>How I went the second time _____ _____</p>	<p>When it could be measured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a gymnastics unit • In a dance unit • Teaching concepts of warm-up and stretching
<p>Muscular endurance</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1st </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd </div> </div>	<p>How I went the first time _____ _____</p> <p>How I can improve this _____ _____</p> <p>How I went the second time _____ _____</p>	<p>When it could be measured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight training or circuit training activity • In an aerobics unit
<p>Muscular strength</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1st </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd </div> </div>	<p>How I went the first time _____ _____</p> <p>How I can improve this _____ _____</p> <p>How I went the second time _____ _____</p>	<p>When it could be measured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an athletics unit (teaching shot-put or discus) • As part of a basketball unit
<p>I am</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> </div>	<p>What does this tell you about your health-related fitness? _____</p> <p>What areas could you improve? _____ _____</p> <p>What are your stronger fitness components? _____ _____</p> <p>Why do you think this is so? _____ _____</p>	

How active am I?

Circle the pictures for the activities that you did yesterday. To help you remember, think about the activities you did:

- before school
- at recess
- at lunchtime
- in PE or sport
- at other class times
- after school
- in the evening

<p>Hard For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • swimming laps • netball • soccer / football • aerobics • running 				<p>Draw your own</p>
<p>Moderate For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handball • cycling • skateboarding • in-line skating • skipping • power walking 				<p>Draw your own</p>
<p>Light For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walking • caring for pets • helping around the house 				<p>Draw your own</p>



Sample self-reporting measure for Stage 3

My day

Mark the box which indicates the intensity of the activity.



<i>On Saturday</i>	<i>Write about this question</i>	<i>Hard</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Light</i>
✧	What did you do after breakfast?			
✧	Did you play in a team or individual sporting competition?			
✧	How did you get there?			
✧	How did you get home?			
✧	Did you go for a bike ride with your friends?			
✧	Did you play with your friends, sisters, brothers or parents?			
✧	Did you play with your pet?			
✧	What other activities did you do on Saturday?			
	Subtotal			

Adapted from: Active Australia: ACT Schools' Pilot Project. ACT schools (1997)

