

Grip Strengthening

✓ classroom

✓ gymnasium

✓ outdoors

Action Schools! BC



K - 3

Healthy Muscles

Muscle strength, endurance and flexibility enhance functional ability and support life-long active living. Weight bearing and strength training activities exert forces on the bones contributing to healthy bone and muscle development. Additionally, stretching increases range of motion, contributes to muscle development, and can help prevent injuries.

Hand gripping exercises are a simple and effective way to improve grip strength, reduce playground injuries and build strength for activities using objects such as bats, racquets, or sticks.

HEALTH
COMPONENTS
OF FITNESS

FLEXIBILITY
STRENGTH

FUNDAMENTAL
MOVEMENT
SKILLS

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



BIG IDEAS

- Daily physical activity helps us develop movement skills and physical literacy, and is an important part of healthy living (K-1).

CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES:

- Describe the body's reaction to participating in physical activity in a variety of environments (K-1).

CONTENT

- Effects of different activities on the body (1).
- How to participate in different types of physical activities, including individual and dual activities, rhythmic activities, and games.

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS



- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTS

- Use an area where students can stand or sit to work on their grip strengthening such as a classroom, gymnasium, or outdoor area.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Working on grip strength allows students to develop muscular strength to participate in a wide variety of physical activities.

EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES



- Hand grippers
- If hand grippers are unavailable, make stress balls (fill balloons with flour so they are appropriate size for students to squeeze then tie off)

IMPLEMENTATION



- Incorporate gripping into activities during the day such as reading, math, spelling:
 - squeeze while reading poems, practising spelling or multiplication tables, rehearsing rhymes or chants (e.g., skip rope rhymes)
 - squeeze to the beat of music
 - squeeze while counting and then change hands on multiples of 3, 5, or 10
 - squeeze while reciting the alphabet; change hands on the vowels
 - squeeze while holding the stretches in the *Head-to-Toe Stretch*
 - squeeze while watching a DVD; change hands when speakers change or the scene changes

- Have students explain how this activity could influence their physical health (e.g., It can help to strengthen their grip strength and endurance, it can help them to play with objects such as bats, racquets and on bars more effectively, etc.).
- In their journals have students set a goal of how gripping and squeezing could be used as a tool for self-regulation.

ACTION TIPS

- Can be used as a “stress” or “strength” gripper – self-regulation tool for students.
- Squeeze and hold or keep squeezing for a long time or in sets or repetitions:
 - squeeze 5 times each hand – repeat 3 times
 - squeeze once as hard as possible and hold for as long as possible!
 - squeeze as many times as you can
- Hold grippers at different levels e.g., shoulder level.
- Store grippers in a small box/bag for easy access and maintenance. Each student can have their own in a labelled ziplock bag at the front.
- Wash with warm soapy water and/or spray with antibacterial spray.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure students warm up before the activity and cool down and stretch afterwards.
- Ensure teacher is present and can observe students at all times during the activity.
- Review with students that the hand grippers are not to be thrown and not to be picked apart to ensure that everyone is safe.

EXTENSION OF LEARNING

- Invite students to use their stress ball next time they’re feeling overwhelmed, explain how instead of losing their temper or when feeling overwhelmed, they can take a few deep breaths and exercise with their grippers.
- Allow students to use it each day as a stress management tool; it can go just about anywhere that they can.