



Strength Spots

by Mike Tontillo

Objective

Strength Spots offer students a challenge for increasing their muscle strength and endurance. The Spots will keep students on task, engaged and challenged. They can be used by all grade levels, an unlimited number of times throughout the year. The more frequently Strength Spots are used, the more students will be progressing toward increasing their strength. Strength Spots provide a wide variety of muscular strength challenges and are quick and easy to use in any setting.

Product Use

The challenging muscular strength activities are the key to this product's success. Instructors can place Spots on the floor and students can move from Spot to Spot in a station or group format, challenging themselves to accomplish each task. As students increase their muscle strength and endurance over the course of the year, they can increase their time from a few seconds up to 30 seconds. It is recommended that each challenge be attempted for a maximum of 30 seconds. Repetition and frequency are key in developing muscular strength and endurance.

Safety

Ensure that there is plenty of room for students to perform the challenges. The Spots should be spread out in an area that is big enough for the number of students participating. It is recommended that the challenges be performed on safety mats. Instructors should remind students to work at a pace and level that is comfortable to them.

Games & Activities

Strength Spot Tag - Place the Spots on the perimeter of the area. Five students are designated as taggers. The taggers should have a soft ball that they will tag students with. All students must travel through the area by using a fundamental, locomotor movement (skipping, galloping, hopping, side-sliding, slow jogging, etc.). Taggers try to softly tag other students during the game by touching them with the ball. If a student gets tagged, he/she has to go to the outside of the area and pick a Strength Spot challenge to perform for 30 seconds. Students may count to 30 as they perform the task. If they cannot complete the 30 seconds, they should rest as they continue to count. Students then re-enter the game and trade places with a tagger. The game continues until the instructor signals to stop.

Muscle Mania - The instructor places the Spots as far apart as possible. Students must travel through the area using different fundamental, locomotor movements (skipping, galloping, hopping, side-sliding, slow jogging, etc.). Whenever a student travels to a Spot, they must stop for 30 seconds and perform the strength challenge. Once the 30 seconds is up, the students continue traveling to different Spots. The student's challenge is stop at each Spot, at least once, before they are allowed to repeat a Spot. The instructor can decide the length of activity (7-12 minutes).

Fitness Stations - The instructor uses the Strength Spots as fitness stations. Whatever activity the students are participating in (a group game, skill practice, or stations) they can move to a designated station and perform that challenge. This fitness strength station can be used every day during every lesson. The students can be taught when they are allowed to travel to the fitness station and can perform the challenges on their own or under the direction of the instructor.

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Games & Activities

Strength Spots Rock, Paper, Scissors - The instructor designates an area and spreads the Spots on the floor. Students partner up and find their own personal space where they can do their work. The pairs begin playing rock, paper, scissors "strength style". They count to three and then place their hand out towards each other in one of three shapes; rock (a fist), paper (hand out flat with fingers together), or scissors (first 2 fingers spread apart). Rock beats scissors, paper beats rock, and scissors beats paper. The winner stays in the center and may choose between: jumping jacks, scissors, football runs, or jogging in place, while the other student travels to a Strength Spot and stays there for 30 seconds performing a challenge. That student then moves back to their partner and they play another game of rock, paper, scissors. The winner stays and the other partner travels to do a Strength Spot challenge. The instructor can decide the length of activity and when students should change partners (10-12 minutes).

Strength Spot Bowling - Instructor evenly spreads the Spots on the floor around the perimeter of the area. They then place a bowling pin on each Spot. Each student should have a small, soft ball that they travel with through the middle of the area. When the music stops or the instructor blows a whistle, the student will face one of the bowling pins. They then get one attempt to try bowling down the pin. If they miss, they retrieve the ball and continue moving in the area until they stop and try again at a different pin. If the student hits the pin and knocks it down, they look at the Strength Spot and perform that challenge for 30 seconds. The student must replace the pin and continue traveling to find a new pin to bowl. The distance the student must bowl from can be adjusted according to whether they were able to knock down the first pin. Each time they are able to knock a pin down, they must bowl one step further away.

Fitness Strength Stations and Warm-ups for Middle and High School

Middle and High School instructors can utilize the Spots as part of their fitness and strength warm-ups and stations. Spots can be placed in a location that the students rotate through as part of a station or circuit format. Students stay at the station for a designated amount of time (1-5 minutes) and perform the challenges. They then rotate to another area or activity. The Spots can also be used in a High School setting as part of any fitness class. The students can perform the challenges and log them as part of their personal fitness plan. The Spots can be used in classrooms or as part of circuit training.

Modifications

Students with disabilities can perform each of the Strength Challenges to the best of their ability. The beauty of Strength Spots is there is no failure. Simply attempting the challenges will help increase strength. Students can perform the challenges on mats with the help of an assistant, or mimic the movements in a seated position, if necessary. Arms and legs can be moved while sitting to increase strength and match the challenge that is shown on the Strength Spots. Challenges range from easier to more difficult and provide every student with the opportunity to be successful.

Evaluation/Assessment

The intended outcomes of the Strength Spots are to have the user practicing the challenges as often as possible, increasing their overall strength. As students become more familiar with the moves they become stronger and will be able to hold the positions for longer periods of time. Also, students will remain on task as they get excited about their successes while participating in the challenges. Instructors simply observe their students enjoying, practicing and getting better at the challenges.

A check sheet of any kind can be utilized for students to record information such as; favorite challenges, longest pose held, total number of challenges completed, etc. Another assessing method is partner assessments. The students have a partner that critiques their form, counts how long they can hold a pose, and tracks how many challenges have been performed. The partners then talk about their data and switch.