

Kayak Paddle

Item #12038, 12042, 12156

Introduction

The Kayak Paddle was designed and developed to add a touch of adventure and excitement to the P.E. class. It is also intended to serve as an activity to build upper body strength. It can be used with any scooter, combination of scooters, or any “rolling” product.

The paddle is constructed from a length of sturdy plastic tubing pipe with a wrap of thin foam material that provides an excellent gripping surface. The end tips are made of a dense rubber compound that grabs the floor, providing good traction for the paddler. The tips’ round shape ensures good contact with the floor throughout the entire paddling action.

Many activities and games can be played using this innovation. Anything that rolls can be used as a potential “gym watercraft”. The paddle can also be used like a canoe paddle when used on only one side of a boat. Students will love these activities, finding them highly motivational and FUN!

How Does This Relate to Current Educational Thinking?

The Kayak Paddle is part of a new wave in physical education classes. It lends itself well to the theme of adventure activities. These games and activities are more about excitement, exercise and fun, and less about serious competition.

Some of the activities also encourage cooperation and teamwork, themes that are very popular in the current physical education curriculum. The paddles are very useful in situation activities where a team has to finish a survival task, where the only way to complete the task is to get all team members to safety. In these activities, the teams who work best together will finish the activity first and with the least amount of difficulty.

How Do I Make These Activities Developmentally Appropriate?

The recommended grade level for the Kayak Paddle is 3-9. Paddling is a fairly strenuous upper body exercise, which makes it difficult for very young children. At about the 3rd-grade-level, students are strong enough to pull their weight around with the paddle. Older students will do even better. One way to adjust this activity is to simply have younger

students go shorter distances to reach their destination, and have older students go farther depending on their strength level. You will quickly be able to see how long, or difficult, courses and relays need to be.

Another method of giving help to students who may not be able to navigate very quickly or successfully is to tie a short length of rope, or even a jump rope, to the bow of the scooter boat and have another student pull gently on the boat to assist the paddler.

When students are working together, with scooters connected, try to make teams that have strong paddlers and weak paddlers together. This will help the weaker paddlers to have more success.

Activity

Watercraft Ideas

The Kayak Paddle can be used with an assortment of scooter-based “watercraft”. The following is a list of possibilities:

- Use a single scooter.
- Use an oversized scooter, 16”, 12 x 20”, etc.
- Use two standard or oversized scooters, one to sit on and one for the rider’s feet.
- Make a long kayak or canoe by using two or more Connect-A-Scooters.
- Use Scooter Links to link two or more scooters together.
- Place 4 standard sized scooters under a folded 4’x8’ mat to make a small raft.
- Place several scooters under 2 or 3 stacked (unfolded) 4’x8’ mats to make a large raft.

Paddle Instruction

Before letting the students use the paddle, it is important that you give them a short lesson on gym paddling technique. This information will help them be more successful in moving their “watercraft” around in the gym.

The following are some simple tips:

- Hold the paddle with hands wide apart, palms down, near the end of the grip material.
- Place the end ball of the paddle out in front but as near to the middle line as possible without it getting in the way of the scooter. Do not place it too far out to the side.
- As you start pulling on the paddle, lean much of

your weight on the paddle to ensure good traction.

- Keep your weight on the paddle as you roll past it and then push hard off of the paddle.
- Place the other end ball on the floor and repeat.
- To use as a canoe paddle use a palm-up grip with the upper hand and always use just one end of the paddle.

As a Station

As a part of multi-stations set up in the gym, place a cone or other marker about 20' away from a start line. Have students take turns paddling down and around the marker and back. To get more students involved, just add another paddle and watercraft, or two. When one craft returns, the next person in line takes that boat and starts their lap around the cone and back.

Relays

Make 4-6 teams and line them up on a starting line in standard relay formation. Each team will have one paddle and a scooter or some type of "boat". Students will paddle down the floor (river), go around a buoy (cone), and return to the line (shore). Each team is finished when all teammates have had a turn.

Options

- Have students retrieve items (a beanbag, ball, etc.) placed near the buoy and return them to the line (shore).
- Have all students follow the same course of cones, tunnels, etc. and then paddle back to their own line.
- Build long kayaks, canoes, or rafts with several scooters and mats, and have 2 or 3 students paddle down to the buoy and back.

River Survival

In this activity, 4 teams of 5-8 are assembled on one side of the gym. For the first game, they are given two paddles, two scooters, and two folding mats. Using only these items, they must get their whole team safely across to the other sideline of the gym. The story line (you may make your own) might go like this: Coming down the mountain toward the river is a red hot lava flow. It will arrive in just minutes. The river is filled with sharks. You will have to get your entire team across the river safely without touching the water (floor) with any part of your body.

Give the students 3 or 4 minutes to figure out how they might accomplish this task with the items given them. On "GO", they will put their plan into action and start the crossing. They may use the items in any manner they wish. Different teams will try various methods. The cooperation and teamwork value of this game is outstanding. Teams who have finished are encouraged to cheer the other teams on.

When all teams are safely across, you may set up a new scenario for the trip back across the gym. On

each trip, take away one of the items. For example, take away one of the mats for the second trip, take a scooter for the third trip, and the second mat for the fourth trip. Paddling becomes more important with each crossing.

Options

- To make the game more humorous, have the approaching danger be a herd of stampeding butterflies, or a flow of warm maple syrup.
- If students are struggling for good ideas, you might give them some options such as building a large raft that can take several students at a time. Toss the mats out as islands and shuttle back and forth with one scooter and one paddle.
- You may add a length of rope to the items for use. Ten feet is a good length for this use.

The Bowron Adventure

The Bowron is group of seven lakes connected by rivers in Canada. To run the Bowron takes 6-8 days and covers about 100 miles. It can only be run with canoes and kayaks. Along the way, you will encounter rapids, grizzly bear, brown bear, moose. You are far away from civilization in the middle of the Canadian wilderness. The landscape is beautiful and untouched. The danger is also very real.

You can build your own Bowron (slightly less dangerous) in the form of a paddle obstacle course in your gym. Set up a course using cones to mark the way. Stand 4'x8' folding mats on end and hang parachutes to make mountains and tunnels. You may even assign a few students to hide behind large obstacles and act out the part of the bears. Use Poly Spots or other equipment to act as rocks in the water. Cut out some large salmon from paper or cardboard and have them swimming along in the water too.

With your course finished, have students take turns running the Bowron. Have it end back where it began so the paddler can give the paddle and the boat to the next person in line. This activity works best as a part of 2 or 3 stations so students will not have to wait too long in line.

Safety

As with any stick type implement, students must be careful with the paddle. Remind them not to swing it, throw it, or jab with it.



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