Team-Building Sample Course Outline

Whether you are using team building in the classroom, for physical education, as a course for future educators, within the workplace, in recreational camps, or among athletic teams, participants will learn how to be supportive, optimistic teammates and resilient, unified teams by participating in the activities presented.

This sample course outline is based on a 12-week semester course with 50-minute class periods, meeting 3 times a week for a total of 36 classes. This outline is appropriate for third graders to adults. If you are using it for elementary physical education, some course requirements will need to be modified, and some of the advanced challenges should be omitted. Chapters 6 through 9 contain specific instructions for icebreaker activities and the challenges used in this sample course. Please refer to the table of contents to locate each activity referenced in the class plans. This is a suggested course outline that will serve as a guide for developing such a course. To meet the needs of your program and participants, modify and adjust activities accordingly.

Chapter 2 discusses the importance of setting participants up for success. Before allowing teams to engage in the challenges, it’s important to explore concepts such as teamwork, failure, growth mindset, and problem solving. Facilitate those concepts by following the activity sequence in chapter 2 to create a successful transition to the challenges. Those activities are embedded into this sample course outline.

### Team Building Through Physical Challenges

Course Syllabus

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| --- |
| Each student will maintain a portfolio consisting of course assignments and assessments. The portfolio should be neat and organized with an emphasis on demonstrating growth and must meet the following requirements:  **Include all handouts received from the instructor.**  **Include five additional articles or journals regarding teamwork**, along with personal reflections on each article that address these questions:   * *What concepts or ideas reinforced your thinking?* * *What concepts or ideas challenged your thinking?* * *How will this article/journal affect you as a teammate?*   **Include a daily reflection** after each class period that includes the following items:   * *Date* * *Description of activity and learning objective* * *Personal reflection on activity: How did the class influence your thinking?* * *Reflection on the question: How will you use the concepts learned today either personally or professionally?*   **Include a copy of your Team Pact** (chapter 2).  **Include a weekly reflection** (figure 3.3, chapter 3); they need to be completed at the end of each week for a total of 11.  **Include one team report card** (figure 3.2, chapter 3) that was completed after each challenge was successfully completed.  **Include a precourse and postcourse growth mindset versus fixed mindset self-evaluation** (figure 2.4, chapter 2). One should be dated and completed the first week of class, and the other should be dated and completed the last week of class.  **Include a precourse and postcourse team-building self-evaluation** (figure 3.1, chapter 3). One should be dated and completed thefirst week of class, and the other should be dated and completed the last class.  **Include a precourse and postcourse self-evaluation that answers these questions: What kind of teammate are you? What kind of teammate do you hope to be?** (figure 2.3, chapter 2) One should be dated and completed the first week of class, and the other should be dated and completed the last week of class.  **Include a growth analysis paper**. This one- to two-page typed paper should include analysis documentation of the precourse and postcourse self-evaluations. Compare your precourse self-evaluation with your postcourse self-evaluation. What are your discoveries? In what areas did you grow the most? What surprised you? How effective was the self-evaluation process in terms of learning? Why is it an effective tool for learning and evaluation?  **Include GROWTH goal-setting guide** (figure 3.4, chapter 3). Your goal must be a personal goal for the semester. It does not have to be school related. It should be a goal that is meaningful for you.  **Include GROWTH tracking documentation** (figure 3.5, chapter 3). Assessing progress needs to be reflected in your tracking document. Tracking needs to take place every two weeks. You will need a total of five completed tracking documents.  **Include a growth goal analysis paper**. A final one- to two-page typed paper needs to include an analysis of how well your goal was met. What were the biggest challenges? What factor did a growth or fixed mindset have on the outcome? What impact did the GROWTH goal-setting guide have on reaching or not reaching your goal? How did the tracking process play a role in the outcome? What were your biggest a-ha moments after having gone through the growth goal-setting process?  **Design and implement a team-building challenge**. The other teams in the class will attempt to solve your challenge. An organizer card and challenge card must be included, and a copy must be provided for everyone in class This is a team effort. It should include a personal reflection of implementation that answers the following questions: What went well? What would you do differently? What surprised you?  **Provide a one- to four-minute video clip, inspirational saying, or story** demonstrating a growth mindset, perseverance, or teamwork. This will be shown in class. You will also need to provide two to three reflective questions to facilitate after the video. Provide a written reflection on your facilitation of the process.  Point Values for Class Requirements (total = 100 points)  Completion of all required portfolio contents = 50 points   * *Five to 10 points will be deducted for each missing requirement.* * *Included in the 50 points is an evaluation of the quality of the completed work.*   Neatness, organization, and presentation of portfolio = 15 points  Attendance and class participation = 20 points  Design and implementation of team-building challenge = 15 points |

Class Self-Evaluation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| X  (if complete) | Required Portfolio Items |
|  | All handouts received from the instructor |
|  | Five additional articles or journals regarding teamwork, along with a personal reflection on each article |
|  | A daily reflection after each class period (35 total) |
|  | A copy of your Team Pact |
|  | Weekly reflection log (11 total) |
|  | One completed team report card |
|  | Precourse growth mindset versus fixed mindset self-evaluation |
|  | Postcourse growth mindset versus fixed mindset self-evaluation |
|  | Precourse team-building self-evaluation |
|  | Postcourse team-building self-evaluation |
|  | Precourse self-evaluation |
|  | Postcourse self-evaluation |
|  | Growth analysis paper (should include analysis documentation of the precourse and postcourse self-evaluations) |
|  | GROWTH goal-setting guide documentation |
|  | GROWTH tracking documentation (five total) |
|  | Self-assessment: growth mindset versus fixed mindset (include an analysis of how well the goal was met) |
|  | Reflection on design and implementation of a team-building challenge |
|  | Reflection on video clip, inspirational saying, or story and questions |

Provide the point total you feel you have earned for each requirement and share your rationale.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Portfolio item** | **Your score** | **Rationale** |
| Portfolio   * Neatness * Organization * Presentation | |  | | --- | |  |   **Out of 15** |  |
| Completion of all required portfolio contents | |  | | --- | |  |   **Out of 50** |  |
| Attendance and class participation | |  | | --- | |  |   **Out of 20** |  |
| Design and implementation of team-building challenge = 15 points | |  | | --- | |  |   **Out of 15** |  |
| Total points: \_\_\_\_\_\_/ **100**  Comments: | | |

### Student-Led Reflective Activity

This activity is very important. At the end of the first five class sessions, there are one or two reflective questions. Take approximately five minutes to reflect on what’s being taught and how it connects to that day’s class to reinforce learning. This activity also provides informal data for the teacher about how well students are understanding and applying the material. Reflective questions can be done in the form of walk and talks, turn and talks (take one minute to discuss the question with someone close to you), or individually. If students walk and talk or turn and talk, they can report back to the whole group when reflections are shared. The instructor will model this the first time, and then the students will facilitate this process.

### Video

As a course requirement, each student needs to provide a one- to four-minute video, inspirational saying, or story demonstrating growth mindset, perseverance, or teamwork. The student then needs to provide two to three reflective questions to facilitate with the class. For each student to have this opportunity, two students may need to present each day. Presentations can be done with the whole group, or the class can be divided into two groups. Another option would be to have one student share at the beginning of class and another student share at the end of class.

### Twelve-Week, 36-Day Course Outline

***\*Disclaimer***: There are more than enough activities provided for each class period. As an instructor, modify and adjust the lessons according to your class’s needs. You are the expert in your program. Be responsive to your students and go at a pace that is best for you and them.

## Class 1: Course Overview

1. Introduce the icebreaker: Memory Game (see instructions in chapter 5).
2. Discuss course syllabus and related documents (if applicable).
3. Complete team-building self-evaluation (figure 3.1, chapter 3) to be completed in class (portfolio item). Evaluations should be collected and returned at the end of the unit. Remind students self-evaluations are not graded and they will not be shared with others. They are for students and teachers to measure growth throughout the course.

**Daily reflective question**: What was the purpose of the class icebreaker today?

## Class 2: Teamwork

1. Introduce the icebreaker: Where Do I Go? (see instructions in chapter 5).

## Complete a Y-chart and discuss what teamwork looks like, sounds like, and feels like (figure 2.1, chapter 2).

1. Ask the class: “What are some potential problems that come with picking partners?” Students almost always respond with: “People will only choose their friends” and “People will be left out.”
2. Now that potential problems have been identified, have students brainstorm possible solutions. “If we want to pick partners and avoid the conflicts listed, what would finding a partner look like, sound like, and feel like?” Allow students to respond and consider having three students role-play how to appropriately pick partners without excluding others.
3. Once it appears students will be able to pick partners and avoid hurt feelings, have students partner up. Give partners a section of the Y-chart to brainstorm—what teamwork looks like, sounds like, or feels like. Have partners take a three- to five-minute walk and talk to brainstorm. When they return, fill out the Y-chart as a class. Students will verbally share their reflections as you complete the Y-chart. Make sure to hang up the Y-chart in the room.
4. Complete a character trait mind map (figure 2.2, chapter 2) as a class.
5. Complete a personal written reflection in class and answer the following questions:What kind of teammate are you? What kind of teammate do you hope to be? (figure 2.3, chapter 2; portfolio item). This reflection should be collected and returned at the end of the unit.

**Daily reflective question**: Quick whip (everyone share one quick sentence) around the room: What is one thing you are going to take away from today’s class?

## Class 3: Growth Mindset

* 1. Introduce the icebreaker: Agadoo (see instructions in chapter 5).
  2. Students should complete the growth versus fixed mindset self-evaluation (figure 2.4, chapter 2). This should be completed before the first growth versus fixed mindset lesson is taught. Evaluations should be collected and returned at the end of the unit.
  3. Show a ClassDojo growth mindset video (these can be found on YouTube; there are several short videos on growth mindset). Also show Michael Jordan’s “Failure” Nike commercial (30 seconds).

1. Introduce the language of a growth versus fixed mindset (figure 2.4, chapter 2). We like to have fun with this and use the “wa-wa-wa” sound effect after the fixed mindset language is used. Students can also choose partners; one partner enthusiastically uses the growth mindset language while the other partner uses a Debbie Downer tone when saying the language of the fixed mindset. Be creative and have fun with it.
2. Put students in groups of four and have each group complete a Y-chart on what a growth mindset looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Groups should share while the teacher records responses. This Y-chart should be posted in the room.
3. Walk and talk: With a partner, take a two-minute walk and talk and discuss what failure, learning, and growth mindset have in common.
4. Participants verbally share their thoughts with the class.
5. Introduce the GROWTH goal-setting guide (figure 3.4, chapter 3) and have students think of a personal goal they want to accomplish. They will set their goals during the next class session.

**Daily reflective question:** What is the purpose of teaching a growth mindset? Is it important to teach?

## Class 4: Goal Setting and Praise and Encouragement (chapter 2)

1. Introduce the icebreaker: Mexican Hat Rock, La Raspa (see instructions in chapter 5).
2. Use the GROWTH goal-setting guide for students to set individualized goals. Ask, “Why are we setting goals after learning about the growth mindset?”
3. Follow the outline in chapter 2 on teaching praise and encouragement. Include movement (walk and talks) and Y-charts when appropriate.

**Daily reflective questions:**

* + What is the link between growth mindset, goal setting, and encouragement?
  + For those of you who were praised today, how did it feel?
  + For those of you who had the opportunity to praise today, how did it feel?

## Class 5: Forming Teams (chapter 2)

1. Ask these reflective questions at the beginning of class: “Did anyone take the opportunity to praise someone outside of class this week? How did it go?”
2. Introduce the icebreaker: Chicken Dance (see instructions in chapter 5).
3. Teams create a Team Pact (see chapter 2).
4. Teams determine their team name (see chapter 2).
5. Complete the following praise activity: With someone on your team, take a walk and talk and praise your partner. Remember, praise must be specific and provide evidence to support your praise statement. Both partners need to provide praise. As a teacher, anticipate potential problems regarding picking partners. It may be good to review what was discussed and discovered last week about choosing partners.

**Daily Reflective Questions**

* + Why did your team create a Team Pact before determining a name?
  + How was teamwork demonstrated while your team completed the tasks today?
  + The day should end with each team doing a team break while saying their team name. This means everyone on the team gets in a circle, places one hand in the middle, and yells their team name on the count of three.

## Classes 6 to 9: Team Activities

1. Teams determine a secret team handshake that will be unique to each team and can be used in place of the team break done before or after each class period.
2. Incorporate student-led reflective activity at the end of each class session (See above description).
3. Introduce the team icebreaker: Moving Team Juggle (instructions in chapter 5); teams should verbally complete a team report card (figure 3.2, chapter 3).
4. Introduce the team icebreaker: Group Construction (instructions in chapter 5); teams should verbally complete a team report card (figure 3.2, chapter 3).
5. Introduce the team icebreaker: The Great Communicator (instructions in chapter 5); teams should verbally complete a team report card (figure 3.2, chapter 3)
6. End each class with a team break or team handshake.

**Daily Reflective Questions**

* Can you share some examples of how your team demonstrated effective communication?
* How was a growth mindset demonstrated?
* Can you share some examples of how your team collectively solved problems?

## Class 10

1. Begin with a discussion about team building. Explain to the class that how they cooperatively work to solve a challenge is just as important as whether or not they solve it. Every member of the team has plays an important role. It’s up to the team to utilize the individual strengths of each member.
2. During some of the challenges, teams may fall short of their goals. Teams may break down if they do not organize and plan. But as the teams solve increasingly difficult challenges, team members will learn to listen to others, provide specific praise for ideas and efforts, and encourage teammates to achieve success.
3. Explain to the class that they will start team building with introductory challenges and then move to intermediate and advanced challenges.
4. Explain general safety rules.
5. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day: See description on page 7 in this sample course outline.

## Classes 11 to 12

1. Before class, set up the following five team-building challenges found in chapter 6:
   * Magic Bases
   * Building Character
   * Construction Zone
   * River Crossing
   * Swamp Machine
2. Discuss safety concerns with the teams. Explain the function of the challenge card and the organizer card, as well as the function of the organizer, encourager, and praiser. Tell the teams that these roles must rotate among team members as they move through the challenges.
3. Setting up one more challenge than there are teams means that one challenge will always be open. Teams will not make it to all challenges but should be able to complete at least three or four.
4. Allow enough time for teams to work together and put equipment away. Tell them to remember where they ended for the last challenge because they will start at that point in the next class period.
5. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Classes 13 and 14

1. Consider having teams assist in setting up the challenges. Today’s challenges should include any of that were not completed in the previous class periods. Also include the following challenges from chapter 6:
   * Tire Bridge
   * Toxic Waste Transfer
   * Lifeline
2. Work on solving challenges. Allow enough time for teams to work together to put equipment away.
3. Begin a short discussion by asking, “How could you change or adapt the challenges that you tried to make them harder or easier?” This discussion will get your students thinking about designing challenges, and they may begin to realize the difficulty of designing a challenge.
4. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for reflection on personal goals using the GROWTH tracking (figure 3.5, chapter 3).
5. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Classes 15 and 16

1. Challenges today should include those that were not yet completed during the previous classes. In addition, set up The Rock and The Whole World in Their Hands (chapter 6).
2. Practice challenges.
3. Each team sits in a circle and fills out a team report card (see chapter 3). Allow discussion within the teams. Allow each team member to fill out one card or assign a secretary to fill out the card after group consensus on the answer.
4. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
5. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Classes 17 and 18

* 1. Set up the following challenges:
  + Teamwork Walk (chapter 7)
  + Stomp It (chapter 7)
  + Indiana’s Challenge (chapter 8)
  + Building Blocks (chapter 7)
  1. Teams may not get through all of the challenges. After the challenges are completed, take some time for the following reflective questions to be discussed in teams or as a whole group:
     + When did your team communicate effectively?
     + In what types of situations has communication been a challenge?
     + How is your team working through challenging situations in the areas of teamwork and communication?
     + In what ways has nonverbal communication been used? How has it affected your team?
     + Did you learn something about communication that will be helpful later? If so, what?
  2. Be sure to leave enough time to put equipment away.
  3. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
  4. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Classes 19 through 21

1. Allow teams to set up any intermediate challenges that they have not attempted. Also set up these challenges from chapter 7:
   * + Island Escape
     + The Maze
     + Stepping-Stones I
     + Bridge Over the Raging River
     + Human Pegs
     + Dynamic Barrier
2. Allow enough practice time and then have teams put equipment away.
3. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for reflection on personal goals using the GROWTH tracking documentation.
4. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for reflection on personal goals using the GROWTH tracking documentation.
5. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 21 to 23

1. Introduce advanced challenges.
2. Revisit team-building concepts.
3. Assign the groups to set up the following advanced challenges from chapter 8:
   * + Black Hole
     + Stepping-Stones II
     + Neutral Zone
     + Knights of the Around Table
     + Electric Fence
4. Allow teams to attempt advanced challenges. Review safety rules with the class and review the roles of praiser and encourager. They are going to be needed!
5. Teams will get to only one or two of these challenges during each class period.
6. Assign teams the task of setting up the same challenges in the next class period.
7. Have teams work together to put equipment away.
8. Teams should verbally complete a team report card after completing their first advanced challenge.
9. Consider the following reflective questions to be discussed throughout the three days of advanced challenges:
   * + What are the different ways leadership is being demonstrated on your team?
     + Did leadership roles shift during the various challenges?
     + How does listening play a role in leadership?
     + How is a growth versus fixed mindset affecting the process of completing each challenge?
     + How can certain challenges be modified to be more or less challenging?
     + How are your emotions affected as the challenges get more difficult?
10. Revisit the positive adjectives previously introduced (see chapter 2). Allow 15 to 20 minutes to ensure each team member gets praised.
11. Hand out a template (team-building outline) for a class project (portfolio item).
    * + Discuss and clarify if necessary.
      + Review: Each team will design a team-building challenge that another team will attempt to solve. Each team must set up and practice its challenge before presenting it. Everyone should get a copy of each team’s completed challenge.
12. Have each team sit in a circle and start initial discussion about its project.
13. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
14. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Classes 24 and 25

1. Students will use the majority of class period to plan their team-building projects.
2. Teams must organize equipment, set up their challenges, and practice their projects.
3. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for reflection on personal goals using the GROWTH tracking documentation.
4. Include a student-led reflective activity after each class session.
5. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 26

1. Team A presents its team-building project. Allow time for setup. Team B attempts the challenge. Other teams observe and take notes.
2. Begin a discussion after the challenge has been completed.
   * How can we change or adapt the challenge to make it better or different?
   * Did the challenge offer participants an opportunity for physical assistance? Be specific.
   * What decisions did the team have to make? Explain.
   * Did the team assign each member a role or task to accomplish the challenge more easily?
   * Did the team complete the challenge the way the originators envisioned?
3. Fill out the team report card.
4. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
5. End each day with a team break or team handshake (students should no longer need reminded).

## Class 27

1. Team B presents its team-building project. Allow enough time for setup. Other students in class observe the setup so that they will better understand the challenge.
2. Team C attempts the challenge. Teams A and D observe and take notes.
3. Put equipment away.
4. Discuss the following reflective questions:
   * Did the challenge create opportunities for discussion, communication, and planning?
   * Did the challenge offer opportunities for physical support?
   * Give some suggestions for adaptations or additions.
   * In attempting to solve the challenge, did the group assign roles to team members?
   * Did the team attempting the challenge communicate well?
5. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 28

1. Team C presents its challenge. The other teams observe the setup.
2. Team D attempts the challenge. Teams A and B observe the challenge and take notes.
3. Put equipment away.
4. Discuss reflective questions.
5. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 29

1. Team D presents its challenge. The other teams observe the setup.
2. Team A attempts the challenge. Teams B and C observe and take notes.
3. Put equipment away.
4. Discuss reflective questions.
5. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 30

1. Discuss competition. Set up a competitive volleyball tournament.
   * Trophies will be awarded.
   * Teams will have time to practice.
   * Team should decide if they want to elect a captain
2. The purpose of the volleyball tournament is to apply what has been learned in team building to competitive game situations. Specifically, look for the following character traits:
   * Supportive teammates
   * Teamwork
   * Praise and encouragement
   * Effective communication
   * Growth mindset
   * Ability to step out of the comfort zone and compete
   * Go after balls, not stand around
   * Seek success with enthusiasm and communicate that enthusiasm
   * Perseverance
3. Allow teams to practice volleyball skills. Use no net. Teams should prepare and organize their own volleyball practices.
4. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for reflection on personal goals using the GROWTH tracking documentation.
5. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
6. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 31

1. Put three nets up in the gym. Teams must organize and practice volleyball skills.
2. Teams should be ready to play the first round in the next class period.
3. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
4. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 32

1. Teams set up two nets and start the tournament. The duty of captain should rotate with every game. The captain or team must make the rotation decisions. The following teams play in the first round:

* Team A versus Team B
* Team C versus Team D
* Play to see who wins two out of three games or play for 40 minutes.

1. Complete a postgame self-evaluation to answer these questions: What kind of teammate are you? What kind of teammate do you hope to be?
2. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
3. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 33

1. Teams set up nets and continue the tournament. Rotation is the responsibility of the captain or team.
   * Team A versus Team D
   * Team B versus Team C
2. Complete postgame self-evaluations on growth versus fixed mindset (figure 2.4, chapter 2).
3. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
4. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 34

1. Teams set up nets and continue the tournament. Rotation is the responsibility of the captain.

* Team A versus Team C
* Team B versus Team D

1. Complete postgame team-building self-evaluations (figure 3.1, chapter 3).
2. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
3. End each day with a team break or team handshake.

## Class 35

1. Begin with a debriefing to answer these questions:

* How did the aspect of competition affect your ability in the following areas?
* Cooperation with teammates.
  + - How was praise and encouragement used? Was it more difficult to use in competitive situations?
    - How did you decide who played what position? Were all team members happy with the role that the team gave them? If not, what did you do about it?
    - How badly did you want to win the trophy? Did competitive feelings cause any stress on the team? If so, how did the team handle that stress?
    - Without referees, how did you handle disputed calls?
    - What happened after the game? If you lost, how did your emotions affect others?

1. Include a student-led reflective activity for the day.
2. End each day with a team break or team handshake.
3. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for the final reflection on personal goals using the GROWTH tracking documentation.
4. Return all three precourse self-evaluations at the end of class. Students will need to compare precourse and postcourse self-evaluations for their growth analysis paper. All self-evaluations should be included in portfolios.

## Class 36

1. Hand in portfolios.
2. Each team engages in positive adjectives activity.
3. Whip around the room. Each student shares a one-sentence answer to this question: What’s one thing you will always remember about this class experience?
4. Class should end with a final team break or team handshake.