

# Parasheets

Item #11016, #11088

## What Are the Educational Applications?

A number of games and sports utilize the fundamental skills of passing and receiving, teamwork skills of cooperation and communication, and tactical (strategy) skills. The object of invasion-type games (go to, to go through) requires the use of effective passing and receiving to keep possession of the ball. Being able to effectively communicate with teammates in an invasion game often increases the difficulty of the game.

When students practice these skills independently in a learning episode, they might not see the results from utilizing the important concepts related to the skill/teamwork/strategy. Parasheets provide a concrete learning activity that supports the development of fundamental motor skills, teamwork, and strategy work.

## How Can I Use Parasheets With My Students?

The following activities foster active learning of force absorption, traveling to receive an object, cooperative work, and communication. Parasheets are an especially helpful learning tool, which enable students to “see” the effects of force absorption when catching an object. Keeping the Parasheet too taut results in the object deflecting off the Parasheet while “giving with” the Parasheet when receiving an object results in successfully receiving the object. You can use either the 4'x4' or the 6'x6' sheets for the following activities.

### 1. Pass and Receive

Working in teams of five students (using a 4'x4' sheet or seven students if you are using a 6'x6' sheet), one person from the team serves as the passer. The passer will pass a foam ball (any ball that is soft and light will work) toward the Parasheet. The other team members are responsible for working together to receive the object. In the beginning, the passer will make the throws easy so that team members can practice using appropriate force absorption to make a successful catch. As the team becomes successful with the foam ball, increase the complexity of the game by changing the object tossed. You can change the firmness, shape, size, and/or weight of the object being tossed. Additional changes that will challenge the students include changing the number of objects to be caught or rapidly passing several objects to be caught.

Remember to change the role of passer so that all students have an opportunity to work as a receiving team member with the Parasheets.

Moving in line with the object to make a successful catch is another concept that students need to master. Once again, use your Parasheets to help students learn this concept. Using the activity above, have the passer challenge the team by tossing the object(s) so that team members need to travel to receive the ball. This challenge will also increase the need for teamwork skills, especially communication.

You can eliminate the role of the passer and have team members work together to self pass and receive the ball on the Parasheet. Remind the students to use the concepts of force absorption and traveling in line with the object.

Teams can set up individual challenges related to the number of successful catches with or without adding the element of travel.

### 2. Group Pass and Receive

In this activity the role of the passer is eliminated as the object is tossed from Parasheet to Parasheet. Teams of four (4'x4' Parasheets) or six (6'x6' Parasheets) pass objects back and forth working toward successive catching. This is a great activity to reinforce the concept of facing the direction that you will be passing an object and having the receivers making a target for the passers.

This activity can be played with a number of teams that are arranged in different formations: line, circle, square, diamond, etc. Periodically reverse the direction of the passes.

### 3. Single Parasheet Shoot and Score

Parasheet teams attempt to send a ball into a goal. The following goal attacking concepts can be presented with this activity: shooting on sight, aiming at the whole goal, and keeping the shot low. You can use this activity with basketball goals, soccer goals, hockey goals, etc. This activity becomes more challenging when you have another Parasheet team attempting to block the shot (goalie). In order to work on distance, have teams shoot from various distances from the goal. The farther the distance, the higher the points scored for the goal.

### 4. Group Pass, Receive, and Score

This is a fun activity that allows the team to score a goal. Instead of dribbling a basketball to a basketball hoop, the teams (class working as a whole) will pass the ball from Parasheet to Parasheet. The final team to receive the ball will have an opportunity to use the Parasheet to shoot the ball at the basket. Divide your class in half and have one team competing on each side of the court.

Other variations include:

Parasheet teams may only move when receiving the ball. The receiving team must stop where they made the successful catch and then pass the ball to another team. This activity also works with other sports that move an object down a field/court to a goal.

### 5. Parasheet Volley

Using a standard volleyball court setup, have teams of four or six (depending on the size Parasheet you are using) pass and receive the volleyball over the net. Use the rules of Newcomb while using the Parasheets. For a real challenge, use the Look-Up™ Volleyball Net (FlagHouse Item #11725).

### 6. Parasheet Cooperative Juggling

Five or more teams are needed to play this game. This game is played in a circle formation and each team will need a Parasheet. One team (Team #1) starts play by tossing a ball to any other Parasheet team EXCEPT the teams immediately on the right or left of them. Team #1 will always pass the ball to this team (now named Team #2) for the remainder of the game. The team receiving the ball (Team #2) will pick a different team to receive the ball. They may select any team EXCEPT the teams

immediately on the right or left of the team that just tossed them the ball (Team #1). Team #2 will now always pass the ball to this team (Team #3). Team #3 selects a team to pass the ball to following the procedures listed above. Continue until all teams have tossed and received the ball. There is now an established juggling pattern for tossing the ball from team to team. Practice this pattern.

To increase the complexity of the game, increase the number of balls to be tossed. Team #1 starts one ball while Team #4 starts another ball simultaneously—always completing the juggling pattern established. On the next round, start three balls. Continue until all teams are tossing a ball at the start of the game.

### Other Exciting Parasheet Ideas

Students can explore movement with the Parasheets. The concepts of high and low, open and close, and over and under can be taught. Students can hold the Parasheets for other students and guide them through these concepts (by holding the sheets in various positions) and have them follow various courses of movement. They may form low ceilings, tunnels, obstacles, etc. to achieve these goals.

As with tumbling, rope jumping, hoops and wands, the Parasheets offer great potential for developing cooperative movement routines. Teams can take individual movements such as turning, lifting, twisting, shaking, snapping, running, jumping to develop routines. These routines can be practiced and performed for the rest of the class. Instructors can set up specific routines or students can be asked to perform freestyle routines using their own moves.

The size of the Parasheets makes them a BIG target. Lay them on the field and use them as targets for soccer passing, flying discs, beanbag tossing or any other activity where a large target would be useful.

Remember, as with any parachute material, Parasheets are slippery and students should not be walking on top of Parasheets. Discourage students from placing Parasheets over the top of their heads or wrapping them around the body.

### How Do I Make Parasheets Developmentally Appropriate For My Students?

Activities 1-4 are arranged in a hierarchical format. Activity #1 requires low-level motor skills and teamwork skills. Each successive activity increases the motor skill and teamwork demands necessary for success. Activities 5 and 6 are culminating activities that should be introduced after following successful passing and receiving among Parasheet teams.

### How Do Parasheets Relate to Current Educational Thinking?

The Council on Physical Education for Children (COPEC) developed the position statement “Appropriate Practices for Elementary School Physical Education”. Twenty-three components of an elementary physical education program have been identified, and appropriate and inappropriate examples are provided as guidelines for recognizing best practices (appropriate) and counterproductive practices (in appropriate). These guidelines are useful as a decision-making tool for developing quality elementary physical education programs. When working with the Parasheet activities contained within this guide, appropriate practices for the following components are supported.

#### *Designing Learning Experiences—Appropriate Practices*

Teachers design lessons that provide frequent practice opportunities that are both meaningful and appropriate based on previous movement experiences and maturation. These experiences enable individuals to develop a functional understanding of movement concepts (body awareness, space awareness, effort, and relationship) and provide opportunities for children to build competence and confidence in their ability to perform a variety of motor skills (locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative).

#### *Developing Effective Skills—Appropriate Practices*

Teachers intentionally design activities throughout the program, which allow students opportunities to work together for the purpose of developing social skills (cooperative and competitive), and responsible behavior. Situations are designed for purposeful teaching of these skills; they are not left for “teachable moments” only.

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