

Programming suggestions for Schools

These programming suggestions are based on the assumption that you will have just two Indoor Rowers, and more than two children, so one of your biggest challenges will be giving everyone a chance, and keeping them busy when it's not their turn to row. Depending on how your program is structured, children may be able to rotate to other activities when not rowing, but in case this isn't possible, here are some suggestions for keeping kids busy.

Rotation Strategies:

- Time: Take your allotted program time and divide it roughly by the number of children you have in the group. For example, if you have one hour, 2 Indoor Rowers and 15 children, then each child gets a max of 8 minutes of rowing. With start-up and transition time, it will probably be more like 7 minutes. You can then decide if you want them to row their 7 minutes non-stop, or split it into two or three different sittings. You can vary this from day to day. Be sure to have them record the number of meters they row each time for their logbook!
- Number of Strokes: For variety, you can allot rowing time by number of strokes. Set up a rowing order for each machine, then have kids row a certain number of strokes, then switch. Thirty strokes should take about a minute. Be sure to have them record the number of meters they row each time for their logbook!
- Distance: this is yet another way to allot rowing time. Keep in mind that it gives more time to the slower kids, because it takes them longer to cover the same distance. You might set any distance from 200 to 500 meters. Again, be sure to have them record the number of meters they row each time for their logbook!
- Speedy Rotation: Kids will probably get into this! Try having each child row for 30 seconds, or 100 meters, or 15 strokes - then switch. This really minimizes the down time for everyone! However, you'll note that it makes it harder to keep track of how many meters each child has rowed....but it can be done. Assign kids to watch the PM3 and record the number meters as each child gets on and off. Then you'll have an opportunity for some math practice later as you calculate how far each child rowed!

Keeping Busy:

Other things that kids can be doing while it's not their turn to row:

- Record their meters rowed in their logbook. If they are rowing several short bouts per day, they can spend some time doing the math of adding them up before they enter them in their logbook.
- Stretching and other exercises. Create a number of stations around the room: rowing, stretching, ab curls or ab bicycles, superman stretches (lying on your stomach), run a lap of the playground, jumping jacks. Put a sign at each station, and number them, and have the kids rotate whenever you call out - every minute perhaps.
- Plan a group "rowing" trip around/along a local body of water. Make a map to post with distance increments, and have the kids mark their progress along the route.

When not rowing, kids can work on planning the trip, creating the map, and marking the progress.

- Do research on the sport of rowing. How many different kinds of boats are raced in the Olympics? When was the first Olympics in which women rowed? What is a "head race" and how did it get that name? What is the difference between sweep rowing and sculling? Etc!! Work on a presentation for the rest of the school.

If time and machine access is not an issue, then it will depend more on the individual student's goals, level of conditioning, and attention span. The trick is strike the right balance for each kids between fun and challenge. Some kids may have the head for longer steady rows, but interval workouts may do a better job of keeping kids focused and interested.