Black Tiger Academy’s Martial Arts Fitness

Teaching and Inspiring Students to Pursue Lifelong Fitness and Wellness

By Sifu Lori Mullen with Steve Bean

20 Lesson Plans

Lesson Plans include a variety of activities and exercises to improve the fitness of a student’s body, mind and spirit.
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Introduction

Black Tiger Academy’s Martial Arts Fitness is a program designed to teach students how to pursue a lifelong fitness and wellness program and to inspire them to do so. The program provides students with the fundamentals of fitness, as well as an introduction to the martial arts. Through a variety of activities and exercises, students will improve the fitness of their body, mind and spirit, most notably:

- By learning and participating in stretching, strengthening and conditioning exercises, students will learn about the importance of physical fitness in their lives.
- By learning martial arts stances, kicks and blocks, students will learn basic self-defense and increase their self-confidence.
- By participating in team-building exercises, students will create a supportive learning community within the class and learn about cooperation, compromise and negotiation.
- By reflecting on the ethical teachings and parables of the martial arts, students will develop positive character traits and improved social skills.
- By learning about basic nutrition, students will build a strong foundation for lifelong wellness.

Goal of the Program

The goal of Black Tiger Academy’s Martial Arts Fitness program is to improve students’ physical fitness and “whole health” and to provide an experience that will build their character. Martial Arts Fitness also seeks to develop the self-discipline and confidence that will help them achieve academic and social success.

How to Use this Program

Black Tiger Academy’s Martial Arts Fitness is a physical education course specifically designed for “at-risk” secondary students in alternative education programs (community day schools, charter schools for “at-risk” youth, schools in juvenile justice facilities, et al). However, the program can be used with a variety of populations including students in conventional high schools or teens and young adults in other programs and settings such as after-school programs like Boys and Girls Club.

The course is designed for use by trained martial arts instructors who currently work, or plan to be working with secondary school students and who would like to supplement their martial arts instruction with content-driven instruction in nutrition, fitness and “whole health.” The course also offers the martial arts instructor a complement of “get-to-know-you” activities that the instructor may not
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have seen used in the martial arts studio/dojo. These activities are great for building a familiar and comfortable classroom community. Many of these activities also incorporate physical fitness or health content knowledge.

The curriculum presented here contains lesson plans for 20 class sessions, each one 50 minutes long (not including time for students to change clothes). Because each class builds upon the preceding lesson, it is recommended that the classes be taught in the order presented. Lessons 5, 10, 15 and 20 are meant to be used as “review lessons” that review the knowledge and skills students have been acquiring in order to assess and cement it.

The program is highly adaptable and can be modified in a number of ways. For example:

- Classes can be taught in a variety of ways: once a week for 20 consecutive weeks, twice a week for 10 consecutive weeks, or twice a week for 20 consecutive weeks with basic lessons repeated. The repetition will reinforce student learning, and repeated activities can be modified to maintain a varied experience for students.
- The difficulty level of activities and exercises can be increased or decreased using the tips and suggestions provided.
- The material and activities in the lesson plans can be modified to meet the needs of students of different ages and abilities.
- Classes can be shortened or lengthened to accommodate different time frames. By shortening or lengthening individual activities, the instructor can adjust the overall length of the class.

The curriculum provides easy-to-follow lesson plans with step-by-step instructions, convenient checklists and detailed information to help instructors teach each lesson with ease. Each lesson plan includes:

- A general goal for each lesson
- Specific learning objectives for each lesson
- Detailed activities including: exercises, games and martial arts lessons
- Teacher preparation checklist
- Required materials checklist
- Optional materials checklist
- Key terms used in the lesson
- Insightful quotes
- Tips, suggestions for modifications and other helpful information
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Each lesson plan is organized around five elements of fitness for the body, mind and spirit. These elements are color coded for easy reference and include:

1. **Stretching and Warm-Up Exercises** (in yellow) for improved flexibility and balance.
2. **Physical Exercises** (in red) for strengthening and conditioning.
3. **Team-Building Activities** (in green) to teach the health and wellness topic of the day.
4. **Martial Arts Lessons** (in gray) to teach specific physical skills, general coordination, self defense, and character traits such as self-confidence, self-respect and respect for others.
5. **Cool-Down and Class-Review Activities** (in blue) that may include breathing exercises, meditation and/or stretching along with a review of the material learned.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, the students will:

- Understand the importance of stretching, flexibility and balance.
- Show improved flexibility.
- Show improved balance.
- Understand the importance of strengthening exercises.
- Be able to demonstrate strengthening exercises.
- Be able to demonstrate the following exercises:
  - Crunches
  - Push-ups
  - Lunges
  - Dips
- Be able to demonstrate at least one exercise to strengthen the following specific muscle groups:
  - Biceps
  - Triceps
  - Hamstrings
  - Quadriceps
  - Deltoids
  - Trapezius
  - Rhomboids
  - Pectorals
  - Latissimus Dorsi
- Be able to demonstrate the following martial arts stances:
  - Crane
  - Cat
  - Forward
  - Horse
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- Be able to demonstrate the following martial arts kicks:
  - Snap
  - Thrust
  - Round house
  - Side kick
  - Double kick

- Be able to demonstrate the following martial arts blocks:
  - Back Lion block
  - Down block
  - Upward Block

- Demonstrate increased mental focus and concentration.
- Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to follow classroom etiquette.
- Understand the importance of cardiovascular exercise.
- Be able to name at least two different martial arts styles.
- Be able to describe at least two principles of teamwork.
- Demonstrate increased levels of self-discipline.
- Demonstrate cooperation skills while participating on a team.
- Know how to read food nutrition labels.
- Know about portion controls.
- Be familiar with, and able to participate in guided meditation.
- Understand more about where one finds “hidden sugar” in one’s diet.
- Understand more about diabetes.
- Know the different kinds of fats found in common diets.
- Understand how many calories we should consume each day.
- Know more about the dangers of fast food.
- Be more familiar with positive character traits.
- Be able to set both short and long term goals.
- Be able to give positive recognition to others.

Equipment Needed:
- Floor mats (suitable for martial arts practice and with sufficient coverage for your class size.)
- Medicine ball
- Resistance bands
- Jump ropes
- Hand weights
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- Kicking shields and targets
- Foam blockers
- Materials and supplies for Health Topic/Teambuilding activities. Listed in the description for each activity.

Sources:
The author would like to acknowledge the following works as influential on her practice as an educator and martial arts and fitness instructor. By extension they have had an influence on the design of this course.

- Complete Idiot’s Guide to Martial Arts by Borkowski & Manzo
  ISBN 0-02-862947-7
- Kung Fu Basics by Paul Eng
  ISBN 0-8048-3494-6
- Nutrition for Dummies
- Strength Training Anatomy by Frederic Delavier
  ISBN 0-7360-4185-0
- Team-Building Activities for Every Group by Alanna Jones
  ISBN 0-9662341-6-2
- The Everything Meditation Book by Rosemary Clark
  ISBN 1-58062-665-3
- 201 Icebreakers by Edie West