

Follow the Leader!

Activity

Resource:

Beyond the Walls: Activities for the Outdoors

Grade(s): 1 2 3**Division(s):** Primary**Setting:** DPA**Season:** Winter

Activity Goal

Participants engage in moderate to vigorous physical activity in a winter environment to enhance their fitness and overall health and wellness. Participants reflect on ways to be active in winter and engage others in activity to build a habit of engaging in outdoor activity throughout the year.

For participant safety, please review the contents of the [Beyond the Walls: Safety Considerations](#) page for information on Safety Standards, Winter Safety Considerations, and Outdoor Playing Areas and Surfaces.

Equipment

A signaling object (e.g., music, hand clap, call and response)

Before Play

- Review the safety rules and activity instructions with participants prior to activity.

- Explain to participants that they will follow the leader in a “snake” formation using different ways of moving while trying to follow the prints in the snow of the person in front of them.
- Share the predetermined signal with participants and the instructions to follow when it is used (freeze and complete an exercise for a prescribed amount of time).

During Play

- Invite participants to explore a variety of locomotion skills in the snow, using different pathways, levels, and directions (e.g., two-foot-hops, skipping, crawling, making zig-zag patterns).
- Pause the activity and use the following prompts for participants to reflect on ways to move in the snow.

Question prompts:

- Which ways of moving do you find difficult in the snow? Which ways are easy?
- What can we do to help keep our balance as we move?
- Are there natural elements or structures made by people in our playing area that we might avoid, move around, on, off, or under safely during winter?
- Invite a participant to choose a locomotion skill and lead other participants through the snow using that skill. Encourage the leader to explore different pathways, levels, and directions as they lead others through the playing area.
- Use the predetermined signal for participants to freeze. Once frozen, participants complete an exercise of their choosing (e.g., make a snow angel, lunge 10 steps, hop side to side to mimic a downhill skier, etc.)
- Once participants have finished their task, invite a new leader to pick a locomotion skill and lead the group.

After Play

Use the following prompts for participants to reflect on ways to be active in winter and engage others in activity to build a habit of engaging in outdoor activity throughout the year.

Question prompts:

- Were certain exercises more challenging than others to do outside?
- How might your winter clothing make any movements or exercises more challenging?
- How can you incorporate physical activity outdoors into your daily routine before and after school?
- How does participating in daily physical activity outside in winter make you feel?
- How can you use this activity with friends or family to encourage them to stay active outdoors in winter?

Adaptations

Consider these tips to maximize the challenge and the fun for participants.

- Refer to Ophea's [50 Fitness Activity GIFs](#) for movement ideas.
- Have participants generate ideas of fun exercises to do in the snow.
- Divide the participants into three teams, having team members take turns choosing a locomotion skill and leading their team.
- Have teams compete to complete the exercise the fastest.

Modifications

Consider these tips to maximize inclusion and fun for all participants.

- For participants who have challenges understanding multi-step tasks, have participants work in pairs to find creative ways to perform the movements together.
- For participants with reduced mobility, offer them an implement (e.g., a stick, a pool noodle) to complete an exercise, have additional support from a partner or their team or perform that exercise seated.