DISC GOLF LEARNING PACKET
The following packet contains information conducive to the teaching and learning of disc golf, currently the nation’s fastest growing sport. The packet begins with a brief history and description of the sport, its basic equipment and techniques, as well as instructional activities and games.

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Disc Golf

The Basics

Disc golf is played much like traditional golf. Instead of a ball and clubs, however, players use a flying disc. Similar to a Frisbee®, but each disc model has different flight characteristics and is designed to fly farther. The sport was formalized in the 1970's, and shares with "ball golf" the object of completing each hole in the fewest strokes (or, in the case of disc golf, fewest throws). A golf disc is thrown from a tee area to a target which is the "hole". The hole can be one of a number of disc golf targets; the most common is called a Pole Hole® an elevated metal basket. As a player progresses down the fairway, he or she must make each consecutive throw from the spot where the previous throw has landed. The trees, shrubs, and terrain changes located in and around the fairways provide challenging obstacles for the golfer. Finally, the "putt" lands in the basket and the hole is completed. Disc golf shares the same joys and frustrations of traditional golf, whether it's sinking a long putt or hitting a tree halfway down the fairway.

Disc golf can be played by anyone from childhood through senior years, making it one of the greatest lifetime fitness sports available. Specially-abled and disabled participate, giving them the opportunity to take part in a mainstream activity.

Disc golf provides upper and lower body conditioning, aerobic exercise, and promotes a combination of physical and mental abilities that allow little risk of physical injury.

And as in traditional golf, disc golfers find themselves "hooked;" increasing the likelihood of frequent participation. Disc golf offers year-round fitness, even in rain or snow. Perhaps the greatest attribute of the sport is the expense - or rather, the lack of it. A professional quality disc costs less than $15, and it only takes one for basic play.

Play on each hole begins at the teeing area and ends at the target. After the player has thrown from the tee, each successive throw is made directly behind where the previous throw came to rest. On completing a hole, the player proceeds to the teeing area of the next hole, until all holes have been played.

There are almost 5000 disc golf courses in the USA as of 2014, in large cities and small towns alike. The Professional Disc Golf Association provides a Course Directory on their website, www.pdga.com, to find the closest courses near you.
Discs

Driver
- Typically thrown from the tee
- Designed to fly maximum distance
- Thicker rim and sharper edge

Midrange
- Medium range shots
- More rounded edge, and slightly Dome-shaped top
- Control and accuracy

Putter
- Putting and shorter range shots
- Rounded edge and Dome-shaped
- Fly Slowly and Straight
Disc Grips

Technique:

Backhand

- Power grip- (Best for Drivers and Mid-range) Thumb flat on top with all 4 fingers underneath pressed on the inside of the rim
- Fan/Control grip- (Best for Mid-range and Putters) Thumb flat on top with fingers fanned underneath with the pad of pinky finger on the inside of the rim

Forehand (“Sidearm”)

- Tuck the disc into the space between the pointer and thumb
- Place your pointer and middle finger underneath the disc with the ring and pinky resting on the palm.
- Feel the inner rim on the underside of the disc with the pad of your middle finger.
- Place thumb flat and firm on top
- With palm to the sky, adjust the grip to keep the disc flat in the hand
Driving

Technique:

Backhand

- For right-handed throwers, have right foot in front with left foot staggered behind.
- Reach arm back straight across the chest, and pull through across the body
- Follow through towards your target

Forehand

- For right-handed throwers, have left foot forward with right foot staggered behind.
- Reach arm back and bring it through in a straight line with the disc flat in a whip-like fashion slightly leading with your elbow.
- It is very important that the elbow be tucked close to the person’s body as they come through their stroke to avoid injury!
- Finish with palm up to the sky and reaching toward the target

Activities:

Driving for Distance

Materials Needed:

* Drivers (can also use mid-range discs, depending on students)  * Cones to distinguish throwing area
* Something to mark the discs with (i.e. Sharpie)

Number of players:  Any

Directions:

1. Mark a number on each of the discs, depending on the number of participants.
2. Distinguish an area with the cones from which participants can throw from, and create 3-6 lines behind the throwing area.

3. Give each participant a numbered disc. Participants are asked to remember the number on their disc throughout the activity.

4. On your signal, the first participant in each line will throw their disc as far as possible. (Watch their form and offer suggestions where necessary.)

5. Once every participant has thrown, ask them to walk and stand next to their disc to see who threw the farthest.

6. Have participants retrieve their discs, return to the throwing area, form new lines and repeat.

**Extension:** If you have a tall object, i.e. a volleyball post, place it in the open area and instruct the participants to throw to the right or to the left of the object. This challenge can naturally help the participants throw hyzer/anhyzer without overloading with information.

**Teaching Tip:** Give each participant two discs with the same number. After the first throw, make possible corrections to their form as necessary and compare after the second throw.

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**Approaching/ “Upshots”**

**Technique:**

- Use Mid-range discs or Putters
- Can use power grip or fan grip, depending on hand size and comfort (See page 5)
- Feet can be staggered, in a straight line or parallel, depending on comfort.
- Keep eyes focused on the target to improve accuracy
- Use a shorter reach back, to not over throw your target
Activities:

“Closest to the Pin” (aka CTP)

Materials Needed:

* Mid-range discs or Putters    * Cones to distinguish throwing area
* Something to mark the discs with (i.e. Sharpie)    * At least 1 basket (if more baskets are available, make several groups)

Number of players:    Any

Directions:

1. Use cones to distinguish a throwing area.
2. Set up target(s) 50-150 feet from throwing area.
3. Depending on the number of participants/baskets/targets, create 3-6 lines behind the throwing area.
4. Mark a number on each of the discs, depending on the number of participants. After handing out the discs, ask participants to remember the number on their disc throughout the activity.
5. On your signal, the first participant in each line will throw their disc as close to the basket/target as possible.
6. Once every participant has thrown, ask them to walk and stand next to their disc to see who threw the closest to the basket/target. At this point, explain the term “CTP” (closest to the pin.)
7. Have participants retrieve their discs, return to the throwing area, form new lines and repeat. This time trying to throw the disc closer than their last throw.

Disc Bocce

Materials Needed:

* 1 Disc Golf Basket    * 2 Putters/Participant

Number of players:    2 – 8 (can be played in singles or on teams of 2 or 4)

Directions:

1. The basket would be considered the “pallina” or “object/target ball” in Bocce. Instead of moving the “pallina” as in traditional Bocce, the winner of each round would choose where the group will throw from next.
2. Determine a throwing order, with the first person choosing the starting throwing position. The first player begins by throwing their first putter, and the other players will follow trying to get as close as possible to the basket. Once the last person throws their disc, go around again to throw the second putter.

3. When all discs are thrown, the player with the closest disc to the target receives one point. If the winning player has both of their discs closest to the target, they receive two points. If a player wins the round by getting their disc in the basket they recieve three points.

4. If more than one player throws a disc in the basket, the player with the closest second disc to the basket receives 4 total points.

*Extension:* The participant with the closest disc(s) can putt their disc in the basket for another point. A miss, however, results in minus a point.

**Putting**

*Technique:*

- Use Putters and Fan Grip (See page 5)
- Feet can be staggered, in a straight line or parallel, depending on comfort.
- Square hips to the target and Emphasize power generated from legs
- Resist throwing the putter, but rather “lofting” it toward the basket
- Focus on the basket, extending the arm toward the chains after release

**Disc Knockout**

(This activity can be used to practice approaching and putting skills alike)

*Materials Needed:*

* 1 Disc Golf Basket
* 1 Marker/player (mini, etc.)
* 2 Putters
* Designated area to throw from (30-200 ft)

*Number of players:* 3 or more
Directions:

1. The object of disc golf knockout is to knock out the player in front of you and continue until you are the last player standing.

2. Participants line up single file at the designated throwing area.

3. The first two players in line each get a disc (Mid-range or putter, depending on distance).

4. The first participant throws. If they make it, they will carefully retrieve the disc from the basket, and run to hand it to the next participant standing in line and go to the end of the line.

5. If they miss the basket, they must place their marker in front of their disc between it and the basket, throw from behind their marker and try to get the disc in the basket.

6. The second participant throws the disc after the first throws. If they get the disc in the basket before the first participant does, they run the disc to the next person in line and goes to the back of the line. At that point the first participant has been knocked out and is no longer part of the game.

7. The game ends when there is one participant left.

8. Mini markers are not needed, but are suggested to help novice players learn how they are used during play.

9. If there are several baskets available there can be a tournament where the winners of each station play in a championship round.

Discshoes (or 21)

Materials Needed:
* 2 Disc Golf Baskets
* 4 Putters (2 for each team)
* Piece of paper for keeping score (optional)

Number of players: 4 total - 2 teams of 2

Directions:

1. Disc golf baskets should be spread out on a flat surface 30 feet apart. The players from each team stand facing each other at opposing baskets- so each basket has 2 people on opposing teams (like in horseshoes)

2. Players standing at each basket take turns shooting two putters to the opposing basket. Scores are awarded in the following manner:
   - 3 points for the disc landing in the basket
   - 2 points for hitting chains, but the disc does not land in the basket
● 1 point for hitting metal on the top or bottom of the cage part of the basket
● If the pole under the cage of the basket is hit, one point is subtracted (-1 points)

3. Scores for each round are recorded then the players from the opposite end follow the same rules and directions as stated in direction 2.

4. Play ends when a team achieves a score of exactly 21 points. If a team scores above 21 points they change their score to 16 and try again to get exactly 21 points in the same manner as played above.

**HORSE/PIG/DISC**

**Materials Needed:**
- 1 Disc Golf Basket
- 1 Putter/participant

**Number of players:** 2 or more

**Directions:**

1. Establish the order the participants will throw (rock paper scissors, etc). This order will continue for the rest of the game.

2. Play begins by the first person throwing the disc to the basket from anywhere in the throwing area. If the shot is missed, the next person takes throws from any as well. This continues until a shot is made. Once a disc lands in the basket, that participant becomes the "first" in order.

3. Once a shot is made, all other players must attempt that shot in order. For example, if four people are playing and the third person was the first to make a shot, the fourth person must then shoot, followed by the first and second person. Participants must attempt the shot from the same spot on the court as the original made shot.

4. Any participant who misses a shot that must be matched earn the letter "H" (or “P”, depending which version participants play.) Participants who have already earned the first letter and miss a matched shot again earn the letter "O" (“I”) and so on until a player accumulates all the letters in the word "HORSE" or “PIG” and are thus eliminated. Play continues until only one participant remains, who is declared the winner.

**Extension:** Participants can decide on modified rules at the beginning of the game, such as requiring the "calling" of shots, such as bank shots, swishes or trick shots. For instance, if a player chooses to shoot a free throw as his shot to be matched and calls "bank," he must bank the shot for it to count, and all players must not only make the shot, but must bank it off the backboard in order to avoid accumulating a letter.
### 3 Putts

**Materials Needed:**
- 2 or more Disc Golf Baskets
- 3 Putters/team
- Cones to distinguish throwing area

**Number of players:** 4 or more

**Directions:**
1. Participants will take turns taking 3 putts from the designated area.
2. Each made putt is designated to represent a certain number of points (1, 2, 5, etc.)
3. The instructor informs the participants how many total points they are trying to earn as a team (11, 15, 21, 25, 30, etc.)
4. Teams must keep track of how many points they accumulate.
5. The team that makes it to their goal first wins.
6. The winning team may begin another round while other teams also try and achieve their goal.

### Basegolf

**Materials Needed:**
- 1 Disc Golf Basket
- Putters (ideally at least 3)
- Piece of paper for keeping score
- 9 items to be used as distance markers (could be minis, rocks, or anything practical)

**Number of players:** 2 or more

**Directions:**
1. Set up the disc golf basket with room on all sides of the basket.
2. Set up the nine distance markers circling around the basket (these represent the nine innings in baseball), with each distance marker being slightly farther from the basket than the one next to it (example- first one is 8 ft. away, the next 12 feet, then 16 feet, etc.) You can decide the lengths based on the skill level of the overall group.
3. Each player will take turns shooting from behind each distance marker (like a baseball game-each player takes turns shooting at each inning/distance marker before moving to the next inning/distance marker), starting with the distance marker closest to the basket. The first player
will shoot discs into the basket until they miss 3 putts (this represents 3 outs in that inning) OR until they get 10 in a row from one spot (a mercy rule or maximum allowed “runs” in each inning). The player counts how many putts went in the basket which represents a “run” and present their score to be recorded for that inning (example- if the player gets in 4 putts before they miss 3 putts, their score for that inning would be 4, and if a players hits 10 putts before they miss 3, their score for that inning would be 10).

4. The players take turns shooting at each inning distance marker and record their score. Once all 9 innings have been completed the players will total their scores. The player with the higher score would be the winner.

**Ring of Fire**

**Materials Needed:**

* 1 Disc Golf Basket  
* 1 Putter/participant  
* Something to mark the circle from which you throw (i.e. spray paint, rope, cones, etc.)

**Number of players:** 2 or more

**Directions:**

1. Participants circle around the basket from the designated distance.

2. The instructor counts down from three, and can command “Fire!” “Go!” “Throw!” or “Putt!”

3. When everyone has thrown, the instructor allows the participants to retrieve their discs.

4. Only participants who made their putt can throw in the next round. The game ends when there is only 1 participant who makes their putt.

5. Start a new round with all of the participants.

**Extension:** Participants have to move backwards each time they throw until there is one participant left who makes the putt.
Flight Paths

Every disc is designed with a distinct flight characteristics, from how far the disc will fly to how hard the disc turns to the right or left during its flight. Players carry several discs to choose from during a disc golf round, giving them options to determine the type of shot they want to throw. By physically changing the angle of their release, players can alter the original flight path of any disc. Two basic flight paths are called “hyzer” and “anhyzer”. (The throwing techniques depicted below are written for a right-handed backhand thrower, all flight paths can be mirrored to adapt to left-handed throwers.)

Hyzer- Best for shots where the disc flies from right and finishes left. This throw is the most natural, as the disc’s spin allows the disc finish to the left for right-handed players (and right for left-handed players).

Technique:
- Line up the same as a backhand throw
- Slightly lean forward during reach back
- Disc should be angled down toward ground (the degree of angle affects how sharply the disc will turn to the left)
- Keeping arm perpendicular to chest, pull through from low to high

Anhyzer- Best for shots where the disc flies from left and finishes right. This flight path works against the natural spin of the disc, so the angle and follow through are important to succeed. This flight path can also be made with a forehand throw.

Technique:
- Line up the same as a backhand throw
- Slightly lean backwards during reach back
- Disc should be angled up away from ground (the degree of angle affects how sharply the disc will turn to the right)
- Keeping arm perpendicular to chest, pull through from high to low in a rainbow shape.
- After release, allow arm to follow through on the same line to ensure the correct angle.
Sources:
Professional Disc Golf Association, www.PDGA.com
New England Women’s Disc Golf
LIVESTRONG.com