Lesson 1 – Pre-Visit
The Athlete's Body

Objective: Students will be able to:
- Explain the meaning of “fitness.”
- Identify ways that athletes maintain physical fitness.
- Recognize the importance of exercising and training safely.

Time Required: One class period

Advance Preparation:
- Ask students to bring in a picture of an athlete they admire.
- Print and cut out the Fitness Forward cards (included).

Materials Needed:
- Space for students to move around and exercise comfortably
- *Optional* The means to watch a few innings of a baseball game either live or recorded
- Pens or pencils
- Writing paper
- Poster board or construction paper of different colors
- Art materials (crayons, markers, paint, etc.)
- Old sports magazines
- Scissors
- Glue

Potential Resources:
- www.exploratorium.edu/baseball/
  “The Science of Baseball” contains a variety of fun interactive programs for students.
- http://www.baseballconditioningexercises.com/
  A website dedicated to the different kinds of workouts baseball players need to be exposed to.
Vocabulary:
Agility - The ability to move quickly and easily
Exercise - Any activity that enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall health and wellness
Fitness – The condition of being physically fit and healthy
Flexibility – Ability of your joints to move through a full range of motion
Muscle - A body tissue that expands and contracts to produce motion
Speed – To go or move quickly
Endurance - The ability to perform an action for a long time without stopping
Strength - Great physical power

Applicable Common Core State Standards:
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3.1, SL.4.1, SL.5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-appropriate topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.8 Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

Additional Relevant National Learning Standards:
(Based on Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning)


Health. Standard 7. Knows how to maintain and promote personal health

Physical Education. Standard 4. Understands how to monitor and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness
Lesson & Activity

1. To prepare for this lesson, ask students to bring in a picture of an athlete they admire.

2. To begin, ask students to share the athlete photos they brought in to class. Ask each student to identify his or her athlete of choice and explain why they admire that athlete.

3. As a class, brainstorm some things that these athletes do to stay healthy, stay in shape, and stay at the top of their game.

4. Discuss that for athletes and non-athletes alike, **fitness** and **exercise** are important parts of a balanced, healthy lifestyle. People exercise in order to improve their fitness and prepare to play sports and games. If you’re fit, your body works well, feels good, and can do all the things you want it to do.

5. Explain that the first thing that athletes do before exercising or playing a sport is to warm up their muscles. Ask students, "Why might athletes warm up before exercise?"

6. Have students sit on the floor with their feet out in front of them. Ask students to try and touch their toes. Ask, “Is it easy or difficult to touch your toes?” “Do any of your muscles feel tight?”

7. Now have students do about three minutes of light activity (slow jogging, walking, jump rope, dance, etc.). At end of three minutes, have students make observations about their bodies. Ask, “Whose heart is beating quickly?” “Who is feeling warm?”

8. Have students perform the touch-toes stretch again. Ask students, “Is it easier or harder to perform this stretch now than it was earlier?”
9. Discuss that a warm-up is meant to prepare muscles for action. Often, athletes can be seen on the sidelines before a game jogging or walking to get their muscles ready to play. At the end of a warm-up, an athlete might also perform some light stretches. Stretching helps muscles become more **flexible**. A warm-up can also involve a sport-specific activity, such as taking batting practice or shots on goal before a game. Muscles that have been properly warmed up are much less likely to get hurt.

10. Review the different activities that your students performed to warm up earlier in this lesson: walking, jogging, etc. Ask students, “What other activities have you done/seen athletes do to warm up before sports?”

11. Discuss that once athletes have completed their warm-ups, they are ready for exercise. Anyone who wants to play a sport or game should exercise their muscles in different ways. An athlete will usually perform many different types of exercises as part of a training program to improve their speed, flexibility, agility, strength, and endurance. Define and discuss each word with the class.

   - **Speed** – Speed measures the swiftness of your actions and performance. Training for speed can help your body respond quickly to commands from your brain.
   - **Flexibility** – Being flexible means you can bend and stretch your body without feeling stiff, lowering your risk of injury.
   - **Agility** – Agility means you can move quickly and easily.
   - **Strength** – When you strength train, with or without weights, you ask your muscles to move against resistance. When muscles work harder, they become stronger and work better.
   - **Endurance** – Endurance activities make your heart stronger. Building endurance will help you play for long stretches of time.

12. *OPTIONAL* View a few innings of a baseball game either live or recorded. Review the positions on a baseball team: catcher, pitcher, outfielder, shortstop, etc. Ask students about different fitness components required to play the different positions. For example:

   - Which positions require a lot of strength?
   - Which positions require a lot of endurance?
   - Which players are the most flexible?
   - Which players are the most agile?
   - Which players are fastest?
13. Now, pass around the Fitness Forward cards (included). Discuss how each of the activities shown on the cards can help improve an athlete’s speed, flexibility, agility, strength, and endurance.

- Endurance activities include swimming, basketball, skating, jogging, and cross-country skiing.
- Strength activities include weight lifting and tug-of-war.
- Agility activities include jumping and special skill practice.
- Flexibility activities include yoga, dancing, martial arts, gymnastics, and stretches.
- Speed activities include sprinting.

**Conclusion:**
To complete this lesson and check for understanding, distribute the poster board, art materials, and decorating materials. Have students create a poster that has tips for improving fitness and exercising safely. The tips should include at least one example of a warm-up activity.
Students should be able to correctly identify how someone can improve their fitness, and recognize the consequences of not exercising safely.

**Optional:**
The Education Department at the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum loves student work! If you would like to send some of your students’ completed posters to be considered for display in our Learning Center, please contact us via e-mail at education@baseballhalloffame.org.
Fitness Forward

Yoga

Sprinting
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Photo of a basketball game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>Photo of dancers in a ballet position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>Photo of a person on a skateboard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cross-Country Skiing

Martial Arts
Stretching

Jumping or Hopping
Skill Practice