The Fraction Race

Introduction: Students in the third grade need to be able to use fraction names and symbols. They will get the needed practice by participating in this fun activity.

Grade Level and Subject: Third Grade Math and P.E.

TEKS: Math 2C  
P. E. 1A, 1C, 3A, 3B, 5A, 7A

Materials: 1 hula hoop, 4 basketballs, 4 small white boards or chalkboards, chalk or markers


Activity: After being introduced to fractions, this activity will provide some energetic practice with reading/writing fractions.

On the playground or in the gym, the teacher should create the “game area.” In the middle of a large, open area, the teacher should place a hula hoop. Inside of the hula hoop, the teacher should place the chalkboards or whiteboards with the chalk or markers. The teacher should then walk about 20–30 feet (depending on the available room on the playground or gym) from the hula hoop and mark that spot with chalk. He or she should do this four times, creating the “start” position for each team. The four “start” positions should be of equal distance from each other and should all be the same distance from the hula hoop in the center of the “game area.”

On the day of the activity, the teacher should divide the students in the class into four teams. Each team will line up behind the “start” position made by the teacher’s chalk. The first member of each team will be handed a basketball.

The teacher will stand in the center of the hula hoop. As a starting signal for each relay race to begin, he or she will call out a fraction. Once that fraction has been called out, the first student in each line will run to the hula hoop, bouncing/dribbling the ball as he or she runs. As the hula hoop is approached, each of the four students participating in the race will place their basketball on the floor or ground, pick up a board and the appropriate writing utensil, and write the fraction that was called out by the teacher. The student will then show the fraction to the teacher. If the fraction is correct, the student will place the board and writing utensil back in the hula hoop, retrieve the basketball, and bounce/dribble the ball back to the “start” position of his or her line. If the fraction is incorrect, the student will continue trying to write the correct fraction on the board. If the student gets frustrated, the teacher can provide instruction.

The team member who reaches his or her “start” position first will receive 4 points; the second student back to his or her “start” position will receive 3 points, the third student 2 points, and the last student will receive 1 point. The game will continue with the second student in each line getting the chance to write fractions and score points for his or her team. The teacher will determine when the game officially ends; however, he or she will want to ensure that all students get at least one chance to write a fraction on the board.

Evaluation: The teacher will determine if any additional instruction is needed by a particular student during game play.