

# Guide to Being an Effective Movement Coach at GALS



Morning movement is a cornerstone of the GALS model, and your role as a movement coach is paramount to its success. Each day begins with the opportunity for students to jumpstart their day through rigorous physical activity that awakens their brains and bodies. Over the course of the year, students try several, distinct activities for extended periods of time (known as modules) in order to understand the impact of different kinds of movement. In addition to the physical and mental benefit of physical activity, each module provides the opportunity for students to know themselves, to push themselves, and to see the effects of sustained effort and perseverance. Your role as a coach is critical in not only teaching students the *how* in each movement module but in drawing the connection to the *why*.

## The role of a movement coach in every module is to:

1. Explicitly teach skill and develop technique
2. Provide ongoing feedback and support
3. Actively participate and model the GALS habits

## Expectations as a Movement Coach

- Plan the entire movement module before it starts. Like any unit, it should be backwards planned with explicit outcomes named, daily plans defined, and some culminating performance or assessment. This might be a mile run, a vinyasa, a dance performance, a tournament, etc. If you are not planning the module, review the existing plans so you are comfortable with the entire scope of the unit.
- Be prepared to teach or support the movement offering (depending on your role in the module) at the start of each day. This means you have thoroughly reviewed the specific workout, you are comfortable leading or supporting the intended outcome, and you are familiar with possible modifications that students may need. Think of this like anticipating common misconceptions in your content. What are students likely to not understand? What replacement behaviors are you likely to see if a student cannot physically do the activity? Understand how to break down the instructions ahead of time.
- Set up space and equipment before class begins. It is essential to waste as little time as possible *during* movement. If setting up in advance is not possible because of scheduling or space conflicts, then having the materials readily available is essential.
- Know your movement group. Take the time at the onset of a module to get to know them. Movement is a vulnerable space for many students, and the more comfortable they feel with their coach and their peers, the more likely they are to give their best effort, to offer and accept support, and to be resilient.
- Provide regular feedback to students. This includes coaching in the moment as well as keeping daily grades (more details on grading below). Students should receive progress reports as they do in all classes and have ample opportunities for self-reflection and improvement.
- Hold high expectations for student engagement. Your job is to ensure that students are not only participating but working hard to ensure they receive the benefits from movement. Approach students feeling hurt, sick, or having an off day with compassion (you are not a doctor; it is not your role to diagnose), but take the necessary steps to ensure that that students can participate again as soon as possible. This includes offering modifications, keeping clear records of days and reasons when students don't participate, and getting in touch with parents/guardians immediately.

\*You do not need to be an expert in the movement module you are coaching nor does the module you are leading need to be an activity you would choose on your own. The success of movement at GALS hinges on staff members modeling working hard and persevering in the face of challenge, being completely present, balancing risk and reward, and providing feedback and encouragement.

## **GRADING/OUTCOMES**

During every module, students receive distinct grades in cooperation/collaboration (their ability to win, lose, and play with grace) and personal challenge (their ability to push themselves). In modules where the outcome is

measurable (like the running unit), students also receive a grade in skill or growth in skill. All grades are based on the need, or lack thereof, for coaches to prompt students - see the movement rubric below for more details.

Coaches are responsible for keeping DAILY grades for cooperation/collaboration and personal challenge in their own records. Then, using those daily grades, coaches enter a grade for each outcome into the gradebook once a week. These weekly grades and final grades should be an accurate reflection of the student’s effort over the quarter – not simply a straight average. This supports our standards-based grading philosophy; the goal is to capture a clear picture of the student’s mastery of these outcomes. The most successful coaches carry a clipboard during movement so that they can take accurate, real-time notes about how often students went above and beyond expectations or how often they needed redirection in order to participate.

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<b>Skill or Growth in Skill</b>			Demonstrates proficiency of skills in module	Demonstrates advanced skills in module
	Does not demonstrate growth in skills in module	Demonstrates limited growth in skills in module	Demonstrates growth in skills in module	Demonstrates substantial growth in skills in module
<b>Cooperation and Collaboration</b>	Rarely demonstrates criteria for a 3; has a negative impact on the group	Inconsistently demonstrates criteria for a 3	Knows how to win, lose, and play; supportive in verbal/non-verbal communication	Consistently models criteria for a 3; sets the example for her team; knows when to lead and when to follow
<b>Personal Challenge</b>	Rarely demonstrates criteria for a 3; has a negative impact on the group	Inconsistently demonstrates criteria for a 3	Actively participates; consistently demonstrates effort at “personal edge”	Consistently models criteria for a 3; sets the example for her team

Attendance is critical to success in movement. Thus, students cannot earn higher than a 2.5 in personal challenge if their attendance is below 80%, and they cannot earn higher than 2.0 in personal challenge if their attendance is below 60%. Be certain that students and parents/guardians are aware of this at the start of each module.

## BASIC STRUCTURE OF A WORKOUT

**Warm-Up (about 10 minutes):** It takes time for students to get situated into movement, and it is important that setting up and stretching is as efficient as possible. Be sure your movement group has a precise routine that includes where to go and what to do (think of it as a Do Now in your classroom) so that after a few weeks, you no longer have to provide feedback or instructions about how to get started. This allows you to take attendance, do any necessary set up, and provide instructions for the day’s workout without losing time.

**Workout (about 25 minutes):** Students should be doing a workout that supports the goals of the module where heart rates are elevated for AT LEAST 20 minutes every day. This can include rest time within the workout.

**Cool-Down (about 5 minutes):** It is essential to build in “wrap up time” whether it is for a debrief, equipment clean up, stretching, and/or an opportunity for students to move locations. Some of the impact of movement is lost without this intentional close out. Ideally, students are not sprinting from their last motion in movement class into their first class of the day.

## TIPS TO BE AN EFFECTIVE COACH

- Carry a clipboard and timing device every day
- Know your movement group well
- Anticipate what may be physically or emotionally challenging for students
- Plan for modifications
- Strictly enforce that non-participation is not an option