

Physical Education During Ramadan

Effective PE teachers strive to be culturally responsive and aware of their students' diverse backgrounds (Alshuraymi & Wright, 2022). How can we ensure Muslim students, who are fasting during Ramadan observance, are safely participating meaningfully in PE?

Know Your Students

Ask questions & build connections with your students. Model open-mindedness as a teacher & promote a safe space for students to respectfully share, & be curious about, multiple perspectives. Educate yourself on Ramadan. This can build empathy & better inform your planning for when Ramadan arrives.



Be Proactive & Educate

Teach the importance of sleep & nutrition, including water consumption, dehydration, & fasting, in your school's PE (or other) curriculum. Ensure students can self-identify ways to monitor hydration status (e.g. urine colour chart) (Kavouras et al., 2016).



Facilities & Scheduling

Avoid planning PE lessons in hot, outdoor spaces. If not possible, provide shaded areas & frequent breaks. If coaching, schedule practices/games before iftar. Fasting athletes can break their fast immediately after their work out (Rizal & Kuan, 2018).



Adventure Challenges

Teach an Adventure Challenges unit that focuses less on strenuous physical activity & more on social & emotional outcomes. Activities are often low-intensity & focus more on conflict resolution, decision-making, self-control, communication, & collaboration. These skills & experiences align with the core values of Ramadan.

Swimming

If students swim during Ramadan, they need to be careful to avoid letting water into their stomach. Students/families may choose not to participate in swimming. During a swimming unit, plan out-of-water activities such as dry-land training &/or opportunities to peer assess & coach while analyzing peers' swim strokes.



Models-Based Practice

The core values of Ramadan (e.g. kindness, empathy, setting goals, resolving conflict, & self-control) align with many models-based practices in PE. Plan a Sport Education unit & provide students the choice to engage in activities in different ways (e.g. reporter, coach, referee, scorekeeper, videographer, etc.).



The information above is based on the work of:

Alshuraymi, A. N., & Wright, P. M. (2022). Teaching physical education during Ramadan observance. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 93(3), 51-53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2022.2035542>

Trabelsi, K, & Chtourou, H. (2019). Teaching physical education during Ramadan observance: Practical recommendations. *International Journal of Sport Studies for Health*, 2(1):e88013. <https://doi.org/10.5812/intjssh.88013>.