

## **Flag Football Unit – Middle School**

### **LESSON #6 – Preseason Games**

#### **➤ Essential Knowledge (Objectives)**

- Student will be able to demonstrate appropriate offensive and defensive strategies for all positions.
- Student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of game and class rules for modified flag football games.
- Student will be able to demonstrate zone defense strategies.

#### **➤ National Standards for Physical Education**

- Standard 1 - Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Standard 2 - Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.
- Standard 5 - Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

#### **➤ Assessment Opportunities**

- Informal teacher and/or student (peer) observations
- Student reflection questions
- Student performance/demonstration of skills
- Written assessment for defensive positions

#### **➤ Pre-Requisite Knowledge and Skills**

- Throwing and catching skills for football
- Pass patterns – hook, slant, fly/go
- Position responsibilities of the quarterback, center, and receiver
- Position responsibilities of the corner, defensive linesperson, and safety
- Rules for game play

#### **➤ Fitness Focus**

- See the [Football Shuttle Run](#) activity in the Football and Fitness Mini Lessons and/or use other mini lessons

#### **➤ Materials and Preparation**

- 1 football for each game
- Large playing area divided into playing fields
- Cones to mark field
- One flag belt for each student – two colors, one for each team opposing one another
- Zone defense rubric

Teacher note: You will need to decide on teams of four prior to this lesson and how you will decide which team begins on offense and which team begins on defense.

► **Link (Activate Students' Prior Knowledge)**

Ask students about the rules for game play and what they remember from their controlled scrimmages in the previous class. Emphasize the following:

- Field markings – Two endlines, “end zones,” midfield line, and “kickoff” line
- Scoring a touchdown – 6 points; offensive player has possession of the football in the opponents’ end zone (caught a pass in the end zone or ran the ball over the line with flags/belt still attached)
- Teams will not be kicking for an extra point
- A play ends when the ball is “downed”; this means that the person with the ball had their flag pulled, or the ball hits the ground (incomplete pass); in the event of an incomplete pass, the ball is placed on the same line of scrimmage, “repeat the down”
- Quarterback has the option to run
- Center is “ineligible” and cannot run with the ball or receive a pass
- Teams always face the same end zone during play, whether they are on offense or defense (no “losers walk”)
- Class rules –
  - Players must rotate positions after each play
  - Defensive linesperson must count aloud to “5 Alligator” before rushing the quarterback
  - Quarterback has to say “down, set, hike” to start each play
  - Quarterback decides what pass patterns receivers will run
  - When the ball is placed on the “line of scrimmage” (imaginary line drawn from the forward tip of the football to the sidelines), the ball should be placed in the middle of the line of scrimmage
  - When the flag of the person with the ball is pulled, leave the flag on the ground where it was pulled to mark where the ball will be placed to start the next play

Ask students to recall zone defense strategies. Emphasize the following:

- Close the spaces through which a ball or person can pass
- Position yourself between your opponents and the end zone you are defending
- A zone defense requires focus on the ball while remaining aware of opponents moving through your space
- Look for visual cues that help to anticipate what is about to happen (watch the quarterback)
- Keep yourself in a “ready position” in order to make quick movements to move to the person with the ball or to take possession of the ball

Tell students that you will be using the same criteria today to assess their ability in the safety position to demonstrate zone defense strategies. Share the Zone Defense Strategies Rubric with students.

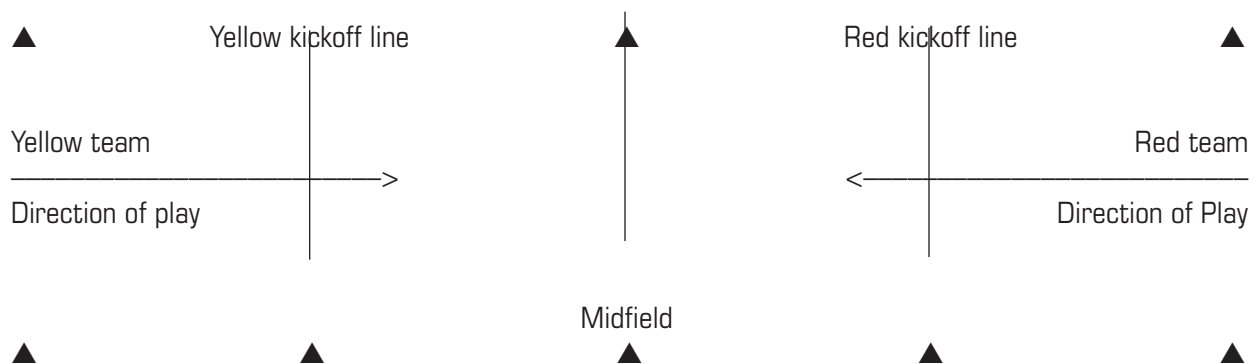
► **Instruction**

Say to students: Today you will be placed into teams for game play. You will have some time to practice offensive plays with your teammates before game play begins. Consider today a “preseason” game day. I will be assessing zone defensive strategies and providing feedback about your game play. As I come around, please be sure to ask any questions you have. During your offensive practice time, each person will need to practice being quarterback and deciding on plays. During game play, you will only have ten seconds to “huddle.” During a huddle, the offensive team gathers together, away from the defense so that they can’t overhear, and the quarterback tells teammates what pass patterns to run or if the quarterback will be running with the ball.

Assign students into teams of four. Allow 10-15 minutes for teams to practice offensive plays. Remind students that everyone will play every position during game play.

Bring teams back to the larger group and provide the following additional game rules:

- Each team sends one person to participate in the coin toss before each day of games. Team members that win the toss can elect to either receive the kickoff (be first on offense) or can elect which end of the field they want (which direction their team will face). One option or the other, not both (receive or end of field).
- Games begin with each team lining up at their “kickoff” line. The team on defense first will throw the ball to the other team.
- Receiving team (first team on offense) may catch the ball in the air or pick it up off the ground and run forward, trying to score without their flag being pulled.
- If the player’s flag is pulled (reminder – only pull the flag of the player with the ball), the ball is “down.” Place the ball in the middle of the field where the flag was pulled to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Teams have four downs to get to midfield for a “first down.” A first down means that the team now has an additional four downs to score. After teams reach or pass midfield, they will have four plays to score.
- If a team scores, they walk back to their kickoff line and then throw the ball to the other team (other team is now on offense).
- If a team does not score within the number of downs allotted, the defense will gain possession wherever the fourth down occurred and become offense.



► **Learning Activities (Application of Instruction)**

Conduct preseason game play. Provide specific and descriptive feedback to assist students with skills, game play, and knowledge of rules. Assess students' performance of zone defensive strategies.

► **Student Reflection (Connect to Essential Knowledge)**

Ask each team to share one thing with each teammate that they did well during the game. Then have each team talk about areas for the team to improve upon.

Review game/class rules and game play with students as needed.

► **Next Steps for Student Learning**

Ask students: What would happen if there was not a "first down" rule? (A: The offensive would continue to have the ball unless they threw an interception or scored)

► **Assessments**

Zone Defensive Strategies Rubric

4.0	Student consistently demonstrates 3.0 criteria and is able to self-correct when an error occurs
3.0	Student consistently demonstrates knowledge and ability to properly execute person-to-person defensive strategies by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Close the spaces through which a ball or person can pass</li><li>• Position yourself between your opponents and the end zone you are defending</li><li>• A zone defense requires focus on the ball while remaining aware of opponents moving through your space</li><li>• Look for visual cues that help to anticipate what is about to happen (watch the quarterback)</li><li>• Keep yourself in a "ready position" in order to make quick movements to move to the person with the ball or to take possession of the ball</li></ul>
2.0	Student does not consistently demonstrate criteria in 3.0 (there are errors or omissions)
1.0	Student can perform some or all criteria in 3.0 with teacher direction but not independently

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