

# Physical Literacy in Canada

## Tools for Assessment

Three tools have been deployed in Canada, which assess key elements of physical literacy in children and youth. Each one of the tools has been designed for specific users, but all are devoted to improving the physical literacy levels of Canadian children.

Physical literacy is a gateway to active participation in life. People working in education, recreation and sport are the key individuals for developing physical literacy in this nation. Canada is a world leader in creating physical literacy assessment tools; this is a testament to the strategic intent of these sectors to contribute to the development of healthy children.

Developing physical literacy requires the acquisition of a large movement repertoire (vocabulary) in a variety of indoor and outdoor settings. The movement repertoire will include a diverse range of basic or fundamental movement skills. Individuals will be able to understand terminology used to describe movement. They will feel confident to perform or attempt movements in various environments. They will be aware of their body in space, as well as the movement of others or objects in space. They will be able to select, sequence and modify their movement suitable to the setting or environment (land, air, water, snow, ice).

Physical literacy is a gateway to being active, and ultimately to active participation. Fitness is a separate but related construct from physical literacy that is also tied inexorably to activity. All together (physical literacy, fitness, and active participation) create a positive feedback cycle.

The assessment of physical literacy should include more than just movement skills (movement repertoire and competence to move), it should assess additional domains, such as confidence, different environments, participation, comprehension, and motivation. Although objective assessment of physical literacy is important it is also valuable to examine the perception of physical literacy by the child, parent or practitioner to identify barriers or facilitators to participation.

*The Physical Literacy Tools*

**PHE Canada - Passport for Life**

<http://www.passportforlife.ca>

**Passport for Life** is a formative assessment tool for use in class by teachers responsible for PE/HE curriculum.

**Canadian Sport for Life –  
Physical Literacy Assessment for Youth Tools**

<http://www.physicalliteracy.ca/play>

**PLAY tools** are a suite of tools designed for program evaluation and research in sport, health, recreation, & at or after school programming.

**60 Min Kids Club  
Fundamental Movement Skills Assessment Tool**

<http://60minkidsclub.org/fmsassessment>

**FMS assessment tool** is a visually guided tool for the assessment of children's movement skills by the general population.

## Passport for Life

The Passport for Life assessment tools are currently available for students in grades 3-6, with a grade 7-9 version launching in September 2014 and a grade 10-12 version piloting September 2014. Passport for Life tools assess four components of physical literacy: Active Participation, Living Skills, Fitness Skills and Movement Skills. These assessment tools allow teachers to easily enter, manage and review student data online while also providing students and parents with individualized, user-friendly outputs (i.e., the Student Passport) (<http://www.phecanada.ca>).

The Active Participation student questionnaire is designed to provide insight into the diversity of activities and environments that the student participates in and also detects the student's future activity interests.

Living skills contribute to the overall confidence and competence an individual needs to improve physical literacy. The Living Skills section is an individual self-report questionnaire. It is intended to provide a general reflection of the feeling, thinking, and interacting skills students need to make healthy active choices—ones that are both beneficial to and respectful of their whole self, others and their environment.

The Fitness Skills and Movement Skills assessments objectively measure student performance across a variety of tasks. Students are assessed using a teacher rubric for each task and assigned one of four levels: emerging, developing, acquired or accomplished. Based on curricular expectations, the desired level for students to achieve is *acquired*.

The Passport for Life is a formative assessment tool (an assessment for learning, not of learning) to support students and teachers in establishing individual (student) and program (teacher) goals to improve physical literacy throughout the school year. Following the *initial* assessments early in the school year, students develop goals based on their individual results and take part in a *check-in* assessment near the end of the school year to assess the level of achievement and improvement of physical literacy.

Age or Grades:	Grade 3 to 6, Grade 7 to 9, and 10 to 12 anticipated
Primary Use:	Formative Assessment in Education System
Secondary Uses:	Engagement and Awareness
Assessment:	Movement, Active Participation, Living Skills, Fitness Skills and Movement Skills; both objective assessments and self-report
Equipment & Space:	Gymnasium space with various balls/pylons and computers with internet access
Assessment Time:	1 class for both self-reports (Active Participation & Living Skills) 1 class for fitness skills assessment 1 class for movement skills assessment

## Physical Literacy Assessment for Youth (PLAY) Tools

This suite of tools includes;

1. PLAY Fun – an objective assessment of movement vocabulary (18 tasks), movement competence, confidence and comprehension
2. PLAY Basic – a short form of PLAY Fun
3. PLAY Self – a child’s self-report of their own physical literacy
4. PLAY Inventory – a checklist of a child’s activities
5. PLAY Parent – a parental assessment of their child’s physical literacy
6. PLAY Coach – a surrogate recall assessment of a child’s physical literacy that can be employed by coaches, recreation leaders, physical educators, etc.

The PLAY tools were originally designed for research but have excellent fit with program evaluation settings since the evaluation burden is minimal (short time to complete assessment, easily accessible equipment and minimal training). The tools have very good to excellent reliability, strong validity, are easy to interpret and are very sensitive to change. The PLAY Fun tool does not exhibit “ceiling effects” so it can be employed over a very large range of ages and abilities. A special scale was designed for the PLAY Fun tool that allows for rapid assessment of motor competence of 18 movement skills.

This tool was developed at the University of Manitoba and deployed by Canadian Sport for Life (<http://canadiansportforlife.ca>).

Age or Grades:	Ages 7 to Adult
Primary Use:	Research and Program Evaluation
Secondary Uses:	Advanced Formative Assessment, Screening, Surveillance, Engagement
Assessment:	Movement vocabulary, movement competence, movement comprehension, movement confidence, participation, self-efficacy and esteem; objective assessments and self and surrogate reports
Equipment & Space:	Gymnasium like space with various balls, sticks, and pylons
Assessment Time:	Objective assessment 10-15 children per hour Self and surrogate reports are under 15 minutes each

## Fundamental Movement Skills Assessment Tool

The FMS (Fundamental Movement Skills) assessment tool was designed to allow a parent or the general public (no special movement skills knowledge required) to assess a child's motor competence. The tool uses a unique visually guided method to facilitate assessment of the movement skills by allowing visual comparison of four different levels of performance for each skill: Emerging, Developing, Acquired and Accomplished. Although there are a total of 15 movements to assess, the team has prioritized and identified the key 6 on which the assessment is based. The assessor determines which video matches the current performance of the child and places the corresponding identification in the chart. Interestingly, the videos provide models for progression and this assessment terminology is perfectly consistent with that employed by Passport for Life.

The tool is designed to be used in association with the 60 minute Kids' Club tracker system (<http://60minkidsclub.org>), but is currently open for use by anyone who registers.

Age or Grades:	Ages 5 to 12 (Grades K to 6)
Primary Use:	Formative assessment by parent or in "at or after" school programs
Secondary Uses:	Engagement
Assessment:	Movement competence in 6 skills (four levels)
Equipment & Space:	Gymnasium like space with various balls, sticks, mats, pylons
Assessment Time:	Approximately 6 minutes per child for all 6 skills

## Why do we need physical literacy assessment tools?

Tools can be used for a variety of purposes, and in the case of the three Canadian assessment tools this is no exception.

Top ten purposes...

1. activity – children, parents and instructors understand individual’s physical literacy
2. program design – ensures activities contribute to developing physical literacy
3. research - answering a question scientifically
4. program evaluation – does your program do what it is supposed to do
5. formative assessment – what is the status of a child and where do we go from here
6. population surveillance – knowing the status of the population
7. screening – to determine deficits so they can be addressed
8. normative data – collecting data to create standards
9. awareness and engagement – understanding challenges and best practices
10. marketing – quantifying a societal issue with a measurable solution

Each one of the tools has the benefit of providing awareness to the assessor, the child, parents and others. The simple use of the tool also engages the person into the physical literacy journey.

## Different Scales for Different Purposes

Passport For Life, PLAY Tools and the FMS Assessment tool all evaluate motor competence in various movement skills and tasks.

The Passport for Life tool uses a four level holistic rubric - emerging developing, acquired and accomplished. These levels were chosen specifically to align with curricular objectives of the education systems. Children that achieve “acquired” have met the expectation, those with “accomplished” would exceed expectations.

The FMS Assessment tool uses identical terminology, and as such aligns with the approach adopted by Passport for Life.

The PLAY Fun tool has a scale, which has very similar terminology to that of Passport for Life (by design), but in order to avoid a ceiling effect, the upper end of the PLAY Fun scale is NOT limited to “exceeding expectations”. The upper end of the scale is set to expert mastery. This allows the PLAY Fun tool to be used over a broad age range and skill level. Roughly speaking, the first 75% of the PLAY Fun scale corresponds to the four levels of the Passport for Life scale.

## Summary

As Canadians, we have three comprehensive Canadian assessment tools designed to help assess various aspects of physical literacy, each of which is targeted to specific groups to create a seamless system for enhancing the physical literacy of our children and youth.

## Acknowledgement

This document was created by Canadian Sport for Life after consultation with PHE Canada and 60 Minute Kids Club.