

Teacher Test–Choice Guide



Use this guide to compare the test options in each fitness category. Choose the format that best fits your class time, space, equipment, and student needs. Teachers may make the choice for the whole class or allow students to select the option that feels like the best fit for them. If students are choosing, use the page at the end of this guide as a student-friendly handout to explain each option before they decide.

Core Strength: Sit-Ups vs. Plank

KEY FACTORS	SIT-UPS	PLANK
Equipment & Space	▪ Mats (optional) ▪ Stopwatch	▪ Mats (optional) ▪ Stopwatch
Time	Fixed 1 minute (everyone finishes together)	Hold times vary (more than 2 minutes for top scores)
Pros/Cons	Pros: ▪ Fast ▪ Easy to pace as a group Cons: ▪ Poor form can strain the lower back ▪ Some students may score zero	Pros: ▪ Less strain on the back/hip flexors ▪ Builds core stability that many sports use Cons: ▪ Requires multiple stopwatches or a timer everyone can see

Cardiovascular Fitness: 1-Mile Run vs. 20-Meter Beep Test

KEY FACTORS	1-MILE RUN	20-METER BEEP TEST
Equipment & Space	▪ A track, field, or gym with a marked and measured 1-mile course ▪ Stopwatch	▪ 20-meter space ▪ Audio track ▪ Speaker
Time	Finishes in waves (about 7 to more than 20 minutes)	Students stop when they can no longer keep the pace (maximum duration is about 22 minutes)
Pros/Cons	Pros: ▪ Familiar format ▪ Simple logistics ▪ Teaches pacing strategy Cons: ▪ Difficult to ensure students complete the required course ▪ Slower finishers may feel singled out as classmates watch	Pros: ▪ Requires less space ▪ Audio-paced, no manual timing Cons: ▪ Needs working audio gear ▪ Students may be uncomfortable with the effort required at the end of the test

Upper Body Strength: Push-Ups vs. Pull-Ups

KEY FACTORS	PUSH-UPS	PULL-UPS
Equipment & Space	▪ Mats (optional) ▪ Stopwatch	▪ Pull-up bar ▪ Mats (optional)
Time	Fixed 1 minute (everyone finishes together)	Typically less than 1 minute
Pros/Cons	Pros: ▪ Many students can complete at least one repetition ▪ Faster for big classes Cons: ▪ Proper form and cadence can be challenging	Pros: ▪ Targets pulling muscles (back, lats, biceps) that push-ups don't Cons: ▪ Limited by the number of pull-up bars ▪ Many students may score zero

Pick Your Test!

You get to choose! Read both options in each table, think about the kind of challenge you want, and pick the test that matches your strengths, goals, or comfort level. There is no “easy” or “right” choice.

Core Strength: Sit-Ups vs. Plank

TEST	WHAT IT'S LIKE	WHAT SOUNDS MORE LIKE YOU?
Sit-Ups	Non-stop sit-ups for 60 seconds — it burns by the end, but it's over quick!	I like counting reps and want to be done fast.
Plank	Hold your body in a straight line for as long as you can — it gets real the longer you hold it!	I like a challenge that tests my strength and stability.

Cardiovascular Endurance: 1-Mile Run vs. 20-Meter Beep Test

TEST	WHAT IT'S LIKE	WHAT SOUNDS MORE LIKE YOU?
1-Mile Run	A steadywalk, wheel, jog, or run for a mile — pace yourself or you'll wear yourself out.	I like a consistent pace from start to finish.
20-Meter Beep Test	Sprint to the line before the beep — you'll need to get faster until you can't keep up.	I like short sprints with quick breaks.

Upper Body Strength: Push-Ups vs. Pull-Ups

TEST	WHAT IT'S LIKE	WHAT SOUNDS MORE LIKE YOU?
Push-Ups	Bend your elbows to 90°, push back up, keep your body straight — find a rhythm and do as many as you can.	I want a test that rewards doing a lot of reps.
Pull-Ups	Pull your chin above the bar, lower down with control — even a few repetitions are impressive.	I like a test that emphasizes pull-up strength and I have practiced pull-ups before.