



CANADIAN OLYMPIC ACTIVITY CHALLENGE



LUGE

Remember the speed you reached when you last went tobogganing with your friends? Well that's nothing compared to the breakneck speeds reached in the luge. Imagine sledding down a banked track of ice feet-first on a small sled at up to 154km/hour and you'd get the idea of what it's like to do the luge. The racing is so fast, that they have to time it to the 1/1000ths of a second!

Luge is one of the oldest winter sports, but it wasn't until 1964 that it was added to the program of the Olympic Winter Games. The athletes launch themselves from the start, and use spiked gloves to help them push off the ice to gain speed. They then slide on their backs on a small sled, steering with their body weight by leaning in the direction they want to go. The fastest time from the start to the finish lines determines the winner.

As the lugers wind their way around the twisty track, they experience five times the force of gravity. The athletes must endure the pressure while steering their sled and avoiding a crash. Although they all wear helmets for safety, a crash at high speeds can be deadly.

The lugers compete in singles, doubles and relay events. While Canada has never won an Olympic medal in the sport of luge, we placed fourth three times at Sochi 2014. Could PyeongChang 2018 be our turn to win gold?

Visit <http://www.luge.ca> to learn more about luge.



LUGE TRIVIA

HIGHLIGHTS



Alex Gough

- The fastest luge speed was recorded in Whistler, BC, when Manuel Pfister of Austria reached 154km per hour.
- Canada placed 4th in the Sochi 2014 luge relay. The relay starts with the women's singles, and the luger hits a touch pad when they cross the finish. This signals to the athlete doing the men's singles who also hits the touch pad to start the doubles team. The times are combined for an overall team time.
- Germany is the most dominant country in the sport of luge. Of the 44 Olympic gold medals won since 1964, 31 have been won by Germans.

FEATURED ATHLETE



SAM EDNEY

OLYMPIAN, SOCHI 2014

When Sam Edney's grade nine gym teacher suggested that he'd be good at the luge, he decided to give it a try. It didn't take long for the excitement of the high speeds and traveling to get him hooked on the sport. Since then, Sam has become the best Men's singles slider in Canadian history. He was the first to win a World Cup gold and has the highest ever men's singles finish at the Olympic Games (7th). His greatest success has come in the mixed team. His lightning-fast reaction time is a huge part of the team's success. The Canadian relay team have won a silver and three bronze medals at the World Championships.

Learn more about Sam or other Canadian lugers at www.olympic.ca.

LUGE ACTIVITIES

Described below are luge daily physical activities that can be used in the classroom and gym. Have fun!

LUGE SCOOTER RELAY

The luge relay includes the women's singles, the men's singles, and the men's doubles. Each athlete races down the track and tags a touch pad at the bottom that signals the start for their next teammate. In this activity, students will have a three-person relay using a scooter board.

 **Participants:** teams of three

 **Space:** gym or hallway

 **Equipment:** scooter(s) and pylons

SET UP:

Set up pylons to mark a start and finish line about 10-15m apart.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:


- The first student sits on the scooter in the luge race start position.
- On the command of go, they use their hands to claw against the gym floor to propel themselves towards the finish line.
- Once across the finish line, they trade places with their teammate, who claws across the course towards the start line.
- They tag the final person in their team who claws to the finish pylon. Their time is recorded.
- Each team gets a chance to do the relay and times from all teams are compared.


ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:


- Add another person to the team. The last leg must be a luge doubles where two students must travel on the scooter board at once.
- Races and time trials add a fun, competitive element to this activity.

BENCH START

The luge is timed to the 1/1000^{ths} of a second, and winners can be determined by the smallest of margins. The luger has to make the most of the start and gain as much momentum from pulling themselves past the start handles at the sides of the start ramp. This activity allows the students to practice a luge race start technique.

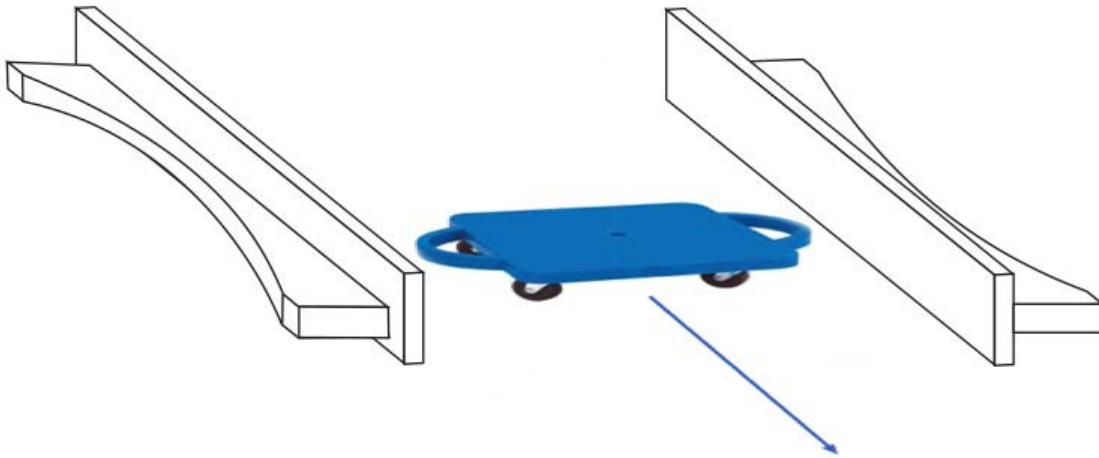
 **Participants:** individuals

 **Space:** gym or hallway

 **Equipment:** two benches and a scooter

SET UP:

The benches are placed parallel to each other. The width between the benches should be slightly larger than the width of the scooter.



ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:


- Have students start by sitting on the scooter at the end of the benches. Students should extend their legs out in front of them.
- The student grips the end of the two benches with their hands.
- They roll forward and back three times to create some momentum.
- On the third and final rock, they pull back and release the benches, rolling forward as far as they can with the momentum they have generated.
- Use some masking tape to mark on the gym floor the record for distance achieved using this starting technique.


ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:


Add up the total distance covered by the class and challenge another class in the school.

LUGE SLIDER

Lugers speed down the iced track at up to 154km/hr. Holding an aerodynamic form, allows them to navigate the curved track and gain speed. Their arms are held at their sides, legs are straight, toes rotated inwards, and head raised to see where they are going. In this activity, students get a chance to experience holding the luge position while being pulled by a fellow student.

 **Participants:** teams of three

 **Space:** clean gym floor

 **Equipment:** PE parachutes and pylons

SET UP:

- Mark the start/finish and a turn-around point using a pylon. These should be about 20m apart.
- Place another pylon 5m after the start.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Student sits down on a parachute in the “start position.” Their legs are straight out in front, and their hands prepare to “claw” at the floor. Two other students pick up the front of the parachute and prepare to pull the athlete.
- On “Go!” the parachute is pulled fast, while the slider “claws fast”. When the parachute passes the 5m pylon, the slider lies down on the parachute, arms, head, and legs in a streamline position and enjoys the ride! Les coéquipiers tirent le parachute autour du cône de demi-tour avant de poursuivre vers la ligne d’arrivée.
- Teammates pull the parachute around the turn-around pylon, and back to the finish line.
- If there are more than one parachute available, the activity is done as a race between teams. If there is only one, then the students are timed.

ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:

- Complete this as a relay where each member of the team gets a chance to be pulled around.
- Add more pylons to make the course twisty like a luge track.

BRINGING IT TO THE CLASSROOM

Use the Internet to research interviews with luge athletes. Use their comments and descriptions to write a short story imagining what it was like the very first time they raced down a luge track.

INSTANT ACTIVITY:

Only have a minute of classroom time to get up and be active? This activity will get the heart pumping. Ab Holds help work the core muscles that lugers need to get a good start.

While sitting in your desk, grab the sides of the seat. Lift your body off the chair and hold your knees up under your desk. How long can you hold this position?