

Name of Activity	Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Movement Concepts	Curricular Concepts
Balance Challenge		■		Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy, directional concepts
Bridges and Tunnels	■	■		Spatial awareness, body awareness, relationship awareness	Cooperative play, language & literacy
Loose Feathers	■			Spatial awareness, effort awareness, relationship awareness	Language & literacy, numeracy, science
A Rainbow of Fun	■	■	■	Relationship awareness	Language & literacy, numeracy
Freeze Game	■	■		Spatial awareness, effort awareness	Language & literacy, listening skills
Hoop Bounce			■	Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy
Hop-a-thon	■	■		Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy
Inchworm Wiggle	■	■		Spatial awareness, body awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy, relationships
Jump like a Frog		■		Spatial awareness, effort awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy
Lean on Me		■		Relationship awareness	Cooperative play
Over the River	■	■		Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy
Beginning Soccer	■	■	■	Spatial awareness, effort awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy, cooperative play

Physical Development of Preschoolers

Preschoolers (3-5 year olds) have significant changes in physical growth and motor development. Children get taller, stronger, and more coordinated. They acquire gross motor skills (abilities to use the large muscles) and fine motor skills (small-muscle abilities) in a predictable sequence. Girls and boys show different patterns of physical growth and motor activity; boys tend toward better gross motor skills than girls of the same age. Children are becoming more skilled at running, jumping, early throwing, and kicking. They should be able to catch a bounced ball, pedal a tricycle (at 3 years); become able to steer well at around age 4, hop on one foot (at around 4 years), and later balance on one foot for up to 5 seconds. They love to run and climb. Children learn best when an activity is fun, so be sure to focus on the positive to keep children interested in moving. These activities are fun ways to increase a child's strength, endurance, and skills.

Equipment and Loose Parts List

Bandanas or feathers to use as tails	Milk jugs or other containers (empty)
Beach accessories	Music
Bean bags	Natural items (such as sticks, stones, pine cones, etc.)
Blocks to jump off of	Scarves
Boxes/baskets	Slow-Mo ball
Cards of different colors with pictures of activities on them	Small balls
Colored floor spots	Soft toys
Cones	Tape
Chalk	Paper plates
Duct tape	Picnic accessories
Fish toys or fish cut-outs	Racquets
Floor markers or carpet squares	Small cars or trucks
Foam noodles	Tin cans (without sharp edges – use duct tape to cover)
Foot cut-outs	
Hula hoops	
Large balls (such as beach balls, foam balls, playground balls)	

Balance Challenge: Balancing on one foot

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

Equipment:

Bean bags, line on floor or balance beam

Instructions:

"Glide the Bird likes challenges. She wants to see if she can stand on one leg. First she tries balancing on one leg. She starts out kind of wobbly, but after practicing she gets it. Then she tries the other leg – that is really hard! Can you stand on one leg?"

- Put different color floor markers around the play area.
- Have the children stand on one leg — count out loud how long they can stand.
- Then have children try to stand on the other leg. Count how long they stand on each leg.
- Are they better on one leg than the other?

Tips:

- Children need to be able to stand on one leg before they can hop on one leg.
- Take it outdoors. Have children hop around — make up a story or song to go with hopping. Try balancing on a tree stump, a large rock, or other natural things.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- If children have difficulty bending one leg and standing on the other leg, have them extend one leg forward instead and stand on the other leg.
- If children are having trouble standing on one leg, have them use a partner or hold onto a wall to help at first.
- Use a story like this one. (You will need fish toys or cut-outs.) Tell the children that they are young storks just learning how to balance on one leg. *"Pretend you are a young stork standing in the water on one leg. Let's stand on one leg without moving until all of the fish are caught."* Have the children "catch" the fish by slowly passing out a fish to each child. It is okay if they need to briefly put the other foot down and then go back to balancing. Advance this by putting the fish on the floor or a table and have the children pick them up while standing on one leg.
- Have the child try standing on one leg while you place a bean bag on his/her head. How long can he/she balance?
- Have the child try standing on one leg on a line or a balance beam.

CUE WORDS

- Keep your arms out
- Eyes forward
- Knee bent
- Keep your head up
- Stand on one leg

MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy, directional concepts
—	Balancing, stabilizing	—		

Bridges and Tunnels

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Equipment:

Small cars (optional)

Instructions:

"Blue the Caring Cub is riding in a car. He comes to a fork in the road and can either go under a bridge to the right or through a tunnel to the left. Let's pretend that we are the bridge that Blue needs to go under or the tunnel that he needs to go through."

CUE WORDS

- Under
- Over
- High
- Low
- Through
- Middle
- Bottom up
- Belly button up

Tunnels

"First let me show you how to make a tunnel." Demonstrate hands and feet on ground, bottom up, making tunnel.)

"Now let's make our tunnel."

- If the child or children are physically able, have one child bend forward (see below) so that hands and feet are on the ground to form a tunnel. Encourage other children to crawl under the tunnel.

"Who can bend like this to make a tunnel?"

- One child forms a tunnel by touching the ground with feet and hands or by getting down onto hands and knees.

"That is a great tunnel. Now, who can go through the tunnel?"

- The other children creep, crawl, or scoot through the tunnel or send a play car through the tunnel.



Bridges

"Now we are going to make bridges."

- *"First let me show you how to make a bridge."* Demonstrate making a bridge by sitting on ground. Place hands/feet flat on ground. Push bottom off ground so that your belly button is facing the ceiling or sky.

"Who can bend like this to make a bridge?"

"Now let's make a bridge and go under the bridge!"

- One child forms a bridge by sitting with his/her hands and feet flat on the ground and pushing his/her bottom in the air.
- The other children creep, crawl or scoot under the bridge or send a play car under the bridge.

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MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, body awareness, relationship awareness	Cooperative play, language & literacy
Creep, crawl, scoot	Bending, stretching, curling	—		

Bridges and Tunnels continued

Tips:

- If children seem unsteady and you are not sure they will hold up while other children crawl under, use a toy car and send that through the tunnel or bridge.
- At first you may need to help children maintain position.
- If child cannot make a tunnel on his/her hands and feet, start by kneeling using knees and hands.
- Make note of approximately how many times the child can perform the activity or how long the child holds up the bridge or tunnel. Encourage more repetitions or more time over several weeks to develop muscular strength and endurance.
- Encourage bridges and tunnels to be rigid and strong while people and objects pass under and through.
- Try it outdoors on a grassy surface or using hills, trees, or other elements to help make the bridge or tunnel.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Start with just one child as the tunnel and bridge. Add other children to make it longer once children seem able to maintain the position for longer periods of time.
- Try making tunnels and bridges using walls or other objects such as chairs or tables by placing feet or hands on wall and having other children go under.
- **For advanced children**, once they go under the tunnel, have each child extend the tunnel (by forming a tunnel next to the person who has already made a tunnel).

Equipment:

Scarves, socks, or bandanas

Instructions:

Glide the Bird has lots of feathers. Some of her feathers form a tail. All birds have feathers that sometimes fall out. Today we are going to pretend that we are very fast birds with loose feathers in our tails. Other birds are going to chase us and try to catch the loose feathers while we are chasing them."

"Each of you will have a feather (or scarf/sock) which you will tuck into the back of your pants. This is your feather tail."

Have each child tuck a scarf or sock or feather into their waistband. This is their "loose feather."

- Have children scatter around the playing area. Show children where the boundaries are where they may run. When you shout "Go!" the children chase each other, trying to grab someone's "feather." After grabbing a "feather" the child throws the "feather" onto the ground.
- Once a child loses his/her "feather," he/she can pick up a "feather" from the ground, go to a safe area and re-tuck the "feather." Then the child can rejoin the game.

Tips:

- No sitting on or hiding of tail feathers.
- Define the play area outdoors so children know where they can run.
- Define a safe area where children can go after losing their tail so they can put in a new tail. They then rejoin the game.
- This is a great activity to do with a heart check – before and after running.
- This is a great outdoor activity for a large, open grassy area.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Use different themes — if you are studying dinosaurs, make the items dinosaur tails or dragon tails.
- Vary speeds, levels and types of locomotor movements.
- Adjust the space by making it larger or smaller to strengthen spatial awareness.



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, effort awareness, relationship awareness	Language & literacy, numeracy, science
Running, chasing, fleeing, dodging	—	—		

Equipment:

Cards of different colors with pictures of activities on them, floor markers, ball, balance beam or tape, noodles, hula hoops, bean bags

CUE WORDS

- Can vary for each skill such as balance or throw overhand.

Instructions:

"Our Be Active Kids friends like to do lots of different things to move around and get their hearts beating faster. Leap the Rabbit likes to jump. She is on the green card. Blue the Caring Cub likes to hop. He is on the blue card. Swing the Monkey likes to throw. He is on the orange card. Glide the Bird likes to balance on things. She is on the yellow card. And Dart the Dog likes to kick the ball. He is on the purple card."

Give each student a different colored card with a picture of an activity they are to do on it (see activity list below). They are to perform the activity pictured on the card. Be sure to tell the child what to do each time they get a new card.

Card Color	Activity	Set-up	Directions
Green (Leap the Rabbit)	Jumping	Floor markers set up in a zigzag.	Child jumps on two feet from dot to dot.
Blue (Blue the Caring Cub)	Hopping	Two floor markers set 3 feet apart.	Child hops on one foot from dot to dot. Child turns around and jumps back on other foot.
Orange (Swing the Monkey)	Throwing	Set up three hula hoops on floor.	Give child three bean bags and have child throw one bag into each ring. Count as each bean bag is thrown.
Yellow (Glide the Bird)	Balance Beam	Tape on floor or 3-inch-high balance beam.	Child walks on beam.
Purple (Dart the Dog)	Kicking	Boxes or basket to kick into. Lines or markers at varying distances to stand on and kick from.	Have the child kick the ball into the basket. Vary distance as needed, increasing distance according to age and skill level.

Tips:

- If possible, have an adult at stations to help children. If there are not enough adults set up fewer stations.
- This can be an outdoor activity using various settings and natural Loose Parts such as a log to balance on.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- If child is unable to jump, he/she can step over the hurdles.
- Increase or decrease distances for each activity. Children with limited mobility can still throw, go around the play area in a wheelchair (assisted as needed), or go under a suspended noodle for hurdles.
- Some activities will be more difficult than others for children. For younger children use alternate activities as needed. To make activities more difficult, increase distances for jumping, throwing, etc., or add time limits or goals such as how far to throw.

MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Relationship awareness	Language & literacy (colors, activity words)
Hopping	Jumping, landing, balancing	Kicking, throwing		

Freeze Game

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Equipment:

Music (optional)

Instructions:

"Dart the Dog loves music. Every time he hears music he runs around. When the music stops playing, he stands still like a statue (freezes) in the position he was in. Let's move around when the music is playing and then 'freeze' when it stops. This is like what some hunting dogs do – they freeze and point when they see another animal." (Teacher demonstrates freezing.)

- *"First let's practice. Everyone stand up. When I say 'go' I want you to run in place as fast as you can. When I say 'freeze,' I want you to stop and stand still as a statue. Now, go!"* (Children run in place. After a few seconds say, "Freeze!")
- Have children practice the freeze position – knees bent, arms extended at their sides. (This can be any position — be creative).
- *"Good job. Now let's play the game around the room. I'll put on the music and you move around as fast as you can. When the music stops, you 'freeze' like a statue. Now, go! (music on) ... Freeze! (music off)."*

Tips:

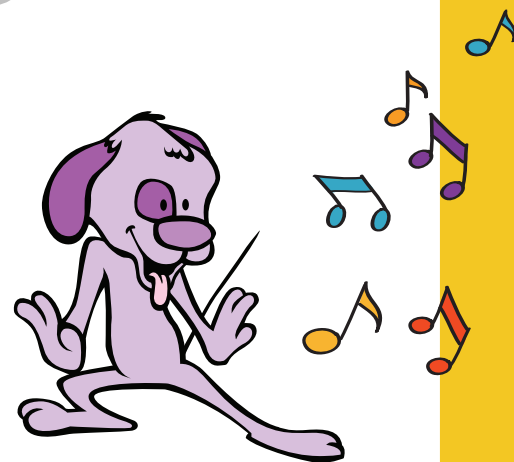
- **This is an important concept — knowing how to stop. Consider using this early in the physical activity program.**
- Try having the children move in the same direction at first to avoid bumping into each other.
- Keep this activity away from walls so children do not run into them.
- This is a good outdoor activity using open grassy areas or pathways. Try to incorporate other natural elements to freeze on such as stumps, hills, walls, etc.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Vary how children move. They can jump, hop, walk, crawl, creep, gallop, etc.
- Have children pretend they are different animals when they move.
- Make up a story in which children are moving and then freezing such as when a bear or alligator comes.
- For children with limited mobility, have them participate using a wheelchair or walker. They can freeze in their chair if they can move themselves; alternately they can move their arms and freeze on cue.
- Play Red Light, Green Light: Children move when you say "green light" and freeze when you say "red light."
- Use noises and visuals for stop and start. These will keep children's interest, especially children with disabilities or attention issues.

CUE WORDS

- Eyes forward
- Arms out
- Steady feet
- Watch for friends



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, effort awareness	Language & literacy, listening skills
Running (and various others)	Balancing	—		

Hoop Bounce

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

Equipment:

Large ball and hula hoop for every two children (one of each per child if possible)

Instructions:

"Swing the Monkey likes to bounce balls. We call this dribbling. He bounces the ball with one hand; he bounces it with two hands; he bounces the ball high with giant bounces; he bounces the ball low with small bounces. Swing bounces the balls so he can catch them. Sometimes he misses catching the ball and has to run after it. He likes to play ball with his other Be Active Kids friends and they take turns bouncing the ball. Let's bounce the balls like Swing does."

- Place hula hoops or spots of different colors in a circle on the floor.
- Have each child stand in front of a hoop/spot with a ball.
 - Have the child bounce the ball into the hoop/spot with two hands.
 - Have the child bounce the ball into the hoop/spot using the right hand.
 - Have the child bounce the ball into the hoop/spot using the left hand.
- When children have some skill bouncing balls, have children pair up and bounce pass to a friend. Have the children stand across from each other at each hoop/spot. Give half of the children a ball. Each child bounces the ball in the hoop/spot, catches it, and passes it on to the child across from him/her.

Tips:

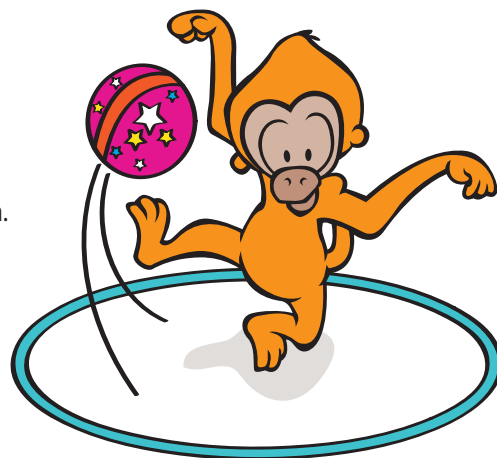
- Have children run to retrieve the ball if they do not catch it. Have children name the color of each hoop/spot.
- The hoops are used mainly for management so children will bounce in a specific area.
- Read a book such as *The Bouncy Ball* (a Lesson Learned book) by Hilda Cuervo and Alex Acayen.
- Take the activity outdoors and play on hard, even surfaces.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Vary the types, sizes, and textures of the balls but start first with a large ball.
- Give a ball to each child. Have hoops in a line or in different parts of the room. Have children bounce the ball in their hoop, retrieve the ball, and then run, skip, jump, etc. to the next hoop and repeat until children have completed the circuit.

CUE WORDS

- Forward
- Backward
- Push, not slap
- Fingerpads



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Language & literacy (colors)
—	—	Hand dribbling		

Equipment:

Floor markers, tape

Instructions:

(To be done after Balance Challenge activity)

"An ostrich is an animal that has two legs and two feet. Sometimes it stands on just one foot.

A stork is a bird that sometimes stands on one foot, too. Let's pretend that we are ostriches or storks and stand on one foot."

- Practice standing on one foot first. Have children in a circle. On the count of three, have children raise one foot, hands on hips, and count how long they can stand.
- *"Now let's hop on one foot."*
- Switch feet. Start on two feet, raise one foot and hold. Now try hopping on this foot.
- Put two lines of tape (or markers) 3 feet apart with a bean bag at the second line. Hop from one line to the other, pick up bean bag, and hop back.

Tips:

- Use several sets of lines to decrease waiting time.
- If standing on one foot with hands on hips is challenging, have children hold arms out to their sides to aid balance. Children may need to be held until they can get their balance. Allow children to hold onto an adult or the back of a stable chair and then let go.
- Slightly bent knees help with balance.
- Hopping on one foot can be challenging — it involves balance and core strength. Encourage children to hop, even if it is only an inch or two.

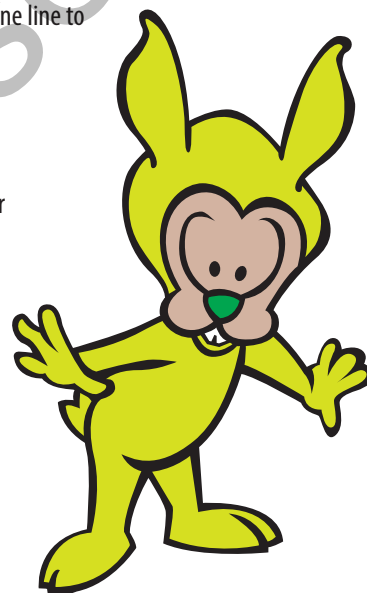
Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Hopping on one foot — start by hopping on one foot in place. Then hop forward five steps. Try turning and hopping back on the other foot!
- This can be done as part of an obstacle course in which the child picks up a bean bag, hops to the next element of the obstacle course, and drops the bean bag into a basket.
- Play Hopscotch hopping on one foot.

Hopscotch: This is an appropriate outdoor activity. Draw a traditional Hopscotch grid with chalk on concrete or create your own grid design. Number the sections one through eight and find a stone or bean bag to throw. Have each child toss the stone or bean bag on a numbered square (child calls out the number) and hop from one number to the next without hopping in the square with the stone. The child should then turn around and hop back to square one, stopping to pick up the stone.

CUE WORDS

- Knees bent
- Arms out to the side
- Push up with your toes



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, body awareness	Numeracy
Hopping	Jumping, landing, balancing	—		

Inchworm Wiggle

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

Equipment:

None

Instructions:

"Glide the Bird saw a worm crawling along on the ground. She was curious —how did the worm move without any legs? So she asked the worm, 'How do you move?' The worm said, 'I wiggle along the ground to get around.' 'Wow, thought Glide, 'I wonder if I can wiggle like a worm?'"

- Start by getting on the ground and wiggling and squirming like a worm.
- "Now let's pretend we are inchworms and play *Inchworm Wiggle*." Let me show you how an inchworm moves."
- (Model while talking.) "First, walk your hands forward. Now keep your hands still and walk your feet forward. Repeat — walk your hands forward again and then your feet again."
- "Now you try doing the *Inchworm Wiggle*. First bend over and put your hands and feet on the ground."
- "Walk with your hands, then walk with your feet."
- "Great, now inchworm to the (name a piece of equipment: bean bags, balance beam, etc.)."

Tips:

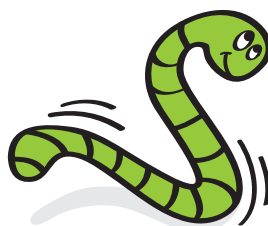
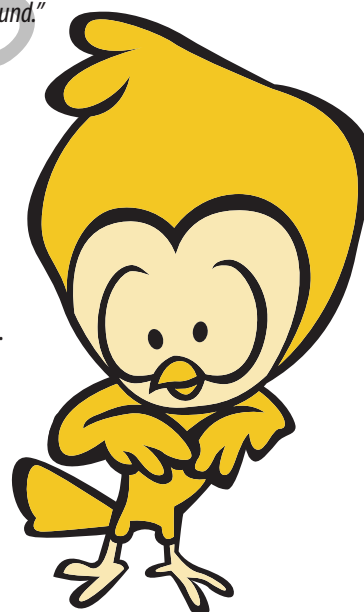
- Have children count how many "wiggles" (how many times their hands and feet come back together) it takes to get across the open space.
- Connect to science — talk about what worms do in the garden.
- Try a worm story such as *Giggly Wiggly Worms: A Wiggly Finger Puppet Book* by Neecy Twinem.
- This is a great outdoor activity to imitate critters in the natural environment.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Have children name other animals that move on the ground.
Can the children become snakes or bugs or caterpillars?
- Have the children connect to another child or several children and move like a millipede.

CUE WORDS

- Low
- Hands walk (bottom down)
- Feet walk (bottom up)



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, body awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy (body parts)
Creeping, crawling	Bending, stretching, transferring weight	—		

Jump like a Frog

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

Equipment:

Floor markers, tape, block or low platform

Instructions:

"Blue the Caring Cub likes to pretend he is another animal. He likes to pretend he is a frog jumping around. Let's play some jumping games that Blue would play."

CUE WORDS

- Bend knees
- Swing arms
- Explode/push off
- Hooray

Jumping for Distance

- *"First Blue wants to see how far he can jump. When Blue pretends he is a frog he likes to jump into puddles. These markers on the floor are the puddles he likes to jump into. He jumps to the first puddle then tries to jump to the one further away. Let's see how far we can jump."*
- Place floor markers (or tape lines) at 6-inch intervals for 4 feet.
- Have children stand on the starting mark, bend knees, and jump to the next marker. Have them raise their hands in the air and say, *"Hooray!"* Repeat.
- Increase the distance between markers as children's skill improves.

Jumping Down

(This allows children some challenge and risk and may allows them to learn how to fall down safely.)

"Blue also likes to jump down. Let's jump down like Blue."

- Children will be practicing jumping from a height and landing.
- Start with children stepping off a low block or platform. Try this on a mat or grass first.
- Increase height from which children are jumping.
- Take the activity outdoors and jump down in safe places, try to find a tree stump or log to jump from. Vary the heights of the stumps or other objects.

Vertical Jump

"Blue's friend Glide the Bird flies up. Blue wants to see if he can get up in the air like Glide does, but he will jump up instead of flying."

- Put stickers, lines, stars, etc. numbered 1, 2, and 3 on the wall at 6-inch vertical intervals starting at a point that a child's extended arm can reach. With children standing sideways to the wall, have them practice jumping up and touching the highest sticker on the wall that they can. (Avoid facing the wall so the child does not jump into it.)
- Outdoors, use trees and branches to jump up to.



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MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Space awareness, relationship awareness, effort awareness	Numeracy, language & literacy (relationships [on/off])
—	Jumping, landing	—		

Jump like a Frog continued

Tips:

- Have a number of stations or break class into groups to decrease waiting time.
- When jumping forward, arms extend behind the body as knees and hips bend. Legs extend forcefully with arms extending forward and upward at the same time. Body leans slightly forward. Landing should be on both feet.
- Vertical jump: Progress to greater heights. Knees should be bent when taking off and landing.
- Be aware of any rules or regulations that may be related to children jumping from heights and landing surfaces.
- These are great activities to take outdoors using stumps, hills, trees, etc. to practice jumping up to, over, off, and more.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Place hula hoops around the room. Play music and have the children walk around the room. When the music stops, have each child jump into a hoop. The children jump in and out of the hoops until the music starts again. When the music starts children resume walking until music stops again.
- Set up floor markers in a zigzag course — have children jump from dot to dot.
- Take the activity outdoors and play Hopscotch. Draw a Hopscotch court on the pavement. Have children jump from square to square.

Equipment:

None

Instructions:

“Leap the Rabbit and Swing the Monkey decided to play a game. They sit back-to-back holding each other’s arms. Then they try to get up. It is really hard and they laugh a lot as they try to stand.”

- Pair up the children — match partners for size.
- Have the children sit back-to-back and link arms.
- Now have them try to stand up.
- If they are able to stand up, have them try sitting down with their arms linked.

Tips:

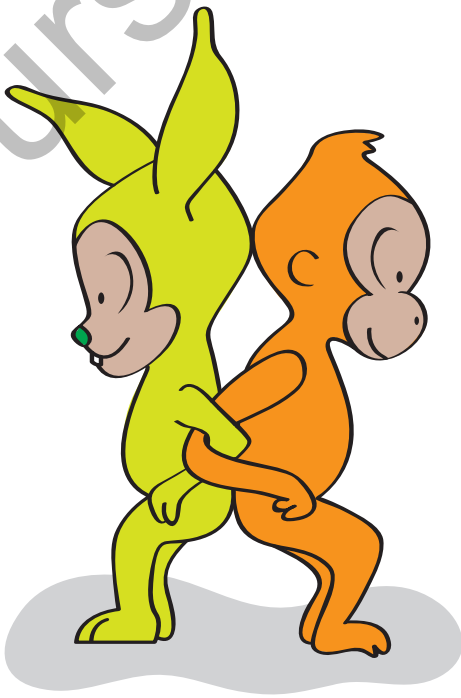
- This is not as easy as it looks! There will be lots of falling over and laughter.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- If children cannot get up using their partner’s back, have them try to get up by themselves without pushing up with their hands.
- Try other partner-connected ways to get up:
 - Facing each other
 - Side to side

CUE WORDS

- Push
- Lift
- Help



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Relationship awareness	Cooperative play
—	Balancing, transferring weight	—		

Over the River:

Sideways jumping (two-footed jump)

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

Equipment:

Tape on floor or chalk line or foam noodles

Instructions:

"The river is rushing through the yard. Swing the Monkey wants to get to the other side but does not have any trees to swing from. He will have to jump over the river. Swing cannot leap forward so he decides to jump over it sideways. Let's jump over the river and back like Swing."

- *"This line (or foam noodle) is a river. Let's jump across it without getting wet."*
 - First have children walk over the "river" with two feet.
 - Next have children walk sideways over the river.
 - Have children jump back and forth over the "river." Count how many cycles the children jump.

Tips:

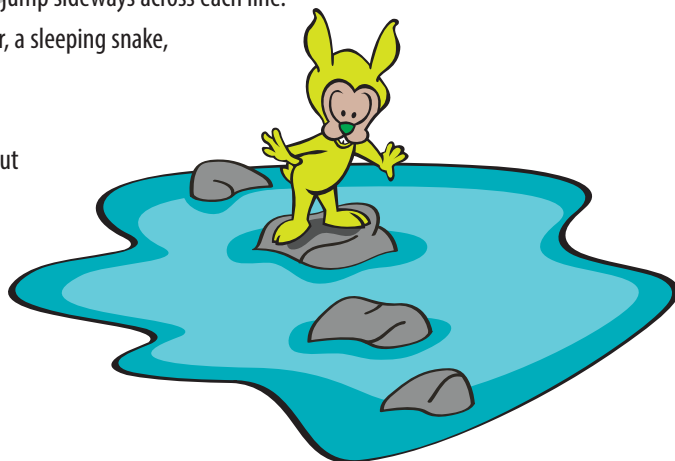
- Note whether children step over one foot at a time or whether they jump with both feet.
- Make up a story where children have to jump across a river or a crack.
- This is a great outdoor activity. Have children jump over real life things found outdoors such as logs, small streams, puddles, etc.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- For children who are having difficulty jumping sideways, have them side step over the "river."
- Set up a series of parallel lines with tape or chalk. Have children jump sideways across each line.
- Have children pretend the line is quicksand, gooey peanut butter, a sleeping snake, or an alligator that they have to jump over.
- Have children pretend they are kangaroos jumping sideways.
- Set up tape in a square or circle and have children jump in and out of the square or circle all the way around.

CUE WORDS

- Bend knees
- Jump
- Both feet



MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, relationship awareness	Numeracy
Leaping	Jumping, landing	—		

Beginning Soccer

BE ACTIVE KIDS®

Equipment:

Balls (beach ball, Slo-Mo ball, junior-size soccer ball, playground ball), cones or markers, soccer net if available

Instructions:

This activity combines the skills used in playing soccer. It begins with basic kicking then adds skills such as kicking for distance and accuracy. This should be done over several days, adding activities as skills are learned.

"All of our Be Active Kids friends like to run around and have fun playing games. Today they decide they want to practice some of the things that they need to know to play soccer."

Introductory Skill: Kicking

Our Be Active friends want to see if we can kick a ball into a goal. The box (or basket) is the goal. Can you kick the ball in?"

CUE WORDS

- Step
- Arms out
- Bend knee
- Swing leg

A. Kick it In

1. Place a large ball such as a beach ball or playground ball in front of the child.
2. Place a large box or laundry basket sideways (large enough so ball can fit into it) about 2 feet away.
3. Demonstrate kicking the ball into the box or basket. Remind the children that kicking should include bending their knee when they kick.
4. Have the child kick the ball.
5. Retrieve the ball and place it in front of the next child.
 - Increase the distance from the box or basket as skill increases.
 - Have the children run to retrieve the ball.
 - Have the children run to the ball to kick it toward you.
 - Position targets around the perimeter of the room and have children kick toward them.

B. Kick it Over

"Next, our friends want to play a kind of bowling game but instead of rolling the ball they are going to kick it to knock over the targets."

1. Set up empty plastic milk gallons (or anything that is easy to knock over) in a group of three.
2. Put balls on the floor in front of the child.
3. Have children kick the ball to knock over the containers. Count how many items have been knocked over.

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MOTOR SKILLS			MOVEMENT CONCEPTS	CURRICULAR CONCEPTS
Locomotor	Non-locomotor	Manipulative	Spatial awareness, effort awareness, relationship awareness	Cooperative play, language & literacy
Running	Bending	Kicking		

Beginning Soccer *continued*

A. Kick it Through

"Now our friends are going to see if they can kick the ball through the cones. They also want to see how far they can kick the ball."

- Set up kicking areas around the play area. Have children jog between activities.

NOTE: It is helpful to have an adult at each station.

- **Station 1: Kicking for accuracy** — Set up cones (or milk jugs). Put a starting line 10 feet away. Have the child kick the ball through the cones. The child then retrieves the ball and puts it back at the starting area.
- **Station 2: Kicking for Distance** — Set up markers at increasing distances across the field. Have a child kick as far as he/she can. Then have the child retrieve the ball and jog to the next station.
 - Cones or markers can be placed at varying distances. Encourage children to kick as far as they can. Alternatively mark lines in chalk and number them.
 - Assign points to each marker, increasing with their distance. Help the children keep track of how far they can kick.
 - If a goal is available, have children kick into the goal, increasing the distance with each turn.

Tips:

- Start with a large target such as a wall or fence.
- The child's eyes should be focused on the ball.
- The non-kicking foot should be positioned just behind and to the side of the ball.
- The kicking leg should bend at the knee for a back swing and should follow through.
- The opposite arm swings forward as the ball is kicked.
- Older children should be able to kick the ball into the air, not just along the ground.
- The body leans forward just before and during the kick.
- Adapt activities to individual child's level; vary the distances to be kicked by the child's ability.
- If using stations, have an adult at each station.
- You can define the playing field with tape or chalk. Children should not run across playing field to retrieve the ball.

Alternatives/Adaptations:

- Roll the ball to the child and then have him/her kick it.
- Pair up children — have them kick the ball back and forth to each other. Remind children not to kick too hard.
- Play a game of Run the Bases: Set up bases and have the children run around the bases after they kick the ball.
- Children who are seated can still hit the ball with their hands. Suspend a ball from a pipe or piece of string. Place at a height where they can reach it when they swing.
- Put bells on a string and tie around child's ankle so they jingle when they kick.
- Bells in targets or visuals make success more exciting!
- For children with limited mobility in their legs, have them knock over things on a table with their arms and count them.
- This is a great outdoor activity for large areas. Using hills can help increase the challenge. Use walls, trees, or fences as targets.
- Can remove some air from balls to slow them down for children having trouble.