

Classroom or Large Space Activities

Suggested grade level: K-5

ANIMALS MOVE

Formation: Standing in the aisles between desks or scattered

Players: Entire class

Supplies: None

The player who is it stands at the front of the room and calls out the name of animal, bird, fish, or reptile, and a movement. For instance, the leader might call out, "Horses fly. Birds crawl. Salmon swim." When the leader states a correct relationship, the class must move accordingly. In this example, they would make a swimming movement. When an incorrect relationship is given, the children should not move. Those who move at the wrong time can sit down and wait until a new leader is selected. Games should be kept short so that all children have a chance to lead and no one has to sit out too long.

AS IF

Formation: Standing at desks

Players: Entire class

Supplies: None

Teacher reads sentence to class:

- Jog in place as if a big scary bear is chasing you
- Walk forward as if you're walking through chocolate pudding
- Jump in place as if you are popcorn popping
- Reach up as if grabbing balloons out of the air
- March in place and play the drums as if you are in a marching band
- Paint as if the paint brush is attached to your head
- Swim as if you are in a giant pool of jell-o
- Move your feet on the floor as if you are ice skating
- Shake your body as if you are a wet dog

Students act out each sentence for 20-30 seconds. Students may create their own sentences for additional activities.

HEART SMART

Formation: Standing at desks

Players: Entire class

Supplies: None

Teacher will discuss the heart:

- Where is it located? Left side of the chest
- What size is it? Size of a fist
- Function? Deliver blood to the body
- What strengthens the heart? Jumping, swimming, jogging (students act out each activity)
- What weakens the heart? Inactivity, smoking, unhealthy diet

Teacher will call out a habit that strengthens or weakens the heart. If the habit strengthens the heart, students will respond by jumping. If the habit weakens the heart, students will respond by falling down or squatting.

- Riding a bike, walking your dog, dancing with your friends, skating, riding a scooter, shooting baskets, raking the leaves, or taking the stairs — jump
- Eating 4 pepperoni pizzas, never going outside to play and watching TV all the time, never eating fruits/vegetables, playing play station, eating fast food, taking the elevator, or eating potato chips and Twinkies — fall

BICYCLE RACE

Formation: Rows

Players: Half the class

Supplies: Desks

The children stand in the aisle between two rows of desks. Alternate rows perform at a time. Children place one hand on their own desk and one on the desk next to them. On the signal “Go,” the children, supported by their hands, imitate a bicycling motion with their legs. The child who rides the longest without touching the floor with the feet is the winner for the row. Winners can compete later for bicycle riding champion of the room.

DO THIS, DO THAT

Formation: Scattered

Players: Entire class

Supplies: None

One child is the leader and performs various movements, accompanied by commands of “Do this” or “Do that”. All players execute the movements accompanied by “Do this.” If the directions are “Do that,” no one is to move. Those who move at the wrong time are eliminated and sit down in place. The game continues until some of the children have been eliminated. The game is then re-formed with another leader, who is selected from the children who were not caught.

BALLOON FOOTBALL

Formation: Two lines facing each other 4 to 6 feet apart

Players: Entire class

Supplies: Balloon or light beach ball

The class is divided into two teams. Players sit in their chairs and keep one hand on the back of the chair throughout the game. The balloon or beach ball is tossed between the two teams. Both teams try to bat it over the heads of their opponents so that the ball touches the floor behind the opposing team. Each touchdown scores a point. A student should be placed behind each team to serve as scorekeeper and ball retriever. The balloon should be put into play at different places along the two lines to prevent action from being concentrated among a few players.

AROUND THE ROW

Formation: Rows

Players: As many as are in a row

Supplies: None

The game is played by rows, with an extra player for each row. On the command "March," children walk around the row. On signal, they stop marching and attempt to get a seat. One player is left out. The game continues to the next row, using the player left out as the extra. Walking only (no running) is permitted. Roughness should not be tolerated.

BALLOON VOLLEYBALL

Formation: Standing, sitting on the floor, or seated at desks

Players: Entire class

Supplies: Two balloons and a rope

Children are positioned on both sides of a rope stretched just above their reach. They try to bat a balloon back and forth across the rope. The balloon can be batted as often as necessary. Two balloons used at once provide good action. A system of rotation should be set near the rope. Scoring is accomplished when one side fails to control a balloon and allows it to touch the floor or a wall.

CLASSROOM MOUSETRAP

Formation: Circle

Players: Entire class

Supplies: None

Several pairs of children form arches around the circle. The arches remain up until the teacher says, "Snap"; then they are brought down. The other children (the mice) scurry through the arches and try to avoid being caught. Anyone caught forms additional arches.

FLAG CHASE

Formation: Hollow square — seated in chairs

Players: Entire class

Supplies: Four flags (or beanbags); chairs for all competitors; a marker centered 3 feet in front of each team

The class is divided into four even teams, facing center and seated on the sides of the square, with a marker in front of each team. The player on the left end of his or her team has a flag. On signal, this player runs to the marker, goes around it from the right (counter clock-wise), and then runs to the seat on the right of the team. In the meantime, all players have moved one place to the left, vacating the right seat. The runner sits in the vacant chair, and the flag is passed down the line to the left. The player now in the leftmost seat becomes the new runner. The race ends when the flag has been returned to the leadoff runner in the original position in the left seat.

OVERHEAD RELAY

Formation: File – by rows

Players: Entire class

Supplies: A beanbag, eraser, or similar object for each team

Each row forms a team. The first person in each row faces the object that is to be passed to the desk behind. At the signal to pass, this child claps hands, picks up the object, and passes it overhead to the child behind. The next child places the object on the desk, claps hands, and passes the object overhead. The last child in the row receives the object and runs forward to the head of the row, using the aisle to the right. After the runner has passed by, each child, using the same aisle, moves back one seat. The child, who has come to the front then sits down in the first seat, places the object on the desk, claps hands, and passes the object overhead. This continues until the children are back in their original seats and the object is on the front desk. The first row finished wins.

HUMAN OBSTACLE COURSE

Formation: Space

Players: Entire class

Supplies: 2 sets of colored poly spots (10-12 poly spots total, depending on class size), 2 hula-hoops

Before class, distribute the poly spots around the outside of the classroom, rotating colors such as orange, blue, red, purple, yellow, green (repeat pattern). Be sure there is plenty of space in between each spot. When students are in a group, explain that half of them will be an obstacle and half will be moving around them, and then they will switch. Explain each of the obstacles to students as follows; have a child demonstrate. Be sure to point out safety concerns (noted) while demonstrating.

- Orange: lies down on stomach or back on the poly spot (do not put hands in the air!)
- Blue: makes a tunnel by putting legs in a wide shape (do not make your tunnel too little!)
- Red: holds a hula-hoop up on the floor (keep hoop on the floor!)
- Purple: holds body in a crab stance (do not collapse!)
- Yellow: kneels on the floor with hands, knees, and legs on floor (keep muscles tight when person goes over!)
- Green: squats down like a frog with knees, legs, and arms on floor (keep head down!)

The other half of the class performs the activity by working through these human obstacles. Each student starts at a different spot, and has to maneuver around, over, under the obstacles in various ways. Allow students to figure out how to move; if they are not able to figure out a way, you can give them suggestions:

- Orange leaps or jumps over the person laying down
- Blue crawls through the tunnel
- Red jumps through the hula-hoop
- Purple crawls under the crab on your tummy
- Yellow puts hands on back; switches legs over. Can also go under.
- Green leaps over the frog

After 2-3 minutes, have students switch roles. For added excitement, ask the students to create their own obstacle and they can instruct their classmate how to maneuver around their obstacle (if needed)! When done, discuss with students which muscles were working hard, and how this helps them to become stronger.

HOKEY POKEY AEROBICS

Formation: Open space

Players: Entire classroom

Supplies: Recording of the Hokey Pokey; Record player or CD player; Small dumbbells or dyna-bands

Put your right foot in (lunge forward on the right leg)

Put your right foot out (return to standing position)

Put your right foot in and shake it all about (lunge forward on the right leg and lightly bounce up and down in lunge position)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself about (do jumping jacks while turning in a circle)

Repeat above but do the opposite for the left leg

Put your right arm in (extend arm at the elbow)

Put your right arm out (flex arm at the elbow)

Put your right arm in and shake it all about (do bicep curls)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself about (do vertical jumps while turning in a circle)

Do the opposite for the left arm

Put your right elbow in (elbow flexed, forearm parallel to the ground)

Put your right elbow out (elbow flexed, forearm parallel to the ground)

Put your right elbow in and shake it all about (flexed elbow making circles)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself about (hop on right foot while turning in a circle)

Do the opposite for the left elbow

Put your head in (slowly touch chin to chest)

Put your head out (slowly move it back to starting position)

Put your head in and shake it all about (slowly move head side to side)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself around (jog in place while turning in a circle)

Put your right hip in (side jump in)

Put your right hip out (side jump out)

Put your right hip in and shake it all about (jump side to side)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself around (march in place while turning in a circle)

Do the opposite for the left hip

Put your whole self in (forward jump in)

Put your whole self out (backward jump out)

Put your whole self in and shake it all about (jump in and out)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself around (do leg squats)

Put your backside in (backward jump in) backwards

Put your backside out (backward jump out)

Put your backside in and shake it all about (jump in and out)

Do the Hokey Pokey and turn yourself around (do pushups)

Do the Hokey Pokey, do the Hokey Pokey, ending – can do regular ending or have students pick their favorite exercise. End with a partner high five!

Variations: Can add light hand weights, dyna-bands, soup cans, or sand filled empty water bottles for added resistance.

EXERCISES

- **Coffee Grinders:** one hand on the floor, walk around hand in circle
- **Crazy 8:** all movements done with 8 counts: move feet apart, clap hands down, walk hands away from body, do 8 push-ups, reverse all movements
- **Grasshoppers:** crab position, jump up with legs, touch bottom with hand at same time
- **Crickets:** crab position, jump up with legs, and touch side of head with hand at same time
- **Jelly Beans:** squat position, say 1-2-3 jumps! Jump up with arms extended in air
- **Supermen:** on stomach, say up, up, & away! Raise arms & legs off ground hold briefly
- **Mountain Climbers:** hands on floor, move legs alternating forward & backward
- **Reverse Mountain Climbers:** in crab position do, same as regular mountain climbers
- **Seat Twirls:** on bottom, twirl in a circle with feet lifted off floor – go in both directions
- **Ski Jumps:** feet together, jump side to side, hands pretend to hold ski poles
- **Nordic Tracks:** just like on television commercials
- **Pancakes:** push-up position, flip over without letting knees or tummy touch ground
- **Helicopters:** feet apart, arms extended, twist arms around waist
- **Swimmers:** push-up position, touch hands alternating to each hip
- **Push-ups**
 - **Line Push-ups:** push-up position, move hands back and forth over a line alternating
 - **Wall Push-ups:** push-up position leaning against wall
- **Jumping Jacks**
 - **Half-Jacks:** same as above but bring arms only up to shoulder level
 - **Door Openers:** feet apart, arms extended sideways, clap hands in front of body, arms straight, open and close keeping arms at shoulder level
- **Arm Circles:** rotate arms and hands at shoulder level forward and backward
- **Foot Circles:** hands on hips, rotate foot in small circles in front of body
- **Bells:** feet apart, jump in air & click feet together
- **ABC Wing Stretchers:** say alphabet as arms and elbows pull back
- **Steam Engines:** hands on ears, touch right elbow to left knee, repeat with opposite
- **Lap Around the Gym or Classroom**
- **Bridge:** with hands and feet on floor, push belly button up toward the sky
- **Stride Jumps:** hands on hips, feet jump apart then together
- **Rockets:** make “nosecone” above head with hands start counting 10-9-8-etc. moving down to a crouch position with each number. After “zero-blast-off!” jump up toward sky
- **Pogo Jumps:** cross feet, jump in the air, land with opposite feet crossed

TAG GAMES

Formation: Classroom – open space or use rows for obstacles

Players: Entire class

PARTNER TAG

Partners start approximately 10 feet away from each other. Both people power walk. The chaser is trying to catch up and tag their partner. If the teacher says, “switch” then roles reverse immediately. If the chaser tags their partner start again but give them some extra distance.

TRIANGLE TAG

Three people hold hands in a circle. A fourth person is ‘it’ and runs around the circle as it turns while trying to tag a specific person in the circle. The people in the circle are trying to protect the designated tagger by turning either direction to help them avoid the tagger. Switch after 20-30 seconds.

KILLER RUNNING

Start out on the first day of class by telling the students that you will be doing lots of running in PE, starting today. Get everybody ready; tell them they are going to jog for 20 seconds: Can everybody do this? How much time should be added next time, 10 or 20 seconds? Can continue with increased seconds and can mix-it-up with variations of running techniques.

RHOMBOID TAG

Limited space, walking only, everybody is it! The only place you can tag someone is on the designated muscle. If tagged on that muscle you perform an exercise for that muscle a designated number of times and you are back to tagging. Check heart rate to show students that brisk walking is a good cardiovascular exercise.

12 DAYS OF FITNESS

Just like the 12 days of Christmas, except students create exercises to go with each day. On the first day do 1 push-up, second day do 2 sit-ups, third day do 3 tuck jumps, etc. Go through all 12 days, and even with 1 push-up on the first day students will end up doing 12. Make sure to include a rest somewhere around the 5th or 6th day.

PATELLA TAG

You’ll need a class set of multi-colored beanbags or yarn balls. Have each student get a beanbag. The taggers change during each round depending on the color of the beanbag. For instance the teacher would designate the students holding the red beanbags as the taggers and tell them to skip. The teacher then chooses a different locomotor skill, such as galloping for the rest of the class. On the signal to start the taggers tag the others on the patella (knee cap, easy), if tagged the player goes down on one knee and raises their hand. Any player can give the student a high five and they get to rejoin the game. When you sense the class is getting tired stop the game and designate a different color as the taggers, don’t forget to change the locomotor skills.

GOT MILK CARTONS?

- Have children jump forward and backward, or side-to-side over milk cartons
- Dribble the milk carton using dominant foot, non-dominant foot, inside of foot, outside of foot, and shoe laces
- Play keep-away. Everyone starts with a milk carton except 5 or 6 students. They try to take the milk carton away from a student who has one; if they succeed they dribble that milk carton around while the other student tries to get a milk carton from someone else
- Play Tap. Everyone starts with a milk carton. On the signal to start everyone runs around the general space trying to tap as many milk cartons as they can with their foot in one minute. Remind students to gently tap not kick! Repeat and try to improve score!
- Toss and catch, spin and catch, flip and catch, flip, clap and catch the milk carton. See how many times you can clap your hands and catch the milk carton. Toss it under the leg, toss it behind the back, toss – turn and catch the milk carton
- Partner Activities: Underhand toss and catch, overhand toss and catch, under the leg toss and catch, over the back toss and catch, foot juggles the milk carton with a small group of students
- What can you come up with?

CLEAN YOUR ROOM

Divide the classroom in half, (can use desks as the divider) and the students into 2 groups. Give each group half of the fluff balls. The objective of the game is to have the cleanest room! The side with fewest fluff balls has the cleanest room. Once the teacher says 'begin', the balls begin flying to the other side. Continue to toss to the other side until time is up. No kicking or throwing fluff balls at people! You can vary to throwing overhand, underhand, bowling, or throwing with the opposite hand. You can also call this, "Clean your Refrigerator."