

Preschoolers on the Move

Grade Level or Special Area: Preschool

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Length of Unit: Ten, 20-30 minute lessons

I. ABSTRACT

It has long been assumed that preschool children naturally develop motor and coordination skills naturally through unorganized physical activities and use of playground equipment. Although children may gain some skills when left to their own devices, and while free play is important, it does not guarantee skill development beyond the minimal performance level (Benelli & Yongue, 1995). With this in mind, this unit presents lesson plans containing organized activities which address the motor skills necessary in laying the groundwork for developmentally fit children, and aiding preschool teachers in facilitating a very important, but often ignored, developmental stage of their student's young lives.

II. OVERVIEW

- A. Concept Objectives
 - 1. Students will develop motor and coordination skills.
 - 2. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
- B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence*
 - 1. Refine physical attention and relaxation.
 - 2. Develop and refine gross motor skills.
 - 3. Develop and refine eye-hand and eye-foot coordination skills.
 - 4. Use the body expressively.
 - 5. Play group games.
- C. Skill Objectives
 - 1. Stop and/or start movement and physical activity in response to a visual or auditory signal.
 - 2. Ascend and descend steps, alternating feet.
 - 3. Maintain balance changing body position without moving through space and walking forward on a wide bench or beam.
 - 4. Situate oneself within a space of defined boundaries, modifying body configuration and size to "fit the space."
 - 5. Move through space with or without obstacles, without touching or bumping into other individuals or obstacles, by: crawling, walking, running, galloping, hopping or jumping.
 - 6. Throw or kick an object in the direction indicated.
 - 7. Play "catch" with a bean bag with a partner, seated or standing 1 ½ feet apart.
 - 8. Coordinate motor activity to carry out a goal with a partner or group: push a large, heavy object from one location to another.
 - 9. Participate in group games.
 - 10. Imitate the position or action of another person.
 - 11. Act out a simple pantomime.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For Teachers
 - 1. Beckman, C., Simmons, R. & Thomas, N. (1982). *Channels to Children*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Channels to Children.
 - 2. Juelsgaard, C., (1996). *Early Childhood Motor Skills Information Packet*.

3. Bredekamp, S. & Copple, C. (1997). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs* (Rev. ed., pp. 97-123). Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.
- B. For Students
1. The students will be in good physical and mental health.
 2. The students will have had a history of normal physical and mental development.

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Learning Station (1997). *This is How We Rock*. On *Rock N' Roll Songs that Teach* [CD]. The Learning Station.
- B. Palmer, H. (1980). *The Bean Bag*. On *Easy Does It* [Cassette]. Topanga, CA: HAP-PAL Music.
- C. Palmer, H. (1980). *Sammy*. On *Getting to Know Myself* [Cassette]. Topanga, CA: HAP-PAL Music.

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Everybody Freeze!

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will develop motor and coordination skills.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Refine physical attention and relaxation.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Stop and/or start movement and physical activity in response to a visual or auditory signal.
- B. *Materials*
 1. CD or cassette player
 2. "This is How We Rock" from *Rock N' Roll Songs that Teach*, The Learning Station, (1997) The Learning Station
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Stop-to leave off doing an action
 2. Start/go-to begin an action
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Place CD/cassette in player and advance to "This is How We Rock."
 2. Space children so that they have room to move in place without interfering with other students.
 3. Announce to students that they are going to learn a new dance and that you will show them how to do it first without the music.
 4. Rock back and forth (heels, toes). Roll from waist. Stop. Stroll-walk in place.
 5. Have children do the actions with you once or twice without the music.
 6. Start music and act out song.
 7. Dance to music once or twice, then inform students that you will play this song again another time, but now you would like to play a game with them called Red Light, Green Light.
 8. To play the game: Choose one child to be the light. This child will stand with his/her back facing the rest of the children at the far end of the room or playground. The other children line up horizontally facing the Light and about 50 feet away from the Light. The Light shouts "Green light!" and the other children run towards the Light until he/she shouts "Red light!" wherein all of the children must stop immediately. If the Light sees any of the children running, they must start over. The game continues until one child tags the Light before

he/she shouts to stop. The tagger then becomes the Light and all children return to the starting line.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year—at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Two: We're Coming Up!

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will develop motor and coordination skills.
 - b. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine gross motor skills.
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Ascend and descend steps, alternating feet.

B. *Materials*

1. CD/cassette player
2. Marching songs
3. A stairway with five – seven steps with a railing, or a small slide
4. One small triangular flag for each student
5. Musical instruments for all students
6. Large Styrofoam cone or other object that flags can be inserted into

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Climb—to move upward or toward the top of something

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Inform students that they are going to be in a marching band. Pass out an instrument to each child and have them form a line.
2. Play marching music on CD/cassette player and, with you as the leader, take children around room/playground. Instruct students to lift their legs high as they march. Ask them if they can play their instruments up high, down low, to the side as you demonstrate each position.
3. After approximately ten minutes, ask children to march past the instrument storage container, placing their instruments in as they go by.
4. Place Styrofoam cone and flags at the top of staircase/slide.
5. Explain and demonstrate that students are going to “Climb Mt. Hirsch,” placing a flag in the top of the mountain to show that they made it to the top. In order to climb to the top they need to alternate feet, and may use the handrail if needed.
6. Lead other students in cheering when a student places his/her flag in the cone.
7. Game: Mother, May I? Choose one student to be Mother, who stands in front of the room/playground. The other students line up horizontally facing Mother and about 25-30 feet away. In turn, each student asks Mother if he/she can advance a certain amount of steps (Mother, may I take four steps?). Mother responds, “Yes, you may,” or “No, you may not.” The winner is the first student to reach Mother. This game works better in small groups so children aren’t kept waiting too long for their turn.

- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Three: Don't Rock the Boat!

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine gross motor skills.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Maintain balance while changing body position without moving through space and walking forward on a wide bench or beam.
- B. *Materials*
1. One carpet square per child (or other item that will indicate to child where their "space" is)
 2. Brightly colored masking tape
 3. Wide bench or balance beam
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Slow-taking a long time
 2. Fast-taking little time
 3. Dance-a group of bodily motions done in time to music
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Space students out on carpet squares.
 2. Ask children to copy you without falling. Staying on a carpet square yourself, stand on one foot, stoop, reach, etc. Ask children to think of other positions they can assume without falling.
 3. Before class, lay a 10-foot strip of brightly colored masking tape in a straight line on the floor.
 4. Ask children if they can walk on the tape without falling (demonstrate). Let the students do this several times before progressing to the balance beam or bench.
 5. Next, ask students if they can walk on the beam without falling. Hold their hand until they are comfortable without your help. Let students experiment in different ways to move across the beam. Make sure that an adult walks along next to the child at all times until you are confident that the child is capable of staying on the beam.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Four: Bodies in Space I

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine gross motor skills.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Situate oneself within a space of defined boundaries, modifying body configuration and size to “fit” the space.
- B. *Materials*
1. Tunnels
 2. Tires
 3. Hoops
 4. Large cartons
 5. Sidewalk chalk
 6. CD/cassette player
 7. Copy of the song The Farmer in the Dell
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- None
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Encourage children to go through tunnels, tires, and hoops during play (either outside or in dramatic play).
 2. Outline a shape on the ground and ask children if they can fit their whole bodies into it.
 3. Provide large cartons for students to play in.
 4. Game: The Farmer in the Dell: Choose one student to be the farmer who stands in the center of a circle formed by the other children.
 5. Following along with the recorded song, the farmer chooses a wife who then stands with the farmer inside the circle. On the refrain, the children making up the circle, circle those students who are inside the circle.
 6. Follow along with the song until completed.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Five: Bodies in Space II

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space and language concepts as well as social development.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine gross motor skills.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Move through space with or without obstacles, without touching or bumping into other individuals or obstacles, by: crawling, walking, running, galloping, hopping (same foot and alternate foot) or jumping.

- B. *Materials*
1. CD/cassette player
 2. “Sammy” from Palmer, H. (1980) on *Getting to Know Myself* [Cassette].
Topanga, CA: HAP-PAL Music
 3. London Bridge is Falling Down song
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Jump-to rise suddenly or quickly
 2. Run-to move on foot very fast
 3. Walk-to move on foot at a normal pace
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Play the song Sammy on the CD/cassette player. Children form a circle and act out the song. This song is always fun for children as they move in different ways to “go to the store for my father.”
 2. Let children pretend that they’re in space and weightless.
 3. Walk like different animals that a familiar to preschool children.
 4. Game: London Bridge- Children form a circle. Choose two children to be the bridge. These children raise their arms above their heads while holding hands to form the bridge. The other children walk under the bridge along with the music. When the bridge “falls down” the forth time, the bridge children put their arms down and around the child who is passing under the bridge at the time. The bridge children gently move the captured child to and fro along with the song (take the keys and lock her/him up). The captured child then becomes part of the bridge along with another child and the song starts all over again.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Six: Target Practice

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will develop motor and coordination skills.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine eye-hand and eye-foot coordination skills.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Throw or kick an object in the direction indicated.
- B. *Materials*
1. Inner tube or hula hoop with a 12’ rope
 2. Nerf balls in various sizes
 3. Child-size basketball hoop
 4. 4 beach balls
 5. 20’ of string
 6. 16 bean bags
 7. Goal net or large laundry basket
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Throw-to propel an object through the air by a sudden forward motion of the arm and wrist
 2. Kick-to strike with a motion of the foot

- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Tie an inner tube or hula hoop from a swing set or other equipment available at child level.
 2. Instruct children to throw/kick a ball through the hoop at different distances.
 3. Using a child size basketball hoop and Nerf balls, shoot baskets with students.
 4. Securely hang beach balls from the ceiling or other overhead areas. Give students beanbags to throw at the beach balls. Once the beach balls start moving this activity can be very challenging, but children love it! (Juelsgaard, 1996).
 5. Let children take turns kicking balls into a goal net.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Seven: Bean Bags

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will develop motor and coordination skills.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine eye-hand and eye-foot coordination skills.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Play “catch” with a bean bag with a partner, seated or standing 1 ½ feet apart.
- B. *Materials*
1. One beanbag per child
 2. Song-The Bean Bag. Palmer, H. (1980). On *Easy Does It* [Cassette]. Topanga, CA: HAP-PAL Music
 3. Copy of the song “Ring Around the Rosie”
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Catch-to take hold of an object (usually with the hands) that is in motion
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Distribute beanbags to students and group them in pairs.
 2. Instruct children to face each other and, starting approximately 1’ apart, throw one beanbag to each other. As each pair of children catch the beanbag, they take one step backwards, but must remain at that distance until they can both catch the beanbag.
 3. Let children experiment with different ways they can throw and catch the beanbags (sitting, kneeling, standing backwards, etc.)
 4. Distribute one beanbag per child.
 5. Play “The Bean Bag” song with children following along with the lyrics and in a circle.
 6. Game: Ring Around the Rosie-Students make a circle, holding hands. Play the song “Ring Around the Rosie” as children sing along while walking clockwise and holding hands. When the song comes to the part that says “We all fall down”, all of the children fall to the ground gently.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student

performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Eight: Altogether Now!

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will develop motor and coordination skills.
 - b. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Develop and refine eye-hand and eye-foot coordination skills.
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Coordinate motor activity to carry out a goal with a partner or group: push a large, heavy object from one location to another.

B. *Materials*

1. Large wooden crate
2. CD/cassette player
3. A copy of the song “Hot Potato”
4. One potato (or an object that can be used as one)

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Move-to pass from on place or position to another

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Using a large, heavy create, tell students that you need to move it from one location to another and need their help doing so. Have one child help at a time, adding on children until all are involved in the task. You may want to have a surprise in the crate as a reward.
2. Sit children in a circle.
3. Using the potato, demonstrate that they are going to pass the potato to each other until the song says to stop. At this age level, it is best not to exclude the “loser,” but just to start the game over again.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Nine: Copy Cats

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Use the body expressively.
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Imitate the position or action of another person.

B. *Materials*

None

C. *Key Vocabulary*

None

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Game: Simon Says: Choose one student to be Simon, who stands at the head of the room and faces the other players. The other children are spaced with enough room so that their actions won't interfere with those students around them and are facing Simon. Simon then does an action and precedes it with "Simon says (state action)." The other players then imitate Simon's action. If Simon doesn't precede the action with "Simon says," the other players should not imitate the action; if they do, they are out of the game. The game ends when only one player is left. With preschoolers, it is best not to eliminate them from the game, but rather just good-naturedly point out that Simon did not tell them to imitate the action.
2. Game: Follow the Leader: Choose one student to be the leader. The other children line up behind the leader. The leader leads the others around the room/playground while performing different actions. The other players must follow the leader and perform the same actions at the same point that the leader does. There isn't a winner or loser in this game, but you may want to replace the leader every five minutes or so, giving other children a chance to lead.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year—at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

Lesson Ten: Star Wars

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students will participate in activities that enhance time, space, and language concepts as well as social development.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Use the body expressively.
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Act out a simple pantomime.

B. *Materials*

1. Small pieces of paper with animal names or actions on them
2. A hat, bowl or other container to put the above papers in

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Pantomime—a person performing a single activity without speaking

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Explain to the children that they are going to learn how to do pantomime. Demonstrate pantomime a few times, asking students to guess what you are doing or imitating.
2. In a hat, bowl or other container have ready pieces of paper with animal names and action words on them. Choose one child at a time to come up, choose a paper, and act out the word on the paper. The other children should guess what the pantomiming child is doing or imitating. Let each child have a turn.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. Teachers will assess each student twice per year-at the start of the school year, and again at the end of the school year. Assessments will consist of the student performing tasks that demonstrate the skills taught in each lesson. Failure to pass the assessment at the end of the school year may result in parents and educators conferencing to determine if testing for developmental delays and/or physical disabilities see Appendix A.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. Plan a Field Day for the preschoolers. Activities should include skills that they've been working on all year and be more fun oriented rather than competition oriented. Everyone who participates is a winner.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A: Preschool Motor Skills Assessment

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Benelli, C. & Yongue, G. (1995, Summer). Supporting young children's motor skill development. *Childhood Education*, 71, 217-222.
- B. Juelsgaard, C., (1996). *Early Childhood Motor Skills Information Packet*.

Appendix A
PRESCHOOL MOTOR SKILLS ASSESSMENT

For _____

	Fall 200_		Spring 200_	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Starts and/or stops movement and physical activity in response to a visual or auditory signal.				
Ascends and descends steps, alternating feet.				
Maintains balance when: -changing body position without moving through space. -walking forward on a wide bench or beam.				
Situates self within a space of defined boundaries, modifying body configuration and size to “fit the space.”				
Moves through space with or without obstacles, without touching or bumping into other individuals or obstacles.				
Throws and kicks objects in the direction indicated.				
Plays “catch” with a bean bag with a partner, seated, or standing 1 ½ feet apart.				
Coordinates a motor activity to carry out a goal with a partner or group.				
Participates in group games.				
Imitates the position or action of another person.				
Acts out a simple pantomime.				