

MARCH 2006 Teacher Fitness Activity Planner

Use this "sample activity plan" as a guide for planning activities that you can do in your classroom. Adapt it to suit your schedule and physical activity preferences.

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			1 <i>ExerDice Bikes & Trikes</i>	2 <i>Catching the Dragon's Tail Dragon Jump</i>	3 <i>Class Walk Outdoor Playground Climber</i>	4 <i>Family Bike Ride Trip to the Park</i>
5 <i>Nature Walk Bean Bag Hit</i>	6 <i>Pantomime Stretch Horse Play</i>	7 <i>Simon Says Fun with Bubbles</i>	8 <i>Class Walk Balloon Bats</i>	9 <i>Jumping Animals Outdoor Playground Climber</i>	10 <i>Relay Races Bikes & Trikes</i>	11 <i>Family Walk Big Ball Bounce</i>
12 <i>Family Walk Blanket Forts</i>	13 <i>Yoga Outdoor Playground</i>	14 <i>Hula Hoop Warm Up Choo-Choo Train</i>	15 <i>Jack Be Nimble Jumps Imaginary Shoes</i>	16 <i>Class Walk Jump-Off- The -Box</i>	17 <i>Catch the Alphabet Bikes & Trikes</i>	18 <i>Family Walk Ball Toss</i>
19 <i>Family Bike Ride Hide and Go Seek</i>	20 <i>Stretching & Moving Exercises Bikes & Trikes</i>	21 <i>Parachute/ Blanket Game Silly Animal Parade</i>	22 <i>Caterpillar Outdoor Playground Climber</i>	23 <i>Class Walk Ball Toss</i>	24 <i>Musical Hats Balance Beam</i>	25 <i>Family Walk Wash Family Car</i>
26 <i>Family Walk Throw for Distance</i>	27 <i>Big Snake Stretch Outdoor Playground Climber</i>	28 <i>Statues Bikes & Trikes</i>	29 <i>Grab Bag Pantomime Coffee Can Stilts</i>	30 <i>Crab Walk Soccer Zig Zag Toss Across</i>	31 <i>Obstacle Course Do the Locomotion</i>	

Remember:

-Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes a day of "structured*" and unstructured** physical activity. The structured play/exercise could be conducted in shorter increments throughout the day.

-Preschoolers should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time (except when sleeping). They should also develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks (i. e. roll, kick, throw, catch).

-Encourage them to get moving with positive comments that focus on effort: "Wow, you zoomed down the slide!" "You almost made a basket!"

-Think about safety. Help children remember hats and mittens during cold weather.

Adapted from Dietitians of Canada.
www.dietitians.ca/healthystart

want more activity ideas? visit
www.everydaylearning.net

*Structured Activities: Activities you direct or do with your preschooler to keep them moving. Also include activities that you might take your preschooler to like dance class or soccer.

**Unstructured Activities: Supervised free time for children to play actively on their own or with other children (e.g., outside on play structures, building forts, running and jumping)

Fun Fitness Planner Activities

Balance Beam

If you don't have a balance beam in your class, tape a piece of yarn on the floor and have the children walk on that. It's fun, and they fall less often.

Ball Toss

Hang hula hoops at different heights. Give the children footballs and balls to practice throwing

Balloon Bats

Promote group cooperation with an outdoor activity after the completion of these teacher-made balloon bats. For each bat, you will need one metal coat hanger, nylons and masking tape. Bend the hanger to form a diamond or circle shape. Twist the hook of the hanger to form a closed handle. Place the nylon over the coat hanger to form, securing it to the handle with masking tape. Get a few colorful balloons and let the kids rally back and forth with a partner.

Big Snake

The children start by stretching out on their stomachs and holding the ankles of the person in front of them to make a two-person snake that slithers on its belly. They soon connect up with other snakes to make a three-person snake and so on. The children may want to attempt to turn the whole snake over on its back without coming apart. The snake can go over "mountains" or curl up and go to sleep.

Catch the Alphabet

Find a soft ball of this size and make sure that there is sufficient area for the ball to be thrown without breaking anything.

Step 1 - Make sure that the student is paying attention and throw the ball to him/her and have them say A.
Step 2 - As the students catch the ball, they must say the next letter of the alphabet. Continue this pattern until the entire alphabet has been gone through. If they make it through the alphabet quickly, add the rule that if the ball is dropped then they must also start over.

Catching the Dragon's Tail

Gather 10 or more children in a line. Each person places hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. The first in line is the "head" of the dragon; the last is the "tail." The head tries to catch the tail by maneuvering the line around so he can tag the tail player. When the tail is tagged, the tail player moves to the front of the dragon to become the new head. The old head is now in second.

Caterpillar

Have the children lie stomach down on the floor, body extended, hands and feet stretched out. Ask the children: "If you walk all stretched out on the floor with your arms and legs, what bug are you?" (*a caterpillar*); "Can you walk without bending your arms and legs?... moving hands only?... then moving feet only?"; "Now, pretend you've climbed up onto a leaf."

Choo-Choo Train

Two or more children form a train and chug around the yard, maintaining contact by keeping both hands on the hips or shoulders of the child in front of them. Cars begin to link together until there is one big train moving in unison. The train can go up a steep hill really slowly, swoosh down the hill, go backwards, make train noises and squat down to go through a low tunnel.

Coffee Can Stilts

You will need two large cans (same size, opened at one end only), about 10 feet of rope, hammer, nail and screwdriver. On the side of the can make a mark about one inch from the top. Make a similar mark on the opposite side of the can. You may choose either the open or closed end of the can for the bottom of the stilt. Use a nail and a hammer to punch a hole in the can where you made the marks. Enlarge the holes with the screwdriver until they are large enough for the rope to fit through. With the hammer, pound smooth any sharp edges on the can. Repeat with the second can. Cut two pieces of rope that measures about three times the length from your child's knee to the floor. Thread the ends of the rope through the holes from the outside and tie with overhand knots on the inside. Pull the ropes so that the knots rest against the insides of the can. If you used coffee cans, you can replace the plastic lids on the cans.

Have your children stand on top of both cans, feet positioned evenly over the cans, and grip the ropes with each hand. Check that the handle is at a comfortable length for the child before knotting the other side. These are always very popular, but never leave young children alone with them especially near stairs or steps.

Crab Walk Soccer

Two teams sit on two goal lines a short distance apart. Team members are numbered. A soccer ball sits in the centre. An official calls a number. The members of that number from each team crab walk to the ball and attempt to get the ball over the opponent's goal line.

Do the Locomotion

You will need hand-held instruments (or pretend-cutouts), fast music and music from different cultures. Children play instruments while they march, walk or jump to the beat of the music or other movements such as galloping, hopping, jumping, running and skipping. Use cultural dances to explore locomotor movements or invite a cultural dance group to make a presentation.

Dragon Jump

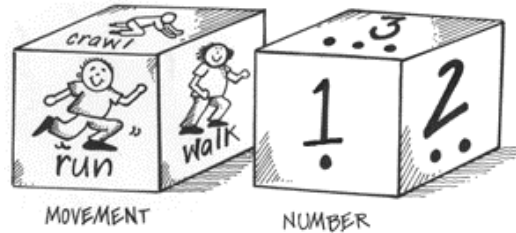
You will need paper, scissors and tape. Cut out "dragon" footprints from pieces of construction paper. In an open area, indoors or outdoors, tape the footprints in a path on the ground that will show when players have to hop, and when they have to jump. For example, the path might begin with two side-by-side footprints that mean that a player has to jump onto the two footprints. Then continue with a single footprint. That means the player has to hop onto the one footprint. For the initial game, make the path simple so that children can easily accomplish the task. For example, if most children are able to jump but not hop, you might make 5 jumps and 1 hop.

Invite children to play a game of "Dragon Jump" with you. Model how to play the game as you tell them the directions. Say, "Is everyone ready to play Dragon Jump? Here's how you play. When you see 2 footprints, you have to jump onto them. When you see one footprint, you have to hop on one foot to get onto it. Then you keep hopping and jumping down the path until you've reached the end."

If children have difficulty hopping or jumping, help them practice by breaking the tasks down into steps. "Okay, before you jump, bend your knees and bounce up and down. Then lift your feet off the ground." As you continue playing "Dragon Jump," make the paths more and more difficult so that children will have opportunities to practice new skills.

ExerDice

You will need two large Styrofoam blocks, paper, markers and glue or tape



Use the two Styrofoam blocks to create two dice.

Cut paper to fit the sides of the Styrofoam blocks.

Print various ways to move on six of the pieces of paper and let the children draw pictures to depict the actions below the words. For example, run, walk, crawl, hop, spider-walk (on hands and feet), and tiptoe. Glue or tape these to six sides of one die. Cover the second die with blank paper. On each side, print the number one, two, or three so that you have two of each number on the die. Ask the children to draw circles to represent each number under the number.

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Gather the children together on the playground. Ask a child to roll the dice. Race around a designated area as directed by the way the dice land. For example, if the movement die lands with "hop" on top and the number die lands with "three" on top, the children should race around the designated area three times while hopping. The goal of the game is not winning the race, but rather to follow the directions indicated on the dice. Encourage the children to cooperate and help each other. Let each child take a turn rolling the dice. In place of one of the movements on the movement die, print the word "rest" and draw a picture of a child lying down. If the ExerDice lands with the word "rest" on top, all should lie down and rest while they count to the number indicated on number die.

Fun with Bubbles

Kids love to make and chase bubbles. There are so many things you can do with bubbles, such as using bubble blowers or bubble wands. Bubbles are inexpensive and always a fun outside summer activity. Put your bubble mixture in a dish bin or a small blow-up wading pool. Bubble wands can be created by cutting shapes out of paper plates or using a strawberry basket. Make giant bubbles by creating a wand out of two straws and some yarn. Thread the yarn through the two straws and tie the ends together. Using the straws as handles, dip the straws and string into the bubble mixture. Carefully lift it out the bubble mixture and the large bubble will form. Make your own bubbles by combining one quart of water with eight tablespoons of dishwashing liquid and 8 tablespoons of glycerin (from a drug store). Shake mixture together and enjoy!

Grab Bag Pantomime

In this game, one child reaches into a grab bag and takes out a picture of something that moves, much as an animal, job, vehicles and moves like that creature across the floor to a designation. Keep all the children involved by encouraging the ones writing to guess the animal the child is pantomiming. Each child, in turn, chooses a card and moves like his or her animal until everyone is at the destination.

Horse Play

You will need Grocery Bags or White Paper, Plastic Bags or Newspaper (for stuffing), Stapler, Yardstick or Dowel, Markers, Tape, Felt to make your horses. Make the horse heads by taking a grocery bag or white paper and stuffing it with plastic bags or newspaper. Then, staple them shut. Leave a small opening on the bottom to insert a yardstick or dowel. Decorate with markers and use felt to make a mane. Have kids gallop to different rhythms of music or have races outside.

Hula Hoop Warm-up

Using hula hoops and some peppy children's music, direct children through this sequence of movements:

- with the hula hoop on the floor, walk around it, skip around it;
- with a partner, jump in and out of it facing each other and performing "patty cake";
- put one foot in and out;
- with a partner, hold onto hoop and skip in a circle.

Imaginary Shoes

Have kids act out what they would do if they were in particular shoes. Some shoes ideas can be ice skates, snowshoes, skis, tap shoes, ballet toe shoes, boots such as a cowboy, astronaut, and child in the snow.

Jack Be Nimble Jumps

Preschool children enjoy the chance to act out stories. Ask each child to jump over candlesticks" without knocking them down. As each child jumps, sing the rhyme and insert his or her name.

Jump-Off-The-Box.

Find different size crates and sturdy boxes. Turn upside down (to stand on) and spread them around the play area. The more space between, the better. Locate pictures of animals/people who are expert jumpers and place next to each box (frog, kangaroo, Olympic broad jumper, etc.). Instruct children to step up onto each platform and then spring off with both feet. Jumping as high and far as they are able to. Once they get the idea, ask them to add sound effects (ribet, boing, yeah!). Jumping is hard work so be sure to give lots of room between jump stations for them to catch their breath. Or, intersperse with a gentler activity like bouncing a ball 10 times.

Jumping Animals

Can be a separate station or as a break. Play music and ask children to jump like a variety of animals, such as a frog or kangaroo.

Obstacle Course

Make an obstacle course using a 2x4 (balance beam), a cardboard box (tunnel), a painter's drop cloth and hula hoops (for jumping). This was a free choice activity that we encouraged children to complete the obstacle course any way that they wanted to. Some children simply worked their way throughout, while others were very creative in completion. The area that allowed for the most creative movement was the painter's drop cloth which was placed so the kids had to get across it before moving on to the next activity. Children rolled, jumped, leap frogged, walked, cartwheeled and crawled across.

Pantomime Stretch

As a cool down and "calm down", parents/caregivers and kids sit on the floor and act out silly stories such as opening arms and legs like an alligator's jaws and eating up healthy food that kids suggest. Close legs and arms in front as if to gobble up the food. Invent your own scenarios and let the kids give suggestions along the way.

Relay Races

Divide the children into teams. Everyone runs to a turn-around point and back to tag the next person in line. Everyone who participates wins. Have everyone warm-up and cool-down before and after activities. Children can skip, walk fast, sprint, do jumping jacks, race-walk, pretend to jump rope, run slowly, run in place with high knee lifts, jump, or hop on one foot (alternate left and right).

Silly Animals on Parade:

Create silly animal walks with your children: waddle like ducks, scamper and squeak like mice, lumber like bears. Encourage your kids to suggest humorous specifics: *Let's pretend we're ducks that oink like pigs. Let's pretend we're bears who want to be ballet dancers.*

Statues

To get your child moving, put on a piece of up-tempo music and invite him to move while the music is playing and to freeze into a statue when you pause it.

Stretching & Moving Exercises

- **Lazy-Day Rest**

To relax the body.

Position: Lie on your backs on the floor, legs slightly apart, and arms limply at your sides.

Action: Take a deep breath, hold, relax. Pull your toes towards and then away from your bodies, hold, relax. Pull your tummies in, hold, relax. Pull seats together, hold, relax. Make a tight fist with your hands, hold, relax. With your hands at sides, shrug your shoulders, hold, relax. Smile while turning your head from side to side. Frown and repeat action.

- **Small Ball**

To relax the body and stretch muscles.

Position: Kneel on the floor with your legs together.

Action: Rest your seat on your legs, lower your head to the floor, and tuck your hands to your side on floor, pointing backward. Take two or three deep breaths and blow it out. Relax.

- **Wash the Dishes**

To stretch the shoulder muscles.

Position: Stand facing your child, holding her hands.

Action: "Wash the dishes, dry the dishes, turn the dishes over." Swing your arms side to side while singing the rhyme. On the word "over", swing your arms up overhead and turn your child around in a full circle so your arms are crossed. Repeat arm swings and rhyme and on word "over," return your child to original position (arms uncrossed). Repeat several times.

- **Angel-in-the-Snow**

To stretch the muscles of the arms and legs.

Position: Lie on your backs.

Action: Pretend to be in the snow and move your arms and legs "in" and "out" several times like an angel.

Yoga

Be a Cat, Be a Tree. Your children will enjoy these two creative movement exercises. They are both based on yoga, an ancient form of exercise and meditation. Invite your children to stretch their bodies and let their imaginations soar!

The Cat:

Start on your hands and knees. Look up. Curve your shoulders up. Hold the stretch for three counts as you purr like a happy cat. Now look down at the floor and arch your back up. Hold the stretch for three counts as you hiss and growl like an angry cat.

The Tree:

Stand on one leg. This is the tree trunk. Place the other foot at the knee of your standing leg. Now raise your arms high above your head, with the fingers touching. Count slowly to five as you imagine the sun shining down on you. (Note: Children who have trouble balancing can stand on two feet or lean against a wall.)

Zig Zag Toss Across

You will need one bean bag. Arrange the children in two lines facing each other.

The first child tosses the bean bag to the child across from them. That child tosses it to the next child in the opposite line, this continues until the bean bag gets to the end of the line. The last child runs to the first position in his/her line (if the lines are uneven in number have the child go to the end of the opposite line) and start the tossing again. Repeat.