

Motor Activities
from Michael Reynolds
Patterson HS

Animal Imitations: Can you leap like a deer? Can you crawl like a spider? Can you slither like a snake? Can you fly like a bird? (Etc.)

HoopScotch: Arrange hoops into a hopscotch-like pattern. Rearrange after 2-3 turns.

Soccer Score: Use only your feet to guide a ball between two stationary goals.

Spaghetti: Form a circle by holding hands. Have each child take one hand of a child directly across from them. When you have quite a mess, and without letting go of hands, untangle!

Rings On A Pond: Form a circle with each child about arms-length apart and pass a ball from child to child. Once around the circle each child takes a step backward, increasing the circle size. Three-to-four steps is a good average.

Hoop Toss: Children toss a hoop and attempt to get it to encircle a cone or similar object.

Thread The Needle: Form a circle by holding hands. Place a hula-hoop between two children and have them join hands through it. The hoop is now passed around the circle (without breaking hand-holds) as the children maneuver their bodies through the hoop.

Dress-Up Relay: Form four lines of children with two lines facing the other two. The lead children dress up in over-sized clothes and race to their waiting partners, who in turn dress up in the same clothing. The sides race back and forth until all have had a turn.

Body-Ball Relay: Two children place a ball between their bodies, Back-to-back or stomach-to-stomach (but no hands!) and walk over to two waiting partners who repeat the action.

Symbol Relay: Same basic premise as other relays, only now you use symbols such as shapes, letters, numbers on corresponding cards (child and teacher have matching cards). Cards can be placed into a container or handed to a partner.

Make-A-Face Relay: Children use beanbags and a piece of rope to make a face in a hoop. Another child gathers these items, runs over to another hoop and repeats making a face.

Ball Madness: Using as many balls as you wish, pass them around a circle at the same time, in both directions. (Object Control)

Hoopla: Place a hula-hoop over several children and have them move around obstacles as one. (Locomotor; Body Management)

Dress Me: Pair children and have them hold hands. One wears an oversized shirt. A third child attempts to take the shirt off one child and put it on the partner without them letting go of their handhold. (Body Management)

Siamese Rolling: Children lie down lengthwise, head-to-head and hold hands. They roll as a team, without letting go of their handhold. (Locomotor)

Aura: Two children face each other and touch palms. One closes their eyes and drops hands. They now attempt to find their partner's still outstretched palms. Challenge by having child turn around once or twice. (Body Management)

Partners Up: Children sit back-to-back with their elbows linked. They then try to stand. Or, have children sit facing each other with feet touching and holding hands. Try to stand. (Body Management; Body Fitness)

Chorus Line: Children line up next to each other with their arms around each other's shoulders. Caller asks them to hop, walk backward, skip, kick out, walk sideways, bow, knell, etc. while linked. (Body Management; Body Fitness)

Shoe Biz: Each child removes one shoe and places it in a pile in the center of a circle. Then, each child takes a shoe (not their own) and sits back in place and takes hold of one hand of the child next to them. Try to return shoes to owners without letting go of handholds. (Play Skills; Psycho-Social)

Person-To-Person: Children are paired and face one another. Caller names-off parts of the body to touch with the same: knee-to-knee, forehead-to-forehead, elbow-to-elbow, thumb-to-thumb, shoulder-to-shoulder, etc. (Body Management)

Blanket Ball Volley: Two, or more, groups take hold of the edges of a small blanket, sheet or large towel and toss a ball from one group to the next. (Object Control)

- Caterpillar Ball Pass

- Parachute Play (Popcorn, Waves, etc.)

- Head/Nose Ball Roll

Passing Fancy: Form a circle about arms-length apart and pass a ball or other object around the circle as music plays. When the music stops, so does the passing!

(Variation: Instead of a ball use cups and pass one cupful of water around the circle.

Rope Movements: You will need a piece of rope about four-five feet long. Tie a very tight knot at the ends to make a loop. The child takes the rope and makes shapes by moving his or her limbs (i.e. feet apart and hands together over their head makes a triangle, etc.

Circle-Kick: Children form a circle closer than arms-length and gently kick a ball around the circle, trying not to let the ball pass between children and out of the circle.

Hockey-Ball: Children use a stick or similar object to negotiate a ball between two goals.

Can You Hammer?: Teacher recites "Can you hammer with (1-5) hammer(s)? Pound, pound, pound!" For 1-5 use hand, hands, foot, feet, head.

Caterpillar Obstacle Course: Variation on a standard obstacle course, yet the children join hands forming groups of 3-4 and attempt the course.

Asteroids: Arrange the children in the following configuration:

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(You may need to arrange two separate groups as such.) In this set-up one of the children at the end position and each of the three children on one side will have a ball. The end child rolls the ball to the other end child while the children on the side attempt to roll their balls and collide with the passing ball. Now, the other child in the end position and those on the other side attempt the same action. Rotate so that each child has a turn at the end positions.

These activities are only a sampling of the possibilities. Please add your own favorites and note which motor area these address.

Michael Reynolds

Head Start