

Have you a Sense of Adventure?

Activities for an Adventure Programme for schools

These activities support the Outdoor and Adventure Strand in the PE curriculum. Many of the aims also support the content objectives in the strands of the SPHE programme.

Does the word 'Adventure' conjure up images of rock climbing, rafting and parachuting for you? Pause for a moment and imagine the way an activity is performed. Adventure exists when there is engagement and engagement comes from providing students with experiences that are unique and relevant. Adventure includes challenge and is about taking risks. Sometimes these risks are 'apparent' physical risks but often they are emotional risks.

In Adventure activities, there needs to be an atmosphere of fun carried out in a safe environment. Believe it or not, these aims can be achieved without ever scaling a rock face or opening a parachute!

The following activities will enable children to:

- Develop movement concepts and motor skills. (PE).
- Demonstrate responsible personal and social behaviour (PE and SPHE linkage).
- Demonstrate the ability to use effective interpersonal skills (PE and SPHE linkage).
- Demonstrate the ability to use the decision making skills of goal setting, risk taking and problem solving (PE and SPHE linkage).
- Understand that challenge, enjoyment creativity and self expression are important life enhancing experiences (PE and SPHE linkage).
- Demonstrate an understanding of and respect

for differences (PE and SPHE linkage).

Activity 1 (junior classes)

Child Sort

This activity will encourage respect for self and others. It also encourages language through questioning and helps develop motor skills. There is linkagewith the Maths curriculum in the area of matching, sorting and classifying.

Children stand in a circle and the teacher says today we are going to see some of the things we have in common.

Teacher calls out categories. A child who fits into that category is invited to go into the middle of the circle eg,
– those wearing red, blue etc walk into the circle.
– those who have a brother or sister...
– those with a dog, cat etc...
– those who have brown, blue etc eyes...

Children not in the centre all shout something like 'hurrah' or clap their hands.

Ask some questions like:

- Was it fun to be in the middle?
- What are some of the things you have in common with children you didn't know already?

Tips – Make sure everyone gets into the circle.

Mix categories eg, those with brown hair and wearing red step into the circle etc.

Ask children to come up with ideas for categories.

Activity 2 (Junior classes)

Rain - Maker

This activity has linkage with the music curriculum in the areas of rhythm and listening and responding.

The class sits in a circle.

Ask children how many have ever listened to the rain falling down? Tell them we are going to create a rainstorm right here today.

1. The rainstorm they create is a series of sounds. Each sound will get passed around the circle like a wave.
2. Students keep performing their sound until the next one comes to them. They are not to change until the person sitting next to them has changed.
3. The sounds the students create, done in a wave like pattern, will sound like a rainstorm coming and going.

The sequence of sounds is:

- (a) Rub hands together;
- (b) Snap fingers;
- (c) Clap hands lightly – finger tips only;
- (d) Clap hands – entire hand;
- (e) Slap knees;
- (f) Clap hands- entire hands;
- (g) Clap hands- fingertips only;
- (h) Snap fingers;
- (i) Rub hands together.

Ask students:

What was it like to listen to the sounds of "rain"?

Would it have sounded the same if it was just you playing the game?

Tip – Ask class to practice making an arm wave go around the circle before having them add in the sounds.

Activity 3 (Juniors)

Beach Ball Balance

This activity promotes co-operation, problem solving and a



variety of movement and motor skills.

Activity: Each pair has a beach ball.

Ask the children have they ever seen a seal balancing a ball on its nose? How about a circus animal balancing on top of a ball? Today we are going to do some balancing with a beach ball but not on our noses and not under our feet.

1. Allow the children to experiment balancing between them and see what they come up with.
2. Ask pairs to balance the beach ball between where their shoulders would touch.
3. Provide students with a series of movement challenges. They cannot touch the beach ball and it mustn't touch the ground. eg:
 - Take 5 steps forward.
 - Take 5 steps backward.
 - Turn around 360 degrees.
 - Travel across a line and back.

Ask children to show each other what they came up with.

Tip – Start with easier balancing methods moving to more difficult. Allow children to stand first while balancing before moving with the ball.

Activity 4 (Senior Classes)

Captain's Calling

Utilizes a variety of movement skills and concepts.

Activity: Gather class in a large open space. Have students make a circle so you can explain the rules for the Activity.

Ask children have they ever been on a boat? Who is in charge on the boat? Is it important to follow the captain's orders? Today we are going to be on a pretend boat and I am going to be the pretend Captain. Let's see if you can follow my orders.

Teach the class the following actions which will be the commands of the Captain.

1. • (One person) "Attention" – children stand at attention until the person who is designated Captain says "At ease".
- (One person) "Swab the deck" – make a mopping motion.
- (Three people) "Lifeboats out" – Form a single line, sit

down and pretend to row a boat really quickly.

- (Five people) "Starfish" – Each of a circle of five puts both hands in the centre and the circle spins around.
 - (Every body) 'Person overboard' – everyone who is out is 'rescued' by the other passengers and back in the game.
2. Point out the boundaries of the ship to your students.
 3. 'Overboard' is anywhere outside a boundary.
 4. Explain to your class that when they are given a command by the Captain they are to respond as quickly as possible. Anyone who is not able to follow the commands must go 'overboard' until "person overboard" is called.
 5. If the Captain calls "attention" and does not say "At ease" students should not move. If they do, send them overboard!
 6. Practice the above commands to give students a chance to practice the various movements.

Tips – when a child is overboard, ask them to do a simple physical activity eg, star jump, jumping jacks etc.

Allow different children to be captains.

Activity 5 (senior classes)

"Turning over a new leaf"

This activity promotes the skills

of balancing, bending, personal space and co-operation.

For this activity each pair needs a single bed sheet or material of same size. (I pick up material from the Creative Resource in Castlebar, attached to Western Care).

Tell children they will be working in pairs to "turn over a new leaf". Ask them what the term means.

Activity: Each pair stands on the sheet and the object of the exercise is to stand on the sheet and to turn it over, both children standing on the other side of the sheet. Children cannot step on to the ground.

Now ask pairs to fold their sheets in half and repeat the process.

Progress the activity by asking four children to step on the sheet.

You can progress the activity further by making the groups larger and the sheet smaller!

Discussion – ask children to give you feedback on how partners worked together, then fours and then the larger groups.

Was the same strategy used every time you "turned over a new leaf?"

Activity 6 (Senior Classes)

Time flies when you're having fun.

This activity promotes many motor skills as well as problem solving techniques and teamwork.

Set out four cones – one at 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock.

Ask the class can you co-operate for 12 hours? Let's try:

Activity:

1. Group holds hands in a circle.
2. The task is for the whole class to move as quickly as possible 12 hours in a clockwise direction so that people standing at 12, 3, 6 and 9 are back to their original spots.
3. Next the class rotates back 12 hours in a counterclockwise direction.
4. If the chain of hands is broken, the class begins again.
5. Time the class.
6. Allow for discussion and multiple attempts.

Ask children how they helped their class. What strategies did children use – ask them to share these with the others.

All that remains is for you and your children to experiment and have some fun with these Adventure activities. And as promised, not a parachute, canoe or climbing axe in sight!!

Submitted by Catherine Canny – PCSP PE trainer. Secretary of the IPPEA- Irish Primary PE Association. Contact IPPEA@eircom.net Check out website – www.irishprimarype.com for more PE tips.

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