

Name/Title: Ostrich, Turtle, Penguin! A memory game!

Purpose of Event: To have students work together to lift up a parachute, and practice responding to remembering teacher cues, while moving their bodies through space (at high and low levels). Parachute activities are also great to reinforce muscular fitness, by bringing awareness to how your arms feel after participating in the activity. Students will recognize that physical activities using resistance (from the parachute) contribute to their muscular fitness.

Prerequisites: Students should know rules of the parachute, such as your expectations for how to stop the parachute, and how to hold the parachute.

Suggested Grade Level: K-2

Materials Needed:

A parachute large enough for all students to fit under safely.

A list of true/ false questions if you want to extend this to a review activity.

Description of Idea

First, have students practice lifting the parachute high over their heads, without letting go. Once practiced, you may begin explaining the rules.

* Capture interest by telling students that today they will practice being 3 animals: an ostrich, a turtle, and a penguin.

Give a little background about each animal.

Ostrich: This is the largest bird in the world, and the 2nd fastest land animal! Some people think that ostrich's sleep with their heads in the sand (like in the movie Dumbo!). Today when we're an ostrich, we're going to pretend to put our heads in the sand.

* Allow students a chance to practice being an ostrich! Instruct students that when they lift the parachute high, they should let go with one hand and guide their bodies to ground slowly, ending on their belly. Only their head should go under the parachute, and they should trap their air in with both hands on either side of their head. Heads under, bodies out!

Turtle: Who knows what a turtle wears on it's back? A shell! Today when we're a turtle, we're going to pretend to peek out heads out of our turtle shells.

** Allow students the opportunity to practice being a turtle!

Instruct students that when they lift the parachute high, they should let go with one hand and guide their bodies to ground slowly, ending on their belly. Only their BODY should go under the parachute, and they should trap their air in with both hands on either side of their head. Heads OUT, bodies UNDER! (Basically the opposite of an ostrich)

Penguin: Penguins live in cold climates, and some people like to pretend that they live in houses made out of ice, called igloos. Today when we're a penguin, we're going to pretend to sit inside out igloo.

** Allow students the opportunity to practice being a penguin! Instruct students that when they lift the parachute high, they should hold on tight with both hands, and sit down inside the parachute, trapping in the air with their bottoms and their hands sealing the edge. The whole body goes inside.

Now, the instructor can start the following directions activity!

After students lift up the parachute, call out the name of an animal! Students need to try to remember what each animal looks like, and they will safely lower their bodies to model what the animal looks like.

Students who get the animal action correct may earn imaginary "points" to increase motivation and be competitive, OR can be played for no points.

Continue to play this activity for several rounds, until students are successfully moving their bodies based on the animal prompt.

EXTENSION:

To extend the activity, students may create their own animal with the parachute! This works great with 2nd graders! Students may teach you the new animal, and then you can play the game again with even more animal actions we remember!

Assessment Ideas:

A formative, affective self-assessment using an exit slip, "plagnets", etc. could be given, where students assess their ability to work with others to lift the parachute in time.

The teacher could use a formative assessment (most likely a checklist) to evaluate to whether students were following safety protocol, and following directions when prompted.

If this activity was being used to reinforce muscular fitness, students could be given a picture of a child (a cartoon picture works best), and asked to circle the part of the body that they thought was getting the most strong from participating in the activity.

Teaching Suggestions:

This activity has also been extended to a True/ False review activity! For example, Ostrich indicates "true," and Turtle indicates "False." You can ask a series of review questions, and have students pick whether the answer is true or false. They indicate through body movement, not raising their hands. This is a great visual for the teacher to get instant feedback about cognitive content.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

This activity can be modified several ways. First, students can kneel on the ground instead of standing up. This may increase the difficulty of lifting the parachute, but it's a great challenge for the whole class.

Students unable to grip the parachute can focus on the movements. For instance, the child may work on spinning their bodies on the direction they are supposed to be facing using whatever ambulatory movements they have. They can focus on coordination of body direction instead of lifting the parachute.

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