Name/Title: **Using Rhythm to Teach Patterns and Directions (November 2012)**

Purpose of Event: The human brain's ability to recognize patterns and sequences helps children build logical thinking skills. Putting movement patterns together helps to accelerate brain development. This rhythmic combination helps the kinesthetic learner learn patterns of movement as well as sequences and movements for directional words.

Suggested Grade Level: K-4

Materials Needed: This activity can be done with or without music. The teacher can provide a rhythm with a drum or other musical instrument. As the patterns and sequences are learned, music can be added and the tempo of the movements can be increased.

Recommended music: Call Me Maybe by Carly Rae Jepsen

Beginning dance formation: The class is in a large circle, or after learning the movements the class can be broken down into several smaller circles letting the students adding their own "style" to the steps. It is important to make sure that the children are saying the directional word as they do the movement.

Description of Idea

Each 8 count pattern can be repeated as many times as the teacher feels necessary. As the class learns the patterns, the repetitions can be diminished so that eventually each 8 count is only repeated one time. Remember that the human brain also likes, and learns more effectively, with repetition. So "repeat to remember and remember to repeat." (Medina, John. Brain Rules)

Counts, Movements and Cues:
1-8 Clap up by R shoulder, clap down by L hip, clap up by L shoulder and clap down by R hip (1-4 counts). Place hands apart by the shoulders with palms out, clap hands together, place hands apart by the shoulders and clap hands together. (5-8) Repeat this sequence as necessary.
Directional cue words are: Up, down, up, down. Apart, together, apart, together.

1-8 Lift R knee and clap hands under the leg, step on R foot and clap hands over the R leg. Lift L knee and clap hands under the left leg, step on L foot and clap hands over the L leg (1-4). Clap hands behind the back and in front of the body. Repeat claps behind and in front (5-8). Repeat this sequence as necessary.
Directional cue words are: Under, over, under, over, back, front, back, front.

1-8 2 slides to the R (step R close L step R close L) counts 1-4. Bring the hands down making a zig/zag pattern. (counts 5-8) Repeat this sequence as necessary.
Directional cue words: Right, right, zig, zag, zig, zag.

1-8 2 slides to the L (step L close R, step L, close R), zig/zag the fingers from above the head

down to the L side (counts 5-8) Repeat this sequences as necessary.
Directional cue words: Left, left, zig, zag, zig, zag.

1-8 Walk forward 2 steps, clap high 2x. Walk back 2 steps, clap the floor 2 times. Repeat this sequence as necessary.
Directional cue words: Forward, forward, high, high, backward, backward, low, low.

Assessment Ideas:

These combinations can be done several times in a row. As the students are able to repeat the pattern and concepts the tempo can be increased and the number of repetitions of each 8 count segment decreased. This makes the combinations more interesting and challenges the brain to learn the pattern and sequence.

Teaching Suggestions:

After the patterns and concepts have been learned, ask the students to find a partner and introduce the concept of mirroring. Allow older students to think of ways to make the combinations interactive with their partners. (Claps can be partner claps, etc.)

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

Children with cognitive disabilities can do the movements by following the teacher and performing at a slower pace. It would also allow the students to perhaps more easily learn the concepts by performing them with the movements. Children with limited mobility could also perform all of these movements at their own pace.

Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 12/6/2012**.
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