Name/Title: Building Core Strength with Rhythm Sticks

Purpose of Event: Students will perform a rhythmic activity that will strengthen the core muscles as well as learn the names of these muscle groups.

Suggested Grade Level: 5-12

Materials Needed: Music player

Recommended music: Shut Up and Dance with Me by Walk the Moon or any music with appropriate tempo

Beginning dance formation: Students can be placed randomly around the room with adequate space that allows for safe movement.

Description of Idea

This activity can be done with rhythm sticks, drum sticks, or even 1 pound weights. Each movement contributes to building core strength and the abdominals, quadriceps and Gluteus maximum muscle groups.

The dance begins with a rhythm stick, drum stick or 1 lb. weight in each hand.
Combination #1 – Rainbow Movement

1-8 - Tap the stick in the R hand next to the R foot while performing a correct squat (1), bring both sticks above the head and tap together (2) tap the L stick next the L foot while performing a correct squat (3) bring both sticks above the head and tap together (4). Repeat these movements for counts 5-8.

Combination #2 – Down-Ups
1-8 –Flex knees and tap sticks on the floor (1) bring sticks back to the waist and tap together (2), releve and extend arms high above the head while tapping sticks together (3) lower the heels, bring sticks down to the waist, and tap together (4). Repeat these movements for counts 5-8.

Combination #3 – Windshield Wipers
1-8 – Moving from the waist lean to the R, reaching over the head with the L arm tap sticks together (1), straighten the torso and tap the sticks over the head (2), moving from the waist lean to the L, reaching over the head with the R arm tap sticks together (3), straighten the torso and tap the sticks over the head (4). Repeat these movements for counts 5-8

Combination #4 – Knees Up!
1-8 – Raise R knee and tap sticks under the R thigh (1), lower R leg tapping R toe on ground and tap sticks together above the head (2) Repeat for counts 3-4. Reverse and perform the movement on the L side for counts 5,6,7,8.

These combinations can be repeated as many times as needed. In other words each combination could last 8, 16, 24 or 32 counts.

Assessment Ideas:

As each combination is taught ask students to name the muscle groups being used. Exit slips could be given that ask students to match the movement with the correct muscle. (Toe raises in combination #2 use the Gastrocnemius etc.)

The following paper and pencil assessment may be helpful to look at as well. You may have to tweak it a bit to fit this dance idea.

Lower Body Muscle Groups Identification Assessment

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

If children have cognitive disabilities allow them to repeat the combinations for 16 -32 counts. The movements can also be done at a much slower pace allowing 4 beats of the song to complete the movement.

Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 9/30/2015**.

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