

Name/Title: Parachute Dance (October '08)

Purpose of Event: The students will be able to perform a parachute dance which promotes rhythm, coordination, the development of upper body strength, and locomotor skills.

Suggested Grade Level: K-5

Materials Needed: CD player, parachute with enough spots for each child in the class

Recommended music: “Behind the Clouds” by Brad Paisley from the Cars soundtrack

Beginning dance formation: Students begin facing the parachute with the handle of the parachute or the material of the parachute in both hands with an overhand grip. The parachute is held at waist level.

Description of Idea

When the music begins hold for 4 sets of 8 counts.

Step-Close Sequence:

1-16 -- Step R to R side and close L, taking weight onto the L foot (2 counts). Repeat the move for a total of 8 times for a total of 16 counts. On the last count, tap with the L foot so that the move can be reversed.

1-16 -- Step L to the L side and close R, taking weight onto the R foot (2 counts). Repeat the move for a total of 8 times for a total of 16 counts.

Shake and Sway Sequence:

1-8 -- Stand in place and gently shake the parachute up and down to the music.

1-8 -- Repeat the shaking movements.

1-8 -- Students will all sway to the R for 2 counts, back to the center for 2 counts, to the L for 2 counts and back to the center for 2 counts.

1-8 -- Repeat the swaying movements for 8 more counts.

The Mushroom Move Sequence:

1-8 -- Raise the arms above the head making the parachute lift into the air to form a “mushroom.”

1-8 -- Students march under the parachute for 8 counts.

1-8 -- Students march back from under the parachute for 8 counts.

1-8 -- Students lower the parachute to the starting position.

1-32 -- Repeat the entire “Mushroom Move” sequence.

Locomotor Skill Sequence:

There will be instrumental music in the song. Students will face to the side and hold the parachute with the L hand.

1-32 -- 16 skips - Each skip is 2 counts. Students can begin with either foot. Emphasize proper spacing and parachute “etiquette.”

1-32 -- 32 runs - again emphasizing proper spacing and parachute “etiquette.” Students will need to face the parachute and take the beginning grip on the last 2 counts.

The singing will begin and the dance will start over.

After repeating the dance a second time, add the following 16 counts:

1-16 -- Stand in place and gently shake the parachute up and down.

The song then continues with several measures of instrumental music. You can continue to repeat the dance or add your own locomotor skills or activities.

Variations:

Variations: For younger children, you can slow down the step-close sequence and only do half as many movements.

If smaller parachutes are available the class could be divided into groups, and after teaching the dance movements each group could create their own ending after the second repetition of the choreographed dance.

Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 10/2/2008.**

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