

At a glance: Balance, Locomotion, Object Manipulation 3 - 5 years

3-5 year olds

TIME: 69 minutes

SKILL: Balance, Locomotion, Object Manipulation

EQUIPMENT: balance beams, baskets, bean bags, benches, buckets, chalk (outdoor), foam blocks, hoops, low beams, ribbons, ropes, skipping ropes, strings, tape, tape (indoor), thin mats, wood slats

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

Game: Traffic light (8 minutes)

Game: Line statues (8 minutes)

Game: Cross the river (8 minutes)

Game: Feed the shark (10 minutes)

Game: Simon says (10 minutes)

Game: Head and shoulders (5 minutes)

Game: Animal Walk Warm-up (10 minutes)

Game: Target throwing overhand (10 minutes)

Wrap-up (2 minutes)

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ORGANIZATION/PROGRAM:

ACTIVITY LEADER: Parents

GROUP NAME: Birthday Party!

Notes:

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

Call the children into a circle or into designated lines and greet them.

Explain any special safety rules and remind the children to stop, look, and listen whenever you signal.

Explain in 20-30 seconds what you will be doing today.

Does anyone know what part of the foot you use to pass a soccer ball?

Traffic light (8 minutes)

- Children pretend to be cars responding to traffic lights and road obstacles that the leader calls out:
 - *Green: Skipping (or leader can specify galloping).*
 - *Yellow: Jumping or hopping on the spot.*
 - *Red: Stop and stand on one foot (stork stand).*
 - *Over the bridge: Walk on a narrow line.*
 - *Through the tunnel: Find a partner, and take turns making a bridge on your hands and feet (or knees), and partner crawls under.*
 - *Car wash: Find a partner, and take turns crawling on back through partner's legs.*

Tips

- Remind children of their "space bubble".

Cues

- *High bridge*
- *Low crawl*
- *Stand tall*

Line statues (8 minutes)

- Children find space on a line in the activity space.
- Lines can be court markings, floor seams, wood slats, ribbons, strings, or ropes.
- Tape (indoor) or chalk (outdoor) can also be used to create lines in activity space.
- Leader explains that when the music starts, children are to walk along the line.

- Children walk forward, following the lines on the floor.
- When the music stops, I want you to freeze like a statue.
- Allow children to “freeze” for 5-10 seconds before restarting music.

Tips

- Remind children of their “space bubble”.
- Encourage children to freeze in positions
- Praise children for making “great statues!”

Cross the river (8 minutes)

- Leader sticks tape on the floor to represent “logs”.
- Create different shapes (e.g. straight, zigzag, angled, squiggly).
- “Logs” can also be made with balance beams, foam blocks, skipping ropes, thin mats, etc.
- Leader must arrange the “logs” so children can move easily from one to another.
- Leader demonstrates how to walk along “logs” with arms straight out to the side, looking up as much as possible.
- Leader explains that when the music is on, children are to walk along the “logs” without falling off.
 - *When the music stops, I want you to “freeze” on the log.*

Tips

- If leaders help children to balance, stand beside them.
- Encourage children to take steps and not slide their feet.

Cues

- *Head up*
- *Look forward*
- *Hold yourself steady*

Feed the shark (10 minutes)

- Leader sets up a low beam or bench for children to walk across the “water”.
- Leader places a bucket or hoop on the floor at one end of bench. This is the “shark”.
- Leader gives each child a bean bag as “food”.
- Leader explains that they will work as a team to feed the shark.
- Leader demonstrates how to bring food to the shark by crossing the “bridge” (beam).
 - *When you reach the end of the bridge, throw your food to the shark (hoop).*
- Children then return to the start of bridge and the next child goes.
- Explain that the goal is to get as many pieces of food into the shark’s mouth as they can before time runs out (2 minutes per round).

Tips

- Keep track of how many pieces of “food” go into the hoop.
- Repeat activity and challenge the children to beat their record.

Cues

- *Arms like wings*
- *Arms straight*
- *Look forward*

Simon says (10 minutes)

- When the leader says “Simon says...”, children look at what the leader is doing and then follow the command.
- Leader signals to the children to stop after 5-10 seconds, then gives a new command.
- If the leader does not say “Simon says...” before a command, children should remain still.
- If a child moves on a command when the leader does not say “Simon says...”, the leader asks the child to sit down and stand up quickly. (Child continues to play. This avoids elimination from the activity.)
- Once the leader has done several commands, children may be given turns to lead the activity.
- Suggestions for commands:
 - *Jump on the spot*
 - *Hop on the spot on one foot*
 - *March like a soldier on the spot (knees up)*
 - *Walk around slowly*
 - *Follow the leader while walking quickly*
 - *Jump around on two feet*
 - *Hop around on one foot*
 - *Skip around*
 - *Walk like a crab*
 - *Walk like a duck*
 - *Leap like a frog*
 - *Roll like a log*

Tips

- Make sure children spread out and find space
- Make sure children face the leader

Cues

- *Heads up*
- *Look where you are going*
- *“Space bubble”*
- *Listen carefully*

Head and shoulders (5 minutes)

- Children stay seated in their circle to watch the leader's demonstration.
- Leader slowly sings the song "Head and shoulders, knees and toes" and demonstrates the actions. *Head and shoulders, knees and toes Knees and toes, knees and toes Head and shoulders, knees and toes Eyes, ears, mouth and nose.*
- Leader asks the children stand, then sings the song together with them (practice).
- Leader and children then repeat with actions (touching each body part).
- Leader can speed up or slow down the song, or change their voice (deeper, higher, softer) to make the activity playful.
- Older children can try this activity while moving around the activity space (e.g. walking).

Animal Walk Warm-up (10 minutes)

- This is an exercise where children practice following signals and instructions.
- Leader asks the children to walk like the animal that the leader names (demonstrate):
 - *Horse - walk at normal speed around the gym*
 - *Cheetah – walk fast*
 - *Raccoon - walk backwards (look over your shoulder)*
 - *Owl - stand still*
 - *Turtle - sit down and make yourself small*
 - *Kangaroo - jump up and down*
 - *Elephant - move very slowly with giant steps*

Tips

- Remind children of their "space bubble"

Cues

- *Head up*
- *Look around*

Target throwing overhand (10 minutes)

- Leader asks children to sit cross-legged on the floor and watch them.
- Leader demonstrates how to do a basic overhand throw with a beanbag:
 - *Stand facing your target (hula hoop on wall).*
 - *Turn sideways so your throwing arm is farthest from the target.*
 - *Point your other hand at the target, then raise your throwing arm.*
 - *Throw your beanbag and turn your body as you throw.*
- Leader sets up three different target stations around the gym:
 - *hula hoops on the walls*
 - *baskets on the floor*
 - *area for "distance" throwing (throw from line as far as you can)*
- Leader places a supply of beanbags at each station.

- Additional leaders monitor each station.
- Leader divides children into three groups, and rotates groups between stations every 2-3 minutes.

Tips

- Allow the children to explore throwing.
- Don't correct technique too much. Preschool children need time to develop mature throwing patterns.

Cues

- *Point and throw*
- *Stand sideways to target (but don't insist)*

Wrap-up (2 minutes)

Call the children back into a circle and review what they learned today.

When you shoot, why do you need airplane wings?

What part of your foot do you use to pass a soccer ball?